The latest book from the History Group was published in October with a book stall set up during both Society meetings that month.

Again this book is edited by our prolific chairman, Rob, who wrote in the preamble on the cover, 'If you have an interest in Clevedon, its views and vistas and, of course, its people, then this book is for you. The vast majority of the images have not been published before.'

Members and friends of the Society have also contributed many of the chapters in the book, including Roy Girling, who was able to expand a previous article about the local engineer, inventor and boat racing enthusiast, Michael John (Jack) Willcocks. There is a fascinating chapter, written by Austin Davis, about the building of the Triangle Clock in 1898, with detailed diagrams of the structure of the building and the clock mechanism. Chris Stone has contributed a chapter entitled, 'Resting Places and Watering Holes.'

John Penny, has written an article about the radio mast which has been such a landmark to the south of the town since it was opened by the BBC on June 14, 1939 (just a week after I was born!). I was pleased to provide Roy Girling with some extra information and photographs to enable him to enlarge on another of his previously published articles about war-time Penicillin manufacture in Elton Road.

Not only did he edit the book but Rob Campbell also wrote several of the chapters himself, including a fascinating story about local flying man Collyns Price Pizey, an account of the heroic life of driver/nurse Rose Norton Harper and the story of Henry Edward May’s courageous rescue attempt in rough seas off the main beach in 1897.

Above all, this is a picture book. It contains nearly 400 old photographs taken in and around Clevedon in the past 100 years or more. If you attended school in Clevedon during the last 50 years or were a member of a sports or theatrical group or if you took part in any of the town’s post war carnivals, the chances are your face is to be found in the pages of this, the latest book to be published by our Society.

As it says on the book cover, ‘It’s a must for family historians and locals alike.’

Geoff Hale

The book is available to Society members at a special price of £12.00.
Effort is rewarding and as I approach the end of my four year tenure as your Chairman I hope that my input has emulated the work done by my predecessors. I am certainly proud of the Society’s achievements over the last 40 years and I am also proud and honoured to have played my part in recent years. May 2011 is rapidly moving towards us; I feel sure that the future of the Society is in very safe hands, as Hugh Stebbing takes the Chair as of the AGM.

Finally, as we all enjoyed the talk from Gina Metcalf Smith on the beautiful Victorian floral art work of Marianne North, whose collection is housed in a special gallery at Kew Gardens, Wendy and I decided to organise a trip so that we could marvel at it in person. The trip is booked for Thursday 28 April 2011 and the price is £26, which includes coach and entry to Kew and the Palace. We will be booking lunch for those who wish to eat together. Something to look forward to when the weather warms up!

This talk is reviewed on page 6

Anniversary

40
Clevedon Civic Society

Footpaths Group

Report by Jean Hannaford

In early summer the group planned a wide variety of walks in Clevedon and surrounding districts. The original town walks were set out in the 1970s and are in the process of being updated one by one. This gives the group the opportunity to find out how the routes have changed, or not, as the case may be. One of the walks was done in July and another in August, the latter being an annual charity walk, July also saw the group walking in Portishead.

In October Clevedon was again the area for walking but this time it was an updated route which proved very interesting. Later in the month the group travelled to Bristol to enjoy a bracing trek around the Downs.

In November the weather changed and our historical walk in Portishead was cancelled due to very heavy rain. This will be rescheduled later in 2011. The Gordano Valley, Berkley and the Purton Wrecks site on the banks of the Severn Estuary are further walking venues taking the group to the end of 2010.

Conservation & Planning Group

Report by Bryan Osborne

allowing house owners to extend their homes as permitted developments.

The Royal Pier Hotel is still in a state of disrepair, even more so since the November storms played havoc with the plastic sheeting covering the scaffolding. Discussions are taking place between the owners, and the pier trust, about exploring options for providing toilets beneath the ramp for pier promenaders. The planning application has just been submitted at the time of writing (the end of November).

The design for the new Community Hospital on the old Kwik Save site is progressing but we are seriously concerned that funding for this much needed development may not be readily available in the current climate to see work starting in the spring as hoped.

The Regent Hotel in Hill Road is still a blot on this attractive shopping road and we understand it may be changing hands again. The council is having difficulty getting the owner to clear the blocked rainwater pipe, the cause of the spalling stone work.

Local History Group

Report by Rob Campbell (Tel: 877038)

Such is a politicians life! He and his PA were extremely apologetic and by the good services of a number of members an ad hoc evening was put together and proved to be very enjoyable.

Our now traditional ‘Winter Supper’ had the tables full to overflowing with delicious goodies, some of which were homemade and now served on washable plates. We all felt very homely about doing our bit for the environment! We welcomed back Pat Hase that evening and in her indomitable manner she had us spellbound with interesting facts and little anecdotes about Weston-super-Mare Worthies.

At the 40th Anniversary Year closes let’s look back at some of the fascinating talks that we have all enjoyed and the friendly atmosphere that we have all fostered.

The programme for 2011 looks varied and interesting and definitely something to look forward to.

Next Conservation Group meetings:
25 January, 8 March, 19 April and 24 May 2011

Next Footpaths Group meetings:
7 March and 6 June 2011

ERRATA

In Derek’s farewell letter in the last edition of The Clevedonian, we named the lady who did the duplicating as Mary Thomas. In fact there were two ladies; they were Mary Brutton and Kathleen Thomas.

Chairman’s Piece
Report by Rob Campbell

I cannot believe that we are now nearing the end of our 40th Anniversary year, maybe that’s because we have been so busy. It started with the launch of our ‘Blue Book’ which filled the much needed gap in our knowledge about the very early period of Clevedon’s history. We then came up to date with the DVD of hard work by members of this great society.

Having been an able volunteer of the century viewpoint. All this has been achieved with an awful lot of hard work by members of this great society.

Who’s Hugh?

Hugh Stebbing was elected as the Civic Society’s Vice Chairman at our AGM in 2010. Hugh will be the Executive Committee’s nominee to stand as Chairman at the next AGM in May 2011. We asked Hugh to send us his CV!

Who’s Hugh?

Hugh was born 62 years ago in Walthamstow, Essex (now London). He went to Forest School alongside the births of Michelle, Joanne and Natalie.

In 1988 Hugh led the team at Lloyds Bank responsible for the development of Canons House at Harbourside in Bristol. This assignment resulted in a family move from Woodford to Clevedon where Christian and Hugh have lived in Cambridge Road ever since. Michelle has moved to New Zealand where she trains and races horses, Joanne is completing her 7th year district nursing in金华 and is in the process of adopting seven year old Alex, an orphan, and an animal lover is working in London as a midwife.

In February 2009 Hugh retired from what is now Lloyds Banking Group where he was Asset Management Director responsible for the operational property portfolio worldwide and for property aspects of various corporate mergers and disposals with which the bank was involved. He is now a director on two boards in the Southern Housing Group, a major housing association active across the south east of England and is chairman of the Investor Committee of Mayfair Capital Income Plus Fund, a commercial property investment management business.

Away from the family and work Hugh has been active in the City of London having been Master of the Worshipful Company of Chartered Surveyors, a City Livery Company, and is Chairman of the Governing Council of Clifton High School, Bristol. He enjoys fly fishing, golf and surfing and is very active at Clevedon YMCA and, for the last 10 years, he, with Christine, has led an annual residential summer camp for children disadvantaged in their day-to-day lives. Hugh’s other great love is his Bristol Brigand car – one of only 29 to have been made by Bristol Cars at their factory in Filton.

Clevedon Civic Society brings a new dimension to Hugh’s activities and he sees it as a practical Christian who worships at Christchurch where he also chairs the Finance Committee. He is now a director on two boards in the Southern Housing Group, a major housing association active across the south east of England and is chairman of the Investor Committee of Mayfair Capital Income Plus Fund, a commercial property investment management business.

Derek has seen the newsletter publication progress from a four page type written issue printed using stencils cut on his own dot matrix printer right through to a 16 page professionally printed document complete with colour photographs.

ERRATA

In Derek’s farewell letter in the last edition of The Clevedonian, we named the lady who did the duplicating as Mary Thomas. In fact there were two ladies; they were Mary Brutton and Kathleen Thomas.
The Environment Group has had a quieter few months since the completion of the Pier Copse Viewpoint but has been working behind the scenes on projects for next year.

We hope to get the public toilets in Pier Copse improved and have surveyed the existing building and are considering the best way to create a disabled toilet there. We hope to be speaking to North Somerset Council about this soon in conjunction with the hoped for development of the Royal Pier Hotel.

We completed our summer Working Party programme by clearing the Donkey Path. We start again with the Big Litter Pick on Monday 11 April 2011.

A Progress Report from David Robinson (Chairman LYF)

The last twelve months have been a busy time for us in the Land Yeo Friends (LYF). On Wednesday 15 September 2009 five members went on a long way in clearing the ex-travellers’ site at Court Lane, Clevedon. We took away three trailer loads of assorted rubbish.

The group also drew the attention of the Environment Agency (EA) to the danger of flooding in the centre of Clevedon due to the build up of rubbish and silt in the culvert under Queen’s Square. Photographs taken by LYF members finally convinced the EA to survey the culvert in the latter half of last year but they found that they were unable to do a complete survey as the culvert was blocked solid with items as large as scaffold planks and beer barrels.

Finally, due to persistence by LYF members, contractors were engaged to clear the culvert. The work was done at the end of November 2009, taking five nights to complete and resulting in several lorry loads of debris to be carted away. The Land Yeo now flows more freely and cleanly, and the flood risk to the town is considerably reduced.

We are also very concerned about the deteriorating state of the Bandstand and have proposals for the replacement of the wooden panels, which we hope to get the Council to agree to, and implement next year.

We found that they were unable to do a culvert in the latter half of last year but finally convinced the EA to survey the culvert.

The Queen’s Square debris

A cheese and wine party held on 29th January 1971 was a great social success with an attendance of over 160. The Bandstand and have proposals for the replacement of the wooden panels, which we hope to get the Council to agree to, and implement next year.

Clearing the Donkey Path

GROUNDS REPORTS

Environment Group

Report by Bob Hardcastle (Tel. 871633)

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Photographs taken by LYF members due to the build up of rubbish and silt of flooding in the centre of Clevedon Environment Agency (EA) to the danger of flooding in the centre of Clevedon due to the build up of rubbish and silt in the culvert under Queen’s Square. Photographs taken by LYF members finally convinced the EA to survey the culvert in the latter half of last year but they found that they were unable to do a complete survey as the culvert was blocked solid with items as large as scaffold planks and beer barrels.

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A plan to provide a pathway beside the river behind Westbourne Crescent was initiated by LYF member, Frank Jacobs, after seeing school children struggling along the muddy path.

Funding was obtained from YANSEC and The Smisson Foundation Donation Fund. The work was carried out in July 2010 by North Somerset Council Works Department.

Feedback from residents has been encouraging and local people are delighted with the new path.

Next Environment Group meetings: 12 January, 16 March and 11 May 2011

Clearing the Donkey Path

We also very concerned about the deteriorating state of the Bandstand and have proposals for the replacement of the wooden panels, which we hope to get the Council to agree to, and implement next year.

Ready for the Spring 2011 edition by: 17 April

Civic Society Executive Members

Chairman - Rob Campbell
Vice Chairman - Hugh Stebbing
Secretary - Wendy Moore
Treasurer - Iris Wheatley
Members - John & Helen Russell
Local Government Representative - Carole Wring
Footpath Group - Jean Hannaford
Publicity/Newsletter - Geoff Hale
Newsletter Distribution - Dave Long
Web Master - Mike Wheatley

Next Executive Group meetings: Tuesdays 18 January and 15 March 2011

Should any member have a point to put forward it is always possible to contact an Executive Group member to have it brought up at a meeting.
Broadmead Before the Shops
Presented by Mike Hooper

Some of his photographs were taken before the war, others just after the massive air raids that devastated the Castle area and later pictures showed the first development of the post-war Broadmead.

It was obvious that many in the audience were old enough to remember these buildings and for throughout the evening murmurings could be heard as first one then another person would recognise a long forgotten building and, who knows, relive a private memory associated with it!

Geoff Hale (14 September 2010)

Marianne North - The Remarkable Victorian Artist
Presented by Gina Merrett Smith

Marianne was largely self-taught in painting and at the age of 41, after the death of her father, she used her inheritance and colonial connections to travel extensively in search of botanical subjects.

Her painting expeditions began in 1871 and were to span the next 13 years, taking her all over the world. Travelling and painting became an obsession. In 1879 she donated 832 of her paintings – most of her work – to Kew Gardens and had a special gallery built to house them. The North Gallery, now a grade II listed building, has recently been refurbished and the paintings restored.

Angela Slotté (14 October 2010)

Bristol Zoo
Presented by Don Packham

Don Packham worked at the Bristol Zoo for 50 years, first as a penguin keeper and later as the head keeper. Now retired, Don had plenty of colourful memories to share during our November meeting.

Using many photographs he had taken himself Don told of the many endangered species which the Zoo is in the business of saving. Under his stewardship, Bristol Zoo has bred 28 Persian Leopards and has been involved in breeding Asian Lions of which there are only 400 left in the world. Bristol was the first zoo in the UK to house a pair of Okapi and Don was their first keeper.

Don also told us of the lighter times, like the occasion when a seal escaped and stood in the road outside the Zoo to the consternation of the passing motorists, and of the annual walk with the elephants, Wendy and Christina, to the weighbridge, where a nearby cake shop owner would lay out a table of her wares to entertain the delighted creatures.

It was particularly interesting to hear Don finally putting the record straight regarding the premature death of Alfred the Gorilla in 1948: apparently he didn’t die of fright because of the Brabazon aeroplane flying overhead as the newspapers had suggested, but of TB. His body was preserved and now resides in the Bristol Museum – preserving happy memories for us all.

Geoff Hale (11 November 2010)

On our first morning we set off with John, our guide, to the Newfoundland Memorial Park which covers 84 acres of battlefield. The grass-covered terrain of craters and trenches betrays the days of turmoil. Walking through a windering trench was very atmospheric.

Situated at Sheffield Park is the unusual red brick memorial to the Accrington Pals and a plaque dedicated to the Barnsley Pals. John found a bullet, which he inspected, and then he preceded to remove the candle – which resembled lengths of fine yellow string.

The Ulster Tower has a memorial chapel on the ground floor. On 1st July 1916 the Ulsterers took five lines of German Trenches but were unsupported and fourteen hours later they were back where they started.

At Thiepval the names of 73,000 men who have no known graves are listed. In Courcellette Civil Cemetery we found a grave dedicated to Frank A. Haywood who was employed as a gardener by the Imperial War Graves Commission.

We concluded our tour at the Devon Cemetery where Rob gave a vote of thanks to John – he really was an excellent guide and his input was much appreciated by us all.

On Friday we were on our own! We visited Arras where Hugh, our very capable driver, found the grave of his grandfather. John discussed the memories we had of our trip. His body was preserved and now resides in the Bristol Museum – preserving happy memories for us all.

Barbara Connell

The mood at our table for our last meal was hardly happy as we discussed the memories we had of our trip. Our return journey on Saturday via the shuttle was quick and hassle free. We all felt the trip was a great experience and one we would not have missed. Thanks to all who organized, arranged and participated!

Barbara Connell

Our Somme Visit 2010
Report by Barbara Connell

The Battle of the Somme commenced on the 1st July 1916 and was one of the largest battles of the First World War. By the time fighting had ended in late autumn 1916 more than 1.5 million casualties had been suffered by the forces involved, making it one of the bloodiest military operations ever recorded.

Last year, fourteen Civic Society members toured back to the many memorials in the region, as Barbara reports.

Finally we went to the Canadian Memorial at Vimy Ridge.
CIVIC SOCIETY
PROJECTS
1970 to 2010
See key on page 10

To Preserve the Best
and Improve the Rest

Anniversary 40 Cleave don
Civic Society

Pics by Geoff Hale

www.clevedon-civic-society.org.uk/
This is my ‘diary’ for October 2010 which, apart from the visit to Ettlingen at the beginning of the month, is representative of a typical month’s activities.

Monday, 27 September: Allotments Committee – as Chairman it is important that I am aware and familiar with the Agenda and background information.

Tuesday, 28 September: Transition Clevedon meeting in Council offices – gave apologies, as preparing for trip to Ettlingen.

Wednesday, 29 September: 2.30pm regular monthly meeting of Senior Citizens’ Forum of which I am President, and currently acting Chairman.

6pm Informal Planning meeting with North Somerset Council officer to discuss and define ‘Open Spaces’ in the town, followed by normal Planning Committee at 7.30 pm.

Thursday, 30 September: 5.45am: Arrive Bristol International Airport for the early flight to Amsterdam, then via the early flight to Amsterdam, then via

Stuttgart to Ettlingen to take part in and represent Clevedon Town Council for the 30th Anniversary of Twinning. A very long day travelling.

Friday, 1 October: Morning: Meet up with the rest of the Clevedon party who had travelled by coach. Lunch in the Brewery accompanied by a small glass of their good beer – not bad for someone who doesn’t normally drink beer!

Evening 7pm: Walked to the Town Hall for a brief Reception and to make contact with our hosts. Each member of the Clevedon group was entertained to dinner ‘en famille’ (this arrangement came apparently because they were so impressed with our hospitality here in Clevedon when we entertained them for Sunday Lunch). Tony and I were hosted by the Lord Mayor, Gabriella Bussemayer and her husband, to a delicious traditional dinner together with the Lord Mayor and his wife from Lobau (Ettlingen’s twin from the former East Germany), one of the Eppernay Counsellors and his wife, and also a representative from Menfi in Sicily – Ettlingen’s Italian twin. There were four languages being spoken. But we all managed to communicate somehow.

Saturday, 2 October: 9.30am: A sightseeing Tour of Ettlingen, which included an extensive tour of the Castle.

11am: Brunch at the Kulisse Cinema in Ettlingen for a tour and reception. This cinema has recently formed links with the Curzon and this is proving beneficial.

5pm: A service in St Martin’s Church to mark the Twinning Anniversary. More importantly this also marked the 20th anniversary of reunification of Germany.

7pm: Walk to the Stadhalle for the formal Anniversary celebration, having spent time beforehand finalising speech for the ceremony and presentation. Dinner and entertainment preceded the formal ceremony and speeches during which we were generously presented with a cheque for £2,000 for the Curzon Cinema, and, on behalf of the Chairman of Clevedon Town Council, Linda Knott and I presented gifts of Bristol Blue Glass to Ettlingen, to Eppernay, and to Middelkerke.

Sunday, 3 October: Breakfast early, and then walk to the Schlossgartenhalle for the 20th Anniversary of German re-unionification ceremony. This was a very moving and memorable occasion, and reminded so many of us from Clevedon just how difficult life must have been in a divided Germany where families and friends were separated for so many years.

It would be enormously helpful to see the old sections of house deeds, to somehow.

To begin with, I am tracing as much information about building dates as a Regency resort, from the state of the village before the Enclosure of 1799, until the period just previous to the arrival of our branch railway from Yatton.

To begin with, I am tracing as much information about building dates as possible to the present day. I am starting with the bottom of Lime Kiln Lane which are part of a farm complex dating back to 1742. The farmyard was later developed as Parnell Road, and Staddon’s barn there was the barn for that 1742 farm, owned by a Mr Barber.

Till we saw those deeds, this information was completely untraceable. Even better, when the farm buildings on the Lime Kiln Lane corner had developed, they were featured in the TV programme, Property Ladder, and internal views showed that the rear part of the buildings is actually the old farmhouse. The roof has been raised to allow the insertion of a second storey, using the same methods that occur in a house at 136-8 Old Street, now dated to 1500.

If you are able to help, I would be very glad to trace the history of your house from your deeds, where possible. The house building date has to fall between 1790 and 1845, though! Please ring if you are able to assist or have any help at all the family commitments or indeed social engagements that are part of my normal diary for a month.

The final entry in Carole’s diary reads:

I have enjoyed these many years of service, found the work very interesting and hope I’ve made a positive contribution to the life of our lovely town.
The new Grand Pier is certainly the best pier in the world and who would argue with that? All Saints’ was built by Dame Rhoda Elton and consecrated on All Saints’ Day, 1st November 1860. The church cost £2500 to build and she paid for it with her own money. She came from the wealthy Willis family of the Isle of Wight and the family of her first husband, James Baird, founded a successful firm of engineers and iron manufacturers working in St Petersburg, Sir Arthur Elton, 7th baronet, her second husband, gave the land and paid for the vicarage and between them they endowed the living. The only church in the lower town in those days was St Andrew’s, remotely situated at the other end of the town. It has always been said that Dame Rhoda wanted to save the people of East Clevedon, many of whom would have been tenants or employees of the family, the long and arduous walk on Sundays. According to the Bristol Times for 3rd November 1860, the building was originally known as Lady Elton’s Chapel, so this seems a credible claim.

The church acquired more glass and fittings. In 1876 a fine brass lectern was given and in 1877 the rose window at the west end was filled with stained glass. At some point a slender wrought-iron screen in the chancel arch appeared.

The church was always on the catholic end of the Anglican spectrum, a position confirmed by the first incumbent, the learned Stephen Henry Saxby FRS, who was also a world authority on astronomy. Saxby was succeeded in 1886 by the disastrous Revd John Vicars Foote. A difficult and irascible man, he sued his curate, who was supported by the Eltons. When he lost the case he promptly sued the Eltons, his patrons, and lost again. In November 1898, after several unhappy and controversial years, he issued the choir and church orchestra with brass knuckledusters in case of disturbances by the Kensitites, an extreme protestant sect. The Bishop clearly disapproved and Foote resigned the living almost immediately. His place was taken in 1899 by the legendary Father Francis Forrester Irving, who restored peace and a fine Baptistery. However, it was his relationship with Ninian Comper from 1915 that finally transformed the building. Comper designed a new screen and magnificent reredos as well as some outstanding glass, including the Jesse Angelus window in the Lady Chapel, both designed by Charles Francis Forrester Irving. The church acquired more glass and fittings. In 1876 a fine brass lectern was given and in 1877 the rose window at the west end was filled with stained glass. At some point a slender wrought-iron screen in the chancel arch appeared.

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Alfred Bond Trestrail was born on 5 February 1849 at Mitcham Common, Surrey, and was educated at Mill Hill and Amersham Hall Schools. Later he attended the Royal College of Chemistry and the Royal School of Mines. By 1885 Trestrail was a resident of Clevedon, living in Albert Road, and was gazetted as a Lieutenant in the 1st Gloucestershire Volunteer Artillery.

He joined the No. 9 Battery, 1st Gloucestershire (Gloucester & Somerset) Artillery Volunteer Corps in Clevedon, which had been raised in 1860 by Sir Arthur Hallam Elton of Clevedon Court; the unit was also known as the 1st Somerset or Clevedon Artillery Volunteers. They manned two 64 pounder guns mounted on Wain's Hill and from there used to shoot at a target moored in the bay. Their Drill Hall, built in 1863, was in Albert Road, only a few minutes’ walk from the Trestrail residence. Nearby was a carbine range. In 1883 the command of the unit was taken over by Captain Sir Edmund Harry Elton, Bart. On 27 November 1891 Trestrail was gazetted Captain and officially took over command of No. 9 Battery. In 1900 he was made Hon. Major and on the 12 September 1905 received the Volunteer Decoration. As well as in his business and military duties Major Trestrail was a very active man in public life. He was a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, a member of the Geological Association, the Hon. Secretary of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Clevedon District), a member of the Clevedon District Council, Vice President of the Weston-super-Mare Division of the Liberal Association and a Justice of the Peace. At an age when many men retire he became Commandant of the Clevedon Ladies Voluntary Aid Detachment and served throughout the Great War as Commandant of the V.A.D Red Cross Hospital, Oakland’s, here in Clevedon. It was for these later services that he was created a Member of the British Empire in the New Year Honours of 1919.

Percy J. Bartlett was a Chemist at No. 1 Selwood House, The Triangle, 1863. He was a fellow of the Royal Society, a member of the Geological Association, the Hon. Secretary of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Clevedon District), a member of the Clevedon District Council, Vice President of the Weston-super-Mare Division of the Liberal Association and a Justice of the Peace. At an age when many men retire he became Commandant of the Clevedon Ladies Voluntary Aid Detachment and served throughout the Great War as Commandant of the V.A.D Red Cross Hospital, Oakland’s, here in Clevedon. It was for these later services that he was created a Member of the British Empire in the New Year Honours of 1919.

The majestic Monterey Pine standing at the junction of Princes and Linden Roads must be among Clevedon's best known landmark trees. It received a Tree Protection Order in August 1980 and the last work done on it was the lopping of the lowest branch overhanging the road junction, following North Somerset Council consent in September 1981. The first Monterey Pine (Pinus radiata) was brought to Britain from the central Californian coast in 1833 by botanist and plant collector David Douglas. Because of its rapid growth and excellent timber and pulp qualities, the following decades saw this pine widely planted around the world in areas with a Mediterranean climate. The Monterey Pine is now the most extensively planted pine in the world – over 90%, or three million acres, of New Zealand’s plantation forests are of this species.

Naturally thriving in cool, foggy conditions, the Monterey Pine is at home in the South West of England and, being salt and wind tolerant – although somewhat frost tender - provides an effective barrier against sea winds. In exposed localities, it develops a wind-swept, picturesque shape.

Nineteen thirty-one Monterey Pines, planted in the mid 1980s as part of a shelter belt, can be seen along Clevedon’s Blind Yeo riverbank near Yeolands Drive. The tallest are now approaching 40 feet.

Young trees can grow up to 6 feet a year. Mature trees may reach their full height of 120 feet in 40 years or so and have an average life span of 80 to 90 years.

The Monterey Pine has needles grouped in threes, but perhaps its most fascinating feature is its cones. It is one of a very small group of so-called ‘closed-cone pines’ in which the mature female cones remain sealed with resin and attached to the branches, often for many years, only to open in conditions of extreme heat. This is thought to be an adaption to forest fires in its native habitat, where the fire’s heat sweeping through the crowns of the trees causes the resin seal to melt, allowing the cones to open and the dispersed seed to re-colonise the burnt site.

One hot day last June I was exploring the southern coastal path in Cornwall when I came across the remains of some Monterey Pines recently felled by the National Trust. I was intrigued by the fact but distinct cracking sounds - the now totally exposed mature cones split open in the scorching sunshine.

A message from Joe Norman (Chairman, MARLENS)

We are enthusiastic for Clevedon Marine Lake, determined to ensure that this seafront jewel is kept in service and used for the benefit of people in Clevedon and North Somerset.

Our vision is of Clevedon Marine Lake & the adjoining Salthease Fields as a water & waterside playground for the district - a continuously and safely available resource for schools, youth groups, clubs, families, residents & visitors.

Our main public events last year were the Aquathlon (swim and run race) on 23 July, the Marine Lake Festival over the weekend 18-19 September and the illuminated night sail of model boats on Saturday 4 December.

North Somerset is preparing a new “Management Plan” for Clevedon sea front this year. MARLENS will lobby for the Marine Lake to be repaired and improved and try to ensure that the needs and ideas of all Marine Lake users are taken into account.

It is important for a campaigning organisation like MARLENS to have members, so if you agree with MARLENS' aims, please join us. There is a membership form on our web site:

www.marlen.org.uk/

or contact Joe Norman 01275 877180
by Jusben (Derek Lilly)

Two swans on the Blind Yeo early one misty morning

Early Morning in Clevedon, taken from the motorway bridge in Court Lane with Tickenham Church just showing in the mist

More of Derek’s photographs can be found at www.morguefile.com. Just type in ‘Clevedon’ and look for ‘jusben’.

Tuesdays in Clevedon by Shirley Beale