

The Clevedonian

Spring 2011



In this edition

- Page 1
Farewell Mr Chairman
- Page 2 & 3
Group Reports
- Page 4
Coming Shortly
Notice Board
- Page 5
Speakers' Corner
- Page 6
Speakers' Corner
Clevedon Mercury - RIP
- Page 7
East Clevedon - Early Stirrings
- Page 8
The Boot Factory
What's in a Name?
- Page 9
Branch Line
News from the Land Yeo Friends
- Page 10 & 11
Kew Visit - the Photographs
- Page 12
BBC Clevedon
- Page 13
Curzon Refurbishment
- Page 14
Woodcutters for Wildlife
- Page 15
Clevedon Archaeological Society
- Page 16
Postcard from Clevedon
Military Chest
- Page 17
Collectors' Lot
The 1841 Census
- Page 18
Tyntesfield American Hospital
- Page 19
Society Publications
Clevedon Pilot Gig Club
- Page 20
Members' Photograph Gallery
Cartoon Corner

The views expressed are those of the authors, and may or may not represent those of the Society.

www.clevedon-civic-society.org.uk/

FAREWELL MR CHAIRMAN

After four years as our chairman Rob Campbell is handing over his gavel.
So this is his last 'Piece!' We wish him and Norma well.

Time seems to move faster as we get older and the last four years have certainly gone by very rapidly for me. I initially said that I would do a term of three years as Chairman and that sort of merged into four. During that time we have gone from strength to strength and managed to achieve a number of our goals. The work done on Pier Copse has been admired by all, our DVD had people rushing to the shops to make a purchase and two new books have greatly added to our library of publications. The Website has been completely updated thanks to Mike Wheatley and the Newsletter has undergone a series of changes thanks to Derek Lilly & Geoff Hale.

We celebrated our 40th Anniversary in style at the Walton Park Hotel and of course the general day to day affairs of the Society have continued to keep us busy. Of late we have been working alongside North Somerset Council in their bid for Lottery funding to aid the regeneration of the whole of the seafront area from Wains Hill to the Pier. Let's hope we are successful!

As this is my last newsletter report as Chairman I would like to take the opportunity to thank the members of the Executive for their dedication



and expertise, especially Wendy our Secretary and Iris our Treasurer for their support. I would also like to thank all Society members for being such a friendly, willing and supportive bunch. You have all made these last four years very memorable and enjoyable for me. I am now looking forward to supporting our next chairman as we move into the next period of the Society's future.

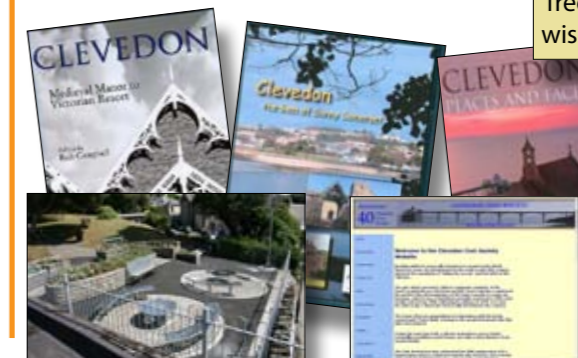
Of course you cannot get rid of me quite so easily! I shall continue to chair the History Group and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at those meetings. I've always said that if the topic of the talk is of interest to you then just come along!

Rob Campbell

I should like to thank Rob Campbell for his dedicated work over the past four years.
Bryan Osborne (Planning Group)

On behalf of the Footpaths Group, Rob, I would like to thank you for all the hard work you have put into the Society. We hope to see you and Norma on some of our walks, taking advantage of all the 'free time' you will now have!! Very best wishes from us all, Jean.

The Environment Group thanks Rob for all his hard work as Chairman of the Society and for his support of the Group's projects. The Society's 40th Anniversary year was a great success thanks to Rob's contribution





Environment Group

Report by Bob Hardcastle (Tel. 871633)

As you may have read the Civic Society has been involved in helping North Somerset Council with their bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant from the "Parks for People" fund to enhance Clevedon's sea front.

The seafront area, called Clevedon's Promenade Park, runs from Pier Copse to Wain's Hill taking in all the main features such as the Bandstand, the Marine Lake, Salthouse Fields and Poets Walk.

Next meetings
13 July, 14 September
and 16 November 2011

North Somerset Council hopes to hear by mid-summer that this Phase 1 application has been successful. If so then the detailed work on the proposals will start, including a public participation exercise, to enable the detailed Phase 2 application to be submitted for approval prior to the release of funding.

The Local History Group helped in writing the section on the historic background to the seafront area and the Environment Group provided suggestions for the enhancement of



parts of the proposed park.

Let's hope that the bid is successful and that the seafront can have a much needed "facelift"!

Other activities have included the Big Litter Pick in April, which involved the other Groups, and our monthly working parties. We would be grateful for any help with these working parties which usually involve some sweeping, litter picking and light pruning on a Monday morning for about an hour and a half. Anyone interested please contact me.

GROUP

REPORTS

Conservation & Planning Group

Report by Bryan Osborne



The first quarter of the year has been an active one for the Group, there being three major developments to consider, and I believe we have made some worthwhile contributions to benefit the final planning applications.

Firstly, the long awaited development of the Royal Pier Hotel site at last seems likely to go ahead.

The Group members met Nick Warfield of Freemantle Developments, a Bristol Company, with his Architect, Robert O'Leary, to discuss their proposals for seventeen apartments. Following our meetings and amendments discussed



Proposed visitor's centre at the Pier

its long term future, as we were aware that any work on the Grade I Listed Structure has a whole set of problems. The Trustees need to see a substantial increase in their income for them to continue their trusteeship of the Pier and we considered that the proposal, sensitively handled, and approved by English Heritage, provides the way forward, avoiding the danger of the Pier being returned into the control of North Somerset District Council, the owners.

Thirdly, with the proposal to build a new Community Hospital on the old Kwik Save site in Millcross in the

working drawing stage, the NHS is seeking to realise the maximum potential from the existing Cottage Hospital site once the new hospital has opened. We were concerned that no part of the existing building would be retained in the initial outline application and we

an old barn which was part of Highdale Farm. The hospital was built by Sir Arthur Elton for the benefit of the townsfolk of Clevedon and opened in 1875. After a further heritage study was undertaken the NHS amended their plans to incorporate two residential units in the old building and this has been approved.

We are relieved to see the old Market Hall in Alexandra Road, designed by Hans Price, being restored sensitively to retain the external detailing, and the health club should be back in business soon.

Since the last newsletter, concern has been expressed over the condition and safety aspects of the front elevation of the Regent Hotel and whilst some work has been carried out to remove loose stonework the cause of the local problem has not been addressed. The Area Building Control Officer is aware of the problem, but the owner is not responding to rectify matters. We shall be keeping a watch on this dilapidated building.



Footpaths Group

Report by Jean Hannaford

On a very cold morning in mid-December 2010 thirteen members of the Footpaths Group set off for Berkeley in Gloucestershire for a historical town walk.

with smallpox, and then on to the Church of St Mary the Virgin. The fascinating churchyard revealed a number of interesting facts. The bell tower is separate from the Church and various



archaeological digs have been carried out to try and discover the reason why. Intriguing tombs came to light including that of a jester and also a clockmaker called Thomas Pearce whose ancestors

recent years a conservation group has been set up to protect the area. Many of the wrecks have almost disappeared under the mud, but all have been clearly labelled with their age, type of vessel, place of construction and date of beaching.

From the banks of the Estuary we found a way up onto the Sharpness Canal to be greeted with the sound of a narrow boat breaking the ice as it motored along, proof of the extreme temperatures! Having negotiated the towpath several members of the group went in search of a late hot lunch on the return journey home.

We find our occasional far reaching walks a pleasant change from walking locally. This does not, however, detract from our important forays within Clevedon.

became town mayors. Both these date back to the latter half of the 17th century. We also found evidence of musket holes in the west door of the Church, simple sundials and barricade holes to block the way from the Church to the castle.

After further house-watching and coffee and tea-cakes at the Berkley Arms Hotel we drove on to Purton to walk along the Severn Estuary to view the wrecks of huge barges which had been deliberately beached in the 50s and 60s to prevent the bank eroding too quickly. This part of the walk was prompted by a talk given to the Society approximately two years ago. In



On leaving the car park we walked along the main street towards the entrance to the Castle grounds. En route a number of interesting houses and shop fronts could be seen including the original Police Station and Court Room, now being used as a residential home for the elderly.

The Castle was closed for the winter but it was still possible to appreciate its beautiful surroundings and the countryside in which it stands. We then walked back towards the town and into a built up area close to the actual Castle building. We passed by the Jenner Museum and home of Edward Jenner, most famous for his work in connection

Next meetings
6 June & 5 September 2011

with the planners the application was submitted and happily this has now been approved. Subject to financial conditions being favourable, work should commence in October.

Secondly, the proposed café, toilets and meeting room on the Pier Approach has also been approved and is closely linked to the work on the Royal Pier Hotel. We met the Trustees to discuss their aims and proposals for the Pier to secure

suggested the Conservation Officer should consider the retention of the oldest parts of the building, which are of local historical interest, being a conversion of

Next meetings
24 May, 5 July, 16 August, 27 September
and 1 November 2011



2011 is moving on apace, spring is well and truly here and we have had three marvelous meetings to start the year.

In January, Roy Girling got the year off to a good start with his recitations 'Normans & Saxons & Such'. Roy stated that he had learnt them from his father when he was about 11 or 12. Seventy or so years later we were all amazed that he kept us completely enthralled and amused without the aid of any notes. Jane DeGracy from the Somerset Heritage Centre gave an interesting talk on the Poor Law in February and Professor June Hannam was so knowledgeable on the Suffragettes of Batheaston and the Bristol area, it made



one think that it should be mandatory to vote!

In May 2012 the History Group will celebrate its own 40th Anniversary,

Local History Group

Report by Rob Campbell (Tel. 877038)



having been formed two years after the Society was founded. We shall not let the opportunity go without laying on some form of event. Jane Lilly, who is a founder member, and I have put our heads together and discussed ideas and of course we would love to hear from members who would like to help make a Saturday in May 2012 a memorable one for the group, the Society as a whole and the town.

Presented by Nigel Coombes

History Group - 19 May 2011
The Group Members' Own




An evening of contributions from members of the various groups that make up the History Group.

History Group - 16 June 2011
Magic Lantern - Fred Wetherley Keith Uttridge




Frederic Weatherly was an English lawyer. He also wrote the lyrics to at least 3,000 popular songs, among which the best-known are the ballads *Danny Boy* and *Roses of Picardy*. Keith and his team return to entertain us as they did at the 40th anniversary dinner.

History Group - 21 July 2011
Clevedon Scrapbook Jane & Derek Lilly




With intriguing local subjects like 'The Two Skulls' and 'The Escaped Bear', who could miss this mysterious talk by two of our own members?

Civic Society - 8 September 2011
Cheddar Cheese John Page




Famous throughout the world, Cheddar cheese has not always been a mass produced 'fast' food. The origins of cheese generally, and of Cheddar cheese in particular, are both discussed, showing how important they were to our ancestors.

History Group - 15 September 2011
Somerset Tsunami Prof. Simon Haslett




Prof. Haslett is Professor of Physical Geography at the University of Wales. He has written and broadcasted extensively about the 1607 Great Storm in the Bristol Channel area.

Civic Society - 13 October 2011
Police Air Operations Inspector Barry Thomas



The Western Counties' police helicopter is used for a variety of operational work from helping to apprehend offenders to conveying injured people to hospital.

History Group - 20 October 2011
The Mapping of Somerset Chris & Joe King




Many copies of historic maps will be on display during this evening.

Civic Society - 10 November 2011
To Follow the Plough Les Davies



Les has been working on the Mendip Hills for over 17 years. He has a rural background, and has worked in the countryside his whole life.

History Group - 17 November 2011
All Saints' Church, Clevedon Julia Elton



Our President, Julia Elton, tells the story of All Saints' Church which was built by her family 150 years ago.

Nostalgia was the order of the evening, particularly for the few members of his audience whose memories were stirred by Nigel Coombes' colourful presentation of these delightful pleasure steamers. He told us that it was the collapse of the Clyde passenger ship trade in the 1880s which brought Peter and Alec Campbell to the Bristol Channel with their chartered steamer, the Waverley. He hastened to point out that this wasn't the Waverley that today

calls at our pier for a month in early summer. So successful was this venture that, at the commencement of WW2, Campbells had 14 steamers moored up along Hotwells wharf in Bristol. But not for long - in 1940 many of these ships were commandeered for use in the Dunkirk evacuation during which it is reckoned that 6000 troops were rescued by the Campbell steamers. Being flat bottomed, these paddle steamers also proved to be ideal for minesweeping duties. After retelling many mariners' tales, including the one about the grounding of Glen Usk on the Horseshoe



PS Bristol Queen



PS Waverley

bend in the River Avon, Nigel Coombes went on to tell the meeting about the collapse of the White Funnel Fleet and the emergence of the Paddle Steamer Preservation Society which now runs the present day PS Waverley and the Bristol based MV Balmoral.

Geoff Hale (13 January 2011)

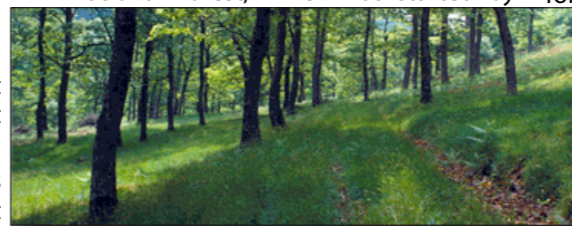
Keeping Woodland Alive

Presented by Jerry Dicker

Jerry Dicker, a retired teacher with a special interest in trees, is actively involved in the Woodland Trust as a voluntary speaker. In his well illustrated and often very amusing lecture Mr Dicker explained that the main aims of the Woodland Trust include the protection of wildlife, the creation of new native woods and the conservation of ancient woodlands. He stressed that Trust owned woodlands are always open to the public as a source of enjoyment and inspiration.

woodland, the amount of native and semi natural woodland has progressively declined. After World War II, large areas of ancient woodland were cut down and replanted with quick yielding conifers, replacing a rich and diverse habitat with a monoculture. Today, the UK is one of the least wooded countries in the world - the total area standing at 8½%. Mr Dicker described the Woodland Trust's programme to replant ancient woodland sites. He cited as examples the National Forest, which was started by

The Woodland Trust was founded in 1972 by Devonshire farmer Kenneth Watkins, who was concerned about the amount of woodland being cut down in his local area. Over the years, with no enforcements for landowners to keep ancient



the Woodland Trust from derelict land, and Wentford Forest, where ancient species are being encouraged to replace conifers in a gradual natural process.

Because the distribution of existing native woodland sites is fragmented, some wildlife species - such as the dormouse, which never travels on the ground - have difficulty to spread beyond their woodland boundaries. Because of isolation of population, certain flowering plants, such as the wood anemone, are indicators of ancient woodland.

Mr Dicker emphasised the importance of diversity in woodlands - the need for trees of different types and ages to support a wide range of wildlife. He mentioned too the importance of woodland banks and edges as habitats.

Angela Slotte (10 February 2011)

Overpaid, Oversexed and Over There

Presented by Prof. Chris Holloway

With a title like that there was sure to be a large audience at St Andrew's Centre on 10th March for this public meeting talk by Chris Holloway. Chris described with an appropriate mix of droll humour, startling insight and appropriate, if frequently dry-witted, reverence his extraordinary time in the mid-1950s' United States Army. For a British subject to have taken an oath of allegiance to the US Army which could, in theory, have lead to his having to take arms against his own country was astonishing enough. But the way Chris described his induction, basic training, more advanced military education and subsequent role as a jeep driving mail clerk at an American army base in Germany just served to confirm this

writer's opinion of the USA military as garnered from TV's Rowan and Martin's Laugh-in and MASH*!!

Chris's talk could have been termed "A life with Eccentrics" if the descriptions of the characters he met during his tour of duties were to be believed. Rosie Grier,



a 300lbs doyen of The New York Giants football team was one, George the Greek another, whilst both Gwyneth Fillingame and Squeaky Putnam had names that only the United States could create! And then there was Elvis [Presley], Bob [Dylan] and Joan [Baez], all of whom featured in Chris's time in the army in Germany or whilst living in Greenwich Village, New York shortly after Chris's two year tour of duty ended but prior to his return to England.

All in all a splendid talk for which Chris required no payment - preferring, instead, to offer for sale copies of his book of experiences and upon which the talk was based. "Overpaid, Oversexed and Over There" does indeed make for an excellent read, bringing yet further texture to a fascinating story.

Hugh Stebbing (10 March 2011)

NOTICE BOARD

Note:
All members of the Civic Society are welcome to attend our Group Meetings. Please contact the group chairmen for the location of the meeting places.

Note:
A full colour version of *The Clevedonian* can be found on the Society's web site at: www.clevedon-civic-society.org.uk/

If you have any interesting information concerning the Civic Society or aspects of our work in Clevedon please send it in. We are always pleased to get contributions from our members. Your photographs, from both digital and film cameras, will be most welcome.

Please send copy for the Autumn 2011 edition by: 16 October

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SPEAKERS' CORNER

Heritage Protection in Mendip

Presented by David Clark

David Clark is Conservation Manager at Mendip Council and he leads a small team charged with providing advice to the owners of historic buildings in their area. No project seems to be too trivial for David and his team to undertake, from the renovation of a

humble run-down shop that had fallen on hard times to the development of the visitor centre at Wells Cathedral.

In the first half of his lecture he described some of the larger projects he has been involved in, including work on renovating HM prison at Shepton Mallet, which at 400 years old is the oldest continuously used prison in the UK.

After coffee David Clark informed us of some of the smaller projects he has worked on during his 11 years with Mendip Council, including the renovation of 3b Cork Street, Frome, Lamberts Farm, near Pilton and the saving of the Malthouse in Norton St Philips which had been neglected for many years.

It was clear from some of David's dramatic descriptions that the job of Conservation Manager isn't without its hazardous moments, such as the time he discovered a man living alone with 17 cats, the time that he found himself

walking on the flattened remains of a Morris Minor car and the very memorable occasion when he was about to step into a hidden tank of farmyard slurry!

Geoff Hale (14 April 2011)



3b Cork Street - Before



3b Cork Street - After

THE CLEVEDON MERCURY - RIP

Clevedon's first local newspaper was the *Clevedon Courier*; it was first published on May 5, 1860 by Charles J. Dare from his home at 2 Windsor Place, Clevedon Triangle. It consisted of six pages of national news printed in London and two pages of local news and advertisements; it sold for just one and a half old pennies (1p).

The first *Clevedon Mercury* appeared on 24 January, 1863 and was produced by a young 17 year old entrepreneur called George James Caple from a building in Copse Road. Later he wrote about that first edition, 'I was about 17 years of age, with little experience, but I fought hard, and was a proud young man on that auspicious Saturday morning when I read my name on the head of the paper and felt myself to be a full-fledged proprietor, editor, reporter, compositor, pressman and printer's devil.'

A year later George Caple bought out his rival, the *Clevedon Courier*, and

continued to produce his *Clevedon Mercury* for a further 21 years. After a brief stay in a house in Woodlands Road he moved production to a purpose-built office in Alexandra Road and installed a new printing press.

Caple was said to be a character and an individualist, and had a great sense of humour. He used his paper to campaign for improvements in the town and was in some way responsible for its piped water, the market hall, the seafront amenities, hotels, and the construction of the pier in Clevedon.

In 1885 Caple sold out to the first of a succession of new owners. In 1894 the paper's headquarters were moved to

Thursday, February 10, 2011 saw the publication of the last local paper in Clevedon with the word 'Mercury' in the title. In future we will have to welcome the newspaper clevedonpeople.co.uk as our source of local news. This event made us search the archives for the origins of our much loved newspaper.

another purpose-built building in Six Ways where they remained for over half a century. The final resting place of the *Clevedon Mercury* in its home town was in the old Public Hall in Albert Road where it remained until 2009 when production of the paper moved into the Bristol offices of the current owners of the publication - the Daily Mail and General Trust.



January 3, 1863



February 17, 2011



February 10, 2011

EAST CLEVEDON - THE EARLY STIRRINGS

Part One

Research by Jane Lilly

In this, the first of two articles, local historian and Society member Jane Lilly takes us through the history of East Clevedon.



East Clevedon Triangle



Old Street Smithy



Clevedon's Oldest House

Although the market granted to Edmund de Clyvedon in 1342 was held at The Triangle in the centre of the old Village, East Clevedon Triangle seems to have been the focus of a great many of the main activities in the early days of the town's development.

Clevedon's oldest pub is the Old Inn in Walton Road - the New Inn was nearby in Old Street, only 10 years younger, being licensed in 1764. Here, those travelling through Clevedon via Walton Road, Old Street and Kenn Road would have had the chance of refreshment and respite from the rough, dusty roads. There were also beer-houses, one being at 5 East Clevedon Triangle in the 1830s. Travel

was largely by horse, and the oldest smithy was where the Health Centre now stands. As the population expanded and visitor numbers increased, another smithy was built on the junction of

Old Street and The Triangle around 1800, as well as a third in the Walton Road in the 1840s. Nowadays, main roads are punctuated with petrol stations, but in historical times, smithies were a reliable sign of plentiful traffic.

In Old Street is our oldest house, dating from 1500, now numbers 136-8. There is still soot on the three old trusses that support the roof, evidence of the days when the fire was in the middle of the floor. Old Street is our only street due to the fact that it had the biggest concentration of houses - a road led somewhere, but a street had houses in it.

Stonebridge, which once led from Walton Road to the Tickenham Road, tells us by its name that the

area was on fairly soft and wet ground. The large field opposite was called Well Paddock, another indication of this. Most of the fields in the Manor had been drained by 1321 and are mentioned in a Roll recording three Courts Baron of that date. At this time, there was still a large stretch of wetland used as a shared common with Nailsea and Tickenham. Each village had an allocation of animals that could be put onto the common, and on a regular basis the animals were cleared and checked, to see that no one village was exceeding its share. Near the Calvary in Walton Road was the enclosure where straying animals were impounded. These could be reclaimed on payment of a fine.

In 1799, the old common land was enclosed and farms were allocated fields there. The verges were also enclosed and divided into new building plots along all the roads then extant. These were soon filled with cottages to satisfy the expanding population. The Elton family established new plots for speculative building along the boundary of their Old Park (now Dial Hill), and with investment from local builders the development of the Hill began.



The Old Inn



The New Inn

Stop Press:

Jane is hosting an exhibition at the Clevedon Library starting on Saturday 14 May 2011 for two weeks.

It will describe the beginnings of Regency Clevedon with a history of Prospect House in Highdale Road, as well as the development of Old Street's Regency area, built on land from John Hollyman's farm at the bottom of Limekiln Lane.

Jane Lilly

THE BOOT FACTORY

Research and Photographs by Derek Lilly

In 1897 Mr J H Woodington, the owner of several boot factories in Bristol, decided to open a branch factory in Clevedon. The factory building was finally demolished last December. Derek has been looking into its history.

In the late 19th century the only business in Clevedon employing a large number of workers was the brick works in the lower Stroud of the growing town. So Mr Woodington's decision was not greeted with great enthusiasm by some of the folks who lived at the top of the town – probably because the lack of employment for large numbers meant there was a reservoir of workers for the menial jobs in Clevedon. However Mr Woodington persisted and took over a complete field, tithe map number 545 called Upper Stroud. Here he had built his factory and a terrace of houses for the operators that he brought down from various units in Bristol. His works' manager – in fact his brother-in-law – a Mr Pollinger, had a larger house at the south end of the terrace. Woodington had intended to build another terrace behind the first one and it shows on the planning application. But the requests for work, and the training of new people went well; he decided he would not need to bring more people down from Bristol,

so he turned the space behind the terrace into allotments.

It was not very long after the works were built that the success of his idea required an extension of the building, which showed in a new bay added at the east side of the place. By the turn of the century he and his family were living in Sunhill, Princes Road. He went down to the factory in the Stroud every day rather than travel to his other places in Bristol. Many of the contracts that kept the place busy came from making supplies for the forces. When he died just after the start of the 39-45 war his wife took over the running. She died during the war years and the factory was kept going until after the war ended. A nephew took on the factories with a partner but unfortunately the fortunes had changed and business slumped although great efforts were made to keep the places profitable. The loss of the Mardyke works in Bristol that suffered bomb damage and was wiped out was possibly a key to this situation. There they specialised in heel making to supply the four other places in Bristol



and Clevedon. The offer to take up the chance of fabricating moulded sole shoes was also missed. That was given instead to Britons, and the celebrated Tuff shoes and boots was the result. The business went into decline and all of the factories were shut down.

As a consequence the building had many other uses over the years and the latest occupants are SKF, a specialist firm making bearings. The building by now was well over 100 years old and beginning to suffer the 'pangs of age'. When one of the roof beam sections collapsed a survey was carried out. It was decided that the cost of repair would be too great to be commercially viable and the old factory buildings were demolished.

Derek Lilly



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Where do the street names in Clevedon come from?



George Weare Braikenridge

In 1839 he donated £850 towards the cost of building Christ Church and £1,000 for an endowment.

Rev G. W. Braikenridge

Son of the above benefactor of Christ Church and its first incumbent.



Rev C. Marson

Vicar of Clevedon from 1871 till his death in 1895. The road was built on the land of the old Clevedon Vicarage where Marson had lived.

His son is the subject of a book reviewed on page 15 of this edition of *The Clevedonian*.

BRANCH LINE

by Angela Slotte



ferns and the flowering plants. Its extraordinary method of reproduction (having motile sperms) places its nearest living relatives as the cycads. It also shares characteristics with the conifers, being a *gymnosperm* (having seeds not enclosed in a true fruit).

Besides being well known for its (disputable) properties as a memory and concentration enhancer, the curious and beautiful **Ginkgo** not only provides a striking focal point in a large garden but also makes an excellent street tree, tolerating pollution and confined soil spaces as well as providing shade.

A number of mature Ginkgo trees can be found in Clevedon gardens, including fine examples in Albert Road, Princes Road and Channel Road. One specimen in a small back garden in Herbert Road stands nearly four stories high.

Ginkgo biloba, also known as the Maidenhair Tree (from the resemblance of its leaves to the leaflets of the Maidenhair Fern), is a truly unique tree, having no close living relatives. Charles Darwin called it a living fossil, a fitting description since it is recognisably related to fossils dating back 250 million years, making it the world's oldest tree species still living. Its ancestors are thought to be the evolutionary link between the

Originating in China, the Ginkgo has been valued and revered for thousands of years by Buddhist monks, who also brought it to their monasteries in Japan. Its name comes from the Chinese *Ginkyo* meaning 'silver apricot', after the fruit-like appearance of its flesh-covered seeds. Today, the Ginkgo is still cultivated in Asia for its edible seeds.

The tree was introduced into Europe in 1730 from Japan by German naturalist and physician Engelbert Kaempfer, who planted his first collection of seeds in the Botanic Garden at Utrecht, Holland, where the oldest - and possibly original - Ginkgoes in Europe are to be found today. It was brought to England later in the 18th Century.

It can grow to heights of more than 30 metres (100 feet), and is extremely long lived.



Some trees in China are said to be over 2000 years old.

The Ginkgo is a deciduous tree, and the bright green leaves of summer turn an eye-catching gold for a brief period in autumn before falling. The leaves themselves are unique among seed plants, being fan-shaped, leathery and smooth, with radiating veins.

Ginkgo trees are either male or female, the male tree producing catkin-like cones and the female bearing ovules that are produced in pairs on long stalks (photograph). Below the Ginkgo in Wellington Terrace last autumn I discovered a number of fallen, half inch long Ginkgo seeds, contained in their yellowish fleshy layer. This was starting to rot and I can confirm the reputed smell of rancid butter, or worse! I am now eagerly awaiting the germination of my first Ginkgo seedling.

NEWS FROM THE LAND YEO FRIENDS

A Progress Report from David Robinson (Chairman LYF)

2011 has already seen considerable improvements to The Land Yeo.

A temporary trash screen has been installed by the council at the mouth of the Queen's Square culvert by the Conservative Club. In spite of its somewhat 'Heath-Robinson' construction this screen has been quite effective in stopping debris entering the culvert. Unfortunately due to its simplicity, an unsightly build up of weed, leaves and assorted litter has resulted. In the new financial year a specially designed, pucker screen is to be installed.

This purpose-built screen will cleverly disguise the build up of trash, and provided that it is cleaned on a regular basis should provide the long awaited answer.

Watch this space!

There has been a small increase in winter levels, though flow through the town has as in previous winters been virtually non-existent.

The Land Yeo Friends have carried out several river cleaning sorties through the town using the new boat, with personnel on the river bank, augmented by Clevedon 2nd Scout Group in their canoes.

At the moment the Environment Agency along with a team of contractors are clearing culverts and removing silt in order to further improve flow through the town.

Earlier in the month (March) the Environment Agency removed a large Willow tree that had rooted in the river bed downstream of the scout hut, and which was restricting flow to the extent of not being able to get a canoe past it. The Friends spent a morning removing branches and roots and litter that had accumulated. Another hazard removed, this time one which could have presented a flood risk to parts of the town.

The change to summer levels, plus the removal of the tree, which resulted in a dam being breached, has led to huge quantities of weed being pushed to the surface with its resultant accompanying trash. The Friends hope to go in and sort out this problem too before the small mammal and bird breeding seasons get under way.

With all these improvements, in years to come we may have a river that we can be proud of.



On Thursday 28 April 44 members visited Kew Gardens and these are just a few of the many photographs taken during the day.

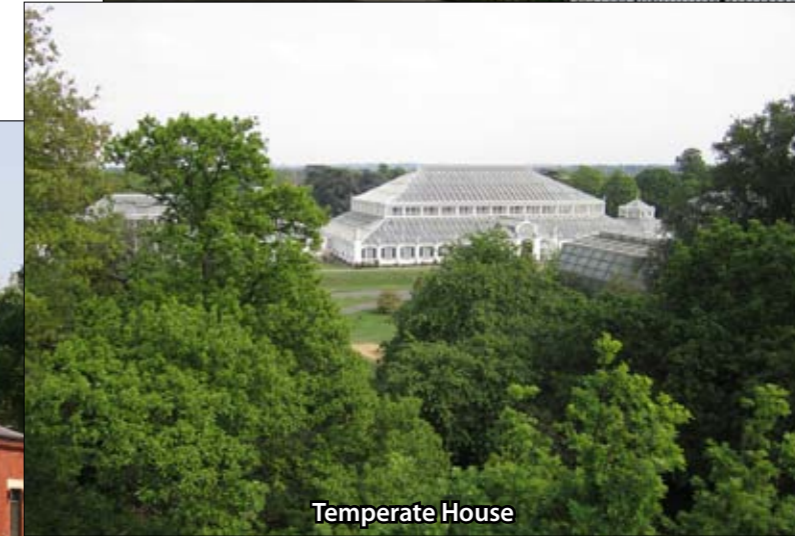
KEW VISIT - THE PHOTOGRAPHS



Palm House



The Marianne North Gallery



Temperate House



Photographs by Geoff Hale & Angela Slotte



Treetop Walkway



Kew Palace



The site comprises a group of buildings and structures occupying a field of approximately 2.75 hectares on the southern outskirts of Clevedon. Access to the site is via a driveway at the southwest corner, which joins Colehouse Lane close to its junction with Strode Road.

The main building, which dates from 1939, is a simple single-storey rectangular block, which is relieved only by a step up in the flat roof level about four metres behind the entrance elevation. Construction is of brick with concrete or stone dressings around the door and window openings, although the windows have been permanently blocked up. The legend "1939" has been moulded into the parapet above the main entrance.

My proposition is that this building has significant heritage value in three particular areas: aesthetic significance, historic interest and rarity. Firstly, I believe the building demonstrates aesthetic significance at a moderate level. Although not a great piece of architecture, it is a notable example of the application of the International Modern style to a modest industrial building.

The design also incorporates some subdued elements of Art Deco, for example the treatment of the main entrance, whilst the planning of the elevations and the site layout owe something to Classicism. This is particularly noticeable in the ceremonial approach formed by the driveway, which leads directly to the main entrance via a formal gateway. The architect of this building is not known, but it is possibly the work of L. Rome Guthrie who designed the larger transmitting station at Brookman's Park, opened in 1929. Guthrie is also credited with the design of the Start Point transmitting station in Devon, which is the exact contemporary of Clevedon. The building has survived

In May 2010 Tom Harper wrote an essay for his Open University Heritage course. It makes the case for the conservation of the Clevedon radio transmitting station as an object of heritage. Here are the salient points.

remarkably intact and is in a good state of repair.

The second value is historic interest, which again I judge to be at the moderate level of significance in local, regional and national contexts. The Clevedon station was one of the final pieces of the network of inter-war radio transmitters (known as the "Regional Scheme") established by the BBC under the direction of P P Eckersley. Opening on 14th June 1939, the station with its relatively powerful 20 kW transmitter began broadcasting on a wavelength of 1474 kHz. Its main purpose was to solve the problem of hitherto poor coverage throughout the region of the "West of England" Home Service, and replaced two low-powered stations at Plymouth and Bournemouth. Thus Clevedon holds an important place as one of a relatively small number of high and medium power radio transmitting stations built in the 1920s and 1930s throughout the country, the last in a chronological line from Brookman's Park (London), through Moorside Edge (North), Westerglen (Scotland), Washford (West) and Start Point. The Clevedon station played its part in the visionary and culturally significant plan to offer listeners a strong, reliable and widely available radio signal together with an improved choice of programmes. The station has operated continuously throughout its existence, and today broadcasts BBC Radio 5 on 909 kHz at 50 kW.

Thirdly we must recognise the rarity value of the Clevedon station, which is exceptional at the local level, high at



the regional level and moderate at the national level. As discussed above, this was one of very few such purpose-built installations constructed in the first half of the twentieth century. When the size of the station is taken into consideration, then its only peer from the same era is its sister site at Start Point. In terms of function, it is unique at the local level, and highly rare at the regional level, being one of only three examples. Having taken an interest in the built environment of North Somerset and its architectural history over a period of 20 years I cannot think of a single comparable surviving industrial building of this period.

In conclusion, I see this humble building as representative of the late flowering of imperial state ambition to promote public good through the expansion of mass media. It scores moderately well in terms of its aesthetic, historic and rare heritage values and is therefore very worthy of protection from insensitive and damaging change. I urge all interested parties and decision makers to take account of the arguments presented here when consulted on any proposed development that would adversely affect this object of heritage.

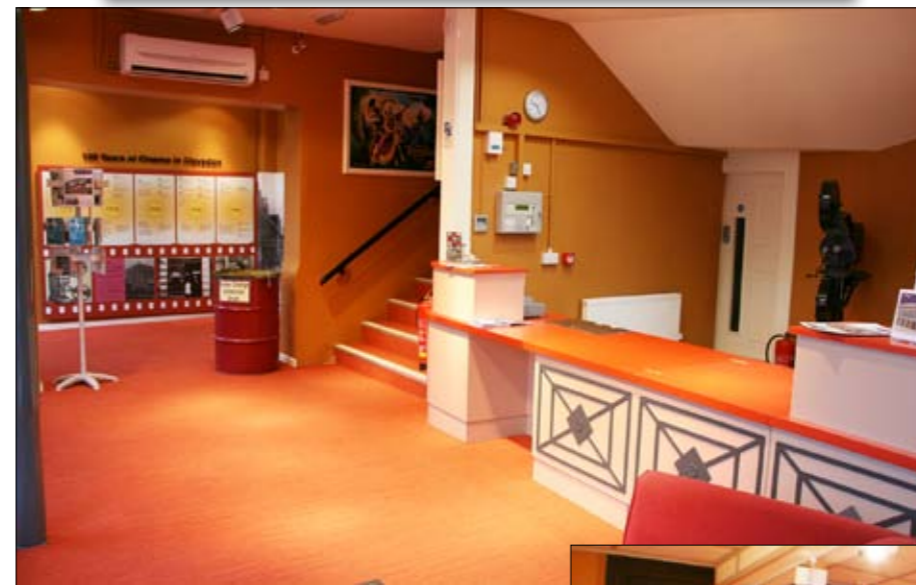
Tom Harper



Hilary is currently the Chair of *The Curzon - Clevedon Community Centre for the Arts*, and has recently been overseeing the refurbishing work being undertaken at the cinema as a result of their successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The recent work has expanded the foyer, opened up the grand staircase, reinstated the first floor Lounge adjacent to the refurbished Oak Room and installed a showcase exhibition in the upper gallery with items from the Curzon Collection of heritage cinema technology and a mini-cinema. Throughout the building, visitors can see information and displays about how cinema as a whole developed over the century, the part it played in society and how the Picture House – the Maxime – and then the Curzon – changed and was part of the social fabric of Clevedon. There is a touch-screen display on the ground floor, summarising the exhibition, with an audio-guide voiced by Tony Robinson.

An important element of the exhibition is the viewing panel on the top floor that shines a light onto the old balcony and the highly decorated tin-panelled



For those of you who have not yet had the chance to see the changes at the Curzon Cinema, now is the time to pay a visit. Newly-refurbished facilities and a fascinating exhibition showing the history of film and cinema from the turn of the 20th century to the present day were fully opened to the public at the beginning of April.

Thanks to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and contributions from many local residents and the Town Council over the years, the Curzon has transformed spaces in the building that have been hidden from view since the mid-1970s. Those were the dark days of cinema, when many picture houses in the country closed through lack of support. The Curzon, as we know, remained open throughout that time – showing films continuously – but had to close off some of its grandest spaces from public view because of the need to save money.



ceiling that still remain closed off. The recent project did not extend to refurbishment of the whole auditorium and removal of the false ceiling. This will be the Curzon's next big task and there is now a strong push for new fundraising efforts to achieve it.

If you would like to help, there are lots of ways you can contribute. For example you can volunteer www.curzon.org.uk/volunteering; you can make a regular donation www.curzon.org.uk/lottery or you can discuss corporate sponsorship with us by contacting Gareth@curzon.org.uk. And if you have memories of the Curzon in past times, you might want to contribute to our memories project by contacting education@curzon.org.

The new facilities and exhibition are open every evening from 6.00pm. You are welcome to come and look round and enjoy a drink in the Oak Room Lounge before the film. The Curzon continues to show its popular and diverse programme of films for all ages and interests. See what's on:

www.curzon.org.uk/whats-on

Hilary Neal

Photographs by Andy Darvill



The Clevedon environmental group Woodcutters for Wildlife was formed in the early 1990s after the Avon Wildlife Trust gave up the management of Clevedon Court Woods as a Nature Reserve.

Four Wildlife Trust members, who had been active volunteers in the Nature Reserve, expressed a wish to continue with the Trust's coppicing programme, and a meeting to discuss possible future action was held at Clevedon Court with Sir Charles Elton, Tim Nicholson (estate agent) and John Gethin (Avon Wildlife Trust director).

Their leader, Fred Quinney, made a formal request for permission to continue coppicing a quarter hectare square each year in Nortons Wood, agreeing that the small group would remain under the control of the Trust, and be led by him. Permission was also requested to sell the felled timber as logs, and this was readily granted by Sir Charles, provided the group liaised with the estate manager.

Using only hand tools – bow saws, axes & loppers - the voluntary group began a yearly coppice programme and the money raised from log sales was sent to the Avon Wildlife Trust. When it was discovered that the Trust was paying 8% VAT on the income a general decision was reached to seek to form an independent group so that income from log sales could be presented as donations (on which no VAT would need to be paid) to the Trust. To open a bank account the group needed to choose a name and so in 1995 Woodcutters for Wildlife came officially into existence. They had hoped to operate as a purely working group but formalities required, besides a bank account, a full committee, a constitution and an AGM, as well as insurance.



Coppicing in Nortons Wood

Report by Fred Quinney



New Wood in Davis Lane

Financed by the Avon Wildlife Trust two of the Woodcutters completed chainsaw & tree felling courses which meant that coppicing work was speeded up and the felling of larger trees could be undertaken. Both men have helped to repay the Trust by using their chainsaws on other nature reserves.

Clevedon Town Council asked Fred Quinney, as local Tree Warden, whether trees could be planted on a plot of ground approached from Brookfield Walk close to the M5 motorway. After some discussion it was agreed to plant 60 cider apple trees in the area, and trees with a Somerset provenance were obtained from Thornhayes Nursery near

Cullompton. As the trees were planted in 2000 the area became known as the Millennium Orchard.

Two years later, Clevedon Town Councillor Michael Adames enquired from the group whether a small wood could be planted on a piece of land owned by the Environment Agency, the condition being that someone would have to maintain the wood for 5 years. The Woodcutters readily agreed to take on the task. After permission had been granted, following discussion with the various interested parties, it was agreed that part of a meadow between Davis Lane and the Blind Yeo, a site of approximately one hectare, would be fenced off and given over for woodland. Advice and funding was obtained from the Environment Agency and other funds were obtained from various groups which allowed a total of 2,500 trees and shrubs to be planted.

Among other projects undertaken by the group have been the management of the woodland behind the Community School and the care of trees on the school campus. In 2004 they helped plant trees on the Clevedon Ring road and have continued their management.

Over the years the Woodcutters for Wildlife have had a fair number of volunteers working with them, with a nucleus of 6-8 regular members.

Fred Quinney

Photographs by Angela Slotte

For over 60 years the Clevedon & District Archaeological Society has been flourishing with between 50 and 70 members, who share their interest in, and love of, archaeology. A past Chairman and Secretary and now President of the Society, Jean Dagnall has written this brief history for us.

The exact date when it all began can only be guessed, as the early Secretary left the area, taking all the Society's records with him! The Society was reconstituted in 1949, with 30 members and a subscription of 5 shillings (25 p) per annum, and it has never looked back since then.

excavated part of a small cemetery (the remains of 8 adults and 3 children) in the foundation trenches of houses being built in Westway, Old Church Road, Clevedon.

There was no dating evidence with the burials but we were lucky enough to



A 1950s dig in the West End of Clevedon

We have always prided ourselves on attracting excellent lecturers, and on taking part in active practical archaeology whenever possible. Until the 1980s active archaeology meant excavations, and we are proud of our past record, participating in many important excavations, as well as initiating several. There were the Mesolithic and Roman sites at Wraxall, the Iron Age Hillfort at Cadbury Congresbury, Roman Gatcombe, and, more recently, in 1978 there was much local interest when we

be awarded a grant by the Lloyds Bank Dating Fund for the radio carbon date of one of the skeletons. The burials were all aligned east/west, and so had been thought to be early Christian, but the date put it firmly in the late Roman period, around 300 AD.

Our last exciting excavation was in a garden on Court Hill in 1988 - this time the burial was of Bronze Age date. We had by this time received another award from the Lloyds Bank Fund for

Independent Archaeologists to buy our own excavating equipment, this being presented at a ceremony in the prestigious premises of the Society of Antiquaries in London.

These were our busy years for excavating, especially as there were so many sites to be investigated prior to, and during, the construction of the M5. Nowadays, intrusive archaeology such as excavating is not politically correct unless for rescue purposes ("much better to leave a site for the more advanced techniques of future generations"), but much can be learnt from Field Walking and Geophysical Surveying. That is why you can see our CLEAT team (Clevedon Environs Archaeology Team) busy in the fields around Clevedon at the weekends.

There is still plenty for the amateur archaeologist to do!

As well as our monthly lectures we have a Summer Programme of visits to places of historical or archaeological interest, and an annual 5 day Study Visit to an area of special interest. As we have done this for over 20 years there is now hardly any part of the country that we have not enjoyed.

The Society has always taken an active part in the archaeology of our region with the Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society and the Council for British Archaeology. We want to spread the interest and fun of archaeology as widely as we can, and we are always glad to welcome any visitors or new members.

Jean Dagnall

Congratulations to Jean on being appointed a **Member of the British Empire** in the Queen's New Year's Honours

A biography of the Revd Charles Marson by David Sutcliffe

THE KEYS OF HEAVEN

This extraordinary clergyman was brought up in Clevedon in the 1870s. He was son of the vicar of St Andrews, whose family lived in the old vicarage near the Triangle. Charles went to Mr Button's school in Elton Rd, thence to Clifton and Oxford. When he worked with Revd Barnett in the Whitechapel slums just prior to the Ripper murders, he became a Christian Socialist, meeting Fabians like GB Shaw and Edith Nesbit.

After three eventful years in South Australia, he spent his final years in Hambridge near Langport where he helped to collect Somerset folk songs with his friend Cecil

Sharp. Using trains and bicycles, they collected from over 400 singers right across the county.

Clevedon was Charles's spiritual home. He sent his children to be educated there and to spend holidays with Miss Sophy Pedder. When his father died in 1895 after 24 years' service, the whole town stopped for the funeral.

This new book by David Sutcliffe draws on 400 of Charles's letters recently discovered in Minehead and is full of local and social history of the late Victorian and Edwardian eras.

£11.99 from Seeley's bookshop or at:

www.charlesmarson.co.uk

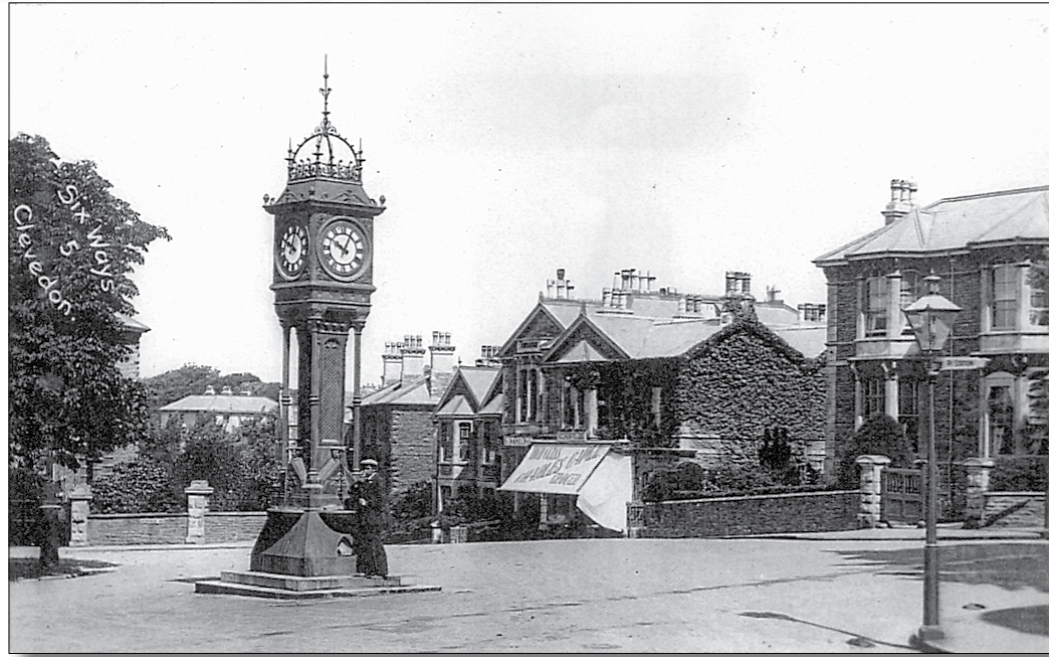


POSTCARD FROM CLEVEDON

Posted by Barbara Connell

The clock at Six Ways was erected to celebrate the coronation of Edward VII on the 9th August 1902. There it remained until WW2 when it was removed in the drive for scrap metal to be used to make armaments for the 'war effort'.

The shop on the right, at the top of Alexandra Road, is Charles Capel's grocery store. It remained a grocer's shop throughout and in the 1970s it became known as Walpoles. In 1980 the entire building was bought by a new owner and he opened the premises as Six Ways Sports.



Farewell! Farewell, dear clock, thou hast tried to do thy duty.
But those in State decree thou art no thing of beauty:
But be thou not dismayed, thy time has not been run,
Who knows, thou might be made into a Tommy gun.

Written by a local poet and first published in the *Clevedon Mercury*, this poem was taken from Jane Lilly's recent book, *Images of Clevedon*.

MILITARY CHEST

Researched by Rob Campbell



Born in Woolwich in 1862 he joined the Army as a Boy Trumpeter in 1877, and rose steadily through the ranks reaching Company SM in 1893 on his transfer as Drill Instructor to the Clevedon Artillery Volunteers. It is interesting to note that he qualified as Battery Schoolmaster in May 1884 — a man of many talents. Much of his service was in India and he was on active duty in Burma during the

Sergeant Major William Hood
Royal Garrison Artillery & 9th Clevedon Company
1st Gloucestershire Artillery Volunteers



Indian General Service Medal **Long Service & Good Conduct Medal** **Meritorious Service Medal**

period 1885-89 thus gaining his Indian General Service Medal with 2 bars.

His Long Service Medal was awarded in 1896 while he was in Clevedon; a special parade was held and he received his medal from Captain AC Currie the Brigade Adjutant.

His Meritorious Service Medal was awarded in 1929 with annuity. He was discharged in 1906 having served a total of over 29 years, his intended place of residence being Clevedon.

In 1897 Hood had been living in 96 Old Church Road and in 1906 he lived at 6 Hillside Road.

A popular man in the town he was appointed steward of the Constitutional Club in May 1909. It is not known when he left the town, but he did return to his home town London where he died in Tooting Beck Hospital March 1948 aged eighty six.

Clevedon Violets

From the Dave Long Collection

George Lee (1817-1913) was born in Wood Cottage in Court Woods and went to school in Tickenham. He was apprenticed to the famous nursery of Miller and Sweet in Clifton. After horticultural training in London he returned to Clevedon and started market gardening. He had various sites in upper and lower Clevedon.

At his gardens in Tickenham he grew varieties of choice fruits and on the terraced hillside early strawberries. At this time the French fashion of wearing violets was adopted by Royalty and society followed. However, French violets were expensive to import and did not grow well here so hardier varieties such as "Russian" and a variety called "Czar" were used. He planted beds of all the hardy varieties that were available at the time. This caused problems at first.



Local stories say that as he was returning home from church one Sunday he stopped to check on the violet nursery. He knelt on a large rock and prayed for guidance. Opening his eyes, he saw a beautiful violet flowering beside him. Being a man who neither employed men on a Sunday nor worked himself, he marked the spot and returned the next day to collect his find. It was a hybrid found growing between beds of "Czar" and "Devoniensis" varieties. After some years of propagation he was able to produce it on a commercial scale.

The new violet had broader petals than usual and was a rich violet-blue, with an exquisite perfume. Its best characteristic was that it flowered from December to February.

He named it "Victoria Regina" and for many years sent bunches to Queen Victoria. He produced many more



Research by Derek Lilly

Having just filled in the 2011 Census form, Derek has been searching through the first Clevedon Census of 1841. He describes the results as, 'Useless but interesting information ferreted from the files.'

In 1841 there were 19 lodging house keepers in Clevedon, 6 of whom were born out of Somerset.

There were 270 registered as servants of one form or another, 82 of them born out of Somerset.

There were 111 registered as labourers of various types, all born in Somerset, 47 scholars of whom 31 were born in the county.

5 school mistresses in 3 establishments. 5 people were entered as 'merchants', 3 being born in Somerset.

22 farmers, only 1 of whom was born outside the county.

4 people were registered as beer-house keepers, and 5 as innkeepers — the difference being that innkeepers were able to sell wines and spirits.

There were 27 Andrews; 28 Carey; 30 people of the Durban/Durbin name; 24

Fry; 22 Griffin; 23 Hedges; 36 Hollyman — to name a few of the early Clevedon families.

99 people were of independent means, 31 of those born in Somerset.

Of the 1,725 people recorded in the census 1,341 were registered as being born in the county.

There were 1,008 females and 717 males. The oldest woman was Mary Weymouth, 87 years old, living with William Weymouth, the proprietor/teacher of the school that occupied the old

COLLECTORS' LOT

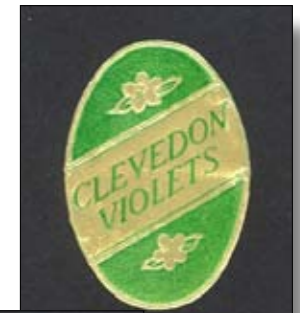
hybrids from this variety, naming them "Prince Consort", "Odoratissima" and many more.

But it was "Victoria Regina" that became known as the "Clevedon Violet"

George Lee died in 1913 just short of his 96th birthday.

Marks the chemist on Hill Road sold "Clevedon Violet" talc and perfumes. Two of the bottles of perfume are pictured here.

Clevedon Civic Society book *The Annals of Clevedon* has the full story of George Lee and "Clevedon Violets" where the material for this article was gleaned.



THE 1841 CENSUS

farmhouse where the library now stands. The oldest man was William Needes, 87, an agricultural labourer who lived at 3 Kenn Road.

The census started at Marine House, a girls' school on Marine Hill run by the Misses Armstrong [3 sisters] and ended at Wood Cottage [now called Queen Anne Cottage] on Court Hill, the home of William Lee.



Queen Anne Cottage, Court Hill (built 1600s)

TYNTESFIELD AMERICAN HOSPITAL

On the 26 January, 1942 American forces started arriving in Great Britain. Later in the year the local council in Somerset was informed that a temporary wartime hospital was to be built on the south east corner of the Tyntesfield Estate, specifically for the United States Army.

As the buildings were required in very quick time a large number of workers were to be employed locally and those without accommodation would be compulsory housed. The hospital would comprise 138 brick buildings and have its own water supply and sewerage treatment works. Rent to the Wraxall Estate was set at £144 p.a.

Work went ahead with local builders in charge of many unskilled workers. The hospital was finished by American army construction companies in the middle of 1943.

Early in November 1943 the 56th General Hospital moved from Malvern to take up residence, its task to treat locally based American soldiers who fell ill from common ailments, or were injured in training for the forthcoming invasion of France. 750 beds were provided, and the hospital was staffed by 56 officers mostly medically skilled, 105 officer nurses while 500 men of non officer rank were employed on wide ranging duties such as police and drivers. There were also 5 ladies of the American Red Cross who, with the help of 20 or so local volunteer ladies, organised leisure activities for the staff and patients. 15 civilians were employed in various roles.

Prior to the build up of US forces in England 50 beds were set aside for the treatment of civilians to relieve the critical hospital situation. Many local

residents remember their treatment and the taste of long forgotten food such as ice cream and oranges.

On the 10th of May 1944 the 74th General Hospital took up residence at Tyntesfield, relieving the 56th of its duties. The 56th moved out soon after to start training for their transfer to France following the D-day invasion on the 6th of June 1944. The 74th received its first casualties from France on the 12th of June 1944. These were transferred by train from transit clearing stations near the ports of Southampton, Weymouth and Portland. At first they were off loaded at Flax Bourton station but this was not very convenient and future trains were met at Temple Meads station by American as well as local ambulances.

For the next 6 months the hospital continued to receive wounded from the initial push into France but, by December 1944, after the battle in the Ardennes, 976 beds were occupied. Temporary canvas wards had been erected on all green spaces to cope with the influx of casualties. From December until the end of January 1945 Tyntesfield became a holding hospital treating those patients no longer fit for duty, awaiting repatriation to their homeland. Most of these were suffering from frost bite or trench foot caused by the prolonged severe winter weather. Tyntesfield was in an ideal situation in its proximity to

Research by David Knights and Mike Boyce

the port at Avonmouth. From there, 12 American hospital ships shuttled across the Atlantic.

A daily link with Clevedon was the contract with the Clevedon and Portishead laundry. A lorry would bring freshly laundered bed linen and take away the dirty items.

The hospital was a self contained unit. All food supplies came in refrigerator ships from America. There was very little contact with the local community apart from the few who ventured to the nearby pubs, which according to the US custom segregated black and white servicemen. Most preferred the delights of Bristol or London. Local girls were often collected and returned home by lorry for the camp dances. We know of only three romances that ended in marriage.

Surprising for such a large hospital we can trace only 3 fatalities in the 2 years that the hospital was open. The maximum number of patients at any one time was in January 1945 when 1,377 were listed.

On June 30th 1945 the hospital closed and its staff and equipment moved on to France to care for the wounded still on mainland Europe who had not recovered sufficiently for transfer back to the US, and for POWs from liberated camps.

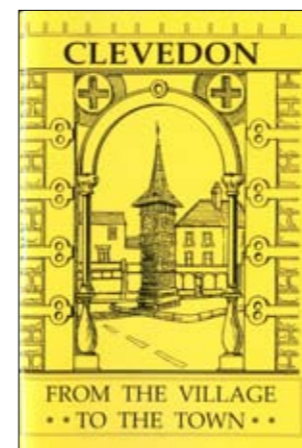
Thereafter, the redundant hospital became a demob centre, a Polish refugee family camp and later a local authority housing estate until 1960 - but that is another story.

Tyntesfield was one of the only WW2 US hospitals in the area to be demolished. All the others are to this day still part of the NHS.

The photograph taken in the winter of 1943/4, shows the main entrance to the hospital and motor pool with the chapel on the left. The concrete hard standing in the foreground is still in place behind the gap in the famous holly hedge. A suitable place for a memorial?

Research into the history of the hospital has been undertaken by Mike Boyce on mdbl00@btinternet.com and of the housing estate by David Knights on david@familyknights.co.uk who would welcome any photos or memories in order that the history of this site can be recorded for future generations.

David Knights



SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Clevedon – From the Village to the Town

Edited by A.W. Gummow

A history of the Elton family and their home at Clevedon Court forms a further chapter, this time written by J.S Jephcott. Lady Elton herself follows this with a very detailed account of the design, construction and opening of the pier on Easter Monday, 1869. Elton House, standing high above Highdale Road, was built in 1844 for a previous Lady Elton and is the subject of another article; this is followed by chapters on the town's religious life, its local government, its education and its shops.

The book ends with a detailed description of the Limekilns of Clevedon complete with illustrations by its author, Gwyneth M. Yeates. Each chapter in the book is prefaced by a delightful line drawing by Michael Horsfield who also designed the cover. Attached to the back page is a pull-out map of the town circa 1900 drawn by Jane Lilly herself.

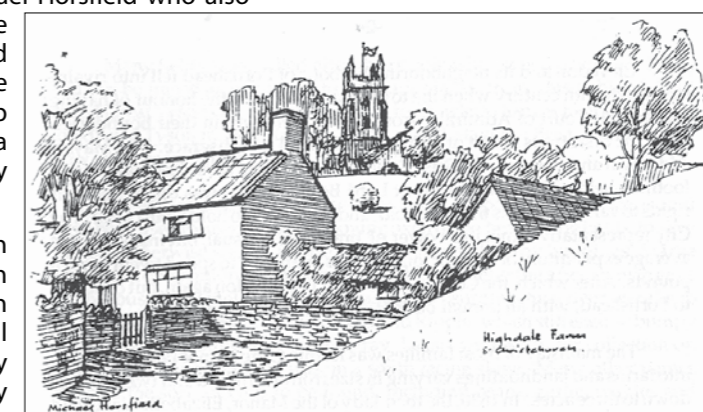
In her introduction Lady Elton suggests that in this book the Local History Society went some way

in exploring some of the answers to her question – how did Clevedon turn from an obscure village to a handsome sea-side town? She wrote that she '... hopes that these essays will give a deeper meaning to our lives in Clevedon, and stimulate others to seek out the story of our town, for there are many gaps to be filled.'

The Society's web site lists a further eight similar publications, plus a DVD, so it would appear that subsequent members have indeed been stimulated to plug many of those gaps!

Geoff Hale

The book is available to Society members at a special price of £4.00



CLEVEDON PILOT GIG CLUB



Six people in search of a boat!

The project gathered a surprising pace and was brought to the public's attention on the Main Beach slipway on July 4, 2009 – an event that was featured in the 'Sport' section of the recent Civic Society DVD.

Just two years later members of the Clevedon Pilot Gig Club witnessed the launch of their first gig at the Underfall Yard in Bristol. They have named it 'Watch and Pray' after the motto of the Clevedon Town Council. They plan to race it at the 22nd World Pilot Gig Championships to be held in May on the Isles of Scilly.

For further information see: www.clevedonpilotgigclub.co.uk

The Pilot Gigs of Cornwall are totally unique six oared open boats that were designed to transport pilots to the sailing ships arriving in British waters in the South West Approaches back in the days of wooden ships and iron men.

The sport of Pilot Gig racing started in Cornwall in the 1960s and after humble beginnings the Cornish Pilot Gig Association grew and now has some 55 affiliated clubs all over the West Country.

In late February 2009 a handful of Clevedon enthusiasts formed a steering committee with the aim of raising the funds to build a gig to race under Clevedon's colours.



'Watch and Pray' arrives in Clevedon

MEMBERS' PHOTOGRAPH GALLERY



by Dave Long



CARTOON CORNER

Gem of Sunny Somerset by Shirley Beale

