

Issued free to members – otherwise 50 pence



smoke signal

Editor: John Randall
202 Leckhampton Road
Tel: 01242 527904

No. 41, November 2002

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Our new season of meetings got off to a good start on 19th September with a fascinating talk by Patricia Thomas about "The Birdlip Lady". This referred to the female figure discovered in the Iron Age burial site at Barrow Wake, on the hillside above the Air Balloon in 1879.

Mrs Thomas began by drawing a word-picture of what life might have been like in an Iron Age settlement such as existed in the Cotswolds among our local tribe, the Dobunni: despite the enormous differences in living conditions between then and the present day, apparently their concerns included cosmetics, dentistry, obesity in the young, and cannabis!

We were shown pictures of the skeletons and grave goods, including a large amber necklace and an ornate bronze mirror. In fact, a replica of the mirror was produced and handed round for us to admire the metalwork and engraving, the original being on display in the Gloucester City Museum.

It was believed that the principal figure, which was flanked by two smaller ones, was of a female of high rank, possibly the equivalent of a princess. From a scanning of the skull a computer had built up a profile of how the face may have looked - here again a moulded replica was shown, which was most impressive.

Speculation then took over as to whether the figure could have been that of Boudicca (more familiarly known as Boadicea), the leader of the Iceni tribe who had devastated Roman cities in London and eastern Britain in retaliation for earlier ill-treatment of the natives, especially Boudicca and her daughters. The Iceni had eventually been routed, and Boudicca and her daughters fled and took poison to escape the Romans. Was it possible that they had made for this part of the country? We may never know, but it was a really splendid presentation with plenty of food for thought.

A report appears inside on our Tenth Anniversary meeting

David Lyall

LECKHAMPTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
Affiliated to Cheltenham Arts Council

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

So, here we are, well into the programme of meetings for the Eleventh year of the Society and it only seems yesterday that we were having our first, up in the Chapel at Leckhampton Court. How time flies! In producing the new edition of the Index for *Smoke Signal*, and in particular the listing of talks and visits we have had in the first ten years, I realised what a broad spectrum of local history we have been able to enjoy in those first ten years. Long may that situation last.

However, as regards *Smoke Signal* itself & the standard which we have been able to maintain over that period, much will depend on more members sending in items of interest and information and I shall look forward to receiving them.

LECKHAMPTON COURT: MANOR HOUSE TO HOSPICE

The launch of Eric Miller's latest book was held in the chapel of Leckhampton Court on Thursday 12 September and was attended by 80 invited guests. These included the Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, Henry Elwes JP, and the Mayor and Mayoress of Cheltenham Ken and Joy Buckland. There was also a member of the Norwood family - from Atlanta, USA - who by chance was visiting Leckhampton with his wife at that time. Before 'unveiling' a copy of the book, Mr Elwes spoke of his own family connections with the Court. His great-grandfather, John Hargreaves, had bought the Court after the sale of the estate in 1894, and their daughter Muriel, who married Cecil Elwes, used to be a familiar figure in Leckhampton until her death in 1955. The book has been well received but if any member still has not bought a copy, it would make an ideal Christmas present and at the same time contribute towards the running of the Sue Ryder Hospice at the Court. The Gloucestershire Record Office has now opened its display of items relating to Leckhampton Court, by the way, and is well worth a visit. (It is in the main corridor, so there is no entrance charge!)

What next? Though Eric says he would like a rest, he is working on 'one or two little articles' and next year intends to revise and enlarge his *History of Leckhampton Church*, which is now out of print. As a spin-off, he is collecting information on notable people from Cheltenham and elsewhere that happen to be buried at Leckhampton. The tombstone inscriptions recorded by Julian Rawes on behalf of the Gloucestershire Family History Society are a great help in this connection. If anyone is interested in helping to complete this work, please let Eric know. (David Maughfling and Roger Richards have already volunteered.)

In due course the Society will bring out another Research Bulletin. This will be devoted to the 'Bendall Archive', with inputs from Eric, Alan Gill and Terry Moore-Scott (plus anyone else who would like to volunteer!). Mike Rigby has also promised an article on Trowscoed Lodge.

SOME LITTLE KNOWN FACTS ABOUT LECKHAMPTON.

This is a new feature, suggested by Alan Gill, who has supplied the majority of the items, drawn from the pages of local newspapers. At present, it is only intended as an occasional feature but if there is sufficient interest and we receive plenty of "tit-bits" from members we will consider making it a regular item.

- * There used to be a giant oak tree by the sharp bend in the road near Blackhedge Farm. It was believed to date from the 13th century and got its name (from which the Grange took its name) from the fact that it was a meeting place for salt traders from Droitwich and their customers. It was still shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1884.
(Cheltenham Circular - July 1936)
- * A cluster of cottages used to stand just below the Devil's Chimney. It is not known when they disappeared. (Examiner - 7 Sep 1904)
- * A stream used to flow from the Hill down the eastern side of the churchyard and formed a small pond near the road, from which water was taken for household purposes and where the local cottagers would wash their chitterlings at pig-killing time. Most of them would have kept a pig at the bottom of their garden.
(Examiner - 7 Sep 1904)
- * Among the features that disappeared with quarrying were some beech trees planted on top of the Hill by the Duke of Wellington to commemorate one of his visits to Cheltenham.
The Duke visited Cheltenham 4 times to take the waters, in 1805, 1816, 1823, and in 1828 when he was Prime Minister. He made his name at Waterloo in 1815, so the planting was probably after that. (Chronicle - date unknown)
- * Norwood Cottages in Church Road were a school in the early 19th century. The schoolmaster, one Mr. Goodwin or Goodly, used to blow a horn to mark the time for school.
(Examiner - 7 Sep 1904)
- * In 1861 a rifle range was opened on Leckhampton Hill near the top of Sandy Lane. It was 800 yards long and for the use of the Cheltenham Battalion of the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars. (Mercury - 6 Apr 1861)

* A Directory of 1876 lists no fewer than 8 Army Generals resident in Leckhampton, most of them in The Park.
At least 19 Generals and 2 Admirals are buried in the churchyard.
(Morris and Co. Directory)

* John, son of Richard Purser who died aged 111 in 1868 and is buried in Leckhampton churchyard, came with his family from Scotland to visit his father's grave in 1880 but died during the visit. He was buried in the same grave. He was aged 61 and an engine driver.
(Examiner - 7 Sep 1904)

* Major Edward Nevil Macready, brother of the eminent Victorian actor William Charles Macready, who lived in Cheltenham and died in 1848, was buried in Leckhampton churchyard. His grave, located near the north west wall of the church, was surmounted by a large stone cross and enclosed with iron railings with a gate and an iron seat. His widow used to sit there for several hours each day. She died in 1887.

About 1900 the family decided to have his remains exhumed and taken to Scotland to be reburied in the family vault. The coffin, plus some of the stone from the grave, was conveyed by train to Bristol and then by boat to Glasgow. The railway company charged one shilling per mile for the corpse, plus extra for the stone.

There is a memorial tablet inside the church dedicated by his widow. It states that he served in the 307th Regiment.

(Examiner - 7 Sep 1904, Looker-On - 7 Dec 1918, Chronicle - 7 Dec 1940)

* In 1901 Captain Cecil Elwes of Colesbourne married Muriel Hargreaves, daughter of John Hargreaves who lived at Leckhampton Court. The bride received an unusual wedding present from the bridegroom's regiment, the Scots Guards - a piece of his skull set in gold in a star brooch. He had been wounded at the Battle of the Modder River in South Africa during the Boer War and had been invalided home.

(Chronicle - 13 July 1901)

* Captain Elwes was fined £2 in 1905 for 'furious driving' in the Promenade. He was driving a 15hp Panhard, registration number A6069, at a speed estimated at 20-25mph.

(Echo - 30 Mar 1905)

* The bridge over the railway between Leckhampton Road and Old Bath Road was known as Hall's Bridge. A man attempted to commit suicide by jumping from it in front of a train in 1909. He was injured, but survived only to be sent to prison for his pains. (Chronicle - 27 March 1909)

* Old Bath Road was widened in 1910 from the foot of the Hill to the High Street. A stone wall that ran the entire length of the road was demolished and the stone used for the foundations of the roadway.

(Echo - 5 July 1910)

* Anti-torpedo netting used during the First World War was erected by the Quarry Company in 1924-27 to counter the danger of flying rocks from blasting operations. Some of it could still be seen on the hill years later.

(Echo - 29 Apr 1963, Chronicle - date unknown)

* The Colmore Cup Car Trials were held on Leckhampton Hill in 1935, 36, and 37. Cars attempted to climb Middle Jenny, a gradient of 1 in 3. Only 2 made it to the top in 1935. Failures were winched up. Hundreds of spectators watched the fun. Mr. T.N.Trye, son of Captain Trye, was one of the competitors and he almost reached the top in a Singer car.

(Graphic - 2 Mar 1935)

* The Vineries nursery in Kidnappers Lane (where Vineries Close now is) had glasshouses covering 40,000 square feet. It was developed further after the Second World War and in 1948 over 10,000 tomato plants, 15,000 gladioli, 400 cucumber plants, 75,000 early carrots, and 1,200 chrysanthemums were grown. A crop of over 50 tons of tomatoes was expected.

(Chronicle - 15 May 1948)

* In 1949 the War Office had big plans for the old Army Camp at Ullenwood (not quite Leckhampton, but close by). It was to become a permanent base for an Anti-Aircraft Regiment housing about 1,000 officers and men, with married quarters for 130 families. It was also to provide a depot for the Gloucestershire Regiment and to be a Territorial training centre. A Signals unit and a military workshop unit were also to be based there. The camp was to be completely rebuilt for which another 20 acres was required. It was estimated that it would take about 10 years to complete.

Cheltenham RDC opposed the plan. When the camp was built it had been assured that it would be dismantled after the war and the land restored to its former agricultural use. As it happened, this plan was dropped and eventually the site became a Civil Defence RQ instead. A nuclear bomb-proof bunker was built there, which is being offered for sale for around £400,000.

(Chronicle - 3 Sep 1949, 8 Oct 1949)

* The funeral of Sir Arthur Vicars KCVO, FSA, formerly Ulster King-of-Arms and Registrar and Knight-Attendant of the Order of St. Patrick, has taken place at Leckhampton churchyard. He was buried near the graves of his parents who lived in Cheltenham. He was born in 1864.

Last Thursday around 30 armed men entered Kilmorna House, Listowel, County Kerry, where he lived and shot him outside. A label was placed around his neck saying 'Spy. Informers Beware. IRA never forgets'. The house and contents were fired and completely destroyed. Apparently his only offence was visiting the Police Barracks and supplying the men with games, magazines, and comforts.

(CHELTENHAM CHRONICLE - 23 April 1921)

* In 1875, when the alignment of the railway line, across Leckhampton Road had been decided, adverts were placed in the local press, by the Agent appointed to oversee the operation, giving notice that a certain house would have to be demolished to make way for the line and calling for Tenders to be made by prospective "demolishers".

However, looking at the advert in hindsight, it is clear that in those days there was, apparently, none of the current practice, whereby a building is demolished into a large pile of rubble and then carted away to a landfill site or whatever.

Tenders were required for the careful removal of different types of materials: the roof tiles; all flooring and joists: all doors; the Cotswold stone of the walls; any brickwork including chimneys and as a complete entity, the stairs and staircase.

Evidence of this last practice can still be found in nos 113 and 127 Church Road, where the staircases, which were originally in Fairfield House and Trowscoed Lodge, now are situate.(although the writer is not sure which is which).

RECORDING LOCAL SITES

Terry Moore-Scott has compiled a file relating to interesting local buildings and features, which could form the basis for a research project. There are some provisional lists which would get one off to a good start. Would anyone interested please get in touch

REPORT ON THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

The tenth Anniversary of the Society was celebrated at Church House by holding a members Social Evening, on 17th October 2002, attended by 55 members and 2 invited guests. John Loosely, Chairman of the Local History Committee of the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council gave the meeting a short résumé of the work done by the Council, in promoting "local history" in Gloucestershire over the years and a brief view of future plans. He congratulated the Society on its obvious success and wished it well in the future.

John Randall, the Society's founding" Chairman, then gave a brief outline of the events leading to the setting-up of the Society in 1992, the guidance and help given by Brian Gerrard, Chairman of the GRCC and its launch and expansion into the widely respected Society that it is today; in particular, in regard to the list of local history publications which the Society has produced.

Following these talks, the evening continued as a Social event, with refreshments and drinks being served. The general feeling was that the Society had had a very successful ten years with the hope that the next ten would be likewise..

HONORARY TREASURER WANTED!

Our Treasurer for the past few years, Jeremy Davis, has indicated that he will be unable to stand for re-election at next year's Annual General Meeting, since he will be spending more time abroad.

Could someone please volunteer to fill this essential post? Jeremy says that all you need is a computer and Excel 97, or another good spreadsheet program. However, don't be put off just for the want of technology: we would welcome anyone who would be prepared to undertake the job even if they prefer to use good old-fashioned double-entry bookkeeping!

The takeover date would be June 2003. If you feel you would be able to offer the Society the necessary help, please think about it and let us know as soon as possible so that we can make our plans.

LECKHAMPTON COURT AT THE G.R.O.

A reminder that the Gloucestershire Records Office has a display about the story of Leckhampton Court at their Alvin Street, Gloucester, premises. It is based on research by Eric Miller and Terry Moore-Scott. Admission is free, and the exhibition will run until the middle of January.

David Lyall

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY MEETINGS

Dec	5th	"Gloucestershire Sights & Scenes" (This replaces that previously advertised- on the life of Dr Edward Wilson)	Hugh Conway-Jones
Jan	17th	"Leckhampton Hill; its Quarries ; Tramways and Social History"	David Bick.
Feb	20th	"History of Lamps and Lighting"	John Kidger.

Held at Church House, Painswick Road. on Thursday evenings at 7.45 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

There has been the usual flow of renewals following the start of the new season and the renewal forms which were included in the last issue. However, of the 103 memberships on our books 19 (representing 23 individuals) have not yet renewed as we prepare this newsletter. So, if you find a renewal form in this issue, please treat it as a polite reminder.

As always, guests and prospective members are very welcome at our meetings. However, we do expect residents in the area to join, say, after attending two or three meetings as a visitor. The Membership Secretary, David Lyall (Tel 512313), has the necessary application forms.

Earlier back numbers of Smoke Signal, are available to members to purchase, and we also have a supply of Research Bulletin No 2 and local books, which are usually on sale at monthly meetings or from Amy Woolacott, 15 Arden Road, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, GL53 0HG, Tel 522566.

The Society's Website. The address is <<http://www.geocities.com/LLHSG53> and the address of our Webmaster, is <Jeremy.Davis@GL53.freemove.co.uk> Research Co-ordinator's address: Eric Miller, tel:526461, e-mail miller@leckhampton53.freemove.co.uk

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No. 42, February 2003

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Our first meeting of 2003 saw the welcome return of David Bick, the well-known historian of Leckhampton. His subject was "Leckhampton Hill, its quarries, tramways and social history" and the audience of well over 40 was entertained by a wide-ranging description of the hill and its development from the prehistoric settlements to the present day, illustrated by a variety of slides, many of which had not been seen before.

Leckhampton was something of a pioneer in early rail transport, with the quarry tramroads of about 1800 believed to be the first example of a railway in Gloucestershire, followed by the 1809 Gloucester & Cheltenham Railway branch running down Leckhampton Road. The quarries themselves and the inclines were extensively covered, as was the short-lived 1920s development with the standard gauge branch to Charlton Kings.

Our old friend the Devil's Chimney also appeared as an outcrop of rock, a remainder from the construction of an incline later tidied up and left as a "quarrymen's joke". (Adopted as a kind of Cheltenham trademark for decades it still serves the Society as the masthead for this publication with its own jocular connotation.)

Leading on from the attempted inclosure of the hill, the Leckhampton Riots and the purchase by the Borough Council, David commented on the partial obliteration of many familiar features and views by encroaching conifers and the need for careful management to prevent the open areas reverting to scrub. The vote of thanks by Eric Miller was enthusiastically applauded.

As well as being Chairman and Membership Secretary I arrange the distribution of "Smoke Signal". It is only made possible - and affordable - by the small army of helpers who each cover their own area and deliver the magazine by hand. So I should like to record my thanks on behalf of the Society to Mr D. Cox, Mrs E. Lea, Eric Miller, John Randall, Peter Smith (and his predecessor Tom Hewlett), Ron Walker, Mrs C. Woodward and Amy Woolacott, for their valuable support.

David Lyall

LECKHAMPTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
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WHERE ARE THE "COMMONS"?

The Project Officer of the Cotswold AONB Partnership has contacted the Society to enquire if we can help them in their project "Caring for the Cotswolds" particularly in respect of Leckhampton Hill and Charlton Kings Common.

Their aim is that grazing should be re-introduced as a form of sustainable management of the sites and if this was to proceed, it would be necessary to erect fencing, of a temporary nature, initially. However, for this to be effected it would require "commons" consent if there were any existing "commons rights holders" from 1925.

They have been unable to establish whether a Register of "Rights" holders still exists or even if any "rights" holders still exist. If any of our members can supply information on this subject, please contact Amy Woollacott.

FOR THOSE OF YOU "ONLINE"

A Website is being created which will contain copies of every edition, since inception in the middle of the 17th Century, of the *London Gazette*, the *Edinburgh Gazette* and the *Belfast Gazette* (some 56,000 issues in all). As you will appreciate this is a monumental operation and will take several more years to complete. However, it has been decided to put some completed periods "online" immediately. These are the issues which cover World War I and World War II and they may be accessed by using the www.gazettes-online.co.uk

It appears that the problems that were being experienced with the 1901 National Census have been ironed out and that a good search service is now being provided. The website is to be found on:- www.census.pro.gov.uk.

Turning to information about "local history" in the County of Gloucestershire, the "locate.gloscc.gov.uk" website is a very good source of material of all sorts, from the Gloucestershire Records Office, main libraries, local reference libraries and other sites.

CHANGES TO THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Also announced recently is the news that the *Public Record Office* and the "*Historic Manuscripts Commission*" are to be amalgamated as from April 2003 to form a single organisation to be known as the "*National Archives*", under the direction of a National Archivist. More details to follow.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Apr 26th Glos Family History Society – Annual event at the Crypt School, Gloucester from 10 a m to 4 p m .
- May 17th Computer Workshop 2003 at the Park Campus, University of Gloucestershire. 11.00a.m. -3.30 p.m. This will be a more hands-on event than previously.
- May 28th Talk by Eric Miller on the History of Leckhampton Court at St Peters Church, Leckhampton at 7.30 p.m.
- June TBA Regional Local History Meeting 2003 to be hosted by Cheltenham LHS at St Andrews Church and Hall. Stroud LHS has asked that they host the 2004 Meeting to co-incide with the Towns 700th anniversary.
- Oct 4th Annual Local History Afternoon 2003 will be held at Thomas Rich's School in Gloucester, with the Theme " In Sickness and Health" and will cover a wide range of health topics.

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JOHN MIDDLETON, ARCHITECT.

On November 15th last year, Brian Torode gave us a very interesting and illustrated talk on the life and times of the Architect, John Middleton who was responsible in the 19th Century, for the design of many buildings in Cheltenham, particularly churches .

John Middleton was born in York in 1820 and attended a school near the Minster. He was orphaned in his teens and went to live with an uncle. At the age of 18, he became a pupil of J J Pritchett the renowned architect who designed many churches in the North and North East of England as well as some early railway buildings.

John qualified in 1843 and soon after, married the daughter of Pritchett. He moved to Cheltenham in 1859 and became well known. He was responsible for the enlargement of St. Peters, Leckhampton and for building the churches of St Marks, All Saints, St. Stephens, Holy Apostles Charlton Kings and St Phillips and St James Leckhampton as well as many other buildings in Gloucestershire . He also did work in Wales in 1864/5. He died in 1885 leaving many reminders, in form of the buildings he designed, of the superb architect that he was.

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY MEETINGS

Feb	20th	"History of Lamps and Lighting"	John Kidger.
March	20th	"Withington: A Roman Estate"	Roger Box
April	17th	Members Evening.	

Held at Church House, Painswick Road. on Thursday evenings at 7.45 p.m.

Annual General Meeting May 15th 2003 .

As members will remember from the message in the last edition of Smoke Signal the Hon Treasurer, Jeremy Davis has indicated that he will not be standing for re-election at the forthcoming AGM. In addition, Marilyn West and Ron Walker have also given notice that they will be leaving the Committee at that time. In order to bring the Committee up to full strength, we are therefore looking urgently for 3 volunteers to offer their services to fill these vacant places.. If you are interested in filling one of these positions, please contact David Lyall as soon as possible.

As always, guests and prospective members are very welcome at our meetings. However, we do expect residents in the area to join, say, after attending two or three meetings as a visitor. The Membership Secretary, David Lyall (tel 512313), has the necessary application forms.

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No. 43, April 2003

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

For various reasons we are losing three valuable committee members next month: Jeremy Davis (Treasurer), Ron Walker (Programme Secretary) and Marilyn West (Oral History, and author of the Upper Bath Road booklet). They will all be difficult to replace - but we must replace them. We have given plenty of warnings, with no positive results so far. The bottom line is that without a Treasurer and a Programme Secretary the Society will come to a halt. Please don't keep us in suspense!

The Manorial Estates of Leckhampton

I am taking this opportunity to remind members of this excellent work by Terry Moore-Scott which was published in "Gloucestershire History - No.16" of 2002 by the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council. It was the result of several years' research in the Gloucestershire Record Office and the Public Record Office and traces the early history of Leckhampton from before the time of the Domesday Book by reference to the three manors and other estates.

This treatise deserves to be more widely known by all who are interested in the history of our locality - nor is the geography neglected, maps of both earlier and the later estates being included, together with several illustrations. The family names of Giffard, Norwood and Trye and, more recently, Nourse - all associated with Leckhampton - are woven into the narrative, as are references to Leckhampton Court. The detail in the text is supported by copious footnotes, an invaluable resource for the serious researcher. The author acknowledges assistance from - amongst others - two of our Society members, Dr John Jurica and Mr Eric Miller.

Copies of the publication - whose cover illustration is Kip's engraving of Leckhampton Court and priced at £3.99 - can be obtained from the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council, 15 College Green, Gloucester, GL1 2LZ (01452-528494 to enquire about postage), from the Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum shop in Clarence Street, and the Gloucestershire Record Office, Alvin Street, Gloucester; they are usually also available at Society meetings.

David Lyall

ANOTHER "LECKHAMPTON HALL"?

Well, yes, in a way. Eric Miller recently circulated, to members of the Committee, copies of E-mails which he had accumulated, some of which referred to a 19th century building called "Leckhampton" in a suburb of Brisbane, Australia, ending with a message from the Lord Mayor of that city.

As I was short of any contributions from anyone else and faced with this page being blank, I decided to do a quick summary of those other "Leckhamptons" of which we have knowledge, if for no other reason, to try to jog someone other than the usual contributors into making a contribution to "Smoke Signal".

However, as you will see from the Notes opposite, Eric has been working on this same subject and was much further advanced than I. So I decided to look into another "Leckhampton", being the former Great Western Railway locomotive named "*Leckhampton Hall*".

Over the years, the GWR produced nearly 300 locomotives, classified as the "Hall" class, in various versions. I have not progressed very far yet in collecting details about the locomotive other than to confirm that it was numbered 5945 and was one of a batch of 100 engines built at Swindon in the period 1930 to 1934.

When I have been able to confirm details such as when it was actually built and to which sheds it was allocated during its lifetime, I shall pass them on to Eric for him to include in his article, which may appear in either the next "Research Bulletin" or here in "Smoke Signal".

OTHER LOCAL HISTORY PUBLICATIONS

Many people will recall Barnby Bendall, the furniture removers, who were a feature of local life for over 100 years. Eric Miller has written an illustrated article about the firm in the latest Cheltenham Local History Society *Journal*, which is available from the Museum and Art Galleries Shop. He has also had an article accepted by the British Association for Local History which will appear in their quarterly magazine, on the subject of parish magazines as a fruitful source of information. The article will be reprinted in our Society's next *Research Bulletin*, to be brought out in the autumn or early next year, depending on the number of contributions received. Terry Moore-Scott has already supplied an article on Leckhampton's farms, and others are promised, but Eric would be pleased to hear from any other potential authors.

REPORTS ON RECENT MEETINGS.

January 16th 2003 saw the welcome return of David Bick to talk on the subject *Leckhampton Hill- its quarries, tramways and social history*. As most members will know, David is well known as a writer on various subjects, such as the two editions of "*Old Leckhampton*" and previously to that, the booklet, now many years out of print, "*The Gloucester & Cheltenham Railway* (including the Leckhampton Quarry Tramroads)".

John Kidger, on February 20th gave us a fascinating talk entitled "*The History of Lamps and Lighting*" illustrated, not by the usual slides or film, but by a superb display of actual and different types of lights and lighting appliances drawn from over the centuries, commencing with Roman oil lamps right up to modern fittings.

On March 20th Roger Box came to talk about "*Withington: a Roman Estate*" a local estate which has not received the attention which others have in recent times. Roger lives close to the site (excavated by Lysons in 1811) and has made various finds, some of which are in the British Museum.

Members Evening 17th April

Eric Miller summarised his researchs into the various buildings with the word "Leckhampton" in their name (such as "Leckhampton Hall" in Cambridge; "Leckhampton Court" in Capetown, South Africa and the house "Leckhampton" in Brisbane, Australia) and said he planned to include an article on the subject in either Smoke Signal or the next Research Bulletin.

Peter Smith then gave a short talk on the life and times of Gwen Hart, the author of the acclaimed "*History of Cheltenham*" published in 1981.

David Lyall showed a selection of his slides, taken over years, of buildings and sites in Cheltenham and Leckhampton, many of which have disappeared or changed out of all recognition.

Your editor rounded off the evening by showing a few of his collection of slides, of People and Places, taken from photographs or postcards, produced around the turn of the 20th Century

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY MEETINGS.

May 15th. Annual General Meeting followed by a talk given by Philip Newcombe on "The Civic Society"

Season 2003/4

Sept 18th Dr Edward Wilson David Elder

Held at Church House, Painswick Road, on Thursday evenings at 7.45 p.m.

Other Forthcoming Meetings

May 28th Talk at St. Peters Church by Eric Miller on the History of "Leckhampton Court" at 7.30 p.m.

June 29th. Regional Local History Meeting at St. Andrews Church, hosted by Cheltenham L H S.

Oct 4th Annual Local History Afternoon to be held at Thomas Rich's School, Gloucester..

As always, guests and prospective members are very welcome at our meetings. However, we do expect residents in the area to join, say after attending two or three meetings as a visitor. The Membership Secretary, David Lyall (tel 512313), has the necessary application forms.

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The Society's Website. The address is <http://www.geocities.com/LLHSGL53> and the e-mail address of our Webmaster is mail@davis127.evesham.net. The Research Co-ordinator's address Eric Miller Tel 526461 and his e-mail address is miller@leckhampton53.freemove.co.uk.

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smoke signal

Editor: John Randall
202 Leckhampton Road
Tel: 01242 527904

No. 44, August 2003

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Officers and Committee

When the last "Smoke Signal" went to press, we were short of a Treasurer, a Programme Secretary and a committee member - and the Annual General Meeting was looming. At the eleventh hour we suddenly received three offers, one for each vacant post - which we accepted with a rapidity only matched by our gratitude.

Jim Breddy - who is already a busy man - volunteered to take over as Treasurer; Rick Kedge - one of our founder members - offered to act as Programme Secretary; and Lorna Robson - one of our newest members - expressed an interest in joining the Committee.

They were all duly elected at the A.G.M., and the administration of the Society is secure once more. The outgoing Treasurer, Jeremy Davis, provided a crash course in the Society's accounting procedure, and Ron Walker had practically filled the slots for the forthcoming year, and we are looking forward to another good season.

Annual Outing

This year it was our turn to organise the joint venture with Charlton Kings Local History Society, and we decided on a morning visit to Lechlade followed by an afternoon at Kelmscott Manor, the home of the famous writer, painter and designer William Morris. With less than 20 bookings from Leckhampton I was beginning to doubt whether the outing was going to be viable, when along came a block booking from Charlton Kings, so in the end the coach was comfortably full.

Two guides from Lechlade History Society showed us round the town and the church in separate groups. After dispersing for lunch, we boarded the coach again for Kelmscott, where we were given a detailed and fascinating account of William Morris and his family, and the history of the Manor which we then spent time exploring. It is a charming 16th-century farmhouse containing beautiful furniture, tapestries, paintings and other examples of the Arts & Crafts Movement. Afternoon tea in the restored barn followed, and despite the damp weather we all enjoyed the day.

David Lyall

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2003

The Eleventh Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at Church House on May 15th but with a disappointing attendance of only 19 members; disappointing when compared with our usual attendance of about 40/45 members.

DAVID LYALL, as Chairman, gave his review of the year, starting with our 10th Anniversary celebrations; the programme of talks and events which had covered a range of interesting subjects; the annual outing with Charlton Kings LHS; the general level of membership and a quick look ahead to 2003/4.

ERIC MILLER, as Research Co-ordinator, outlined the position regarding Society Publications and their current stocks; proposed future projects and the possibility of holding further afternoon research meetings.

JEREMY DAVIS presented his Report on the year's Financial activities and his Statement of Accounts, copies of which were circulated at the meeting, which showed that the financial position of the Society was very healthy.

On the Election of Officers (as mentioned in the Chairmans Message) the Society had been successful in obtaining replacements for the three Committee members who, for various reasons, had decided not to stand for re-election this year. All other Officers were re-elected unanimously.

As usual, we are not circulating a copy of the full Notes of the AGM to all members but a few copies will be available for perusal at the first two meetings of the year. After the meeting, Philip Newcombe gave a talk about Cheltenham Civic Society.

P O W CAMP No. 263.

As you will all know, Leckhampton Court was used as a Prisoner of War camp for a period during and after the last War. The Camp was finally de-commissioned in 1948, when the majority of the prisoners were re-patriated to Germany although some decided to remain in the locality and, in a few cases, still do.

However, as far as I can ascertain, none of us has ever seen any correspondence from POW's to addresses in Germany. It came as a big surprise therefore when our member, David Cox, let us know that he had purchased an "official" POW postcard, written by a POW named Adolf Hartmann, to an address in Brunswick in 1947.

The card clearly shows the Camp address as Leckhampton Court, Cheltenham, Glos and is cancelled with a superb postmark for POW Camp 263. We had intended to reproduce a photocopy of the Card here but at the last moment found that it would not copy sufficiently clearly and we did not want to spoil the effect. We have asked David if he will bring the card to the first meeting(s) so that members can view it there.

COUNTY LOCAL HISTORY REGIONAL Meeting -- 29th June 2003.

This event, hosted by *Cheltenham Local History Society*, was held at St Andrews Church, Montpellier, as part of their 20th Birthday Celebrations. St Andrews proved to be an excellent venue for the meeting and the weather could not have been finer.

Aylwin Sampson started proceedings by giving a talk entitled "Cheltenham for the Curious" describing various "oddities" and features around Cheltenham which most of those present did not know existed. He encouraged those who were going on one of the three guided walks around the town, to "keep their eyes open" and ask questions later.

Those who did not want to walk, admired the displays; tried their hand at a Cheltenham quiz or perused the vast selection of second hand books and new publications for sale. When the walkers returned, refreshments, all homemade, plentiful and superb, were served and it was considered by all that the afternoon had been a resounding success.

PUBLICATIONS

"Leckhampton in Old Photographs" is now out of print but we do have a few left, at the bargain price of £3.99.

"Leckhampton Court - Manor House to Hospice" is still available, price £6.99 - every penny goes to Sue Ryder Care at Leckhampton Court.

It is hoped to issue a third Research Bulletin later this year, to include articles on Leckhampton's farms, Trowscoed Lodge, the Grotto and some of its occupants, John Milner's house in Old Bath Road (bombed and restored), the meaning of "Leckhampton" and some other similar place names, houses elsewhere named "Leckhampton", light industry in the vicinity of the Norwood Arms during the 19th century and the 12th-century tithes of Llanthony Priory in Leckhampton.

Eric Miller

OBITUARY

Since the last "Smoke Signal" we have been notified of the deaths of two of our members.

Firstly, in May, that of *Arthur Bendall* at the age of 85 years. He was one of the "founder members" of the Society and had been a source of much information about Leckhampton. He was a relative of the late Jean Bendall and a member of the Bendall family responsible for the building many houses in Leckhampton over the years, especially in Leckhampton Road.

Secondly, in August, the death of *Trevor Holt*, a loyal supporter of the Society over a period of some seven years.

To the families of both members, the Society offers its deepest condolences

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Season 2003/4

Sept	18 th	Dr Edward Wilson	David Elder
Oct	16 th	Members Evening	
Nov	20 th	A Walk down Cheltenham High Street	Carolyn Greet
Dec	11 th	Ghosts of Cheltenham.	Bob Meredith

Held at Church House, Painswick Road, on Thursday evenings at 7.45 p.m.

Other Forthcoming Meetings

Oct 4th Annual Local History Afternoon to be held at Thomas Rich's School, Gloucester..

As always, guests and prospective members are very welcome at our meetings. However, we do expect residents in the area to join, say after attending two or three meetings as a visitor. The Membership Secretary, David Lyall (tel 512313), has the necessary application forms.

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Issued free to members – otherwise 50 pence



smoke signal

Editor: John Randall
202 Leckhampton Road
Tel: 01242 527904

No. 45, November 2003

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

One of the pleasures of a society such as ours is having the occasional "Members' Evening", when we have the satisfaction of home-made fare instead of that which is, as it were, bought in from outside.

In October, we were on tenterhooks for a short time to see if anyone would volunteer, but as usual the members rose to the occasion. Rick Kedge began with the results of his research into the old tracks across Leckhampton Hill, and particularly one which appeared to join the prehistoric Crickley Hill site with that of the Iron Age camp on Leckhampton Hill, supported by aerial photographic evidence.

Next, Terry Moore-Scott brought us up to date with more investigation into place names from manorial court rolls; for example Ashburn Lane which turned out to be part of what is now Church Road past Church Farm. There were some very interesting extracts from the records, including local landowners getting into trouble for allowing their hedges to overhang the public highway.

Daphne Wheeler followed this with a report on her recent visit to Tyntesfield, the Victorian Gothic house and estate near Bristol, recently acquired by the National Trust at great expense - and undergoing long-term restoration at even greater expense. Even now, it is well worth a visit.

Next, Amy Woolacott recounted her experiences as a volunteer photographer for the National Photographic Archive, recording the external appearance of buildings in Brockhampton and Sevenhampton under difficult conditions, which ranged from poor lighting to being attacked by dogs

Eric Miller concluded the evening with a brief discourse on "Leckhampton and Boris the Bear Hunter" - not, as it turned out, a reference to local wildlife, but to a member of the Wishaw family of The Grotto with Russian connections who wrote adventure stories for boys!

Subscriptions

Thank you to all those who have renewed your subscriptions. If you have not already had your receipt it should be found enclosed with this issue of 'Smoke Signal'.

David Lyall

STILL MORE ON LECKHAMPTON'S ANCIENT MILLS

In Smoke Signal No. 17 (Dec 1996), Rick Kedge described what appears to be illustrations of windmills in carved graffiti in St Peter's church porch and suggested that this could indicate the presence at one time of a windmill in the grounds of the Court and within eyeshot of the porch. One possible location could have been in the field known as "Mill Hay" just below the Court. In Smoke Signal No 18 (Feb 1997), evidence was described indicating that the lord of the manor of Leckhampton in the 13th Century, possessed a watermill probably situated somewhere along the course of today's Moored Brook, either up near the Court (perhaps in "Mill Hay") or downstream perhaps around Allenfield ("Walkhampstead" field).

Further information recently came to light thanks to the work being done in Cheltenham Local History Society to transcribe early Cheltenham Manorial Court Rolls from their customary Latin to English. The roll of a Court meeting of 1531 indicates that a windmill could very well have existed in Leckhampton at that time for, under the heading of Leckhampton "tithing", lord of the manor Ralph Norwood is stated to have held a grain mill (tenet molendum granale) and, along with his predecessors, is accused of charging excessive payment for its use over many years "to the common harm". Significantly, Norwood's mill is not referred to as a watermill (molendum aquaticum-the term used at this time when a watermill is being discussed) suggesting that it may have been a windmill. If so, this would back up the evidence from the graffiti in the church porch but unfortunately we still do not know where the windmill stood.

Considering the terrain around Leckhampton and where there could be sufficient regular exposure to brisk westerly winds needed to operate a mill, my money would be on a site up on the hill, perhaps on that promontory of land above the Court where the Continental monument stands today.

Terry Moore-Scott

[Author's note: my thanks are due to Jill Barlow and her team of researchers, especially Jane Sale, for making this information available.]

EDWARD WILSON

On September 18th, David Elder gave us a very interesting talk, on the life and times of Edward Wilson, not primarily as an Antarctic explorer but as a widely regarded naturalist. Cheltenham born, his family ran a farm in Wards Road, Hatherley. Later they moved to the Crippetts. He became a Doctor but he had been interested in all forms of nature from an early age. He was a very fine artist, painting and drawing all sorts of specimens, large and small. His love of Penguins led him to the Polar regions where, tragically, he met his death with Scott, on their return from the Pole.

DAPHNE WHEELER

An Appreciation by Peter Smith.

Monday is the day when, under the "Devil's Chimney" logo, I always read Daphne's "Village Voice" column. How, I wondered, does she manage to report so much detail, attend so many meetings, keep abreast with all that is happening in Leckhampton, raise so many important issues and seldom miss a meeting of the Society? So we met to talk.

Daphne's "office" is a mass of paperwork spread around a comfortable chair. Here I learnt that Daphne had never missed writing her weekly column, even when she had a hip replacement or subsequently a knee operation!

It was James Graham, the Chairman of the Parish Council, who first pressed Daphne to write about Leckhampton in the Echo. After agreeing, she immediately made contact with every known organisation in Leckhampton, such as W.I., M.U., Scout and Playgroups and, of course, the Churches. Although the parish magazines publish many events she still has to probe, attend meetings – the important Parish Council of Leckhampton and Warden Hill is one – and to keep to a copy deadline of Wednesday 9 a.m. for the following Monday paper. From 1990 onwards, she has kept cuttings of every reference to Leckhampton appearing in the Echo.

Daphne's columns are so much more than a diary of events. She has campaigned for many causes and as a member of the Concessionary Fares Panel she pressed for increased taxi allowances for the disabled. Many people look upon her as a "General Knowledge Source Centre" for Leckhampton. In her post, on the day I met her, was a long letter from a researcher asking for help over the Haw Bridge Mystery.

Daphne had been a staunch supporter of the Sue Ryder Home in many ways but especially in the area of fund raising activities. In the early days at Leckhampton Court, she had many contacts with Lady Ryder.

Coming from Stratford-upon-Avon, Daphne came to live in Cheltenham early in 1970. As a girl, she attended Alcester Grammar School. Many years earlier, I had been at the same school, and yet we knew some of the same teachers and Alcester personalities! There she had won medals for sports achievements and went on to captain Stratford Ladies' Hockey Club, captain her college team and for a year to play for Essex.

Every few years, the Echo hosts a meeting of the many writers of the "Village Voice". Each week I believe these "Voices", and to me especially Daphne's, add something to the pages of local history.

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Season 2003/4

Dec 11 th	Ghosts of Cheltenham.	Bob Meredith
Jan 15 th	"A Hole in the Ground" the story of Battledown Brickworks"	David O'Connor
Feb 19 th	History of Roads and Public Rights of Way	Charlie Morris

Held at Church House, Painswick Road, on Thursday evenings at 7.45 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

At the time of writing, the membership of the Society stands at 117 fully paid-up members plus 2 Honourary members. May we remind you that your annual subscription was due as at 1st September last. If you have overlooked the fact, the Membership Secretary will no doubt be looking forward to receiving your payment in due course.

As always, guests and prospective members are very welcome at our meetings. However, we do expect residents in the area to join after attending, say, two or three meetings as a visitor. The Membership Secretary, David Lyall (tel. 512313) has the necessary Application Forms.

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smoke signal

Editor: John Randall
202 Leckhampton Road
Tel: 01242 527904

No. 46, February 2004

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I hope it is not too late to wish you a belated "Happy New Year" – although many of you attended our first meeting of 2004 when David O'Connor related the history of Battledown Brick and Tile works – the enormous "hole in the ground" of yesteryear. Not only is the rest of the season well provided for, but we are already laying plans for 2004/05.

Our next Members' Evening is on 15th April, when we look forward to a mixed programme of individual members' interests or research projects. We already have a couple of interesting offers: have you something you would like to air?

As you will see within, John Randall who has edited 'Smoke Signal' for a number of years will have to step down after the next issue. Would someone be kind enough to offer to take over? As usual, it would be enormously helpful if a successor could be identified sooner rather than later, as we don't want a gap in publication of this modest but highly esteemed publication!

At our last committee meeting on 2nd February all members attended and we discussed a wide variety of subjects. The most exciting project is the forthcoming archaeological resistivity survey at The Moat which we hope will uncover more of Leckhampton's early history, although somewhat less dramatically than the 'Time Team'.

On a more down-to-earth note (no pun intended) we reviewed the form of our monthly meetings at Church House. The need to postpone our starting time to 7.45 arises from the occasional use of the room by the Brownies until 7.30. (A certain law decrees that on the occasion when one keyholder is absent and the other is delayed, the Brownies are elsewhere and members are shut out of an empty house.)

For security, we always lock the front door once the meeting starts and it has been our custom to allow a little extra time for stragglers. However, we decided that this was unfair on our speakers, especially as we have a few notices to give out beforehand, so we plan to follow the railway companies' example and close the door half a minute before departure time. You have been warned!

David Lyall

LECKHAMPTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Affiliated to Cheltenham Arts Council

THE DROPPED MEDICINE BOTTLE

Members may recall the photographs taken during the First World War in which Dr. Hugh Lloyd-Davies features among the medical staff at the Leckhampton Court Red Cross Hospital. (The present-day surgery in Moorend Park Road is of course named after him.)

During a recent talk at Charlton Kings LHS, I mentioned the fact that less than 18 months after the photos had been taken, the good doctor was dead, a victim of the influenza epidemic which he had worked so hard to combat. The remark prompted Mary Paget to write to me regarding one Frank Neather, who as a small boy used to be paid a farthing by an old woman in Charlton Kings to collect her medicine. This involved a round trip, first for the prescription from the surgery of Dr Lloyd-Davies at Italia Villa in Leckhampton Road (now No. 29), then to the Workhouse in Cheltenham for the medicine, and finally back to Charlton Kings. In 1903 (when Frank would have been about seven years old) he stopped in Lyefield Road to watch the men laying the tramlines, dropped the bottle - and had to do the whole round again! Not surprisingly, in the 1980s he was still walking into town, despising the bus.

Eric Miller

Note.

The photos referred to above are to be found on page 33 of *Leckhampton in Old Photographs* and page 30 of *Leckhampton Court- Manor House to Hospice*. An article about Dr. Lloyd - Davies appeared in *Smoke Signal* No. 14 (March 1996)

SOME FORTHCOMING MEETINGS 2004

Cheltenham Local History Society A.G.M. April 20th - at the Council Chamber, Municipal Offices, 7.30 p.m. . After the meeting, *Eric Miller* and *Geoff North* will be giving a talk, illustrated by slides, entitled " The late Steve Stoke - a Photographic Legacy". Steve lived in Leckhampton and practiced as an architect and was a fine photographer. The speakers will be showing some of his slides.

Computer Workshop - 8th May 2004. to be held at Tewkesbury School from 10.30 am to 4.00pm. Note revised date and venue. £10 per head not including lunch..

Local History Regional Meeting - Sunday June 27th 2004.-to be hosted by Stroud Local History Society. Full details to follow in due course.

The Bryan Jerrard Award: This is awarded annually for the best article on Gloucestershire local history and will be presented during the Local History event in October. Entries should be submitted before July 2004.

Local History Event. October 2nd at Thomas Rich's School, Gloucester and will this year, will be combined with the Midland History Conference. It will be a whole day affair and will concentrate on "Crime and Disorder". Again, full details will be circulated later.

A NEW "MOAT" SURVEY.

At the Committee Meeting held in November last, Rick Kedge put forward the suggestion that it might be time to consider a new investigation of the "Moat" site. The last time any work was done was in 1933 when a partial excavation took place but the results had given little indication as to what sort of building(s) existed there.

He suggested that any new investigation should be in the form of an archaeological survey, primarily on the field nearer the Church., using modern "geo-physical" methods (à la "Time Team") with the view of gleaning further more detailed information about the site.

Through the auspices of Terry Moore-Scott, we approached the Gloucestershire and District Archaeological Research Group (GADRAG) to ask if they would be prepared to consider using their equipment for such a survey and they have agreed to that request. Preliminary visits have been made to the site, with the kind permission of the owner, Mrs. Hicks. Application was made to English Heritage requesting the granting of the necessary license to allow us to proceed. This license has just been received and the geophysical survey will take place over the first weekend in April, depending on the weather. We will keep you informed of the results in due course.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2004.

Yes, that time of year is fast approaching and all the necessary information will be sent to you with the next edition of "Smoke Signal". One item I can give you is that Eve Andrew will be giving us a talk after the A G M has finished, on the subject of " Old Leckhampton"

Regretfully, however, I have to tell you that I have given notice to the Committee that I am tendering my resignation as Editor of "Smoke Signal". I have been Editor for three years and have enjoyed the job but for various reasons I have to hand the job over. I hope someone will come forward to carry on the job (possibly a "new" face) because it is an important part of the life of the Society.

STOP PRESS!

Now, there's something I have always wanted to do, or rather say, but when I had more or less completed the text of this edition we were informed by Jeremy Davis, our Web master that there is now a new, most interesting and informative Web site which covers many varied aspects of Leckhampton, in the round and, particularly, history. The address of this website is [WWW:leckhampton.co.uk](http://WWW.leckhampton.co.uk). Happy surfing!

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Season 2003/4

Feb	19 th	History of Roads and Public Rights of Way	Charlie Morris
Mar	18 th	Cheltenham Town Survey 1850	Geoff North
Apr	15 th	Members Evening	
May	20 th	Annual General Meeting — followed by a talk given by <i>Eve Andrew.</i>	

Held at Church House, Painsewick Road, on Thursday evenings at 7.45 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

As always, guests and prospective members are very welcome at our meetings. However, we do expect residents in the area to join after attending, say, two or three meetings as a visitor. The Membership Secretary, David Lyall (tel. 512313) has the necessary Application Forms.

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smoke signal

Editor: John Randall
202 Leckhampton Road
Tel: 01242 527904

No. 47, April 2004

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

They say that time flies when you are enjoying yourself – and it certainly seems to pass more quickly with advancing years. It seems no time since we were contemplating last year's Annual General Meeting and wondering where three new Committee members were coming from. However, our prayers were answered by exactly three members who volunteered to fill the vacancies, and to whom we remain most grateful.

As mentioned in the last issue, this will be John Randall's last as Editor of 'Smoke Signal', and I should like to thank him on behalf of the Society for maintaining an excellent run of newsletters during his editorship, and not least for having produced such a useful index. However, we do need a successor. The stark fact is: No Editor, no 'Smoke Signal' – but we are sure that one of you will come to the rescue!

Some familiarity with word processing, or even desktop publishing, would be an advantage, although we might be able to find someone to assist with the typesetting. If you feel that you might be able to undertake the editorship I would be delighted to hear from you, and John would be able to explain what it entails.

Since the whole Committee retires, although usually members offer themselves for re-election, it provides an opportunity for any Society member to be proposed. Some of us might even be relieved to be given the opportunity of retirement! Perhaps I might mention that I am entering on my third and final year of office, but although remission for good conduct would be nice I can hardly expect it!

Correction

In the last issue, when commenting on our use of Church House, I intended to refer to the occasional wait for the Brownies to leave before we can have the use of the room. I ought to make it clear that the Brownies normally use the room every Thursday, but they are often able to meet elsewhere on "our" evenings to avoid a clash, which we appreciate, as no doubt they in turn do in relation to our later start of 7.45 – and in practice it generally works well.

David Lyall

RECENT MEETINGS

In case you missed any meetings since January, here is a brief report, coupled with the hope that you may be able to come more often later in the year, even if you don't make the A.G.M.

The first meeting of the New Year was a talk by David O'Connor on the history of Battledown Brickworks, and especially the involvement of the Webb family. Very little now remains of what was once an extensive quarry and industrial site. Besides the Webbs' brick, tile and coal business, they had diversified into wine and educational supplies!

In February Charlie Morris gave us an interesting insight into the history of roads and public rights of way, and the intricate legal complications surrounding them. This was followed in March by Geoff North's talk on the Cheltenham Town survey of 1850, with illustrations of contemporary plans recently saved for posterity. Incredibly, the originals had until fairly recently been in regular use for consultation by Severn Trent when trying to trace sewers!

Our members' evening in April brought contributions from Terry Moore-Scott, Eric Miller and Cyril Richardson. Terry reported on the preliminary results of the geophysical (resistivity) survey carried out in association with GADARG at the Moat site, which extends into the garden of Church Farm, with computer-generated charts (future interpretation awaited). Eric recounted his researches into how the Lancashire cotton machinery magnate John Hargreaves happened to become the buyer of Leckhampton Court in 1894, and Cyril produced extracts from contemporary newspapers reporting on local balloon ascents in the early part of the 19th century – many of which were hair-raising.

We certainly get variety at our meetings!

AUCTION OF PUBLIC HOUSE AT LECKHAMPTON

From Alan Gill comes this Advert printed in the EXAMINER - 8 May 1861.

"At the Exmouth Arms Inn on 13th May 1861.

"All that freehold messuage now used as a Public House, with the extensive piece of land attached, and occupied therewith, in the Parish of Leckhampton. The property adjoins the Leckhampton Turnpike Gate and is situate at the junction of the New Bath Road with the road leading to Charlton Kings, commanding extensive and picturesque views, and justly celebrated for pure air and water. The frontage to the two roads, which is on a curve is 325 feet, and the average depth about 160 feet. The property is rapidly increasing in value from the locality becoming daily more and more a favourite site for the erection of villas and suburban residences. As there can be little doubt that in the course of a few months the present powers of the Turnpike Trust will be removed a considerable distance, the value of the land for building purposes must certainly advance more rapidly. The purchase will include the whole of the valuable fruit trees."

(This refers to the Malvern Inn, although it is not named as such.)

The "New Bath Road" was the early name for Leckhampton Road.)

SOME FORTHCOMING MEETINGS 2004

Computer Workshop - 8th May 2004. to be held at Tewkesbury School from 10.30 am to 4.00pm. Limited to 30 persons . £10 per head NOT including lunch..

Local History Regional Meeting 2004 – To be hosted by Stroud LHS.on the occasion of the town's 700th Anniversary on Sunday 27 June from 2.30 to 5.00 p.m. Starting with a talk on the "History of Stroud" in the Old Town Hall, at 2.30 p.m. where Tea will also be served later. After the talk, there will be a series of guided instructional walks. Due to the hilly nature of Stroud, these walks will be "graded". A charge £5.00 per head will be made. Applications to be submitted by 1st June to Mrs A Howard, 16 Barrow field Road, Farmhill, Stroud. GL6 4DF.

Local History Event. 2004 October 2nd -10 a.m-5 p.m at Thomas Rich's School. The morning talks will concentrate on "Crime and Disorder" in the Midlands. The afternoon will be devoted to Gloucestershire. Pre- booking for the whole day attendance is essential, light refreshments are available.

The **Bryan Jerrard Award 2004** – for the best article on Gloucestershire local history – will be presented during the event. The last date for entries is the end of July; they should be sent to GRCC at Community House, 15, College Green, Gloucester. GL1 2LZ.

OTHER EVENTS

May 2004 has been designated as **Local History Month** by the *Historical Association*. Numerous events have been organised locally.

At **Lydney** Town Hall on Sunday, 16th May, a Forest of Dean Local History Fair .

At **Cheltenham** on Tuesday May 18th., at 7pm a talk by Dr Stephen Blake followed by a buffet at The Little Owl, Cirencester Road, costs £7.50.

At the **Old Town Hall**, Stroud on May 19-23rd a Celebration of Industry in the Stroud area.

In September 2004 (Friday/ Saturday 3rd/4th 10am-4pm) **David Smith** is running a 2-day interactive workshop at the Kings School, Gloucester on the Manorial System of the 15/16th C. Limited to 20 persons each paying £30.

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Season 2003/4

May 20th Annual General Meeting — followed by a talk given by
Eve Andrew.

* * * * *

Season 2004/5

Sept 16th The Village of Naunton David Hanks

Oct 21st Members Evening

Held at Church House, Painswick Road, on Thursday evenings at 7.45 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

As always, guests and prospective members are very welcome at our meetings. However, we do expect residents in the area to join after attending, say, two or three meetings as a visitor. The Membership Secretary, David Lyall (tel. 512313) has the necessary Application Forms.

Back numbers of Smoke Signal are available to members to purchase and we also have a supply of Research Bulletin No. 2 and other local books, which are usually on sale at the monthly meetings or from Amy Woolacott, 15 Arden Road, Leckhampton, Cheltenham GL53 0HG. Tel 522566.

The Society's Website address is <<http://www.geocities.com/LLHSGL53>
and the Webmaster's e-mail address . mail@davis127.evesham.net.
Our Research Co-ordinator is Eric Miller whose telephone number is 526461
and his e-mail address is .. miller@leckhampton53.freemove.co.uk.

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Issued free to members – otherwise 50 pence



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No. 48, August 2004

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

*"Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date."*

We doubt that William Shakespeare had the Leckhampton Local History Society in mind when he wrote that sonnet. However, it is quite apposite since it seems but a few weeks ago that we held our A.G.M. on 20th May, yet next month we start again. You may be wondering (we hope you are) how this 'Smoke Signal' comes to you despite the previously announced retirement of its former editor John Randall. The answer is a simple one: John had collected enough material for another issue and very kindly offered to come out of retirement for the purpose. This was of course an offer I couldn't refuse, despite my reluctance to allow the Society to trespass on John's good nature - but it does underline the fact that we do need a new Editor if 'Smoke Signal' is not to be mothballed after this issue. Is there anyone out there?

For those more recent members who may be puzzled by the title of our newsletter, I should explain that it was devised (if I remember correctly) by our first editor, the late Bruce Staite. Leckhampton's outstanding physical feature is the Devil's Chimney, the pillar of rock visible from the lower levels of the area. Since the American Indians used to communicate by smoke signal, and Leckhampton has its own chimney, Bruce thought that our newsletter might as well be graced by the depiction of the Devil's Chimney with smoke coming out.

As you will see from the enclosed fixture card, the new season begins on 16th September with a talk by David Hanks on the Village of Naunton.

David Lyall

S.O.S.S.

Or –in other words “ Save Our Smoke Signal”. As you will see from David Lyall's Chairmans Message, although I had given plenty of notice that I wished to resign from the Editorship as from the AGM last May, no-one has yet volunteered to take over the job.unfortunately.

It is not a very onerous job but in the terms of the Society, an important one , being the conduit between the Committee and the members of the Society. Thus advanced notice of Society meetings are up-dated;other germaine local history matters are reported and reviews of past meetings and events plus pertinent articles on Leckhampton local history are included.

I trust that someone will give careful thought to the question and come forward to volunteer to take up the reins.

John Randall.

CHRISTMAS TREAT AT SALTERLEY GRANGE

From Alan Gill comes this Report printed in the CHRONICLE - dated 22 nd December. 1900 .

“Mr and Mrs Williams, as is their usual custom when at home, entertained the employees on their estate, with wives and children, to the number of nearly 60. After justice had been done to the good things provided, presents were given out to each, consisting of items of wearing apparel, one pound of tea to each woman and a substantial piece of beef to each married man and 2/6d to each single one. The above only helps to strengthen the bond that exists between master and men, that other employers of labour might with advantage copy. After singing the National Anthem, and hearty cheers had been given for Mr. and Mrs. Williams, the company dispersed, highly delighted with their nights entertainment”.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

In the Summer Edition of “*Local History News*” it was reported that the National Archives have set up a web site which contains over a million digital images of wills of men and women from all walks of life – from servants and plumbers to – royalty. The Web address is :- www.DocumentsOnline.pro.guv.uk

RESEARCH BULLETIN No.3

The next issue of the Society's Research Bulletin is due to be launched at the Members meeting on 21 October. It contains articles on a wide range of topics of local interest and is copiously illustrated. No member should be without a copy, especially at the bargain price of £2.50! An order form is enclosed.

SOME FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Cheltenham LHS We have been asked to advertise the fact that on Sunday August 22nd, Cheltenham Local History Society is again running a Local History Show at St. Andrews Church in Montpellier, similar to the very successful one held last year. Other affiliated local history Societies have been invited to participate and the event should be well attended. Our Society will be there; Eric Miller will be representing us and will be taking a selection of items about Leckhampton.

Gloucestershire Local History Event 2004 October 2nd -10 a.m-5 p.m at Thomas Rich's School. The morning talks will concentrate on "*Crime and Conflict in the Midlands*". The afternoon will be devoted to Gloucestershire. Pre- booking for the whole day attendance is essential, light refreshments are available.

The Bryan Jerrard Award 2004 – for the best article on Gloucestershire local history – will be presented during the event. The last date for entries has now passed and it will be interesting to see who wins the Award this year.

In September 2004 (Friday/ Saturday 3rd/4th 10am-4pm) David Smith is running a 2-day interactive workshop at the Kings School, Gloucester on the Manorial System of the 15/16th C. Limited to 20 persons each paying £30.

PAST EVENTS

Stroud 's Local History Event

A good number of local history society members had an enjoyable afternoon at this event which was held in the Old Town Hall. Coincidentally, the town of Stroud was celebrating it's 700th anniversary.

The president of Stroud LHS summarised the town's history followed by a choice of walks (more or less strenuous!) led by well-informed guides who were able to point out aspects of Stroud's development of streets and buildings.

The weather occasionally threatened rain but it held off until the lovely tea was being served, which rounded off a thoroughly interesting afternoon.

Local History Afternoon. 2005

Just a reminder to all members that Leckhampton LHS will be the host Society on July 2nd 2005 and the Committee will be looking for plenty of support from the members to make this a rousing success.

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Season 2004/5

Sept 16 th	The Village of Naunton	David Hanks
Oct 21 st	Members Evening	
Nov 18 th	Hailes Abbey	David Aldred
Dec 16 th	My Collection of Artefacts	Terry Enoch

Held at Church House, Painswick Road, on Thursday evenings at 7.45 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

As always, guests and prospective members are very welcome at our meetings. However, we do expect residents in the area to join after attending, say, two or three meetings as a visitor. The Membership Secretary, David Lyall (tel. 512313) has the necessary Application Forms.

Back numbers of Smoke Signal are available to members to purchase and we also have a supply of Research Bulletin No. 2 and other local books, which are usually on sale at the monthly meetings or from Amy Woolacott, 15 Arden Road, Leckhampton, Cheltenham GL53 0HG. Tel 522566.

The Society's Website address is :- [www: llhs.org.uk](http://www.llhs.org.uk)
and the Webmaster's e-mail address is; [jeremy.davis127@btinternet.com.](mailto:jeremy.davis127@btinternet.com)
(Please note that both of the about addresses have been changed.)

Our Research Co-ordinator is Eric Miller whose telephone number is 01242 526461 and his e-mail address is .. miller@leckhampton53.freemove.co.uk.

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The Newsletter of the Leckhampton Local History Society

No. 49, December 2004

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

This issue come to you through the good offices of the Ghost of Christmas Present, since we do not have an incumbent Editor. No prizes are offered for guessing the identity of our ethereal benefactor, but we are very grateful to him for acting as Santa Claus in this instance.

Having said that, we really do need someone more substantial than the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come to take over the editorship of this publication. We were very nearly deprived of the opportunity to wish A Merry Christmas to all our Readers.

A Tiny Mystery Solved

Some interest was generated recently by the attempt – even involving GCHQ – to decipher an inscription at Shugborough Hall in Staffordshire, consisting of a string of apparently jumbled letters. After the usual wild predictions that it might lead to the Holy Grail (why always that?) it turned out to be the initial letters of a Latin epitaph to a deceased wife and sister.

Now, can you guess why the parapet of the former railway bridge in Leckhampton Road bears the mysterious inscription "BCL 106-12" and that in Moorend Park Road "BCL 106-28"? Is it perhaps to enable the little green men to locate the Village Hall as a base to take over the world?

The explanation is much more mundane. When British Railways, in their unwisdom, closed the Kingham line they retained the responsibility to maintain the structures of the bridges. Every section of railway line, whether operational or disused, has a three-letter Engineers' Line Reference. In this case it stands for "Banbury-Cheltenham Line" – which it was originally – and the figures denote the distance in miles and chains measured from Paddington, just in case somebody from Network Rail wants to find it to repoint the brickwork. A more modern example is a neat metal plate on Lansdown Road bridge lettered "BAG" for "Birmingham And Gloucester" with the miles and chains from Derby, which was the hub of the Midland Railway.

Isn't useless information fascinating?

David Lyell



AGAIN S.O.S.S. & AGAIN

In the last Edition of "Smoke Signal", John Randall included the following paragraphs :-.

" Or --in other words " Save Our Smoke Signal". Although I had given plenty of notice that I wished to resign from the Editorship as from the AGM last May, no-one has yet volunteered to take over the job..

It is not a very onerous job but in the terms of the Society, an important one , being the conduit between the Committee and the members of the Society. Thus advanced notice of Society meetings are up-dated; other germane local history matters are reported and reviews of past meetings and events plus pertinent articles on Leckhampton local history are included."

Unfortunately, so far, no-one has come forward. Again, we, the Committee appeal for someone to volunteer to take the job on, as we do not wish to see the demise of the "Smoke Signal".

NEWS — from the Gloucestershire Records Office.

January 1st 2005 sees the implementation of the *Freedom of Information Act 2000*, which gives everybody a general right to access all types of recorded information held by public authorities, with limited exceptions to cover such areas as national security and personal data.

The G.R O. has announced that as from 1st January 2005, users of the Search Room will no longer have to pay an admission charge, currently £2 per day. However, users will still have to register for a searcher's ticket at the Record Office.

In addition, Search room staff will also be able to offer new or infrequent users the opportunity of a 30 minute guided tour around the Search Room on Monday mornings at 11.15 a.m. Bookings may be made in advance by telephone or at Reception when you arrive before 11.15 a.m.

The *Friends of Gloucestershire Archives* Programme of Events 2005 gives information that there will be two workshop sessions, entitled "Finding Archives Online" at the Record Office, on Wednesday 16th and Saturday 19th February 2005 and led by Nicholas Kingsley

NEWS — from the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Season 2004/5

Dec 16 th	My Collection of Artifacts	Terry Enoch
2005		
Jan 20 th	Crickley Hill	Richard Savage
Feb 17 th	Great Views of Gloucestershire	Alan Pilbeam

Held at Church House, Painswick Road, on Thursday evenings at 7.45 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

At the time of writing, the membership of the Society stands at 105 fully paid-up members plus 2 Honorary members. May we remind you that your annual subscription was due as at 1st September last. If you have overlooked the fact, the Membership Secretary will no doubt be looking forward to receiving your payment in due course.

As always, guests and prospective members are very welcome at our meetings. However, we do expect residents in the area to join after attending, say, two or three meetings as a visitor. The Membership Secretary, David Lyall (tel. 512313) has the necessary Application Forms.

Back numbers of Smoke Signal are available to members to purchase and we also have a supply of Research Bulletin No. 2 and other local books, which are usually on sale at the monthly meetings or from Amy Woolacott, 15 Arden Road, Leckhampton, Cheltenham GL53 0HG. Tel 522566.

The Society's Website. The address is <<http://www.llhs.org.uk> and the e-mail address of our Webmaster is :- jeremy.davis127@btinternet.com

The Research Co-ordinator's address Eric Miller Tel 526461 and his e-mail address is .. miller@leckhampton53.freemove.co.uk.

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The Annual Local History Event 2004 was held as usual at Thomas Rich's School in Gloucester on Saturday 2nd October . This was a full day meeting and was combined with the Midland History Conference. It was a one-off event and concentrated on " Crime and Conflict in the Midlands" in the morning and Gloucestershire in the afternoon. It was, in general, well received but said by some to be too scholarly.

The Award for the best display/ information table by a Local History Society was presented by Bryan Jerrard to Swindon Village Local History Society.

The Bryan Jerrard Award 2004 for the best article on Gloucestershire local history was awarded to David O'Connor for his article "The Bartons of Hambrook and Bafford Grange" which appeared in the Charlton Kings LHS Research Bulletin No. 50.

The Local History Regional Meeting 2005 will be held on July 2nd and as previously notified, will be hosted by Leckhampton Local History Society. It will be based at the Sue Ryder Home (Leckhampton Court) and run from 2 - 5 p.m.: there will be a £5 per head charge which will include tea, talks and guided walks.

The Annual Local History Afternoon 2005 will be on Saturday 1st October. The theme will be the Napoleonic Wars Era. This was chosen because October 12th is the 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar. Any local connection would be of interest, whether it be military or naval and could form part of the LHS display/information table.

A number of Local History Societies are assembling artefacts and items of interest to make small museums – often in private homes with limited opening. The Rural Community Council Chairman hopes to collate details of where the museums will be, and their opening times.

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Eric Miller reminds us that the book "Leckhampton Court – Manor House to Hospice" is now on sale at the bargain price of £3.00. If you have not had a copy yet, or if you'd like to send one as a Christmas present, you can buy one from him, tel. 526461.

#

The Events Committee of Emmanuel Church is planning to put on an exhibition next year concerning the northern area of Leckhampton. If you think you may have something to contribute, please contact Pauline Bradstock, tel. 515825.

Issued free to members – otherwise 50 pence

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The Newsletter of the Leckhampton Local History Society

No. 50, April 2005

THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

It hardly seems possible that our society newsletter has reached its 50th edition, but time flies when you are enjoying yourself, as they say – usually ironically. However, we do have additional cause for celebration in the form of a new Editor.

Lorna Robson has kindly offered to undertake the task, with the help for this edition of John Randall who is now able to retire properly. Our grateful thanks to him, once again, for having put numerous issues together (and writing much of them) and especially for No.49 produced in his "retirement", to say nothing of his additional responsibilities in the Gloucestershire-Warwickshire Railway - and all this whilst recovering from a car accident.

The notice of the Annual General Meeting on 19th May is enclosed with this issue. As usual, we invite – nay, entreat – members to stand for the Committee. It is all the more pressing this year as we are losing two of our long-standing members. Roger Richards, the current Vice-Chairman, needs to devote more time to his church duties, and Alan Gill has decided not to seek re-election this year, but he has kindly agreed to continue to look after the Society's photographic archives. Both of them having been on the committee for more years than most of us can remember, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking them for their years of service, for which the Society is greatly indebted.

This will be my last Chairman's Message, as I shall have completed three years in the chair by the A.G.M. We would be delighted if a surprise candidate were to be sprung upon us, failing which our Secretary Amy Woolacott (a former Chairman) would be prepared to fill the gap for one year. However, we really do need two or three new committee members to maintain continuity and to come up with fresh ideas. Alan Gill acted as Minutes Secretary, so we are therefore looking for a committee member to undertake that important but not too arduous task: could it be you? (If no-one else volunteers, I would be qualified to do it, but since I am willing to stand as Vice-Chairman as well as being Membership Secretary and chief 'Smoke Signal' distributor I really don't want to wear four hats at once!).

David Lyall

AN APPEAL FROM YOUR NEW EDITOR

As David Lyall has said, there are three places for members wishing to join the Committee. I joined last year (probably because no one else offered) and I have not regretted it. Everyone on the Committee has taken many roles over the years and I think it only fair that others should take their turn!. Why should the success and continuity of the Society depend on so few? There are only three meetings a year and to date, everything runs like clock work. The events programme is arranged, the finances are taken care of, but for it to continue, new faces would be more than welcome around the friendly table. Please do consider joining us

Lorna Robson.

THE HAW BRIDGE MYSTERY

The March meeting was a "Sell Out". Being a relative newcomer to Cheltenham, I had no prior knowledge of what the evening would bring, but there was a great air of excitement in the hall as everyone took their seats and more chairs were brought in. We were in for a treat.....

That treat was a film made by the Dowty Cine Club about the 1938 Haw Bridge mystery, when a dismembered body was found in the River Severn at Haw Bridge and the unsolved murder was linked to Tower Lodge on Leckhampton Hill. Made some 30 years ago, the film was extremely professional with realistic monochrome reconstructions (made all the more interesting by the odd detectable anachronism), colour panoramas of the local countryside and background music by Elgar and Vaughan Williams.

The presentation took one back to the days of "steam" cine with the nostalgic noise from the sprockets and occasional loss of the loop – much more fun than video! (We even had an expertly repaired projector breakdown, but the unscheduled interval was without ice cream). Still shots of pre-war Cheltenham and newspaper cuttings evoked nostalgia. We trust that the film can be digitally archived to ensure preservation of such a gem of amateur film-making.

David Lyall.

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Leckhampton Local History Society has received a letter of thanks for the donation it made to the Gloucester and District Archaeological Research Group. This organisation carried out the geophysical survey of the Moat in 2004. Our donation will enable GADARG to upgrade some of their equipment so that they will be able to conduct resistivity surveys more quickly.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Local History Regional Meeting 2005 will be held on July 2nd and as previously notified, will be hosted by Leckhampton Local History Society. It will be based at the Sue Ryder Home (Leckhampton Court) and run from 2 - 5 p.m.: there will be a £5 per head charge which will include tea, talks and guided walks.

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The Cotswold Water Park Society.

A feasibility study is taking place on how the historic environment can be interpreted and the methods of enhancing the place of the historic environment including consultations with societies concerned with history and archaeology. Their report is due by early April 2005.

Local History Month – May 2005.

The Historical Association will be publishing events on their website- www.history.org.uk and publicity for this event can be sent to:- lhmm@history.org.uk

Local History Event at Emmanuel Church – 20th /21st May 2005.

This is a not-to-be-missed opportunity to view a wide range of exhibits put together by local people about the church and its parish. These include local industries; Marylyn West's Bath Road study; Naunton Park Recreation Ground; Naunton Park School and Hatherley Park and others. There will be refreshments and chances to share memories and information. The event will be open on Friday afternoon at 4.00pm-7.00pm and on Saturday 10.00am – 4.00pm.

The School is rapidly approaching its 100th year and as my daughter is a pupil there, I have offered to put together a display about the school's history. I am fortunate in having material from a recent school reunion and a scrapbook by Geoffrey Capper detailing his school days, but if members would like to offer their memories or allow me to photocopy memorabilia, I would be very happy to hear from them.

Lorna Robson (01242 242996).

FORTHCOMING SOCIETY MEETINGS.

Season 2004/5

May 19th Annual General — followed by "Memories of Leckhampton"
Meeting By Mary Paterson.

* * * * *

Season 2005/6

Sept 15th Edward Wilson Snr David Elder
Local Historian

Oct 20th Members Evening

Held at Church House, Painswick Road, on Thursday evenings at 7.45 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

As always, guests and prospective members are very welcome at our meetings. However, we do expect residents in the area to join after attending, say, two or three meetings as a visitor. The Membership Secretary, David Lyall (tel. 512313) has the necessary Application Forms.

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