



# Smoke Signal

Affiliated to Cheltenham Arts Council

Leckhampton Local History Society's Newsletter

## Town Meets Country

*This story begins, as they often do, with a simple enquiry: a family name and a possible connection to a house name.*

Lyndon Evans, now living in South Wales, sent an enquiry to the LLHS website in the hope we might be able to help. The family name was Phipps and the house name was either Lynn or Lyme Cottage. There was an address of 161 Shurdington Road as well. There was also a picture of some possible relatives sat outside a thatched cottage. Lyndon had no way to know if these people were relatives of his, or whether this was Lyme Cottage.

I began the search with the family name of Phipps. Lyndon added a great bit of extra info, when he identified that William and Ann Phipps were buried in St.Peter's. This gave me some firm dates, which lined up with available census records, and suddenly I was able to start piecing the Phipps part of the story together.

The Phipps family appear in the earliest census available, William Phipps (wine cooper), living at 11 Commercial Street in some small cottages behind the Fountain Inn. This establishment is long gone and was on the site of what is now the small Sainsburys on Bath Road. William and Ann (now buried in St.Peter's close to where the footpath heads up to the Court) had a son William James. William James remained in the area and became a boot maker. A brother, Charles, became a well-known pork butcher and had a store in the Bath Rd in what is now the Red Cross shop (see the excellent Southtown website – [www.cheltenhamouthtown.org](http://www.cheltenhamouthtown.org)).

So by the mid 1880's the Phipps family have become the artisans, which Southtown was so well-known for, and William James Phipps had married Hannah and after a number of house moves, arrived at Lyme Cottage (now 28 Shurdington Rd), where they raised nine children. Part of Lyndon's original mystery was now solved; we had made the connection between the Phipps family and Lyme Cottage. But Lyme Cottage wasn't the thatched cottage shown in Lyndon's family photograph that he had originally mentioned. So was it just a random image after all, or did it have a real connection to the family? It was time to see the picture. As many will immediately recognise, the thatched cottage in question turns out to be Cromwell Cottage, sadly lost in 1962.

*continued on next page*



## Subscription holiday for current members

Just a reminder that subscriptions paid over the past year are valid until Autumn **2022** to reflect the reduced outgoings of the Society during pandemic restrictions. So if you were wondering why there is no renewal form included with this edition of Smoke Signal – that's the reason! The 2021/2022 programme is taking shape. All meetings until January 2022 will take place via Zoom on the second Thursday of each month.



Photo: Phipps Pork Butchers, Bath Road

### *Continued from front page*

At this point, Lyndon introduced some new information. As I mentioned, William James and Hannah Phipps had 9 children. One of those was Catherine Hannah and Lyndon mentioned that she had married Albert Hawker. He wondered if I had any information on the Hawkers.

So now it was back to the census: The Hawkers were cut from a different cloth. They represent a very long line of agricultural labourers, and appear to have been one of the main families living in Leckhampton for generations past. They first appear in the 1700's in Staverton, but move to Upper Pilley (now near the top of Old Bath Rd) in Leckhampton at the start of the 1800's. William Hawker married Mary Mustoe (another old name). William and Mary have 7 children, one of whom – George – marries Ellen Clutterbuck. They set up home in the mid 1800's at Prospect Place (now where Moored Road bends round to join Leckhampton Rd). They have 5 children and one of these, Albert, marries Catherine Hannah Phipps. And so the two families, Phipps and Hawkers, come together, and in doing so, Town met Country.

But what about Cromwell Cottage? Was there a family connection, or was that just an attractive backdrop for a local photographer. This is where I had some luck in my research. The Leckhampton Court estate was sold in 1894 at the end of the Brandon Trye era. The society archives hold the sales particular of that sale. I decided to have a look at the sale details for Cromwell Cottage and to my great surprise, found that in 1894 it was being leased to a Charles Hawker, who was the brother of Albert and therefore Lyndon's great grand-uncle!

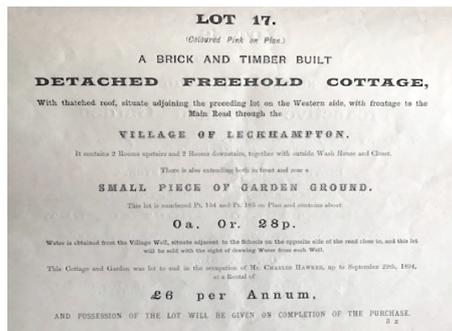
Those sale details and various census records show members of the Hawker family living all over the village from Upper Pilley down to the thatched cottage that still sits alongside Collum End Farm. The unexpected final chapter was when elements of both families moved from Leckhampton to the Rhondda in South Wales, which is where Lyndon still lives.

Charles remained in Leckhampton when his brothers Albert and Ralph moved to the Rhondda. He became a coal merchant, possibly selling coal coming from the Rhondda, reflecting a shift in economies as our society moved from its agricultural past to its industrial future.

*By Paul McGowan*



Plan: Plan from the 1894 Particulars of Sale for Leckhampton Court



Above: 1894 Particulars for Sale for Cromwell Cottage

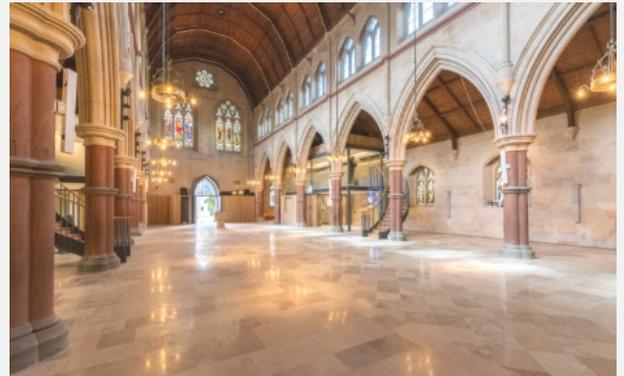
## Research Bulletin No.5 Addendum

A gremlin removed the footnotes to Eric Miller's article on 'Henry Knight's Will'. If you have a copy you may wish to insert the following explanations.

- The will itself, written in Latin, may be seen in Gloucestershire Archives, ref D3439/1/258, also TNA PROB 11/22/120.
- In 1522 Henry Knight's property was worth £200. It is very difficult to suggest equivalent values in today's money, but using the Bank of England calculator, that sum would be worth about £195,000..
- It is not known where he died, as there are no burial records at Leckhampton before 1626 and early records for the Savoy Chapel (which would have been relevant if he had died in London) were destroyed by a fire in 1864.
- The 'Dirge': '*Dirige*' in the original document, is the Latin word from which 'dirge' is derived, being the first word of the office for the dead.
- The 'Hearse' would have been a triangular frame on a stand, holding fifteen candles on which to hang epitaphs.

## Chairman's Message *Stop Press: All Change?*

Well! Things are getting back to normal. Yes, people are being cautious and very sensible when they are out and about. I have had more coffees, teas and meals sat outside and I have to say I have been lucky with the weather. This leads on to thinking about the return to having live meetings. I am delighted to say that new people have still joined our society over this lockdown time which brings our membership to over one hundred!! Wonderful! The committee has been working hard in debating when to return to our meetings in person and, because we have grown, whether we should find alternative accommodation as it was getting rather cramped in the cottages. There are three possibilities.



*Photo: The newly reordered St Philip and St James's Church, Grafton Road, Leckhampton*

Four of us have been to St Philip and St James's Church which has been reordered beautifully which gives us a great space to meet in. On the plus side people can sit away from each other if they so wish, there is adequate parking and toilet facilities. Also, someone will be on hand to help with the IT in setting up the lecture and there will be a mic and loop which people can tap in to. The church is only available on Monday and Tuesdays though. The church is open each morning for you to have a look inside, which is impressive. We also thought of St Peter's Church but this may be closed next year for reordering.

We have contacted Emmanuel Church, who have recently decided to rent out their worship space. This is a large area with screens and facilities to plug in the computer. It is available on Thursdays and has a large car park. We also have access to a kitchen! So as you see the committee is working hard to secure a new venue for our growing numbers.

The committee has decided to continue for the time being with ZOOM lectures at 19.30 on the second Thursday of the month. The first will be on September 9<sup>th</sup> when Rose Hewlett will talk about "How to date a village from parish records". We appreciate that not all members are happy with using Zoom and others have not got a device to use. If you have difficulties with Zoom or cannot access Zoom and would like to participate, please do contact me as we are here to help. [sue@everest48.plus.com](mailto:sue@everest48.plus.com) 01242 581661. Looking forward to seeing you all soon in person!

*Sue Marlow, Chairman*



## Listening to Leckhampton

How often am I driven to ask: what is that dreadful noise? In a rural setting, such as Leckhampton, "noise" is usually transitory, while road repairs are done or a neighbour has house/garden alterations made. There are more - pleasant "noises" for example - the Primary School playground at lunchtime or perhaps St Peter's Church bells beckoning

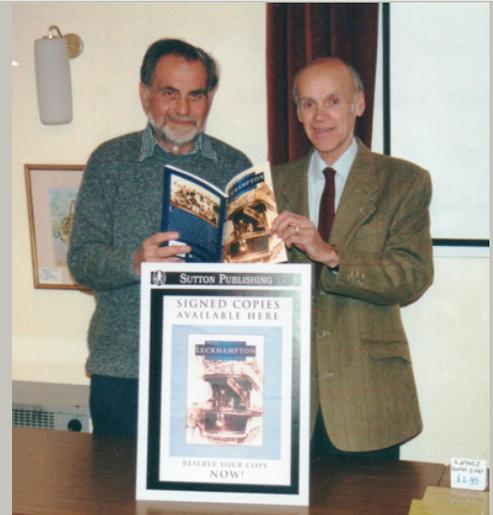
the faithful, but it could be from a football match in Burrow's Field. This large open space, surrounded by a wide variety of trees, is for all age-groups' recreation and much frequented by dog-walkers, whose pets often indulge in "mock fights" with many yaps and growls.

So, it is true, we are largely rural with farmland nearby; I often hear cattle mooing and domestic fowl cockerels crowing near Allenfield. Many of us like to amble along various footpaths and enjoy "birdsong" - perhaps hearing a pheasant or maybe an evening owl. Just occasionally we might hear the evocative sound of swans' wingbeats overhead. Early-birds (I am one) might hear the milkman's delivery van whirring around our roads. The seasons have their special sounds; Easter church bells, carol singers at Yuletide but in moments of rural calm I ponder how little has changed from our historic past. Surely LLHS members have their own recollections. Your society is planning to encapsulate the sounds of Leckhampton. Suggestions are welcome.

*Amy Woolacott*

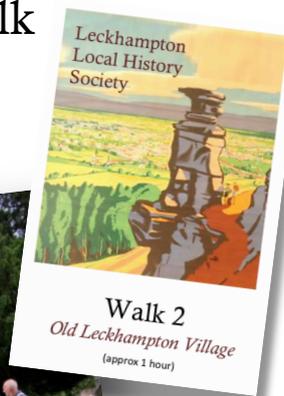
## Obituary – Alan Gill

Alan Gill died suddenly on 25<sup>th</sup> May at the age of 88. Failing health had prevented him from attending recent meetings, and he and his wife Jane had been elected as Honorary Members. During the society's early years he had been deeply involved in its activities, serving on the committee and contributing articles for *Smoke Signal* and the first *Research Bulletin*. His main achievement – a monumental undertaking – was to compile the society's portfolio of over 500 photographs, all meticulously catalogued (as befits a former Civil Servant). The book *Leckhampton in Old Photographs* included a selection of the images. It had been our intention to enable members to see the portfolio at a special meeting, but Covid prevented this from happening. An early opportunity will be taken to show them when we can meet again. We send Jane our deepest sympathy.



Alan Gill with Eric Miller, November 2000, after launch of *Leckhampton in Old Photographs*

## History Walk for FOD LHS



Way back in the distant past, in a land before social distancing, face masks and double jabs, I was asked by the Forest of Dean Local History Society (FODLHS) if I would lead them on one of our local walks around the village. We had originally planned for it to happen in the summer of 2020 – bad timing. But the FODLHS secretly kept us in their plans, and a few weeks ago, I received a message asking if I was still up for doing the walk. With restrictions beginning to lift, I concluded that we would be able to do it, and on Sunday the 11<sup>th</sup> of July, a group of 15 travelled up from the Forest. In the end we did two of the walks – the Old Village and the Church & Yard. Victoria Sandwiched in the middle, was a lovely stop for tea and cake at the Church Cottages – thanks Maggie! Eric kindly helped out on the Church section which gave my throat a rest. The weather was kind and the visitors all said they had a lovely day. A delightful surprise, was meeting Madeline Johnstone, whose father Geoffrey Coleridge Ford, had been rector in the 1960's. Madeline stayed on to look around her old family home, which brought many memories flooding back, including sitting in the dining room, listening to the news of Soviet forces re-invading Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1968!

*Paul McGowan*

## Wanted: Independent Examiner of Accounts

It was reported at the AGM that Jim Breddy has decided it is time to step down as Independent Examiner of the Society's accounts, and we recorded our thanks to Jim for his contribution in this and other roles over many years. We therefore need a volunteer to be our Independent Examiner before the next annual accounts are presented to members in Spring/Summer 2022. If you or someone you know might be interested in taking this on, please get in touch with me and I can provide details of what is involved. Stephen Gale, Hon Treasurer - [leckhamptonlhs@gmail.com](mailto:leckhamptonlhs@gmail.com)

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