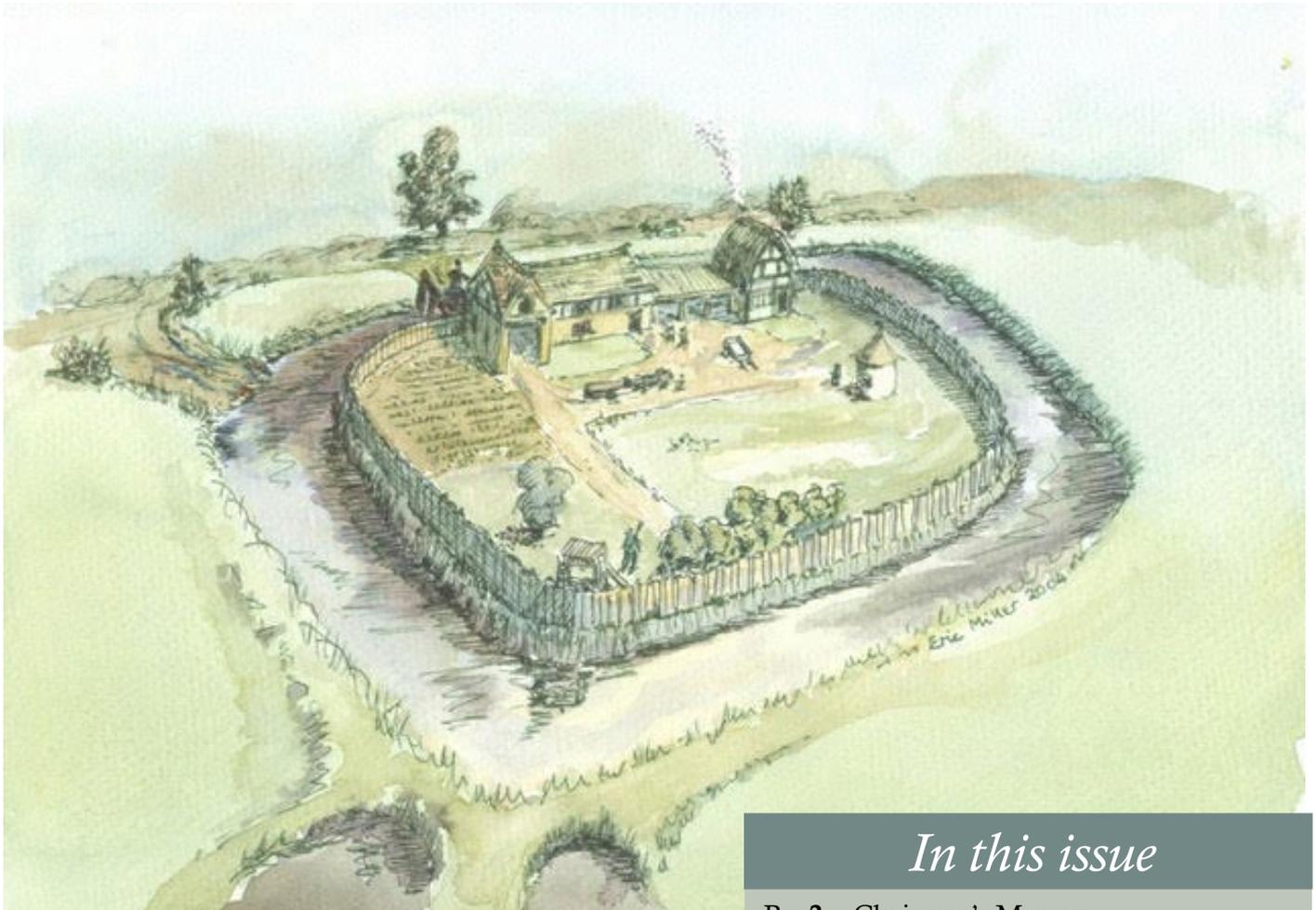




# Smoke Signal

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The newsletter of Leckhampton Local History Society



## *Our Medieval Village*

Could an 1830s map provide a glimpse into Leckhampton's medieval past? *Paul McGowan* has an exciting development.

**Find out more on page 3**

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*Cover Image:* with kind permission from Eric Miller

## Chairman's Message: Good news!

I am delighted that we are meeting for the AGM in person! Please join the committee for the LLHS AGM at St Peter's Church Leckhampton on May 12<sup>th</sup> at 19.30. As you know the business meeting will take around twenty minutes followed by Alan Pilbeam speaking about The Royal Progress through Gloucestershire 1535. I am so grateful to Stephen Gale, our treasurer, who has got to grips with Zoom so we could continue with our meetings. Also the rest of the committee, who have been very supportive during this time. My thanks to Matt Youngs, who has stepped forward to edit this edition of *Smoke Signal*. We are planning to display a selection of items from the Society's archives in the Glebe Cottages on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July. Also David Elder has agreed to take us on walk on September 3<sup>rd</sup> titled 'Secret Cheltenham' starting at The Wilson. Details of the two events to follow. I enjoyed planting my tree in Burrow's Field with help! Thank you, Barbara! I also made contact with Lucy, the community officer, at the planting, who will keep in touch with events in the area.

It will be lovely to greet you all on 12<sup>th</sup> May!

*Sue Marlow*

**LLHS Chairman**



## Gloucestershire Local History Association News

### The History of Education in Gloucestershire

GLHA's Local History Day takes place this year on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May**, at the University of Gloucestershire Oxtalls Campus.

The programme includes talks from Catherine Holloway, Professor Nicholas Orme, Judith Ellis, and Averil Kear.

LLHS, along with other local history societies, will have a display present for all attendees to view. For more information visit [www.gloshistory.org.uk](http://www.gloshistory.org.uk)

Tickets are £5 for the day, including refreshments at lunch and tea breaks. Additional donations welcome.

### Summer Meeting

GLHA will also hold a Summer Meeting on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> June, 1.00 pm – 5.00 pm in St Andrew's Church. It is being hosted by Cheltenham LHS, as it celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The theme is Trade and Industry and various societies, including Leckhampton LHS, will be putting on displays. There is also a choice of conducted walks. Advance booking is required by 28<sup>th</sup> May - £10 to include afternoon tea.

Details and application forms may be obtained from [suebrown@waitrose.com](mailto:suebrown@waitrose.com) or Tel. 01242 231837.



## *Change of Smoke Signal Editor*

Julie Sharpe started editing *Smoke Signal* towards the end of 2013, not long after she and her husband Dave joined the Society. Julie has now decided it is time to stand down. We are hugely grateful for her skilful contribution – in print or online, she has always made the newsletter look clear, attractive, and professional. And we are delighted that, once again, a new member has stepped to volunteer for the job! This edition of *Smoke Signal* is edited by Matt Youngs, who introduces himself below.

*Stephen Gale*

**On behalf of the LLHS Committee**



Hello!

I'm very grateful to the LLHS Committee for permitting me to become resident Editor, having only joined the Society myself a week or so before the call went out! I was born and raised in Leckhampton, becoming an alumnus of Leckhampton Primary School when I left Year 6 in the summer of 2008. I'm currently a long-distance member of the Society, being based in Loughborough, the town of my alma mater, but frequently return to the area when visiting family.

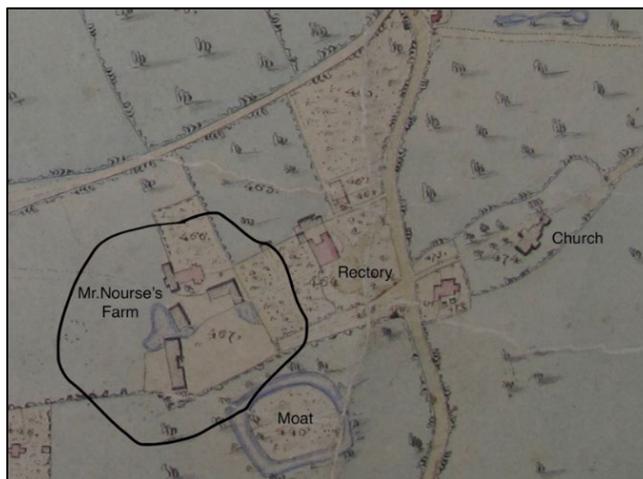
I hope you enjoy this, my first edited edition of *Smoke Signal*, and I look forward to meeting more of you in due course. I always welcome feedback and thoughts, so please do get in touch via email ([youngsmatthew@gmail.com](mailto:youngsmatthew@gmail.com)) if you wish to share some reflections.

~ Matt

## Leckhampton's Archaeology: A Geophysical Survey

*Paul McGowan investigates*

We are fortunate in having a wonderful record of Leckhampton's history, through the efforts of earlier residents and members of the society. While much is known, there is always more to know, especially about the medieval and earlier periods. One such question is the location of the medieval village and its relationship to the early manors of Leckhampton.



We know from early maps (see an excerpt from Croome's map of 1836 above) that there were a number of significant buildings, latterly known as Mr. Nourse's farm, in the fields lying to the north of the moat site. What was the relationship between these buildings, the moated manor, and the early village? Is this the site of the medieval village?

We are fortunate that these fields have been undisturbed, so any archaeology should still be present. The society is currently exploring with GCC the possibility of carrying out a geophysical survey in this field with the aim of learning more about what lies beneath! We are seeking grant funding to allow us to recruit professional archaeological

support, but the real aim would be to allow residents to get involved in, quite literally, unearthing the story of early Leckhampton. We will update you during the year, as to whether we will be able to take this forward. For the time being, spread the word! It would be wonderful if we could recruit some enthusiastic locals to help out, should we be able to take this project forward.

# Planting for the Future

Many of us have watched the re-landscaping of Burrow's Field over the past year or so on walks around the new perimeter path – only to encounter the water-logged stretch at the far end, by the patch of tangled bramble and scrub near Moorend Stream.

As part of the management of their home ground, Leckhampton Rovers Football Club were given over 1200 tree saplings by the Woodland Trust. A mix of thirsty species, including willow, dogwood, birch and oak, planting these in this area should help to soak up some of the water running off the playing fields.

So, on a sunny Friday in March, under the watchful eyes of Mark Beaney from LRFC and Borough Rangers Wayne Sedgwick and Lucy Wise, a group of 25 to 30 volunteer planters showed up ready for action. Volunteers represented local residents and organisations including LLHS, FOLK, Cotswold Wardens and Friends of Pittville.

With the brambles already cut, though extremely wet in places, planting proceeded rapidly, with the main block of around 800 trees planted by the end of the morning. Leckhampton Primary School Parliament came along mid-morning

to plant their own patch, near the path out to Merlin Way; as did the Pre-school. Other schools and some of the football teams were due to plant their own patches later in the day and on the Saturday.

Trees were planted in simple slip trenches, with a supporting stick and biodegradable animal protector. A circle of bark chips around the base of each tree should inhibit grass growth, which might hold back the tree's establishment. Though not all the trees will take, and some will need to be thinned over time, within a decade or so they should form a dense copse.



Not only should they become a welcome 'sponge' appreciated by walkers along that stretch of the perimeter path, but they will also develop into a fine backdrop to the sports pitches and to the circular Centenary Copse, itself now fairly mature, which stands nearby. And for the children and other volunteers who helped to plant them, watching

the trees take, grow and mature will be a lasting reminder of the Royal Platinum Jubilee year of 2022, long into the future.

*Oliver Pointer*

## Annual General Meeting

This is to give notice that the Society's Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm in St Peter's Church** (N.B. not the Church Cottages). Please do attend if you are able to. As usual, we will be electing committee members for the next year, retrieving accounts, and reviewing the Society's previous and future activities, as per the agenda which will be sent out with this copy of *Smoke Signal*. We are delighted to be able to hold this meeting in person and look forward to welcoming everyone.

*Anne Gale*  
**Honorary Secretary**

## Obituary: David Cox

We regret to record the death of David Cox on 6<sup>th</sup> February at the age of 94. David was a keen supporter of the Society in its early stages and was a member of the committee for several years. We offer our condolences to his family.

# The Platinum Jubilee

Future historians will search for reports of the celebration of Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, much as we already enjoy accounts of her actual Coronation. As recalled in *Smoke Signal 68* (Autumn 2012), Leckhampton laid on a 'right royal' celebration of the Queen's coronation, with fun and games for young and old. A huge beacon was erected on the Hill, as was done for both of Queen Victoria's Jubilees, and for the coronation and Silver Jubilee of King George V. In 1953 a crowd of 1200, including 550 children, took part in sports and novelty events on the former Leckhampton Sports Club ground (now the school field).

For Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, according to the Reverend Clifford Aston's enthusiastic account, 'good fellowship and glad harmony everywhere prevailed' while 'to the strains of gentle music by the Town Band, couples tripped it merrily on the green, and seemed incapable of fatigue'. Special peals were rung on the bells of St Peter's church. Permanent memorials of the Queen's reign are the Parish Hall and its clock. Opposite the Malvern Inn (remember that?) a drinking fountain would 'prove a real boon to wayfarers, both four-legged and two'. Sadly, that has since been removed.

Edward VII's coronation was postponed because of the King's operation for appendicitis. On the actual day (9<sup>th</sup> August, 1902), there was a service in the church at noon, and at 2 o'clock a dinner in the Parish

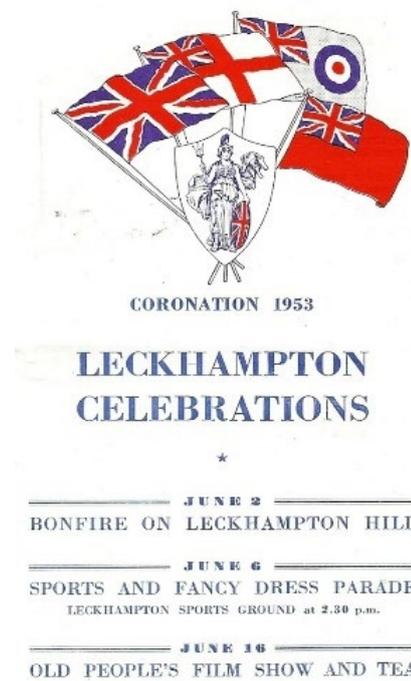
Hall for all parishioners of the age of the King upwards (ie 60 and over). Then there were games in the field near the school, and later all local children up to the age of 16 sat down to a 'meat tea'. At 6.30 p.m. Mrs G B Witts performed a

ceremonial planting of the 'King's Oak' beside the Parish Hall (the tree had little chance of surviving). Finally, on the sports field there was dancing and 'kiss-in-the-ring', while fairy lights decorated the evergreens at the entrance.

Fuller accounts of all these celebrations – and much more – are included in *Leckhampton Yesteryear*, of which a further reprint has just been received.

*Eric Miller*

**Research Coordinator**



**Images:** *The Jubilee Bonfire, 1897 (left); front cover of the 1953 souvenir programme (top); Mrs G B Witts planting 'The King's Oak', 9<sup>th</sup> August 1902 (above).*

## Noticeboard

### *Walk with Forest of Dean LHS*

Some of you may recall that we led a walk around Leckhampton for members of Forest of Dean LHS last year (see [Smoke Signal 93](#)). The FoD society were keen to reciprocate and arrange a walk for us this summer. This has now been arranged with a date of **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> July**. the proposal is for them to lead a historical walk around Mitcheldean. Please let me or anyone on the committee know if this is something you might be interested in joining, so that we might be able to give the FoD society an idea of numbers.

*Paul McGowan*

### *Display of LLHS Archives*

Members are invited to inspect a selection of items from the Society's archives between 2.30pm and 4.30pm on **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July** in the **Glebe Cottages**. Chief among them are the four volumes containing over 500 photographs, but maps and books and other documents will also be on display. Panels illustrating various aspects of Leckhampton's past, including trade and industry and education, will be arranged around the room. This will offer an opportunity to absorb some of the history of the community and chat about it with other members. Tea, coffee, and cake will be served in aid of charity.

*Eric Miller*

**Research Coordinator**



Leckhampton Local History Society

*Affiliated to Cheltenham Arts Council*