

The Clevedonian

Autumn 2012

Issue No. 06



In this edition

- Page 2**
A View from the Chair
Group Report - Footpaths Group
- Page 3**
Group Reports
Environment Group
Local History Group
- Page 4**
Group Report - Conservation Group
Coming Shortly
- Page 5**
Livery Trip to London
- Page 6, 7 & 8**
Rebuilding Clevedon Pier
- Page 9**
Whiteladies Cottage
- Page 10 & 11**
Picnic at Clevedon Court
- Page 12**
Entertainment in Clevedon
- Page 13**
Transition Clevedon
- Page 14**
The Four Brothers
- Page 15**
Society Publications
- Page 16**
Neighbourhood Watch
What's in a Name
Derek Lilly's Wordsearch
- Page 17**
Branch Line
- Page 18**
Postcard from Clevedon
Collector's Lot
- Page 19**
Military Chest
Don't Believe Everything You See!
- Page 20**
Members' Photograph Gallery
Artist's Attic

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

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

LIVERY TRIP TO LONDON



After Hugh Stebbing's interesting February talk about the London Livery Companies he offered to take a group on a visit to the City of London for a walk around the area.

See page five for Wendy Moore's detailed account of the trip



A VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Report by Hugh Stebbing



Can it really be that we're rapidly approaching the end of another year? Autumn winds and rain and increasing numbers of adverts for festivities of all kinds – what joys lie ahead...

Well, firstly, we're planning our Society AGM due in January and you'll see more about this important formality elsewhere in this edition and on the website. Secondly, we have our programme mapped out for 2013, thanks as ever to the diligence of Hazel Pedder. The special interest groups have been busy too with arrangements in place for the next twelve months.

So we can all look forward to another stimulating and exercising year with activities that I hope will suit us all.

Meanwhile 2012 has seen an equally interesting programme both in the Society and through those issues where our opinions and experience have been sought by others. The successful first round of the Marine Lake Heritage Lottery Fund bid by North Somerset Council had a large input from the Environment Group whilst, at another level, I had the opportunity to facilitate discussions between a large number of Clevedon's many action groups with the twin objectives of ensuring each knew of the others and creating bigger opportunities for groups to link up where that would benefit planned activities. We're already doing this by working with other societies through our Footpaths, Environment, and Conservation &

Planning Groups as well as with North Somerset Council. But I do sense there's more that can be achieved here since the number of activity groups in Clevedon seems to be growing – an indication perhaps that larger numbers in our community want to help make Clevedon a better place. Rest assured though that the Civic Society will remain true to its purpose and our plans for next year will give all our members something to enjoy and continuing opportunities to be fully involved.

Enjoy the remainder of 2012 and let's all expect great things for 2013.

GROUP REPORT

Footpaths Group

Report by Liz Byrd (Tel: 872633)



The group roamed as far and wide this summer as the weather would allow: walks being postponed, curtailed or diverted into less muddy byways. We were lucky at times, particularly exploring old leafy sunny Portishead, its history and people. High wind (but no rain) didn't deter us from our annual Midsummer Walk in Upper Clevedon, and garden social evening – again – many, many thanks to Geoff and Wendy Moore for their hospitality.

We were wettest (but warm) on our coastal paths walk to Walton-in-Gordano, where we returned by a less muddy route than planned, as was also the case when we explored Cadbury Camp Tickenham. Cadbury Camp Congresbury provided an interesting comparison enjoyed by all.

After being postponed from May our Chew Valley Walk took place on one of the few perfect days in August. Similar sunny

weather awaited our working walk across Clevedon's southern fields. This was once a well-used route to Kingston Seymour but the vegetation blocking its stiles and bridges now needed the clearing we gave it. Loxton was a September destination, followed by Barrow Gurney. The pub lunch has become a firm and convivial favourite round off whether we have 17 or 7 walkers and have walked 2.5 or 5 miles!

Close to home the group is eager to work with the Land Yeo Friends on their proposed signposted 5 mile walk taking in our two rivers. The group has also responded to North Somerset Council's request for comments on changes to the Definitive Map involving the footpaths linking The Beach and Copse Road.

We have welcomed quite a few friends and visitors since April, resulting in some new members, as well as

the welcome return of old ones. Sadly, some valued contributors are no longer able to manage some of the walks they love, but we enjoy their experience and enthusiasm in planning them. Plans for future walks extend well into next spring thanks to new and old walks leaders and their ideas. Quarterly meetings will continue to be held at the Friends Meeting House until further notice.



Coastal Walk - 10 July

Next meetings: 3 December 2012 and 4 March 2013

Civic Society Executive Members

Chairman - Hugh Stebbing
Secretary - Wendy Moore
Treasurer - Carl Peries
Membership - John & Helen Bussell
Local Government Representative - Carole Wring
History Group - Rob Campbell

Environment Group - Bob Hardcastle
Conservation & Planning Group - Bryan Osborne
Footpaths Group - Liz Byrd
Publicity/Newsletter - Geoff Hale
Newsletter Distribution - Dave Long
Web Master - Mike Wheatley

Next Executive meetings:

Tuesday 20 November 2012 and 19 February 2013

Should any member have a point to put forward it is always possible to contact an Executive Group member to have it brought up at a meeting.



Environment Group

Report by Bob Hardcastle (Tel. 871633)

It's always nice to start with some good news! We have just heard that North Somerset Council's bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Marine Lake restoration has received Stage 1 approval. This provides money for NSC to employ a project manager to prepare details of the work, following which hopefully a further grant will be made for the work itself.

The Civic Society helped in the bid process by providing background information relating to the Marine Lake and seafront area and now look forward

Next meetings: 14 November 2012 and 9 January 2013

to working with the Council in preparing the Stage 2 submission.

We are meeting the Council in October regarding this involvement and also to discuss the repairs to the Bandstand, which appear to have stalled following the initial temporary repair work for the Jubilee.



MARLENS Festival - 2012

Our regular monthly working party has been busy working in the Ladye Bay area, clearing the Zig-zag steps, and working on the Marshall's Field bridge with the Friends of the Land Yeo. In October we cleared the area by the Lookout on Poet's Walk.

One of our members, Alan Cotton, will be funding more tree planting this autumn in memory of his wife Sylvia. Any suggestions regarding suitable locations for new trees in Clevedon will be gratefully received.



Local History Group

Report by Rob Campbell (Tel. 877038)

Meetings continue to attract audiences averaging over 50 - very good news. The high quality of speakers and the varied topics are enjoyed by all. Work on next year's programme is complete, with a varied selection of topics and it's good to see group members coming forward and volunteering their skills & expertise for talks.

Report on past and forthcoming events:

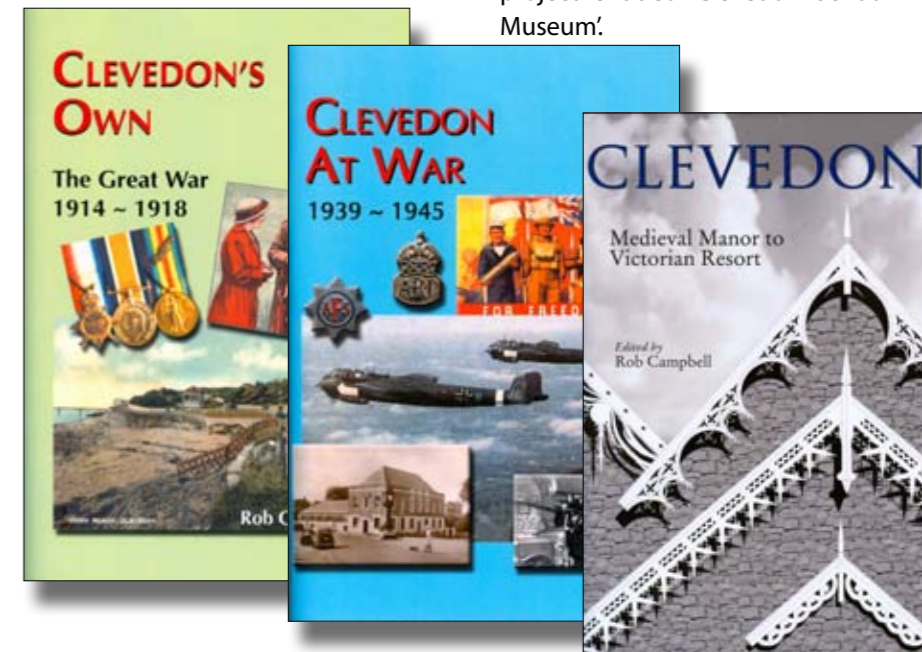
July Meeting: I feel that we were very honoured and privileged to have Arthur Spencer DFC as our guest speaker. Arthur served as a navigator on Lancaster bombers with 97 (Pathfinder Squadron) during the war and completed 2 tours of ops, one of those sorties being the Peenemunde Raid, which was the subject of the talk that was delivered without a script. I am pleased to say that Arthur has agreed to return next year to enlighten us on his experiences on flying boats after the war...a lesson in pure luxury and a bygone era!

September Meeting: Pat Hase, one of the group's favorite speakers, spoke about George Reed and his connections

with Burnham-on-Sea. As ever Pat was in good form, her level of research an inspiration to us all.

The October Public Meeting: Peter Insole's talk was extremely interesting to local historians. Check out the website: www.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace or just Google know your place. Let's hope that with extra support the site can be enlarged to encompass Somerset & Gloucestershire.

Book Sales: A new order of books



has been made with the Woodspring Resource Centre; sadly Noel who runs the Centre has been very unwell, so let's hope he makes a full recovery. 'Places & Faces' can be ordered on a print on demand set up and we will take advantage of that once supplies have run out. The Blue Book has ceased publication. Copies of 'Clevedon's Own 1914-1918' & 'Clevedon at War 1939-1945' have been donated to Clevedon School to assist with a forthcoming project entitled 'Clevedon School War Museum'.

GROUP REPORT

Conservation & Planning Group Report by Bryan Osborne



Since writing in April for the Spring Clevedonian there has been bad news and good news. I am referring to the planning front rather than the 'summer' weather and the Olympics!

North Somerset planners have decided, in their wisdom to reduce costs, not to issue paper plans for inspection and this means we all have to view the documents one at a time on a small monitor screen. This is unsatisfactory and probably means less public participation.

It is very disappointing that plans for the proposed Community Hospital have been scrapped, the decision being taken

The extension and redevelopment of the Highcliffe Hotel in Wellington Terrace to include fourteen apartments has been approved. We have misgivings over the parking arrangements between the building line and the back of the pavement.

I am pleased to report that the application I referred to in April for Staddons Timber Yard was withdrawn, and a fresh application has been made for seven houses with parking accessed from Parnell Road, so there will be no additional traffic in Arundel Road. This is an improved scheme with a few minor reservations.

At last we may see some movement in Hill Road on the Regent site. A planning application has been submitted for twenty apartments and two

eight houses and eight hotel suites on the Clevedon Hall Estate, behind the listed Hall. This is a very contentious proposal and there is a lot of opposition to the loss of this private open space and to the density and quality of houses, as well as serious concern over the combined accesses for the homes, offices, conference/wedding venue and the associated hotel proposal.

If you would like to see the proposals and express your views for both the Regent and Clevedon Hall Estate developments, we have persuaded the planners to provide paper copies for these two important schemes to be available in the Clevedon Library. Just ask at reception.

It seems a long way off, but as there will not be another opportunity in print, may I wish all our readers a Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year, looking forward to the continued efforts of our Society to watch over Clevedon.



Royal Pier Hotel

so late in the planning process and at such an expense.

I referred to the intended summer start of work on the Royal Pier Hotel Apartments. You will be well aware that nothing has happened, but we ARE assured by the developer that it is his intention to start work this year and the apartments are currently being marketed.

Next meetings: 18 December 2012 and 29 January 2013

shop units, prepared by the same developer and architect as for the Royal Pier Hotel with the owner of the site. It is intended that one of the shop units will be a Sainsbury's convenience store and we gauge this is largely being accepted as beneficial to the shopping road.

The other larger development for which there is a current planning application is the resubmission of plans for forty



Regent

COMING SHORTLY...

15 November 2012

The Baedeker Blitz on Bath

John Penny

10 January 2013

Clevedon in Transition

Ruth Gofton

14 February 2013

Ashton Court Mansion, Past, Present & Future

Peter Weeks

14 March 2013

Bristol Water & Your Local Supply

Paul Hodge

11 April 2013

The History of Western Architecture

Martha Perriam

9 May 2013

Life on the Ocean Wave

Cyril Routley

All meetings are held at St Andrew's Church Centre

All are welcome, visitors £3

13 December 2012

Christmas Party

Members only

17 January 2013

Out of the Murk!!

Jane and Derek Lilly

21 February 2013

A Village Tragedy 1944

David Pedder

21 March 2013

Every Boy will join the Navy

Shirley Hodgson

18 April 2013

Congresbury Kilns

Derek Lilly

16 May 2013

Crime in 18th century Bath

Dr Steve Poole

by Wendy Moore

LIVERY TRIP TO LONDON

On Tuesday 14th August 38 members and friends set off by coach from Clevedon to the City of London, where all the Livery Companies are situated. We were blessed with good weather.

Most of the Livery Companies were founded in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries and some buildings were destroyed by the Great Fire in 1666, some again in WW2, and then rebuilt.

We started the walk by the Museum of London and along London Wall to the **Plasterers Hall**. Founded in 1501, this company actively supports plastering and gives prizes each year to plastering colleges.

Then via the Roman Wall relics to the **Pewterers Hall**, a company still connected with all aspects of the pewter trade, founded in 1348.

Next was **Goldsmiths Hall** which lies on land acquired in 1339. The company still tests and marks gold, silver and platinum wares in the Assay Office and is also responsible for the annual testing of the nation's coinage.

Then **Wax Chandlers Hall**, originally producers of beeswax products such as candles and sealing wax. They still support many aspects of bee keeping and the production of honey.

The next stop was the **Guildhall** to see the remains of London's fascinating Roman Amphitheatre, which was discovered in 1988. Also at the Guildhall was an exhibition called **Butcher, Baker, Candlestick Maker**, which was showing 850 years of London Livery Company treasures. This was really interesting and we were all sorry when the time came to leave as we could have spent much longer in there.

On to the **Brewers Hall**. The earliest references to a hall on this site is from



1403. It was restored after the Great Fire and bombed in WW2, the current hall being built in 1960.

Then to the **Girdlers Hall** founded in 1431 and the **Armourers and Braziers Hall** founded in 1346. The present **Drapers Hall** was built in 1543 but has been adapted several times since. All of these Halls could only be viewed from the outside as they are all closed in August to deal with decorating and repairs.

Hugh had arranged for Kevin, the Beadle of the **Merchant Taylors Hall**, to give us a tour and talk, for which we were taken through some very ordinary looking doors into a magical building. It contains

a fourteenth century great hall and a very tranquil, hidden garden. A place steeped in grandeur and tradition. It is also used as a venue for various receptions and is of course the hall for tailoring trades.

We then had a break for lunch, after which we viewed the **Tallow Chandlers Hall** founded in 1476, the Grade 1 listed **Skinner's Hall**, the **Innholders Hall** which was rebuilt after the great fire, **Vintners Hall** which was in a quaint little alleyway and lastly the **Painter-Stainers Hall** which was founded in 1532.

Anyone who hasn't visited the City of London for a number of years wouldn't recognise it now as there is so much modern building but somehow the old



Girdlers Hall

fits in with the new.

It was then time to return to the coach for the journey back to Clevedon after a very enjoyable day.

Many thanks to Hugh for all his work in organising this trip.

Possibly another trip will take place in the Spring of 2013 – maybe to the Guildhall Art Gallery and the Museum of London. So watch for dates etc.

by Wendy Moore

Photographs by Dave Long

The history of the Pier is one of frustration, bad temper and controversy. It began before it was built with a letter to the Clevedon Mercury in 1867.

Clevedon Ruined - Sir, 'Tis a rum thing for me to see how great an interest you and your correspondents take in injuring Clevedon...the village did look inviting, but now ugh, you have ruined it. What with a local Board, or Local Humbug and trumpery railway, gas lights, reservoirs of water and one thing and another, why 'tis not safe to live here. And a pier, whoever heard of anything so foolhardy- a pier at Clevedon- why gad-a-massy, 'twill make the place ten times worse than 'tis.

Yours obliged,

Breeches and Gaiters (and I'll stick to them) - 6 April 1867

personal memories from Tony Wring



It is astonishing to look back, as I am privileged to do, and read the vast quantity of evidence that records the continuous and often vitriolic argument at meetings, articles in the media, and letters to the editor, Councils struggling to justify expenditure, blind objections, and a Public Inquiry. It collapsed on October 17th 1970, yet throughout the whole of the following period, even among the most aggressive of those against saving it, I detected a hope that it would be saved. The growling noise and turmoil of opposition died away and it was immensely satisfying to see at last this iconic landmark standing again, completely restored, serene and essential to the aspect of Clevedon's seafront.

In September 1978 I presented a paper featuring the Pier written by John Topham, the UDC Engineer, during a seminar at the University of Sussex in Brighton. It contains the most accurate account of the collapse that happened during testing for insurance required after 1945, but few appear to know the story.

An even loading of 50lb per sq. ft was required over the entire deck, achieved initially by hiring three tanks 100ft

long and 18ft wide, which were then assembled, filled with the required weight of water, and the result tested. This was progressively repeated over the eight 100ft spans along the deck, three adjoining tanks at a time. A surveyor's level was set up on the landward, firm approach to



the deck and sighting scales printed on 30 boards set up on the top of each trestle and in mid span. The expected deflection was 2½-3 inches, to be regained as the load was released. As a precaution thin asbestos panels that could be breached by sledge hammer

THE SAVING OF



were fitted to each tank to release the water in an emergency. This was a very expensive process and for economy reasons subsequent tests were made using thin polythene sacks, each 100ft long and 2ft in diameter. Nine were needed, snaking over two spans at a time, supported by loose planks laid on edge between the sacks. This preferred method of testing was used every two years over a period of ten years, and the deflection readings were identical.

In October 1970 all was normal for the seventh and eighth spans, levels were taken and the workmen went for a



tea break. Half an hour later the Assistant Engineer took a routine reading and found that one of the boards had moved slightly, partly obscuring the next board in line. He went to the Café to ask if the board had been accidentally dislodged then quickly back to the level where



CLEVEDON PIER



it was realised that two sections of the Pier were moving. It was judged too dangerous for anyone to run the 800ft necessary to release the load. As the water was in thin plastic sacks to less than half their capacity the water assumed its natural level and flowed towards the sinking trestle, greatly overloading the structure. The interval between the first observed movement and the collapse was between 15 and 20 minutes.

When it collapsed there was deep dismay in the Town among those who cared. The Pier had been sold for £700 to the Local Board, soon to be the Urban District Council in 1891, and they were divided on how to repair it. Alderman Cecil Coppack considered it 'a waste of money'. Alfred Tarr declared it 'a decaying lump of steelwork', and Michael Nobes felt that the Council should 'not touch it with a barge pole'. There were however many voices, including the Civic Society, in favour of support for a more cautious approach. All the talk was for repair as emotions ran high, and blindly little regard was paid to the condition of the rest of the structure. The original Grover and Ward design to account for the second highest tide in the world, twice a day, is slender and elegantly unique in contrast to the more normal vertical cylinders at 40 to 50ft intervals. It is complex, being said



Piermater - Bernard Faraway on the left

to be one of the first such structures based on mathematical principals; this has been confirmed by checking against a modern computer model. Erosion was the enemy of such an elegant and minimalist design.

The original estimates were £50,000, soon rising to £75,000 (considered too high) and the UDC settled on a grant of £15,000 towards the repair; the balance was to be raised by public subscription. Sir Arthur Elton with his London contacts soon had the Pier listed as a Grade II structure and formally created a Trust. A campaign to raise funds by cash and promises was started and we all contacted friends and influential people to write letters of support to the UDC. A local Pier supporters group was formed that kept fully alive the interest in the town. A sum of £50,000 was soon raised (mostly promises) and Jack Hayward, who had recently bought Lundy Island for the Nation, was persuaded to fund the shortfall. However there were disastrous times ahead. Inflation was beginning to rise, and the UDC was about to be absorbed into Woodspring District Council under the New Avon County Council. A broken pier was not high on the new Local Council's agenda. Time began to slip by and the estimated cost of repair rose steadily. Soon it was over £100,000, then £175,000, eventually

£500,000+ and it was clear that raising these sorts of funds had slipped from the realistic ability of local fund raisers. Frustration set in and for a number of years we all felt helpless.

There was an interesting episode within my own family when the journalist (and his very attractive French girl friend) from the Sunday Times Colour Supplement came to write up the story. Carole and I invited them to supper and our attention to them was so intense we failed to notice that our seven year old daughter Naomi was enjoying rather too much of the red wine. She found it quite difficult to climb the stairs to bed.

We kept niggling away at the Council until they decided to demolish it. However, it was a listed building and this decision was 'called in' by English Heritage and a Public Inquiry was required.

At the height of raising funds I gave illustrated talks, with a hundred slides and a large model, to Round Tables, Rotary Clubs etc. to heighten awareness and raise funds. I had commissioned the model at my own expense, made by a friend who is a top model maker and this was eventually used, positioned directly in front of the Inspector throughout the inquiry; it is now housed in the Heritage Centre on the Beach.



Continued on page eight



When the Public Inquiry became inevitable following the decision by Woodspring DC to demolish this Grade II Structure, I became the Campaign Director in February 1980. The precious funds gathered earlier in the campaign were the subject of fierce debate to limit their use as they were being released too easily for wasteful marketing and advertising. I agreed with this and knowing that legal representation would be expensive I did all I could to halt the



further expenditure of funds. The Inquiry itself was a dramatic event in Clevedon's history. We retained Paul Chadd QC who had a powerful reputation in conservation matters. He had led the opposition that proposed enlargement of the Clifton Spa Hotel, endangering the Suspension Bridge setting, and he had also taken the proposed 'filling in' of the Bristol Floating Harbour to the Bar of the House of Lords. He won both.

On the first of the three days there was good public attendance, but by the third day such was the buzz in the town that there was standing room only. On the evening before the first day I appeared on BBC Points West Television, complete with my model, for a five minute grilling. A new group of gifted engineers and architects had been formed with creative ideas to restore the Pier. On television I hinted about their ideas to counter the direct question that the structure was at the end of its designed life and a wreck.

The most famous supporter of the many for the Pier was John Betjeman. I chatted and sat next to him at the inaugural lunch in London of the National Piers Society of which he was the President and I was the provisional Treasurer. He knew Clevedon and its Pier well, and wrote of its beauty and importance: 'A Japanese print in the mist' and 'Clevedon without its Pier would be like a diamond with a flaw'. I invited him to the Inquiry and have his letter of acceptance to me. However he did not come, but sent a powerful statement read out at the inquiry. There were many memorable incidents during the inquiry as Paul Chadd weaved his magic, and demolished Woodspring's arguments. One such tense moment came when Paul Chadd asked if the cross section

of the wrought iron Barlow rail used in the construction could be repeated today in steel. Mr Gale for Woodspring agreed that anything might be possible, but he doubted it. Paul Chadd reached behind him to where I was sitting with the latest British Steel Catalogue in my hand. He took it and pointing to the illustrated sections, said to Mr. Gale "Is this not the identical sections we are talking about?" There were

many such strong arguments by Paul Chadd and from many other people full of passionate opinion. At the end of the third day after his summing up, the audience gave Paul Chadd a standing ovation. In reply Mr Bailey, the Solicitor for Woodspring, ruefully remarked that he did not expect such a reception. How right he was.

Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for the Environment, had not only a warm and deep understanding for heritage but also admiration for the local people who struggled against financial and opposing views. He refused to allow the Pier's demolition. Emotion and lack of technical insight into repairing a structure that was badly deteriorating subsided as realism dawned. If the repair had been achieved, continuous expensive maintenance and further repair would have followed until today. Thank goodness it didn't succeed. It would have been wrong and the action of Michael Heseltine in demanding a new pier was a blessing.

My involvement effectively ended after the Public Inquiry; most of us were exhausted and had no place in the next phase. Tribute must be paid to the new group of engineers and architects who quickly took up the cause and injected a new enthusiasm and superbly overcame many daunting new challenges. The rest is history.

LONG LIVE THE PIER

Tony Wring



Tony's model of the Pier now on display at the Heritage Centre

At the West End, on the way to St Andrew's Church, are the last two houses in Clevedon still roofed with thatch. The larger of the two is Tennyson House, built by Thomas Bradford in the early 17th century. The smaller one, now called Whiteladies Cottage, was formerly known as Burryatts, and has a more complicated history.

In the last few months, the render has been removed and the occupants given permission to repaint the walls facing Old Church Road, leaving the stonework exposed. The old render demonstrated that the house had in fact been two houses, because there was a discernable dividing line down the centre of the building where the render met. Now that the stonework is uncovered, it is possible to see what an excellent job was made of attaching the eastern half of the house to the older, western half, as there is no discernable join.



Five years ago, the former owners allowed me to invite John Rickard of the Somerset Vernacular Buildings Research Group to survey the house and see whether it could be dated. The deeds had revealed that two adjoining houses had been united to form the present dwelling as late as 1978.

John Rickard discovered that the fireplace at the western end of the house had belonged to an earlier house - this often happens, a new house being built onto the substantial masonry of the surviving structure. His conclusion was that, 'a second complete building was erected nearby in the 17th century. Subsequently extended to incorporate the surviving earlier part and create a separate house. This would explain the uniform 17th century walls and common roof construction.'

In short, the oldest structure is the western fireplace, the eastern house

was built near this, then extended with salvaged roof timbers to fill the space between that house and the old fireplace to form a second, adjoining dwelling.

Part of the house's story may never be uncovered, but from the Survey of Clevedon made in 1630 for Elizabeth Wake I have found that the family then leasing the house were the Burriotts, or Burryatts, namely Alice aged 46, William and Marie. Alice was the wife of John Burryatt aged 50, who with Stourton aged 40 and Edward Burryatt aged 46 leased another, larger house in Old Church Road, which stood on the

site of the row of four shops by the Library.

These leases lasted for 99 years, or until the three people named in them as 'lives' had died. My suspicion is that John, Stourton and Edward were brothers, while William and Marie were John and Alice's children. In March 1629

John and Alice died, a week apart. For our house, this would have meant that William and Marie had to pay a heriot, or death duty, to the Manor, of two of the beasts on their farm. They held land on a different lease which incurred a further

beast as heriot, which would have been a considerable loss.

In 1655, Mary Burryatt paid the rental, and the next time the house appeared was in 1664, when the Hearth Tax was charged. There would seem to have been two hearths, one being exempt from charges because it was a cooking hearth. In 1700, a lease was taken on the house by William Smith, who had some 40 acres of land, meadow and pasture as well.

By 1732, the holding, now called Smiths, was occupied by John Griffin Junior, and he and his descendants held it for a hundred years, gradually increasing the acreage until in 1839 they were farming just over 140 acres. By 1841, Joseph Griffin was living there, aged 70 and still a farmer.

The next traceable reference to the house is an unfortunate one! By then, the Sanitation Report in 1852 remarks: 'We then went to a cottage occupied by a person of the name of Horsey, where the ditch is stopped, and the privy empties into it.' The Horseys had the Card family for neighbours in 1861, and by 1871 the Bacon family lived next door to them, a situation that continued to the 1891 Census.

By 1919, when the cottage was sold away from the Clevedon Court Estate, the two houses were rented by Miss Horsey and Mr Hedges. Emily Mogg bought the pair and over the years sold 3 plots from the land that came with it, for building. At some point the houses were sold to different owners and only joined together in 1978.

Jane Lilly



PICNIC AT CLEVEDON COURT



Photographs
by Geoff Hale



ENTERTAINMENT IN CLEVEDON

Researched by Geoff Hale and Alan Smith

Clevedon has four amateur entertainment groups. In the last edition we looked at the history of the two musical groups and this time the drama groups will be in the spot light.

Clevedon Players was originally formed in 1923, with Dr R. Stuart Renton as the chairman. Their first production was *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* performed at the Picture House (Curzon) for a week in June 1923. The play was an ambitious choice, a burlesque of dramatic styles by the Elizabethan playwrights Beaumont and Fletcher, which took a great deal of work to stage.

Some years later, Victor Cox, who owned the cinema at the time, recalled that it was not unusual to have stage shows at the cinema. A pantomime was presented there for three years running.

After their first appearance in the Picture House the Clevedon Players took up residence in the recently built St John's Elton Memorial Hall, which became the main centre in the town for drama, concerts, dances and other social functions.



The Knight of the Burning Pestle - 1923



The Importance of Being Earnest - 1957

After the Second World War the Clevedon Playgoers Club was formed and performed regularly in St John's Hall, bringing many popular plays to the local stage including Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, whilst down the road at the Salthouse Pavilion the short lived Coleridge Players were staging similar plays under the direction of George Holland.

With the demolishing of the Salthouse Pavilion and the building of the New Hall (now the Princes Hall) in the 1960s, the Playgoers and the Coleridge Players combined to form a reincarnated Clevedon Players and staged *Watch it Sailor* as their debut offering. They have been successfully entertaining the populace three or four times a year ever since.



Spring 1600 - 2010

Of the Clevedon Comedy Club, founder member Alan Smith writes:

'When the Comedy Club was formed in 1970 there was already in existence a Drama Club and an Opera Club, but nothing in light entertainment - and nothing to encourage youngsters to join. It was decided to form a family club and concentrate on light entertainment and pantomime.

The first production, in June 1971, was a variety show - *The Roaring 20s* - produced by Jack Hawdon. The local paper stated, 'Roaring Twenties a Roaring Success', a club has been born! This then encouraged more people to join and the first pantomime, *Aladdin*, followed in January 1972. The club has produced a pantomime every year since and a revue type show every other year.'



Jack and the Beanstalk - 1986

TRANSITION CLEVEDON AND THE MILLENNIUM ORCHARD

by Liz Byrd

Transition Clevedon was started in 2010 by a diverse group of people who found they had common concerns about a wide range of issues facing Clevedon and the wider world.

All of us are no strangers to worries about changing weather patterns, drought or flood, the cost of petrol, rising heating and transport costs, possible food shortages, riots and so on. A rapidly changing world indeed. The Transition movement aims to foster resilient communities better able to make the transition to being a closer community with the skills and knowhow that will give us more confidence to face our concerns and do what we can about them. Now with a mailing list of 200 or so, the level of interest in Clevedon is substantial.

In the meantime, what has our Millennium Community Orchard got to do with all this? In November 2000, on land belonging to the town council, 70 or so cider apple trees were planted by the Woodcutters for Wildlife - like so many projects in many a town and village - to mark the millennium. And like so many millennium projects, it faded from people's interest and notice until only the Woodcutters, and the dog walkers of Brookfield Walk, knew that there was a cider orchard accessible to us all tucked away alongside the M5. With the renewal of the lease in 2011, Transition Clevedon took over the general management of the orchard, and with the help of the Woodcutters and the guidance of Angela Slotte, our Tree Warden, the overgrown, forgotten orchard is making itself more available for the people of Clevedon to enjoy.

Trees have started to be pruned again, varieties identified and mapped, and a few fallen and diseased trees removed. Enthusiasts are recording the seasonal biodiversity with photos and paintings. The local children are building dens and advised us where they would like the paths. There is very little litter or vandalism.

2011 saw people come together to picnic and enjoy the spectacular display of apple blossom and later to joyfully pick around 60 sacks of apples sold to a local cider maker. Wassailing in January 2012 brought together a crowd of 40 or more with children climbing trees and banging pots and pans. Bad weather this spring and summer meant very little blossom and a few impoverished apples. Nevertheless, the old Lammas festival

was celebrated in August in a downpour under a tarpaulin with songs and stories and, of course, cider.

Old skills like pruning and scything are being revived for all who want to learn and work together on this lovely asset to our community. So the orchard helps to contribute to a more resilient Clevedon with local people working together, making new friends of all ages, and families playing in a natural environment with the roar of the M5 as background music! It is encouraging our community to come together, enjoy our traditions, have a sense of place and the seasons, and gain satisfaction through simple pleasures and achievements.

In the future, we hope more organisations will be regularly involved - scouts, schools, mental health groups among others. Come and have a look and join in - it's yours!

Liz Byrd



Wassailing at the Millennium Orchard



Lammas Time at the Millennium Orchard

A talk on Transition Clevedon by Ruth Gofton features in the 2013 Civic Society programme - not to be missed! See page 4 for details.

Video Frames from Clevedon News

THE FOUR BROTHERS

Three sons of Douglas Edward Kite and Ellen (Webb) Kite joined the army at Bristol Recruiting Office in Prewett St. on the 29th December 1939. The "Unique Enlistment" was recorded, with a photograph in the Bristol Evening Post the following day. The youngest of Douglas and Ellen's family of nine joined the Merchant Navy as a radio officer in 1943 and took part in Arctic Atlantic and Mediterranean convoys.

The three brothers, Ken, Harry (Paddy) and Frank were posted to Exeter for driver training with the Royal Army Service Corps. Ken was commissioned and became a Captain and by the end of the war and Paddy and Frank were sergeants.

A twist of wartime fate saw the three brothers' families move to Clevedon as a direct result of the first night bombing raid that devastated Broadmead and Castle St. on the 24th November 1940. Douglas and Ellen with their unmarried daughter Joan and son Ray were bombed out of their house in West End (off Coronation Rd.) Bedminster. A bomb and an incendiary came through the roof; the bomb went through to the basement and remained un-exploded. The incendiary clipped the edge of Ray's open bedside drawer, flipped and became jammed in the open drawer; both remained unexploded in the house. Fortunately Douglas and Ellen had taken to the Anderson Shelter in the garden. Daughter Joan was in town and Frank's wife Doreen (Millard), who lived at the same address, was at the Ebenezer Methodist Church in North St. Bedminster. Both remembered dodging bombs to get home. Paddy's wife Marjorie (Shearn) with son Paul lived with her father at his Boot and Shoe Repair shop at the other end of North St. in Bedminster near the Hen and Chicken Pub, which was also hit during the Blitz, as was a bungalow on the other side of the road, which killed all the occupants. That site is now a small nature reserve garden and has never been built on.

As a result, all the individual families decided to evacuate to Clevedon where Douglas as a child had been to the British School on Chapel Hill.

Eventually and for the rest of the war the families took up residence at No 11 Herbert Road. The top flat was inhabited by Douglas, Ellen, Joan and Ray, the flat below by Paddy's wife Marjorie and son Paul. Douglas's daughter Gladys (Kite) and husband Tom Aliband with their son David occupied the basement flat after evacuating from the bombing in Bristol. Frank's wife Doreen initially lived with Marjorie and Paul at Bryn Derryn in Marson Road but then moved, on the arrival of their daughter Patricia, to live over Cambourne's greengrocery shop on Hill Road, next to Challicombes. Ken was already a Clevedon resident and had an Ironmongers shop in Strode Road.

Clevedon became the natural home for all four sons serving in the Army and the Merchant Navy.

Ray had worked for the Bristol Tramway Company and probably was apprenticed as an electrician. That job came to an end on the first night raid, with the Tramway's Electrical Generating Station being hit, removing trams from Bristol's streets. In Clevedon he worked for the BBC at the transmitting station. He then went to Colwyn Bay Radio School and trained as a Wireless Operator, and in 1943 he joined the Bristol based Charles Hill shipping line. It is recorded that he was third Radio Officer aboard the City of Gloucester and brother Paddy writes

Memories by Paul Kite



Frank - Ken - Harry (Paddy) at the Bristol Recruiting Office 29-12-1939



Kenneth Douglas Kite 1912 - 1992



Harry (Paddy) Ralph Kite 1914 - 1999



Frank Chatterton Kite 1922 - 1986



Raymond George Kite 1924 - 1993



Stafford Street, Bedminster - 24 November 1940

(post war) that his first trip was an Arctic convoy carrying high explosives to Archangel.

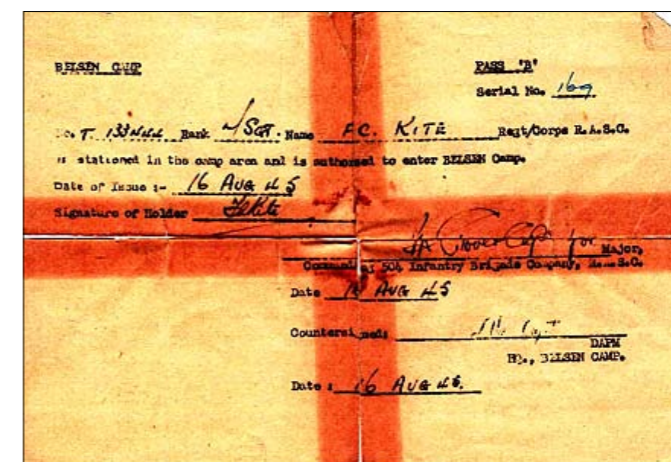
Paddy and Frank remained in close contact with one another throughout the war and landed in France on D-day plus six as RASC drivers. Paddy was for a short time a Dispatch Rider and then went on to drive small Bedford trucks carrying ammunition and supplies to the front line troops. At one point he described arriving with his company in a field for the night and being mortared. The result was a direct hit on one of his friends. In fear for his own life he pressed his face deep into the soft ground and nearly suffocated. Whether Frank was in the vicinity is not known. Paddy and probably Frank went up to Arnhem to extract Paratroopers from the fighting. When watching a post war film about Operation Market Garden, he said it wasn't quite like that. He had to drive with his company beyond enemy lines and pick up the escaping Paras as they emerged from a sewer pipe.

In April 1945 both Paddy and Frank were called to take medical supplies and blankets to a place called Belsen. Paddy says it was on the day it was discovered.

He did describe some of the horrors that they both witnessed and these are well recorded on film. Frank's original entry pass to Belsen is still in his daughter Julia's possession and a copy of it is attached below. It is dated 16th August 1945, a few months after the inmates had been cleared and the contaminated huts burnt (May 1945). Hostilities were over but there were still prisoners to be repatriated. Paddy recalls taking Russian women soldiers to a location for handing back to the then Soviet authorities. One wonders about the fate of these women.

All four men returned safely to Clevedon

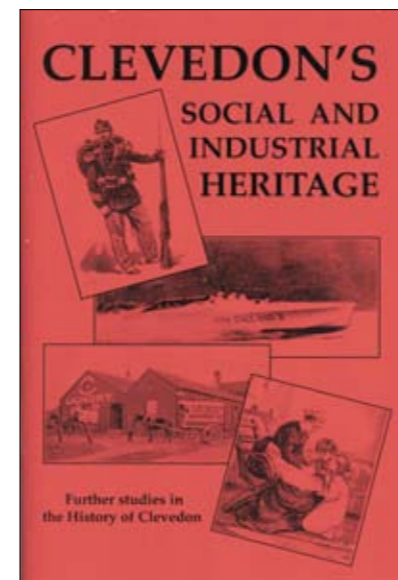
Paul Kite



Belsen Camp Pass dated 16 August 1945

Reviewed by Geoff Hale

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS



the boot factory, lived in the present Community Centre house - Sunhill? That there have been four generations of Shoplands plying their trade in the town? Or that Jack Wilcox, who ran the garage opposite the Salthouse Fields, was involved in an ill-fated bid to break the water speed record in 1930. Even if you did know these facts there is still a wealth of information here - like when did the utilities of water, gas and electricity come to Clevedon and who exactly were Mr Binding and Mr Payne?

And that is only the half of it. The second section in the book adds a further half dozen chapters about the social history of our town to the three books already reviewed in the Clevedonian.

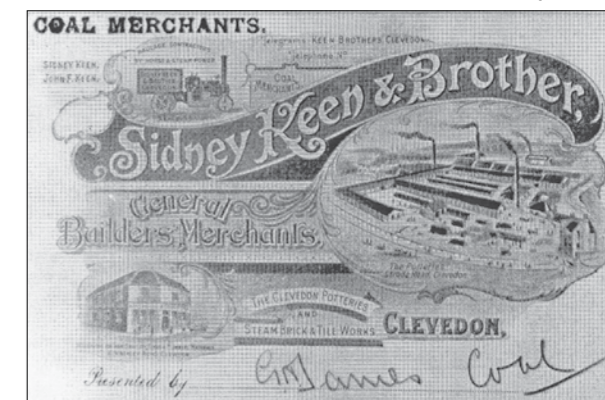
These later chapters are once again written by Society members, the subjects ranging from the story of a 22 year old Clevedon man who fell during the battle of Gettysburg, USA, and is buried in St Andrew's Church yard to the recollections of a boy's adventures on the beach in the 1920s and 30s and the contents of the Wareham's Guide to Clevedon of 1878. Also included is a survey of the farms of East Clevedon by Jane Lilly and an intriguing article by Derek Lilly entitled, The Marchant Mystery, which details many aspects of life in 19th century Clevedon.

Geoff Hale

The book is available to Society members at a special price of £6.00

If the names Binding & Payne, Wilcox, Woodington, Shopland, Hale, Holland and Sydney Keen mean something to you then the first half of this book is definitely a must. The stories of the businesses run by these men, along with many others, make fascinating reading and give an insight into Clevedon's industrial past.

Did you know that weaving was one of the earliest trades carried out in the town? That Mr Woodington, who ran



NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

by Marilyn Edwards

2012 marks the 30th anniversary of the formation of the first Neighbourhood Watch group in the UK.

The Neighbourhood Watch movement in the UK covers six million households (according to the most recent figures published by the Home Office) with some 170,000 Neighbourhood Watch groups.

Here in Clevedon we have over 160 co-ordinators successfully running schemes for approximately 3,500 households. Although the local Police no longer administer the scheme, the NHW committee works closely with the officers from the Clevedon Police Station. The committee meets quarterly and we are always happy to welcome new members. Having taken over the administration of the scheme from the police we find that computer skills are useful but not essential.

If you are not keen to join the committee but would like to get involved in doing your bit to fight crime in Clevedon, becoming a NHW co-ordinator takes very little time and, unlike other voluntary work, can be done at any time convenient to fit in with busy lives. You can choose how many households you would like to include in your scheme (we have everything from 5 to 117, although we would recommend 20 as a maximum).

Being a co-ordinator involves delivering a quarterly newsletter to your scheme members and asking once a year for a voluntary contribution of £1 subscription (which goes towards covering costs of producing the newsletter, NHW signs, contributions to awards leading to arrests and other general administrative costs). If you have access to email, you can also receive "Ringmaster" email updates on local crimes, cold-call traders or scams. If possible, we ask that you forward Ringmaster information to the members in your scheme, so that householders can be made aware of current issues. The committee members can offer advice to co-ordinators and help in the form of introductory letters and subscription request forms, etc.

For further information ring David Brockington on 01275 790233, Fiona Barnes on 01275 870383 or Marilyn Edwards on 01275 876147.



Recent 'Meet the Neighbours' Meeting

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Where do the street names in Clevedon come from?



Tutton Farm

The farm was in Moor Lane and was demolished in 1975. The farm was named after a John Tutton who leased it in 1700.



The Cole (or Coles) family.

The family lived in Cole House Farm from the thirteenth century. There are still members of the family living in the town today.

DEREK LILLY'S WORD SEARCH

The Solution to the last puzzle

Word List	D												
ARUNDEL	E	G	D	I	R	E	L	O	C			R	
SUNNYSIDE							A	L	E	X	A	N	D
EDWARD											W	A	
CAMBRIDGE				C	A	M	B	R	I	D	G	E	W
WELLINGTON													
ALEXANDRA													
ALBERT													
HALLAM	H						E	I	I	L	E		
HERBERT	A	L	B	E	R	T	D	R	S	L	L		
HIGHDALE	L	R						I	O	Y	I	A	
COLERIDGE	L	U						S	T	N	N	D	
VICTORIA	A		N					Y	C	N	G	H	
	M						D	N	I	U	T	G	
								E	N	V	S	O	I
								L	U			N	H
	T	R	E	B	R	E	H	S					

Pollards in Clevedon



by Angela Slotte

Our regularly pollarded street trees are a part of our living heritage and should be valued and protected.

Of the many hundreds of trees bordering our streets in Clevedon, 237 appear on an official North Somerset Council 'pollarding list'. These are old trees that are severely cut back – re-pollarded – every 4 years between November and February in order to limit their size and increase tree safety. The process removes the entire branch system, but new and vigorous shoots appear the following spring, drawing energy from sugar reserves in the 'pollard heads' or 'knuckles' and quickly re-clothing the trees in vibrant green.

may live to a great age because each regular pruning effectively "re-sets the tree's biological clock."

The practice of pollarding dates back many centuries to rural communities where it was used, especially on Willow, as a means of producing a succession of young branches for fuel and for use in a variety of local crafts, as well as to supply freshly cut or dried shoots to feed to animals. The pollard point was always at a height beyond the



Pollarding a Poplar at Salthouse Fields February 2012



White Poplar pollarded in June 2011 after major branch collapse



The same tree in October 2012



The Salthouse Poplar 8 months later

The sight of a newly pollarded tree in the urban landscape may awake dismay and criticism, but this drastic action can be seen as a necessary evil. Once started, the cycle has to be continued, as the trees can never return to a truly natural form and the union of branch and pollard point may remain weak. Pollarded trees

reach of browsing livestock and deer.

Pollarded trees in towns are commonly associated with avenues, a feature that evolved from the fashion in Italian Renaissance gardens of the 16th Century for formal drives or walkways lined with regularly spaced trees of a single species, and leading the eye to a distant feature. The Victorians were especially fond of planting avenues of street trees, particularly with Lime (Linden). Consequently almost all the regularly pollarded trees in Clevedon are to be found in the older parts of the town.



Lymes in The Avenue – new shoots also appear on the trunk and may need to be removed

The greatest number of pollarded Lime trees in Clevedon today are to be seen in The Avenue (there being 64 remaining), which was probably created to provide a vista to Walton

Castle, then derelict. Due to traffic and other restraints, Linden Road, named after the tree, has just five Limes left.

Other Clevedon tree species on the 4-year pollarding programme include Sycamore (Hillside Road), Horsechestnut (Cope Road), and Willow (Northern Way/Clover Close). Also listed is Hallam Road, which is planted on one side only with a variety of interesting species including London Plane. In addition to those listed, individual trees are pollarded when need arises, and these include various Poplars.

Our Clevedon pollard-listed trees were all worked last winter and this will be due again in 2015. Meanwhile, the smaller tree species that are now preferred in car-lined streets and confined public spaces can be kept in check by occasional lopping back of the longest branches.

Written and Photographed by Angela Slotte

POSTCARD FROM CLEVEDON

Posted by Barbara Connell



The postcard's sender speaks of damage done during a gale, and that the estimated cost of repairs was £600. The pier landing stage had been 'ripped in all directions'. Salthouse Field was under water and some of the little cottages were flooded.

The card must have been sent in an envelope and although no date is given research suggests that it was taken in 1903.

I also have three postcards published by Lippiatt dated October 1903. These

show damage to the prom adjacent to the Salthouse Field, debris on the beach near the pier and damage to the pier decking near the entrance.

Barbara Connell

COLLECTOR'S LOT

From the Dave Long Collection

Public house tokens were in use from about 1840 to 1914. There are around 10,000 varieties known and possibly more still undiscovered. Unfortunately very little information is available to research them. They are usually made from brass or copper and sometimes bronze, the most common shape being round, although they can also be oval or octagonal. Most were made in Birmingham, with smaller numbers from Bristol, Exeter, Leeds, Liverpool, London and Sheffield.

They typically have the name of the public house and occasionally the name of the publican on one side and the value and sometimes the token manufacturer on the reverse. They seem to have had various uses but mainly for pub games. Before the start of a game such as a skittles match, both teams would agree the prize, usually a pint of beer. The captain of each side would then collect from each of his team the price of a pint, and after the match the cash collected would be handed over the bar and replaced with tokens. These would be handed out to the players who could



The Rock Hotel



use them to buy a pint that evening or if they preferred at another time but only at that pub. They have also been used as a pass to public toilets, and by Friendly Societies who often held their meetings at a public house.

I only know of two examples from Clevedon: one for The Rock Hotel and one for Thomas Ascott at The Bristol Hotel. The Rock House token is probably the oldest as it is for The Rock Hotel and not The Rock and Pier Hotel, but as it doesn't have the name of the publican this is only a guess. The token from The Bristol Hotel is easier to date as it has the name of Thomas Ascott who was the publican from 1889 to 1910.

Tokens are known to have been used in 91 towns or villages in Somerset resulting in about 500 different varieties, with possibly more to be discovered.

If you would like to know more about pub tokens Somerset County Council Library Service have produced a booklet on Somerset tokens.

Dave Long

In our last edition we published an account of Clevedon Mercury journalist, William Frederick Sercombe, who had enlisted at the start of the First World War. At that time his father was the Mercury's editor. William wrote many letters home and his father published a number of them.

CLEVEDON MERCURY & COURIER & SOMERSETSHIRE WEEKLY ADVERTISER

15 JULY 1916 PAGE 3

THE BRITISH BOMBARDMENT

Corporal William Frederick Sercombe 6th Gloucestershire Regiment, in a letter to his parents dated Tuesday 4th July and received here on Monday evening last says in reference to the great "push" on the Western Front which commenced on the 1 July 1916



This is the first opportunity I have had of replying to your letter. We arrived back last night after having a few days up in the zone which witnessed some of the heaviest fighting of the recent operation, you will have read all the details by this time. Soon after my arrival back from leave matters began to get rather lively, the Bosches even becoming so unfriendly as to shell the place we were in on several occasions. As you will have read, the attack was preceded by a bombardment extending over several days, such as there has never been on this front before, and it reached a climax on the morning when those of us who were detailed to go up to an advanced post moved forward to our positions.

I only wish I had the time and ability to describe the scene, but that is impossible. With the exception of a small portion who fought with great gallantry and distinction, the whole of our crowd was held in reserve and did not take any actual part in the "show", but things were lively enough where we were. Our guns were all about and behind us, and when they opened up the din was indescribable. Naturally the Bosch were throwing a few back by way of acknowledgment but they did us no harm, although I must admit that one night when I moved further forward I did feel rather uncomfortable!

On that occasion I met an officer, who was at Clevedon with the last lot you had there, and was one of three officers who came through in his crowd, which speaks for itself. It was all very interesting and exciting, and I would not have missed it for anything, but there is another side of the picture, a side one does not like to dwell upon, the sight of the wounded who all through the day were drifting back past us to the field ambulances, some in ambulances, others in returning ammunition limbers, and those who were able to do so on foot. It was rather an awful sight and brought home to one the horrors of war, and yet at the same time it was a very stirring sight to see the brave and stolid way in which these heroes bore themselves in such a trying ordeal.

As I said before, we are back again now, and I am sorry to get the chance of a decent sleep, which was out of the question in the place we have just left, where it was a case of "carrying on through day and night".

It has been something of an experience the kind of experience that makes one so proud of the fact that one is a Britisher. My only regret is that there were no shirkers or conscientious objectors there to witness it.

Certified true copy from Clevedon Mercury Newspaper.

The 4th & 6th Gloucestershire Regiment (144th Brigade) 48th South Midland Division were in V111th Corps reserve in the Hebuterne sector, and did not attack the enemy until the Battle of Bazentin Ridge, which opened on the 14th July 1916.

DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU SEE!



Clevedon, Pier & Promenade.

MEMBERS' PHOTOGRAPH GALLERY by David Robinson



ARTIST'S ATTIC

by Shirley Beale

