

The Clevedonian

Autumn 2013

Issue No. 08



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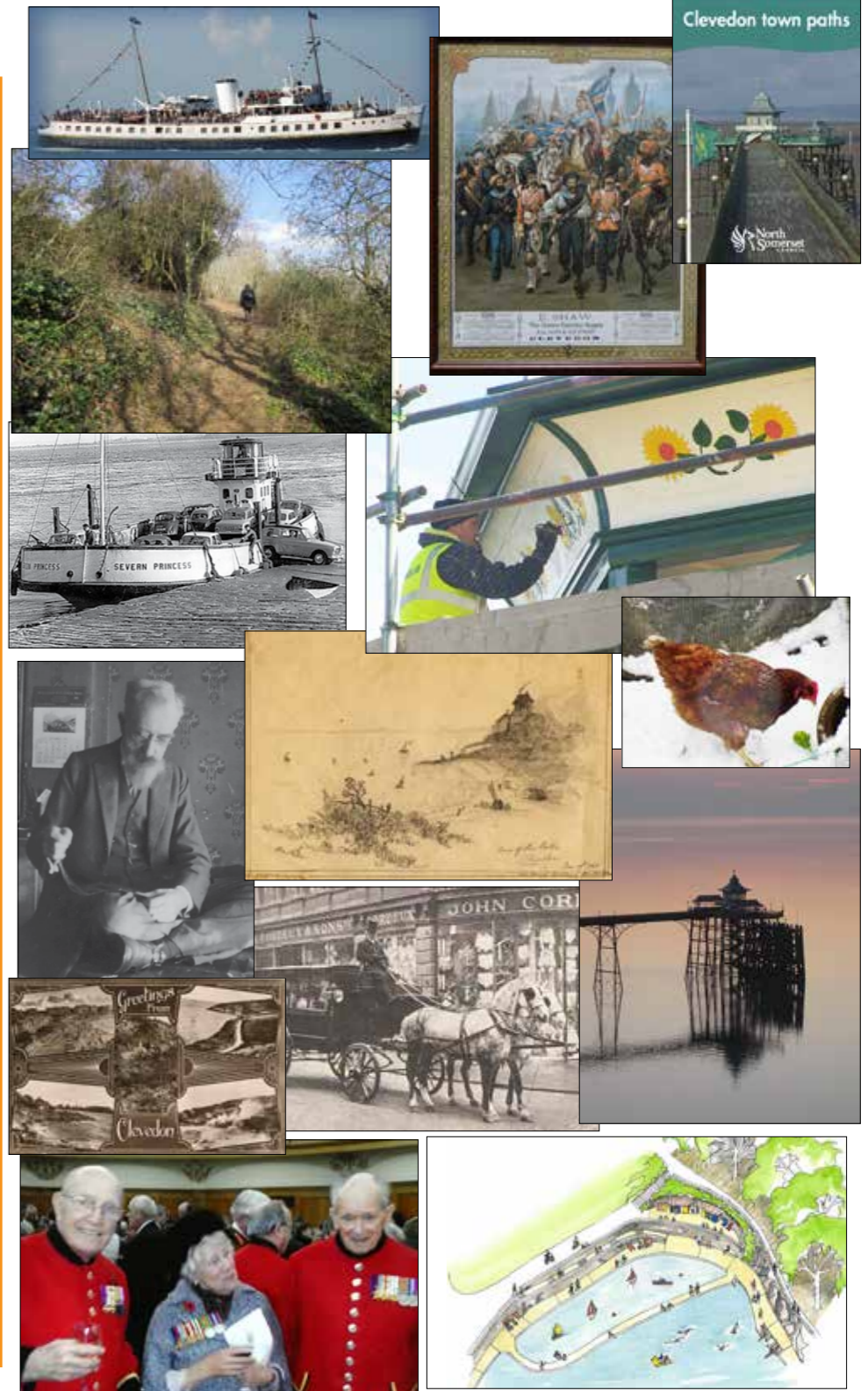
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The views expressed are those of the authors, and may or may not represent those of the Society.



Self Portrait by Hugh

How much do we take for granted?

I've been pondering on this question recently. My initial thought was that the 80 : 20 rule applies. We take 80% for granted and take a closer interest in the remaining 20%. On further qualitative mental analysis I now think this is wrong and that we actually take a greater percentage of everything for granted leaving, perhaps, 5% for close scrutiny and appreciation. Just think for a moment. In our daily routines we assume we'll have water in our taps, food in the shops and our cupboards and that "someone" will look after us if something goes wrong (with our health, the car, our roads and so forth).

Does all this matter, and what relevance has it to our Civic Society, you may be asking.

I'm sure it does matter since the more we take for granted the less we will exercise

Report by Hugh Stebbing

consideration, discretion and challenge and the greater will be our failure to act where we need to. It will always be someone else's problem to solve or solution to deliver. And maybe our roles will be limited to whinging over our cappuccino or latte in the coffee shop.

But that brings me to the Civic Society. Fortunately we have not fallen into the trap of taking Clevedon - the place and its people - for granted. The list of achievements over time that have improved the fabric and environment of our town is a rich testament to that. And the way we are organised enables such a broad range of interests to be pursued. Local development activities are investigated and influenced and active support provided to our Councils

as they struggle to balance scarce financial and professional resources with the need to creatively manage our town and environment.

Your Society has the means to have its voice heard. You can help by expressing your thoughts to any member of the Executive or to me, and also direct to the Town and North Somerset Councils. As we look forward to 2014 let's see if we can reduce that percentage of "stuff" we all take for granted and get our opinions more widely heard. Then my 80 : 20 rule might become the accurate one with particular benefits to our town and our feeling of wellbeing about it!

Hugh Stebbing

OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY

Thursday 12 December

£6



The Society's Christmas Party will be a ticket only affair open to members and their families.

Priced at £6, tickets will be available at Society meetings and from Wendy Moore.

The entertainment this year will be *The Travelling Light Magic Lantern Show*.

Please note that the cut off date for tickets will be Thursday 5th December.

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 - **John Tranter**
 Footpaths Group - **Liz Byrd/Julie Slocombe**
 Programme Secretary - **Jean Hannaford**
 Editor - *The Clevedonian* - **Geoff Hale**
 Newsletter Distribution - **Dave Long**
 Web Master - **Mike Wheatley**
 Co-opted Member - **Bryan Osborne**

Next Executive meetings:

Tuesday 19 November and 18 February 2014

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)



Most of the Group's activities recently have been involved with helping North Somerset Council prepare their Marine Lake bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. And most of that work has been done by Group member John Tranter. John has prepared the master plan and illustrative sketches without which the bid could not be made. The application is being submitted on 15 November with a decision date of 4 March 2014. If the bid is successful, and matching funding raised as well, the target date for the completion of the work is the proposed Tides Festival in September 2014.



Sketches by John Tranter



At the time of writing work on the fascia panels to the Bandstand is nearing completion. Progress has been painfully slow but we hope that this Phase 1 work will be complete in the near future. The Phase 2 work involving the replacement of the timber panels is planned for next year. We will continue to liaise with North Somerset Council to get the restoration of this iconic feature on Clevedon's seafront properly restored.

On the subject of redecoration the Society has paid for the repainting of the decorative arch into Salthouse Fields and the cast iron features on both the Victoria Road drinking fountain and the Marine Hill drinking trough. All of these have been previous Civic Society projects.

The Working Party team has also been busy on the sea front area, around the Marine Hill trough and adjacent

copse, Ladye Bay, the Marine Lake and the Community Centre. The work at the Community Centre was done in conjunction with the local FRIEND organisation and proved to be a very successful collaboration.

The Environment Group will continue its policy of looking after previous Civic Society projects. We are however in need of helpers for our 2014 programme. So if you would like to help please contact me, and I will explain what is involved.

We should be grateful to two other Group members as well for their work on past projects. Angela Slotte continues to look after the planting in the Pier Copse seating area and Paul Trowbridge has taken on the maintenance of the Society's Jubilee seat at the Pill.

Finally a joint walk has been arranged by the Environment Group with the Footpaths Group for Wednesday 20 November. It starts at 10.00 from the Sailing Club on the seafront and will tour the Society's many past projects before ending up at The Beach for coffee in one of the several cafes there. All are welcome to join us plus well behaved dogs too. Let's hope for good weather!

Bob Hardcastle



Bandstand - October 2013



Next meetings: 13 November and 12 January & 12 March 2014

GROUP REPORT

Conservation & Planning Group Report by John Tranter

Monitoring of planning applications on a weekly basis continues and applications are predominantly domestic extensions, or work to trees. Although the Civic Society does not comment on this type of application unless it is particularly contentious to the neighbours, there is an overall trend towards conversion of garages into habitable rooms, with a resulting increase in on-street parking, which is of concern.

The following applications have yet to be determined:

- Clevedon Hall Estate
The Regent, Hill Road
Land between 29A and 31 Dial Hill Road
- Clevedon Court Nursing Home, Dial Hill Road

The application to develop Staddons Timber Yard site was approved on 9th October with 23 conditions, many associated with flood prevention, drainage and site remediation.

The Royal Pier Hotel, and the Regent, Hill Road continue to be eyesores in sensitive locations in the town. We are informed by the selling agent that a number of flats in both developments have been pre sold, and that the Royal Pier will be completed in late 2014, and the Regent in early 2015.

Marine Lake Heritage Lottery Fund bid. A tremendous amount of work has been done by all the parties involved in assembling a bid that has a realistic chance of success, and which will be submitted in early November. If successful the works to the Marine Lake and its environs will make the most significant improvement to the seafront for many years, to which the Civic Society will have fully contributed in terms of volunteer time.

The dates and location for the meetings of the Conservation and Planning Group are shown regularly in **The Clevedonian**, with an invitation for anyone with an interest to attend. Regular attendances now number five, sometimes less, and for the ongoing vitality of the group, there should be more members.

John Tranter

Next meetings: 12 November,
17 December
21 January & 25 February 2014



Photographs taken on 27/10/2013



Sketch by John Tranter



Local History Group Report by Rob Campbell (Tel. 877038)



Work on next year's programme is complete, with a varied selection of topics. Once again it is good to see group members coming forward and volunteering their skills and expertise for talks. We will also be holding two special evenings devoted to the First World War, one relating to Clevedon, the other to family stories, enabling everyone to take part. Earlier in the year a guest speaker will be talking about the part that Bristol played during that terrible conflict.

Report on past and forthcoming events:

Imperial War Museum Trip: Organised by Ian Mottram of Clevedon Royal British Legion the trip proved to be a fantastic day out, even though major building work was taking place. I have thanked Ian on your behalf and he thanked all those who went for their support. Ian will contact us in future regarding any possible trips.

100th Anniversary Trip to Ypres/Somme: Leaving Clevedon 13 June 2014: Response to the trip has been very positive, we have 33 people signed up to go, with only 4 single rooms available. Please let me know if any friends or family are interested in joining us for the 5 day trip. Cost is about £400.00 B&B and includes all travel on a luxury Bakers Dolphin coach. There is a Single Room supplement, sadly beyond my control. We have the services of an excellent guide for 2 days, Jon, a Yorkshire man now living on the Somme. We are using



Thiepval Memorial

the Novotel Hotel in Ypres and the Royal Picardie in Albert, both good hotels.

Table Sale: With the view of supporting the Market@Seeleys we did a table sale in July and will be doing the same in December, so please come along and support the group on Sunday 8th and remember our books will be on sale..... great Christmas presents!

Book Sales: The Woodspring Resource Centre which prints the majority of our books has moved from Locking to Clevedon, making the logistics so much easier. We have placed new orders to ensure adequate stocks for Christmas.

As always folks, thanks for your support again this year, we have gained the reputation of being a very friendly and vibrant group!

Rob Campbell

Footpaths Group Report by Liz Byrd (Tel: 872633)



The last six months saw a variety of strategies as the group decided to walk whatever the weather. Luckily, our scheduled days were kind to us and more adventurous walks were tackled. We enjoyed Crook Peak (thanks to Ross Janes for an excellent description of this walk), and a whole day in the Quantocks with a walk guide provided by Roy and Joan Girling. The weather even allowed old favourites such as Dolebury Warren and the coast path to Portishead. A planned walk at the top of Cheddar Gorge was postponed (but replaced on the day by a cool stroll around Marshall's Field) due to temperatures of 30 to 32 degrees! Surely a first.

The summer continued to be catch up time as we finally explored the much cancelled Sand Point and Middle Hope, a walk enriched by the wide knowledge that several members have of the archaeology, plant life and local history. A survey walk of Clevedon Moors followed, with Bleadon Hill later in September. The drizzle returned but

undaunted we walked the Winscombe section of the Strawberry Line and took a Sunday afternoon stroll that took in Clevedon's 3 rivers and Quinney's Wood.

All this is made possible thanks to the hard work that members do in coming up with suggestions, researching walks, making a careful prior check of each walk so that we know exactly how far, how long, whether suitable for dogs and of course, how good the food is at the chosen pub.

The North Somerset Life magazine is ever a rich source of well-described walks, and we are also grateful to Maggie Stear for her donation of several books of walks based on pubs and teashops –



it goes without saying that these were enthusiastically seized upon by our sociable members.

The aims and purposes of the group were revised from the previous edition of 1992 – perhaps long overdue. This document is available to anyone who would like to see it.

Along with the general population of Clevedon, members very much welcomed the new town map of footpaths and cycle paths produced by North Somerset Council in collaboration with Sustrans and Transition Clevedon. Members are helping to proofread this first edition – all comments on errors and omissions are welcomed by the group chair until 2 December when they will be forwarded to Eric Holdsworth.

The next quarterly meeting is 2 December, 10.30am at the Friends Meeting House in Albert Road. Mince pies and sloe gin await those attending.

Liz Byrd

Next meetings: 2 December
and 3 March 2014

2013

21 November 2013
Members' Own & Winter Supper




12 December 2013
Christmas Party Travelling Light Magic Lantern Show




Civic Society Meetings

9 January 2014
The New Hospital at Southmead
Joanne Anyon



16 January 2014
Fings ain't wot they used ter be
Jane & Derek Lilly



13 February 2014
BBC Travels With the Queen
Geoff Hale




20 February 2014
Bristol and the Great War
Clive Burlton



13 March 2014
Thatchers Cider and the Environment
John Thatcher



20 March 2014
Operation Bellicose
Arthur Spencer DFC



10 April 2014
Berkeley Castle
Anton Bantock



17 April 2014
Great Houses of the Gordano Valley
Sandy Tebbutt



8 May 2014
Arnos Vale Cemetary
Dave Napier



15 May 2014
We inherited a Bishop
Roy Girling



ART CLUB WINNER

Congratulations to John Tranter on winning the Selectors' Choice with his *Tudor Warship*, painted on drift wood.

You first saw the painting on the back page of the Spring 2013 edition of *The Clevedonian!*



After the History Group's September speaker had departed having told us a colourful tale about the fate of the Severn Princess, your intrepid reporter, with Bus Pass to the fore, went in search of the now beached ferry.



The Severn Princess was part of a car ferry service that operated across the River Severn between Aust and Beachley saving motorists a 60-mile round trip to Gloucester, the location of the nearest fixed crossing. In 1966 the ferry ceased to operate when the first Severn Bridge was built.

In 1999 the Severn Princess Restoration Group found the vessel rotting away in a harbour in Ireland. They bought her for £1.05 and arranged to tow her the 500 miles from Ireland back to her home waters.

When the Paddle Steamer Waverley departed from Clevedon Pier at the end of her 2013 Bristol Channel cruising period, many people asked when the MV Balmoral was sailing. She never appeared - here's why.

The MV Balmoral was built in 1949 as the flagship of the Southampton Red Funnel Fleet, and was used on their Southampton to Cowes service and on coastal excursions, mostly around the Isle of Wight.

In 1969, she was transferred to the Bristol Channel, where she became flagship of the famous P&A Campbell White Funnel Fleet of excursion ships. Her days under Campbell management came to an end in 1980 and she then spent a short spell as a floating restaurant in Dundee.

In 1985, Balmoral was bought by supporters of PS Waverley, the world's last sea-going paddle steamer, and after major renovation she re-entered service in 1986 as support ship to the Waverley.

Since 1986, the MV Balmoral has been based on the Bristol Channel but has also cruised all areas of the UK Coast, carrying over two million passengers and, together with the PS Waverley, has kept alive the great tradition in the UK of coastal day excursions.

A combination of circumstances has resulted in Balmoral not operating her traditional cruises in 2013 and she is currently moored outside the M Shed in Bristol's Floating Harbour awaiting a major survey and refit.

The Chepstow Town Council then offered a sum of £10,000 to help with restoration work. To date the group has spent just over half the money on insurance and repair work to the hull.



Severn Princess beached at Chepstow

Our lecturer, Tim Ryan, said, 'In the first four years a lot of work was done inside.'

Last year, the Severn Princess was towed to Buffers Wharf, under Chepstow's Brunel Railway Bridge, and was finally winched on shore in April this year at high tide.



MV BALMORAL

MV Balmoral Fund Ltd. is a company with charitable aims set up to provide funds for Balmoral's restoration, preservation, and finally her re-entry into passenger service in 2014. The cost of this will be £350,000.

If this work is not carried out, Balmoral's passenger certificates will be lost and it may never be possible for the ship to go cruising again.

Geoff Hale



Working on the engines



Balmoral's only voyage in 2013 - moving berths in Bristol

SEA BATHING IN CLEVEDON AND THE

As part of the Heritage Lottery bid to renovate the Marine Lake, North Somerset Council asked Civic Society member and local historian Jane Lilly to write a dossier detailing the history of the lake and the emergence of swimming as a pastime in Clevedon.

The first reference to sea bathing at Clevedon comes from the Bristol Mirror, when in 1823, 'George Cook respectfully informs the ladies & Gentlemen of Bristol and the public generally that during the ensuing season he will have four bathing Machines on Clevedon Beach which will be drawn in & out of the water by Capstans. Experienced persons will attend the machines and every possible care will be taken.'

Bathing machines were changing huts on wheels, which could be drawn into the sea while the bather stripped and donned a long smock. When the door of the machine was level with the surface of the water, an awning could be lowered to give the bather privacy while descending the steps at the door.

Elton in 1864 and thoroughly renovated. The bathing machines were still there too, run by the Lilly family who rented the foreshore from Clevedon Court from the late 1830s.

By 1881, the proprietor of the Baths had to combine the business with a steam laundry to make the Baths financially viable. By 1883 the public rooms there were in use as auction premises. Enlargement of the existing site was impossible as it was surrounded by other properties, the road and the cliffs.

The Clevedon Local Board of Health



View of the Baths, Clevedon Nov 17th 1845

House Bay, fell by the wayside. By 1900, the Baths were disused, and within a few years, collapsed into the sea.

In 1907, the Council had bought the field called West Leaze from Clevedon Hall. They renamed it Salt House Fields and in 1923, decided to develop it for recreation, providing unemployed men with work during the economic depression. Tennis courts were laid out, a wooden shelter built and plans were made for the laying out of a footpath round Old Church Hill and Wain's Hill, to form Poets' Walk.

In October 1926, Councillor Frederick Nutting urged the Council to enclose Salt House Bay. It was suggested that boating and bathing there could earn the Council as much as £200 a year, when the sea was only deep enough for bathing for approximately two and a half hours a day. Clevedon's bathing income was entirely dependent on the tide table and brought in £155 a year.

75% of the money for the Clevedon lake scheme would be spent on unskilled labour. 50% of the material was on site, and the Council had a bona fide offer for £240 for boating rights alone.

had discussed methods of making sea bathing and the Baths more attractive and viable from the 1860s, when the enclosure of Harp Bay had been suggested, along with later ideas such as the laying out of a concrete base on the shore along with that of clearing the mud to a point below the Salt House wall. In 1887 further schemes were put forward, and none carried out. By the 1890s, the Board was involved in purchasing the Pier, and the Baths plans, as well as a scheme to enclose Salt



The main beach - pre 1896

In 1828, Samuel Taylor of Hutton bought a plot of land now on the site occupied by a bungalow called Sea Walls, north of the Royal Pier Hotel. The level part of the plot provided enough space for Taylor to build a house, while the sloping cliff was low enough to allow the making of an enclosure which could be filled by the tide and would then retain seawater for the bathers. The importance of this on the Bristol Channel, where the range between high and low tide is some 47 feet at its extreme, was paramount if you were aiming to make your money from those who were bathing in sea water.

These Baths were still in full use when they were bought by Sir Arthur



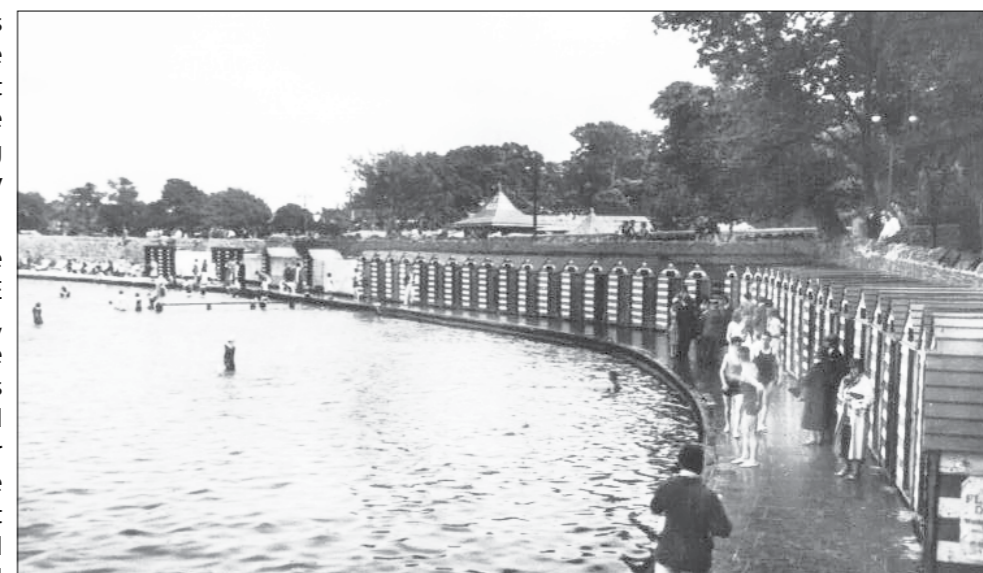
The Baths next to the Pier Hotel - 1871

EVOLUTION OF THE MARINE LAKE

by Jane Lilly

The population of Bristol was 300,000, and Clevedon was the closest seaside town with a decent beach and road and rail links. The enhanced income from bathing and boating would certainly pay off the loan for building.

A local enquiry was held by the Ministry of Health in 1927 and Mr E H Shopland supported the scheme, little having been done in the town to increase visitor numbers for some 30 years. An offer had now been received of £400 for the boating rights alone on the proposed lake. The scheme went forward and Mr Nutting purchased Salt House, and sold the Council



Opening of the Marine Lake - 1929

the woods behind the house at cost, improving access to Poets' Walk. The Crown sold the rights to the foreshore to the town for £150, and Mr Gower Pimm, the engineer, applied to the Mercantile Board of Trade for approval to build the lake.

In September 1927 tenders were put out specifying that 90% of the men

employed must be local. This would ease the appalling unemployment situation in the town. The tender from Messrs J Moore and Co of Nailsea, at £5195 and 6d was accepted. Work began after March 1928, on a slightly reduced

plan which was to enclose an area of three and a half acres.

After decades of delays, the lake was in use in August 1928, the income from this being a total of £62/11/3d for the first week of the month alone. Clevedon Publicity Association had been granted the management of the boating and deckchair hire. The Council decided

that they would run the swimming themselves for the first year.

At last, on March 17th 1929, the opening of both the lake and recreation grounds on Salt House Fields was performed by the Lord Mayor of Bristol, Councillor W H Eyles. In his speech thanking the Lord Mayor for attending, Sir Ambrose Elton in fact said that Clevedon was offering 'a happy paradise for the toil-worn men and women, and especially the children, of the Lord Mayor's great and wonderful city, so that here they may enjoy themselves and recuperate their health. We hope that more and more of them will make use of the opportunities we are trying to provide for them.'

Jane Lilly

Where do the street names in Clevedon come from?

WHAT'S IN A NAME?



Sir Edward Elgar (1857 - 1934)

Famous British composer of works including the *Pomp and Circumstance* marches and the *Enigma Variations*



Carice Elgar-Blake (1890 - 1970)

Daughter of the famous composer, she lived in Clevedon for a number of years and died in Bristol.

CLEVEDON PIER – PRESENT AND FUTURE

by Ross Janes

Civic Society member Ross Janes is also a member of the Clevedon Pier Board of trustees. Here he sets out the Board's case for the controversial plans to develop the landward end of the structure.

You may have noticed that over the last year the promenade of the UK's only Grade I listed structurally intact pier has been repainted. This has been a major achievement of the Clevedon Pier and Heritage Trust and, in particular, of the Trust's chairman, Simon Talbot-Ponsonby, who fought tirelessly to raise the funds for the repainting. The pier is owned by North Somerset Council, with the Trust having a 99-year lease on it. Supplemented by the Trust's own reserves, it was the Council as the freeholder who eventually provided the major part of the funds to repaint the eight 100-foot spans forming the promenade. Whilst the pier head was repainted seven years ago, it was 24 years since the promenade was last done and the work was well overdue. The job, which took 34 weeks, has been done to a commendably high standard and will last many years.

a tea room seating some 40 people. This will enable visitors to enjoy the stunning views at the same time as having refreshments. At the lower level there will be fully accessible toilets and a multipurpose room for educational activities, meetings and functions. The ground floor of the Toll House will be renovated to upgrade the retail area. On the first floor a gallery will be created with interpretive displays telling the story of the pier in the context of Victorian Clevedon and the Bristol Channel. The displays will replace the somewhat dated format of the Heritage Centre exhibition. The interior of the pier head pagoda will be fitted out to create an attractive ice-cream parlour. The ground floor of No.4 The Beach on the sea front will be used to create a flexible space for both pier staff and a greatly expanded number of volunteers. The building will also provide a base for



With its 800-foot promenade and 40-foot pier head, this most elegant of piers, opened in 1869, has to withstand the rigours of twice daily tides that are the second highest in the world. The cost of repairing and repainting the structure over a ten-year cycle is around £100,000 a year. Somehow this has to be raised to maintain the pier on a regular basis. As it is, the pier lacks adequate visitor facilities, even basic ones like toilets. The Trust needs to generate more income from its activities so that it becomes self-sufficient and able to carry out essential maintenance work from its own resources. A major constraint on this is the lack of space.

The current visitor facilities project involves a number of aspects. The pier ramp will be partially dug out to create

a community archive and an art gallery. None of these developments come cheaply and the Trust has put a huge effort into fund raising over the last two years. To date some £1.4 million has been raised, primarily from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Coastal Communities Fund. A total of £2.1 million is needed for the whole project and grant applications continue to be made. So far some 20 applications have been submitted and of those, six of £5,000 or more have been successful including a generous grant from Clevedon Town Council. Outcomes of other applications are still pending or they have been unsuccessful. Each submission has to be individually tailored to the grant provider and involves a lot of work. To this end we have employed Ian Parkin of



Parkin Heritage & Tourism to assist us in writing applications.

In financial terms, once the whole project has been implemented and the new visitor facilities are up and running, forecasts indicate that over the first five years of operation the number of

visitors will increase to 125,000 a year from the 2011 level of 90,000 a year. There will be a resultant growth in admissions takings and an improved income from the shop and pagoda, together with new income from the tea room. From analysis, it is projected that over five years the Trust's total annual surplus will rise to around £70,000

to £80,000 a year. Subsequently, it is anticipated that this surplus will grow further. This will enable a reserve fund to be established to maintain the pier without having continually to return cap in hand to the Council to ask for more funds.



Heritage Centre (No 4 The Beach)



Architect's (O'Leary Goss) aerial view of the tea room



The plans have the unequivocal support of English Heritage, who commented that the scheme to excavate into the ramp was ingenious and that the overall proposal sought to provide the new facilities with the minimum of visible structure. The Trust is doing its utmost to preserve the beauty and simplicity of the pier, whilst also securing the financial future of this nationally important Clevedon icon so that it remains operational, in public ownership and in sound condition for future generations.

Ross Janes



Architect's section through new visitor facilities



View from multipurpose room below ramp

Eileen lived in Clevedon for the first fourteen years of her life, but her family's connection with the town goes back a long time.

MY FAMILY IN CLEVEDON

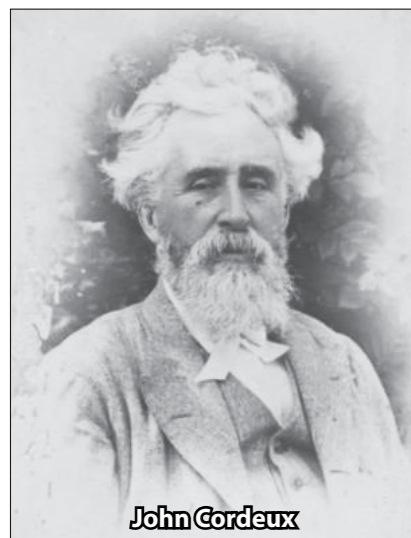
by Eileen Cole

As far as I know, my family's connection with Clevedon began in the mid 1860s. My grandmother, Alice Cordeux, was born in 1863 in Bristol, but the family must have come here soon after, as she was very small when she wandered from home. After a frantic search, she was discovered in a small greengrocer, near where the Curzon is now, sitting on a wooden box, eating pears while the juice dripped onto her dainty white pinafore!

When the family drove to Bristol, Alice and her three older brothers always had to get out of the carriage and walk up Tickenham Hill to spare the horses!

Later her father, John Cordeux, sent Alice to school at Penarth House, at the bottom of Albert Road. I do not know her age at this time but in 1881 the boarders at Penarth House ranged from 10 to 16 years old.

Discipline was strict at school, at least when the headmistress was present, and



John Cordeux

young Alice Cordeux was a bit of a rebel! Each day, after lessons, the girls went for a sedate walk. One day, she decided it was too hot to put on hats and gloves, and suggested they all refuse to do so! They agreed, and were lined up in the hall when the headmistress came out of her room and asked sternly, "Young ladies, where are your hats and gloves?" While the other girls trembled, Alice announced cheerfully, "We're not going to wear them any more, Miss Knight! We think it's silly!" In her sternest tone, the headmistress said, "Young ladies, go straight upstairs and put on your hats and gloves!" Such was the force of her personality that all the girls, even Alice, trooped up the stairs without a word.

But the headmistress was not at dinner the day the circus paraded round the town. The girls heard the music and with one accord jumped up and ran to the

window, while their teacher sat at the table imploring, "Young ladies, young ladies, come back and sit down." But the 'young ladies' took no notice until the last animal and clown had passed!

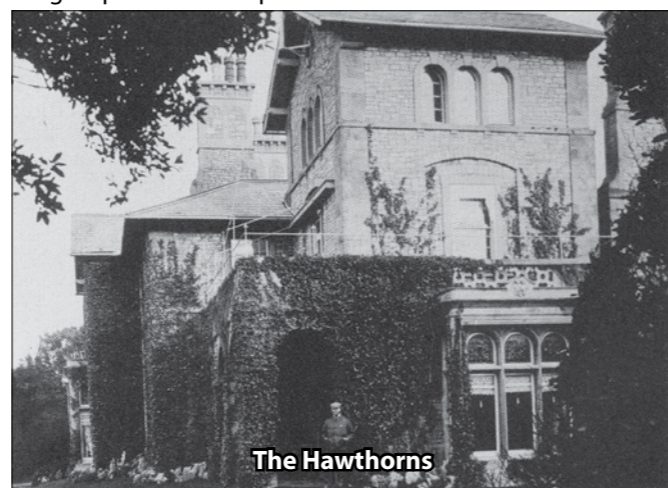
When Alice was 18, her mother died and she left school and became mistress of the house, until her father married her ex-headmistress! It could not have been an easy situation, but the two women got on well. In a letter dated 29 June 1921 my mother wrote: "Grandma Cordeux is coming tomorrow for a fortnight's visit. She was 85 this month and I will enjoy good walks every day while she is here; she is travelling alone."

John Cordeux was founder of Cordeux, a large drapery business in Bristol. A publication of 1893 stated 'a tour of inspection is like a visit to one of the most gorgeous bazaars in the Orient'.



When he retired, leaving the shop in the hands of two of his sons, he moved to Clevedon and lived in "The Hawthorns" for a couple of years, before moving to "Baycliff", 31 Victoria Road in March 1894.

John's faith was very important to him and he supported many types of Christian work, including Copse Road Chapel. So

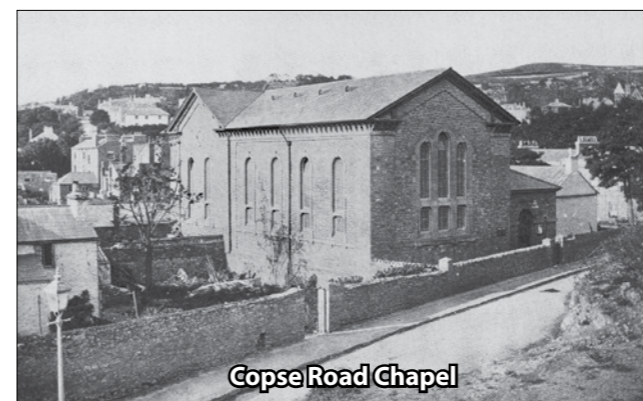


The Hawthorns

when his daughter became concerned about the rough lads who looked after the donkeys which gave children rides from the pier to Salthouse Fields (if I remember correctly for one old penny – 240 to the pound!), he encouraged her and even turned one of his unused outbuildings into a classroom. She gathered these wild lads one evening a week, and taught them the four Rs – reading, writing 'rithmetic and religion! Some of the Clevedon ladies were very shocked, and prophesied disaster, but that did not stop the Alice who had led the rebellion over hats and gloves at Penarth House! She understood boys – after all she had three older brothers – and they responded and never gave her serious trouble. One of the housemaids was artistic and drew texts, which the boys traced, coloured and learnt by heart.

When Alice was in her 80s, she could not

walk far, so a wheelchair was hired (from the furniture shop opposite the post office in Albert Road). One day she was being pushed by the Marine Lake, which was being cleared by labourers with shovels, when one of the old workers came up and said "We didn't have wellingtons like this when we went to



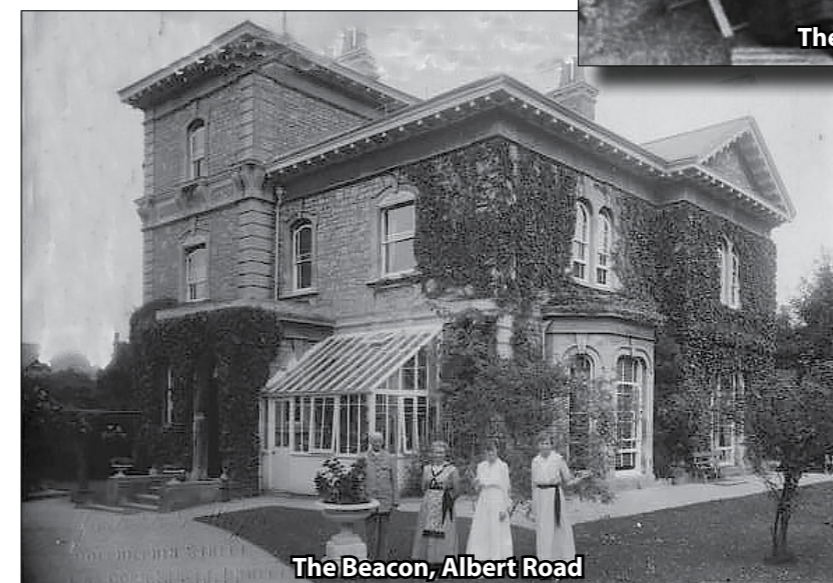
Copse Road Chapel

Miss Cordeux's class." Alice was thrilled to meet one of her donkey boys again.

When Alice was married, there was a wonderful write up in *The Clevedon Mercury and Courier*, August 22, 1896. *Seldom has Copse Road Chapel presented such a gay and festive appearance as it did last Tuesday, when Miss Alice Cordeux was married to Mr John Mitchell. The bride, the only daughter of Mr John Cordeux, of Clifton, Bristol, and Baycliff, Clevedon, is well known amongst us as an earnest and successful Christian worker among the young.*

The bridegroom is a native of Edinburgh Educated at this seat of learning, like many other "canny Scots", he migrated to England. Combining native shrewdness with a burning zeal for souls, he has by pen and tongue done good service for Christ ... and hopes, God willing, next month to take charge of the work at the Whitecross (now Clarence Park) Baptist Church, Weston-super-Mare.

The service began at once by Dr Anderson-Berry giving out the first four verses of the wedding hymn, written specially for the occasion by the well-known hymn writer, Miss Lucy Bennett. The members of the Christian Band and Sunday School in connection with the church occupied



The Beacon, Albert Road

the gallery and led the singing heartily and well, whilst Mrs. Anderson-Berry presided at the organ.

After the benediction and the signing of the register in the vestry, the bridal party left the chapel, whilst children strewed with flowers the bride's path and showered them down

upon her from the gallery. ...

Alice and John lived in Weston for two years, where their only daughter, Alice (known as Alcie) was born.

As a minister and travelling evangelist, John had to move the family several times, until he became diabetic. As at that time it was a death sentence, in 1915 or 16 he moved back to Clevedon so that his wife would be supported by her family and friends. He bought The Beacon, Albert Road,

By the time her father died in 1927, Alcie had given up all hope of marriage, as

there were so few single men left after the carnage of the first World War! But this changed when Harold Cole moved to Clevedon and fell in love with her! They married in 1929 and they lived with her mother in The Beacon, while his parents moved from Mowbray, Elton Road, to Fernlea, Victoria Road.

Harold had been a dispatch rider in the First World War, and having survived that, was badly injured in a train accident in 1922, when a train hit the barrier at Clevedon station. As a result of undiagnosed concussion, he had difficulty in sleeping and concentration for the rest of his life. In spite of this, he was lay pastor at the Baptist Chapel in West End Nailsea, where a cottage had been converted into a chapel, with the preacher sitting in the chimney! In the 1960s the chapel was closed and has now been rebuilt as a house at the end of Chapel Lane.

Their son, John, who was born in 1934, began his schooling at Lawnside, next door to the Beacon, and remembers lessons being disrupted by having to go into the garden to the shelter when the



The Cordeux Family

air raid siren sounded. Later, he moved to Walton Lodge, a school for "the sons of gentlemen"! One well-respected Clevedon resident recently told me that he was not allowed to attend as his father was a shopkeeper – obviously no one realised that John was the great-grandson of one!

Eileen Cole

Eileen was born in 1939 – her story continues in the next edition of The Clevedonian.

THE TAILOR OF HILL ROAD

by Paul Kite

On April the 5th 1891 - so the 1891 Census records show - George Longdon Kite aged approximately 37 had a tailoring business at Victoria House on Hill Road, Clevedon. George, a Master Tailor, trained by his father John Kite of Wooton Under Edge, had come to Clevedon from Guildford in Surrey where he'd lived for about six years.

We know that George was a trader in all sorts of clothing as well as a teacher of dressmaking to middle class ladies of the YWCA. A copy from a Trade Directory shows him at Twyford House. The same directory also lists another well known Hill Road Trader - Mr Hagley whose shop I remember well as a teenager (opposite Seeley's). I had a girlfriend who worked there! These cuttings must date from Clevedon newspapers and Trade Directories 1891 to 1893, but which, I don't know. Suffice to say that this was the start of a long "love affair" the Kite family has had and continues to have with Clevedon.

George was born in Cirencester on August the 6th 1853 and spent his childhood in Cirencester, Stroud and Painswick before moving at around 27 years of age to Guildford, probably his first foray away from his father's influence. Why Guildford we will never know. His first marriage, to Eliza Jones in Painswick in 1876, produced five children.

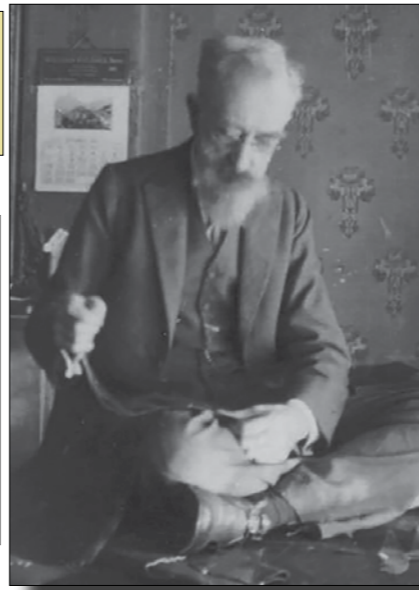
On 16th September 1882 Eliza had written a poignant letter to her cousin Maggie, comforting her at the loss of a "babe" and in it she describes her own loss of a child, probably through a miscarriage. We have no record of this child. The next record we have of her is her premature death in 1885 aged 33 in Guildford.



Eliza Kite (Jones)

George re-married in 1886 at Guildford to Mercy Colar Rye, his housekeeper. We think from her name she was of Romany stock. They had 6 children. Two sons were born to Mercy in Clevedon and of George's total of 11 children two emigrated to America around 1905 and

YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, VICTORIA HOUSE, HILL ROAD, CLEVEDON. SESSION 1890-91. MR KITE WILL GIVE A COURSE OF TWELVE LESSONS On his Direct Measurement System for Cutting all kinds of Ladies' Dress. First Lesson on WEDNESDAY EVENING Next, at 7.30. Is the Course to Members and Associates, others 2s 6d. Mr KITE will be pleased to give PRIVATE LESSONS. Terms at Victoria House.



NOTICE OF REMOVAL. GEORGE L. KITE begs to return thanks to his numerous Customers for the liberal support accorded to him during the past two years, and to inform them that he has taken LINCOLN HOUSE, HILL ROAD (lately vacated by Mr THOMAS, Draper), where he hopes, with more accommodation and a larger and more varied Stock, to merit the confidence hitherto reposed in him.

WARWICK HOUSE—Lee Mr G. and fam Selwood House—Hagley Mr E. Mrs & fam E. HAGLEY, DRAPER AND SILK MERCER. Gloucester House—Hordle Mr F. Mrs & fam F. HORDLE, FURNISHING IRONMONGER. Twyford House—Kite Mr G. L. G. L. KITE, TAILOR AND WOOLLEN DRAPER. Barrington House—Charles Mr D. Mrs and fam D. CHARLES, CROCHER & WEAVER MERCHANTS

are remembered as migrants on the Ellis Island memorial.

George's son Douglas Edward Kite (my grandfather from the 1st marriage), also a wanderer, had an eventual and eventful, enforced evacuation to Clevedon from the WW2 Bristol bombing when close to his retirement.

During the years his father resided in Clevedon, Douglas attended the British School on Chapel Hill - now a private residence. He left at age 13 and was apprenticed as a baker on Hill Road - I suspect at No1 Hill Road, Prospect House, run by William H Marks. This came to light just a year ago from a talk by Jane Lilly. Douglas did not complete his apprenticeship but ran away to sea as a steward, coming ashore again to marry in Bristol. Whilst there he joined his father to be trained as a tailor.

George had a reputation for challenging others within his profession to a bet. For the price of a pint he would cut off the silk facing on the collar of a gentleman customer's coat and then re-stitch it by hand without any noticeable damage.

The picture of an elderly George sitting cross legged, tailor fashion shows a lost art. Scissors and needle have been replaced by laser cutters and programmed sewing machines. The picture of him with Mercy shows just how beautifully he made his own suits and coats. The same can be said for my Grandfather Douglas, who carried on the tradition of at least 4 generations of tailors going back to Gloucestershire, and clothed his own 9 children during the 1920s depression. Douglas in turn trained his daughter Grace in the art, enabling her to clothe her children during WW2 rationing. Grace was to be the last of the tailoring line.

Paul Kite



George and Mercy Kite

by Liz Byrd

CLEVEDON'S OTHER POPULATION

Clevedon occupies a prime position on the Somerset coastline with lush green fields on the levels and gently rolling heights backing middle and upper Clevedon. Wherever you are, you find carefully tended gardens surrounding new houses and apartments, twenties and thirties bay-windowed facades and the elegant frontages of Victorian and Regency houses of all size. But did you know that behind all the palm trees, shrubbery, roses and garden gnomes lives an increasing population of hidden neighbours?



These inhabitants are rarely seen, and only occasionally heard in spite of being among the most constantly hardworking and productive members of our community. Hens. Garden hens. Well-loved family members, frequently living in some style as their besotted owners build them the equivalent of chicken palaces complete with leisure centre (with chicken treats available of course), and their named portraits displayed on the outside. They are curious, affectionate, entertaining and egg-laying. When a particularly weighty egg is laid, that's when you are most likely to hear a proud, triumphant squawking (not from a cockerel - they're not required for the girls to lay eggs).

You'll find all sorts of hens from bantams to pedigree Orpingtons to ginger rescue battery hens. The latter are a sorry sight when they first arrive with a few feathers and creaky legs. But they're determined to live life to the full after 18 months in cages and within two weeks have learnt to scratch for food and make dust baths (or in our climate - mud baths). These feisty girls can see off the neighbourhood cats and gang up on small dogs like our Jack Russell. All hens, whether aristocratic pedigree breeds or scruffy ex-bats, seem to like their human staff and will happily follow you round the garden helping with the weeding while working hard to rid the ground of

snails and slugs and their eggs. Toes are fair game so garden clogs are a must. A welcome rest is appreciated after all that work, especially sitting in the crook of an arm to have a doze.

Friends and neighbours enjoy the gentle clucking as the hens potter about, and they love the spare eggs as well.

Omelette for supper tonight?

Liz Byrd

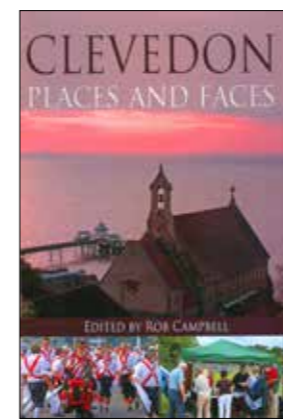


Chickens in St Andrew's Church Glebe

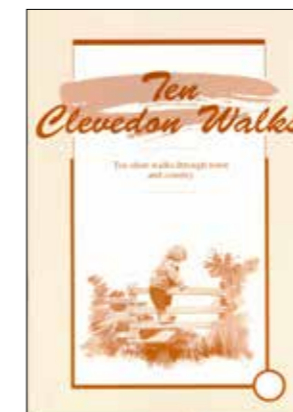
Further information on ex-battery hens can be obtained from the British Hen Welfare Trust, South Molton. www.bhwt.org.uk. Our nearest collection point is Clapton-in-Gordano.

Tickenham Rabbit Centre, Luggards Cross Farm, Stone Edge Batch (yes, they do chickens) have a good range of established breeds as well as being a great source of advice and supplies. www.tickenhamrabbitcentre.co.uk

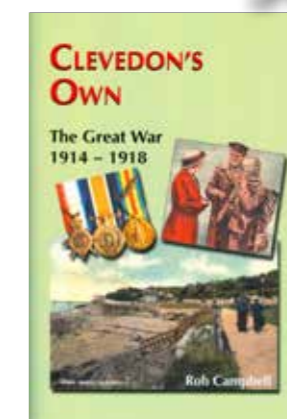
SOCIETY BOOKS



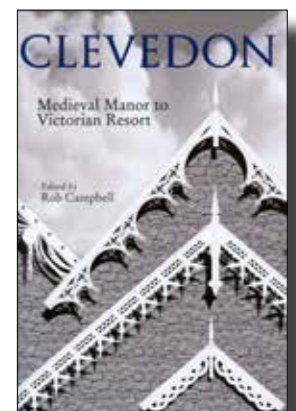
£14.95 (£12.00)



£2.00 (£1.50)



£9.95 (£8.00)



£8.00 (£5.00)

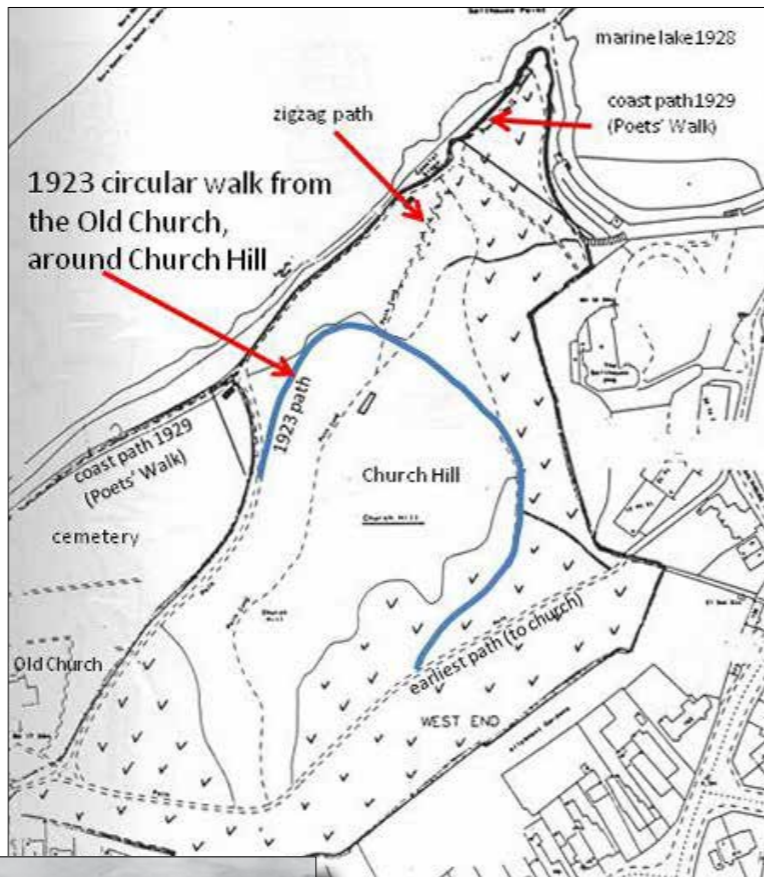
Prices in brackets are for Clevedon Civic Society members

*Restoring Old Footpaths
on Church Hill*

Working with North Somerset Council since September 2011, the volunteer group, **Friends of Poets' Walk**, have been reinstating lost paths and opening up view points on Church Hill.

The volunteers' latest project is the uncovering of a footpath on Church Hill that predates the formal paths of Poets' Walk by six years. The circular, now largely forgotten path was laid out in 1923, serving to provide local employment in the economic depression and to offer visitors easy access to the top of Church Hill with its stunning views over Clevedon to the Mendip Hills and the Bristol Channel to Wales. At that time the entire hill was open grassland.

Branching upward from the well established path from the Old Church across the southern flank of Church Hill, the route of this new path took the visitor to the hilltop and then curved anticlockwise around the hill before descending gently and then following the churchyard wall. The broad path was cut into the hillside to make it level, and gravelled, probably with waste from the Old Church Hill quarry. It slowly became grassed over, but would still have



stretch that the Friends of Poets' Walk have uncovered, removing scrub and cutting a corridor through secondary woodland. It is hoped to reinstate the complete route in the near future. From the section running above and behind Salthouse Court flats the walker will be able to glimpse the Marine Lake through the trees. The west-facing section will run close to the top of the wide, stone steps that overlook the churchyard and will provide a welcome alternative to clambering up or down a steep and often muddy slope.

been in regular use until brambles and scrub – and ultimately trees – finally took over as a combined result of the cessation of grazing in the 1940s and the decimation by disease of the rabbit population in the 1960s.

A section of the same 1923 gravel path is clearly shown on an aerial photograph from 1928 and can also be seen on several old postcards. The entire route is marked on a map from the 1970s. Only the south-facing section is indicated on North Somerset Council maps today and it is this



Two winters ago the now popular Church Hill zigzag path, which leads up from Salthouse Woods near the Sugar Lookout, was but a memory, having become lost under scrub in the last few decades. Since uncovering the stepped and metalled path, the volunteers have opened up a broad, grassy plateau above, re-establishing possibly the best view of all from Church Hill. Under brambles and elder they rediscovered the iron cross bollard that marks the top of the zigzag. The path was probably created shortly after the opening of Poets' Walk in 1929. A mid 1930s photograph shows it bordered on both sides by a rustic fence similar to that erected along the coast path, the fence and bollard presumably serving to prevent cattle wandering onto the path.



Angela Slotte

With thanks to Jane Lilly and David Long

Posted by Barbara Connell

POSTCARD FROM CLEVEDON

I have many multi-view cards of Clevedon in my collection but was pleased to find this version at a recent fair. It was postally used on 19th August 1928 when the sender comments, 'the weather is beautiful – hope it is the same with you?' I am somewhat curious about the addressee – one Miss Ruth Shirehampton! The card was published by A. T. Bonham of 30 Alexandra Road where Bonham's Library and shop were located. When I moved to Clevedon in 1969 the building housed a toyshop but more recently the premises have become a domestic dwelling.



The card of 'The Beach', top left of the multi-view, was posted on 6th April 1926 – the writer was sitting on the pier in 'this pretty place, the Glendower [PS Glen Gower] has just landed passengers – from Cardiff I suppose.'

A few cars are parked but how different life was then – a group of six people are walking abreast in the roadway!

Barbara Connell

COLLECTOR'S LOT

Numbers 41 & 43 Hill Road is the Regency house at the bottom of the Zigzag path. Like most of the houses at this end of Hill Road, it had a shop extension built in the front garden.

In Kelly's Guide for 1883 Earnest Shaw was the proprietor of the **Golden Canister**, and was described as a tea trader, grocer, French and Italian Warehouseman.

He also had premises in Old Street.

The calendar pictured is one of two I have. I assume they were given to account customers.

From the Dave Long Collection

The Golden Canister



PARKER'S STORES. Conveniently situated near the Post Office, Banks, and Victoria Library.

Residents and Visitors can obtain at this Establishment all goods at **Lowest Cash Prices** as at a **London Store.**

BROOMS, BRUSHES, SPONGES, HOUSEHOLD AND TOILET REQUISITES.

PARKER'S STORES ROGERS' ALES & STOUT IN CASE BOTTLES. Family Grocer, Provision Merchant.

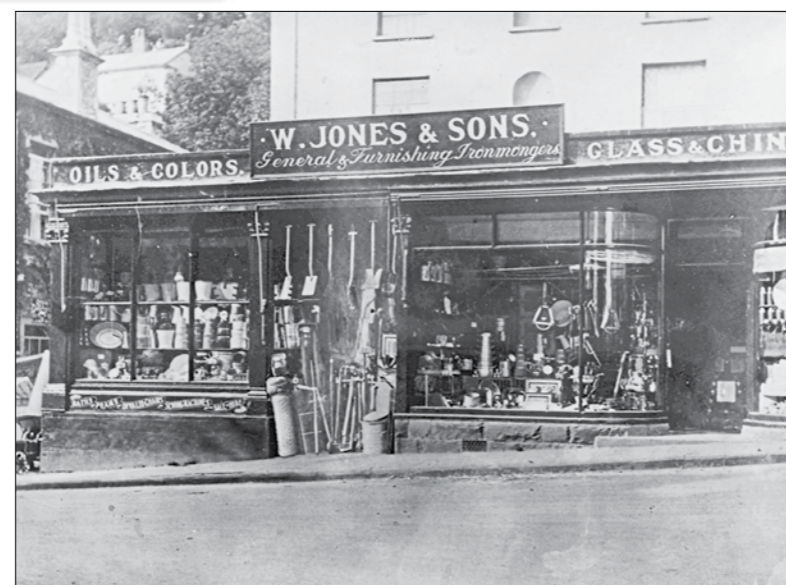
Provisions, General Grocery, Wines, Spirits, Ales, and Mineral Waters.

Free Collection and Delivery of Orders Daily.

Branch Store at **54, KEN ROAD,** Near Railway Station. Telephone 12 Y.S.

J. B. PARKER, Tea & Coffee Blender, **41 & 43, HILL ROAD, CLEVEDON.** Telephone No. 1Y.

Kelly's Guide for 1914 has William H. Jones & Son in business there as Hardware Dealers; they were here until about the 1930s.



Dave Long

MILITARY CHEST

Captain Robert (Bob) Wilyman 52nd Royal Tank Regiment

by Geoff Hale from material from Joy Wilyman

Civic Society member Joy Wilyman's late husband, Captain Robert Wilyman, saw action in the Battle of El Alamein during the 2nd World War. Seventy years on, Joy was proud to represent him at an anniversary service in Westminster Abbey last year.



at the grave of the Unknown Warrior. The first was on behalf of the Duchess of Cornwall whose father Major Bruce Shand had served with the 12th Lancers at El Alamein and the second was laid on behalf of the Armed Forces.

Recalling the importance of the Allied victory at the Battle of El Alamein, Sir Winston Churchill wrote: 'Before Alamein we never had a victory. After Alamein we never had a defeat'. He famously described

the battle as the end of the beginning of the Second World War.

Captain Robert (Bob) Wilyman later transferred to the 52nd Royal Tank Training Regiment at Bovington, Dorset and was released from service on the 15th May 1946.

Bob Wilyman joined the 23rd London Battalion of the East Surrey Regiment, a Territorial Army infantry battalion, in 1939. This became part of the 42nd Royal Tank Regiment soon after. In 1942 he saw action at the battle of El Alamein, a fourteen day tank battle in the Western Desert of North Africa, under the leadership of General Montgomery.

Wilyman, was invited to attend an Evensong Service of Thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey to remember the 4,000 Allied servicemen who lost their lives and the almost 9,000 who were wounded during the battle.

Exactly seventy years later, on Saturday 27 October 2012, Bob's widow, Joy

During the service two wreaths were laid



Somewhere in the Mediterranean





Victorian
Thirst Quenchure

by Bev Harris

Sunset at
Burnham

by Hugh Stebbing

