

Memories of a Bygone Gloucester

A Victorian Gloucester Family by Una Dowding

In the last half of the 19th century, Great Grandpa Taylor ran what Gloucester people may remember as Urch's restaurant and bakery in Southgate Street opposite Bakers, the jewellers. Mr Taylor was a master baker, visiting the Lamprey Inn, in Westgate Street each year to make the pastry crust for the lamprey pie which was the City's traditional yearly gift to the ruling sovereign. Whether Queen Victoria ever sampled my ancestor's cookery skills, we never knew.

Four children were born to the Taylors; William who became manager of the local branch of Pickfords removal firm, Sidney who directed one of the tax offices in the City and who played cricket for Gloucester, my grandmother Harriette (who would understandably, only answer to Ette) and the youngest sister who was only ever referred to as Queenie because of her imperious manner.

The Masonic Hall, with its entrance off Westgate Street, was behind Taylor's bakery, so to facilitate any cooked food being delivered hot to the Hall, a connecting corridor was built over the narrow intervening street. Years later, in 1936, Ette's husband Eric would preside there as Worshipful Master of the Zetland Lodge.

Queenie married a man from Cardiff, but found visiting her parents quite convenient, as she and her children travelled by paddle

steamer from Cardiff to Gloucester where a horse and cart took them straight to Southgate Street.

Ette, my Grandmother, seems to have been rather ahead of her time, as she aspired to take part in all her brothers' activities. Sid and Will owned a bicycle, one of the first local 'modern' ones.

At the side of the shop was a narrow alley through which deliveries were made to the bakery. This enabled Ette to practise on her brothers' bike, rebounding from wall to wall while she learned to balance and, crucially, to stop. The front door being left open one day, she was out into Southgate Street with no walls to shelter her and her floor length skirts inhibiting a safe descent. She managed to turn right into Eastgate Street, then right again into what was then Queen Street where another right took her back to Southgate Street. By this time, the brothers had found that their bicycle was missing and had rushed into the street to see if they could spot the thief.

To their horror, they saw their hoydenish sister, long skirts flying, pedalling like fury. "I can't stop", she shouted. "Catch me next time round," which they managed to do, although doubled up with laughter.

Sid and Will were either amused or loyal enough to keep the incident a secret, but

Mr Baker, a friend of their father, had seen Ette speeding over the cross and stated his disgust at the sight of a young lady acting in such an abandoned way. It was the only time that Grandpa Taylor became cross with his lively daughter, for she had displayed her ankles in public, though they were shrouded in button boots.

This did not quench Ette's spirit for long, as she was soon roller skating on the boards which were fixed over the swimming baths, near Barton Gates, each winter. It was there that she met Eric Keys, a trainee teacher at the National School.

They had a long and happy marriage, with Eric ending his teaching career at Linden Road after becoming Head of what was then 'Night School' for apprentices. He is even now remembered as the founder of schoolboys' Rugby, becoming their President and sowing the seeds in the young for what has become the successful 'Glawsters'.

Ette returned to the baths for many years as swimming teacher for all the school girls. She also returned to school in her 60's, for she was my local, true, living history lessons for my classes when I started teaching in Gloucester.

Una Dowding is a Civic Trust member.

Armchair Tours of Historic Gloucester

Tours of Gloucester's historic gems, especially aimed at those with mobility problems, started on 19th April.

Gloucester Civic Trust members, John Larking and Mike Fox, have devised the free tours, which mean the audience never have to leave their comfortable chairs at St. Michael's Tower on the Cross.

Using the latest technology, including a video camera mounted on top of the Tower, which can pan and tilt to focus on many of the city's historic locations, John and Mike tell of the buildings and the stories of the personalities that go with them.

Marilyn Champion, the Trust's Tower project leader, said: "Many people phone to say they want to go on one of our daily tours, but the walking is too much for them.

"So, John and Mike taught themselves all the necessary IT skills to come up with a 55 minute power point presentation of Gloucester's history. It took hundreds of man hours to put together.

"Last year 150 disabled people took advantage of the service and we are repeating the exercise each month between April and September in 2012. Depending on demand we can do more.

"John has also put together a series of five minute films about Gloucester's history, including the coronation of King Henry III, the murder of King Edward II, the martyrdom of Bishop Hooper and the life of Robert, Duke of Normandy. These are available every Thursday of the season, when John is on duty. Refreshments



John Larking begins his April Armchair Tour with an introduction to St. Mary de Lode Church.

are available at the Tower which has full disabled access and toilet facilities".

This year's Armchair Tours continue on June 21st, July 26th, August 16th and September 6th. All presentations start at 10.45 am and admission is free.

Press release from Hugh Worsnip which appeared in the 'Citizen' on Monday 5th March 2012.



Civic Trust News

Gloucester Civic Trust Ltd
Reg. Charity No. 264719

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A Bell Returns to St Michael's Tower

After a break of nearly 60 years a bell is back in St. Michael's Tower.

On the rather chilly evening of Wednesday, April 4th the bell from All Saints Church, High Wycombe that has been purchased for us by our business partner Ecclesiastical Insurance Group, was delivered to St. Michael's Tower. It is hoped the bell will be hung in the Tower in time for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations in June.

Mr Bill Berry, an expert on bells, particularly Gloucester bells, oversaw the delivery. Bill's father removed the original peel of bells from St. Michael's Church in 1956 and in the 1970s Bill himself removed the last bells from the country's only Bell Museum when it was housed in the Tower.

Bill will be installing the bell and says he is really pleased to be returning a bell to St. Michael's Tower.

The Church of St. Michael the Archangel once had a ring of 10 bells, one of which was called the Curfew Bell. This bell also rang out on Market Days and was later called the Market Bell.

The bell from All Saints Church was first cast in 1711 by Master Bell Maker, Richard Phillips. He was based at the Whitechapel

Bell Foundry which is still in existence to this day. The bell was re-cast in 1919 but as it was deemed a heritage bell the original inscription had to be reused.

The inscription reads:-

**'Through many ages did I rang true,
'Neath shades of war my voice
faint grew,
With dawn of peace new hopes arise,
My wound is healed through sacrifice.'**



Bill Berry oversees the unloading of the bell.

The bell will be rung on special occasions such as Gloucester Day, Heritage Open Days and of course, Market Days.



The bell on display in the Tower.

Flag Pole Erected

Postponed from Sunday 29th April, because of strong winds and heavy rain, the flag pole, which is also part of the Tower Bell Project, was finally positioned in place on the top of St. Michael's Tower just after 8.00am on the morning of Wednesday, 2nd May.

The flag of St. Michael is now flying on the Tower and the flag of St. George and the Union Flag will be flown on appropriate occasions.

The flags have been donated by Trust member Nigel Spry whose mother was christened in the Church of St. Michael the Archangel and who married Nigel's father there in 1938.



The bell arrives at St. Michael's Tower.



St. Michael's flag flies from the top of the Tower.



Information and articles are always appreciated.
Please contact Terry Brooks, 44 Wheatway, Abbeydale, Gloucester GL4 5ER
Tel: 01452 411827 or e-mail terence.brooks@btopenworld.com.



News from the Docks



Victory for Tommi Nielsen

T Nielsen & Co of Gloucester has been awarded a prestigious contract to work on the restoration of HMS Victory at Portsmouth in partnership with BAE Systems and Bell Riggling of London. Tommi Nielsen's men will be using traditional shipwright skills to replace planking and knees etc in the forward one third of the hull.

originally built for the engineer and directors of the Gloucester & Berkeley Canal Co, but she is now privately owned and based in Maidenhead. (Citizen 3 Mar 2012)

Wye Trow Launched

A replica Wye Trow built by T Nielsen & Co was lifted by crane into the main basin on 28 March, a mast was installed and later it was rowed around the basin with about twenty of Nielsen's men on board.

Design Team Chosen

Ecclesiastical Insurance has appointed Bristol-based Stride Treglown as architects for their new headquarters building on what is now the Southgate Street car park overlooking the Victoria Dock. Stride Treglown have recently designed the Merchants Quay apartments and Sainsbury's at Monk Meadow. (Citizen 14 Feb 2012)



♦ The Trow under construction in Tommi Nielsen's shed.

New Minister

At a special service on Tuesday 21 February, Rev Andy Osmond was licensed by the Bishop of Tewkesbury as the new minister at the Mariners Chapel. Previously a curate in Cheltenham, Andy has bold initiatives to help grow the church and make it more accessible to people in the area. He can be contacted at marinersglos@gmail.com



♦ The Trow being rowed around the main basin by Tommi Nielsen's men - 28 March 2012.

Gloucester Steamboat for Royal Pageant

The steamboat Sabrina, built by local engineering company Fielding and Platt in 1871, will carry the Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire in the Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant on 3 June. Sabrina was

Gloucester Rowing Club Crew for Royal Pageant

An eight-man crew from Gloucester Rowing Club will row the Old Balliol in the Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant on 3 June. The boat, normally housed at the River & Rowing Museum at Henley-on-Thames, is a replica of the craft used in the first ever boat race in 1829. (Citizen 3 Mar)

Dredger returns to Museum

Following an overhaul in the dry dock, steam dredger SND No 4 was welcomed back to the Waterways Museum on 28 April by Chairman of the Friends, Chris Witts and the Mayor and Sheriff of Gloucester, Councillors Andy Lewis and Pam Tracey.



♦ Steam dredger SND No4 welcomed back to the Waterways Museum by Chairman of the Friends Chris Witts and the Mayor and Sheriff of Gloucester.

Stop Gates Put In

Following record rainfall in April, the River Severn at Gloucester rose to the level that required the stop gates at Gloucester Lock to be closed on the 30 April to protect the basin from possible flooding.

Civil War Salute

Members of the English Civil War Society fired a salute on the North Quay on 25 March in honour of those who died in the Siege of Gloucester in 1643. They had previously marched to St. Nicholas Church to lay a wreath where some of those who died were buried.

These notes are from Hugh Conway-Jones monthly e-mail newsletter reporting activities connected with the Gloucester Docks and the Sharpness Canal. To receive a regular copy yourself go to www.gloucesterdocks.me.uk click on newsletter and type your e-mail address into the box. Photographs courtesy of Hugh Conway-Jones.

Marketing Gloucester, Gloucester Quays and Docks Attractions

Hospitality Day - 20th April 2012

Marketing Gloucester, Gloucester Quays, Antique Centre, Waterways Museum, Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum, English Holiday Cruises and Civic Trust Tour Guides participated in a Hospitality Day in Gloucester Quays and Docks on Friday 20th April 2012.

The principle behind the day was to give coach operators, tour companies and similar organisations an opportunity to visit The Quays and Docks to see and enjoy the attractions that are available for tourists and visitors and to encourage them to add Gloucester Quays and the Docks to their itineraries and programmes.

Representatives from over 60 organisations, some from as far away as Dorset and Shropshire, accepted the

invitation and after refreshments and welcoming speeches were escorted around the attractions by Civic Trust tour guides.

The day included a 45 minute cruise on the Gloucester & Sharpness Canal in Queen Boadicea II and the morning concluded with lunch in the Blue Elephant restaurant of The Quay (formally Foster's on the Docks).

Feedback from the visitors on the day and since has been extremely positive. Our guides were praised, not only by the managers of the attractions but in particular by the visitors for their knowledge of the docks area and for acting as the link between the attractions in such an efficient and professional way.

A further Hospitality Day is planned for the autumn.



♦ Tour Guides ready for their escort duties.

Photograph courtesy of Marketing Gloucester.

Interpretation Board

Gloucester Civic Trust
St Michael's Tower

<p>Early history</p> <p>This tower, on the south-eastern corner of Gloucester Cross, is all that remains of the ancient church of St Michael the Archangel. The tower dates from the 1460s, but there has been a church on this site since late Saxon times, one thousand years ago.</p> <p>By the 13th century, three small churches stood on Gloucester Cross. St Michael's was the only one that survived until modern times, because it was awarded the whole of Eastgate Street, a wealthy trading area, as its parish.</p>  <p>Extract from John Speed's map of 1610 showing churches at the Cross.</p>	<p>The old churchyard</p> <p>In the mid 14th century, the parishioners bought another plot of land on the south side for a churchyard. Up until then parishioners had been paying to be buried in the abbey burial grounds.</p>  <p>Engraving by Thomas Bonnor showing the churchyard in the 18th century.</p>	<p>17th century alterations</p> <p>The interior of the church was very much altered in the mid seventeenth century when it was opened up to make an auditorium for preaching to a large congregation, this being the great age of long sermons and popular preachers.</p>  <p>Interior of the church before its demolition.</p>	<p>19th century rebuilding</p> <p>However, by the mid nineteenth century, these alterations were seen as inappropriate, and on the recommendation of the architect F S Waller, all but the tower was demolished, and the church was rebuilt in the Victorian Gothic style.</p>  <p>Interior of St Michael's Tower.</p>
<p>The present tower is built</p> <p>Money for building a tower came from a bequest by Thomas Baret, a wealthy draper who lived in Eastgate Street. The tower was to house the curfew bell, which was rung at 8pm every night to tell people to put out their fires; a town full of wooden buildings was very vulnerable to destruction by fire. It was rung again early in the morning to let people know that fires could be lit once more.</p> <p>In order to build the tower, the surrounding tenement shops had to be demolished. They were erected again afterwards and stood until 1777, when they were pulled down in order to widen the road. This left the tower walls in such a mess that the parishioners appointed John Ricketts to make extensive repairs and his masonry elegantly covers all the bottom stage of the tower, and is usually taken for medieval work.</p>  <p>Engraving by Thomas Bonnor showing the church after John Ricketts' repairs.</p>	<p>The Victorian church is demolished</p> <p>During the second world war the church became a centre for collecting and sending second-hand clothes to families all over Britain that had lost everything in the destruction caused by bombing raids.</p> <p>After the war the church was closed because the parish had become depopulated. The Victorian part was eventually demolished in 1956, leaving only the medieval tower, which was saved by a protest led by Alderman Theodore Hannam-Clarke.</p>  <p>A walkway was created through the tower, which became a landmark in the centre of the city and a short cut past the Cross.</p> <p>It then served for some years as the city's Tourist Information Centre, but has recently been restored to its former glory by Gloucester Civic Trust and now functions very successfully as a heritage centre and headquarters of the trust. Events are often staged in and around the tower, and visitors can see audio-visual displays about the city's history and heritage.</p>  <p>Detail of the interior carved stone roof bosses.</p>		



Gloucester Civic Trust
St Michael's Tower
The Cross
Gloucester GL1 1PA
www.gloucestercivictrust.org.uk

♦ The Interpretation board to be erected outside St. Michael's Tower gives a history of the Church of St. Michael the Archangel.

Fielding and Platt Project Wins Heritage Lottery Fund Support Gloucester's Proud Industrial History Remembered

The world famous engineering firm Fielding and Platt is the focus of a new archives project run by Gloucestershire Archives and Gloucester City Centre Community Partnership. Thanks to a grant of £42,900 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the project will record, preserve and celebrate Fielding and Platt's history and its impact on the city. A key part of the project will be to record the memories of people who worked for or lived near the company, situated at the bottom of Southgate Street where Gloucester Quays Shopping Centre is now.

"We are delighted to have the Heritage Lottery Fund's support for this project", says Heather Forbes, head of Gloucestershire Archives, "there is little trace of where Fielding and Platt's large premises used to be and without the memories of former employees and residents of the Quays area, an important piece of local history will remain unrecorded and be lost with time".

At present, the only such recorded memories concerning the company are those of Stan Nash, once a pattern-maker at Fielding and Platt, collected during the recent Barton and Tredworth Community Heritage Project, also funded by the HLF (see www.bartonandtredworth.org.uk). Now in his 90s, Stan's memories give an intimate account of what it was like to work for the company in the 1930s and prove how valuable an addition to written histories such oral testimonies are.

Stan left school aged 14 to join the firm as an apprentice pattern-maker at Easter 1934. Pattern-makers would work to blueprints to produce the wooden patterns used to prepare the brass or iron castings. As an apprentice Stan was paid 7s 6d for working a 56 hour week: 7.30am to 5pm on weekdays, as well as Saturday mornings. Such apprenticeships lasted for seven years and were highly prized. Initially, though, Stan was an errand and tea boy, taking other workers' billycans down to the foundry to boil the water by placing them on the red-hot castings. There was no canteen in those days!

Another of the apprentice's jobs was to change the sandpaper on the sanding machine used for smoothing the woodwork. "That was a bit of a job" Stan recalled, "the sandpaper was glued onto the disc and you had to soak it to get it off". The sanding machine can be seen in the background of the photo in which Stan is drilling.

After a couple of years, Stan moved onto a bench and assisted his more senior colleagues. "I was pretty good on a lathe" he remembered, "I used to love wood-turning, and I used to get a lot of those jobs on the lathe, which were smaller jobs. I can

remember making some pattern that was going to be used on 'HMS Ark Royal', just one example of the prestigious work done by the company.

The HLF funded project runs for 15 months and is recruiting volunteers to help with a range of activities - as well as oral history recording, there are opportunities to handle original archives, create a project website and help run events. Training and support is provided. The Civic Trust is already helping to promote greater awareness of Fielding and Platt's history through its guided Docks tours which set off from the Customer Information Point, Gloucester Quays every Friday evening at 6.15 pm and Saturdays and Sundays at 11.30 am during July and August.

For further details about the project and opportunities to get involved, please contact Julie Courtenay at Gloucestershire Archives either by phone on 01452 425297 or email julie.courtenay@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

If you or someone you know has memories of Fielding and Platt then Gloucestershire Archives would love to hear from you!



◆ Apprentice Stan Nash shown drilling with sanding machine in the background c1935/36.



◆ A group of Fielding and Platt apprentices c1971/72.

Roger Peel Takes Over Role as Tour Guides Booking Secretary

I was rather surprised, but delighted to be asked by the T3 tour guides committee to take over from Ted Edmunds as Booked Tours Secretary, and so far, a couple of months into the task, I do not have any regrets.

I retired from GCHQ nearly five years ago after seventeen years and previously twenty-six years serving in the Royal Air Force; one of the highlights was being on a visit to Berlin from Warsaw when the Berlin Wall was taken down during the late 1980s.

Since taking over from Ted, things appear to have been fairly straight forward, being new to the task I'm keeping up to date with the correspondence.

After sending out an initial e-mail notifying guides of a proposed tour, I endeavour to make telephone calls to qualified guides not on e-mail to ask for their availability. I think it's fair to spread the tours around to

as many qualified tour guides as possible, and take into consideration those who are fully occupied with weekday work (whether professionally or voluntary) for weekend tours. After the initial allocation of tour guides I send out a 'booked tour form' with all the necessary details seven to ten days before the event.

For this year's tour guide season, it's been a hectic time helping to organise April's Gloucester Quays Hospitality Day for tour operators, with more than eighty visitors anticipated; June looks to be busy too but with the help of the team of loyal and enthusiastic guides no one is being disappointed. The Civic Trust are arranging tours for the Austin Healey Car Club and a coach party from Alton, Hampshire; altogether nearly one hundred guests on the same day will be in the city. Already, we have a provisional booking for May 2013.



1972 - 2012

Civic Trust's 40th Anniversary Join In Our Celebrations

As most of you will know the Gloucester Civic Trust was 'born' in 1972. Since then the Trust has led the way in preserving and promoting the city's glorious heritage.

It has been a remarkable 40 years of expansion and - in the words of our chairman Robin Morris - the Trust is now one of the most respected organisations operating within the city.

On Saturday, October 27th we will be marking this significant milestone with a celebration at the Guildhall preceded by a service of thanksgiving at St Mary de Crypt Church.

The main speaker at the Guildhall will be Professor Henry Hurst. In the 1970s and 80s Henry was the doyen of city archaeologists and did much to throw light on Gloucester's 'hidden' past. Fortunately for us he has maintained his links with the city and has agreed to speak to us - at absolutely no cost to the Trust. It is also hoped to show a

film taken at the time showing Gloucester above - and below - ground.

Inevitably - as at all birthday parties - there will be refreshments.

To encourage as many of our members to come as possible, the Trust's Council of Management has agreed to pay the cost of the hire of the Guildhall and the cost of entertaining civic guests leaving other guests to pay for the refreshments.

Please put the date in your diary. We have much to celebrate.

More details and an application form for tickets will appear in the August edition of this magazine.

Please try to be there.

John Lovell
Civic Trust Secretary

Planning Appraisal Report

18th April 2012

12/00183/FUL Alterations to the ground and first floor window openings at Saintbridge House, 189 Painswick Road for Pipin Patel. **Acceptable. These windows are in the modern development and not the original part of Saintbridge House.**

12/00211/COU Change of use of Casino Royale, 27 Westgate Street, from amusement arcade to hot food takeaway, and installation of a ventilation flue for Martin Slowe Estates. **No objection to the change of use but the flue is completely unsatisfactory because of its low level and proximity to the Grade 1 listed Fleece Hotel. Flue should be routed up the chimney to discharge at a much higher level.**

12/00271/FUL and 12/00272/ADV. New shop front and advertisements at Phones 4U shop at 2 Southgate Street. (former Hawkshead) **The illuminated advertisements are satisfactory, but the bright red fascias are far too big for this handsome classic style building on the Cross. The panel is very concerned about what will go in the large windows on both the Westgate Street and Southgate Street frontages. The panel wants to see strict controls on what material can be stuck on the windows in the premier conservation area.**

12/00324/ADV Illuminated signs at 1 Westgate Street for Royal Bank of Scotland (Santander). **The ads are acceptable, but the scarlet coloured fascia is far too long and dominant, even on this modern building. The fascia should be confined to the area above the windows.**

12/00302/FUL and 12/00303/FUL. Extension and alterations to the old chapel of Horton Road Hospital in Horton Road and change of use from office to residential for Mr M Wynn. **This will be the final phase of the conversion of the listed hospital building, which is one of the first four purpose built psychiatric hospitals in the world, dating back to 1811. The panel welcomes the bringing back into use as a nursing home of Thomas Medland's Victorian Gothic chapel (1871), which has been empty since the hospital works department moved out. We would prefer to see the roof of the extension in slate to match the chapel, but, failing that, a dull coloured metal profile. Though archaeological trial trenches have revealed no burials associated with the hospital, or Roman, Saxon or medieval remains, we would like to see a watching archaeological brief as the building proceeds.**

12/00348/COU. Change of use of first floor of 4, Saint Aldate Street to a tattoo parlour for Christina Rogers. **Acceptable provided there are strict controls on what can be displayed in the first floor windows. This is the last remaining house of the original Saint Aldate's Square.**

12/00370/LBC Demolition of rear extension and repairs to 5 Priory Place (Grade 2 Listed Building) for Gloucester City Homes. **The panel welcomes the refurbishment of this very prominent building on the corner of Greyfriars and Priory Place, which will acquire greater significance as the Greyfriars redevelopment continues. We want to see all the existing internal doors, windows, mouldings and fittings retained and repaired.**

Report from Hugh Worsnip
Panel Member

New Members

We welcome the following new members to Gloucester Civic Trust:-

- ◆ Mr and Mrs R Auckland
- ◆ Mr L Bedford
- ◆ Mr J Bell
- ◆ Mr and Mrs D Brown
- ◆ Mr P Callaghan
- ◆ Mr and Mrs I Crowe
- ◆ Mr D Gamston
- ◆ Mr and Mrs D Hall
- ◆ Mr K Hayward
- ◆ Mr & Mrs S Howard
- ◆ M/s C Jordan
- ◆ M/s S Moore
- ◆ Mr and Mrs M Morley
- ◆ Mrs M Murphy
- ◆ Mr and Mrs B Reeks
- ◆ Mr C Roberts
- ◆ Miss S Tolley
- ◆ Miss A Trump

Llanthony Secunda Priory

Members will have noticed that, finally, a huge amount of work is now being undertaken at Llanthony Priory.

Since taking on responsibility from the City Council almost 4 years ago the Trustees have worked very hard to identify funding sources and equally importantly to establish the detailed requirements of the work needed on site.

Having raised initial funding from a number of grant-giving organisations we quickly decided that the most urgent priority was to stabilise both the gatehouse structure alongside Hempsted Lane and the upper stonework on the tithe barn within the grounds and to remove the buddleia which had become a destabilising and unsightly problem. This work was completed last autumn and our attention turned to clearing the very-overgrown pond of excessive tree growth and debris and this has opened up a view of the priory remains from Hempsted Lane.

The next phase, once funding had been found, was to carry out very extensive works

to stabilise the Victorian farmhouse and the medieval lodgings. The entire structure was cleared of dry rot, which required complete removal of the upper floors of the farmhouse, rewiring and provision of an effective alarm system. New floors have now been inserted, rooms recreated, roofs repaired, rainwater drainage renewed where necessary and the building is now stable.

The next stage of the operation will be to apply for major funding grants and carry out much more extensive work to the structures to bring them back into use. We also hope to be able to undertake work on the area known as the stable block which needs a considerable amount of investigative work and protection.

I'm sure members will agree that, finally, one of the gems of Gloucester's heritage is now receiving the care and attention it richly deserves.

*Martyn White
Trustee of the Priory and Council of
Management Member*

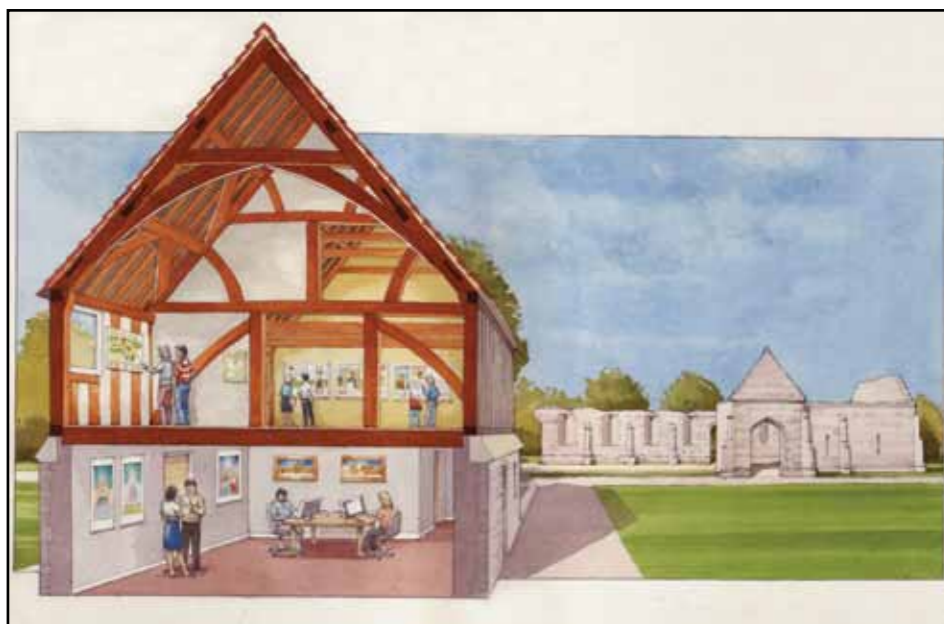


Illustration courtesy of Phil Moss shows the restored Priory.

Metre Readings Phillip Brown's Collection of Poems

Phillip Brown's collection of poems 'Metre Readings', first published in book form in 2002, is now available as an e-book. It includes poems about the city: 'Gloucester: an unreliable history', 'The true story of Doctor Foster' (allegedly), and others.

There are also poems about the county, 'The Sculpture Trail', 'Steam Teas' and others.

For preview pages see Amazon.co.uk or Kindle. The price is £3.18.

Culture Club

Culture Club continues into the summer with an interesting and varied programme of talks, the details are:-

Wednesday 6th June 'The Art of PJ Crook'

Join us as we explore the fascinating art of Cheltenham born artist PJ Crook.

Wednesday 4th July 'Fabulous facts about hats' Fern Berreen

Discover more about the history and art of hat making with milliner Fern Berreen. After the talk why not pop down to the Folk Museum to look at our 'Fascinating Forties and Hollywood Hats!' exhibition.

Culture Club does not meet in August.

Wednesday 5th September Gloucester History Festival celebrates 'Gloucester Rugby Club' with Councillor Paul James and Bob Rumble.

As part of Gloucester's History Festival celebrating the history and heritage that has made and continues to make Gloucester great, two genuine Rugby fans will be exploring the history and impact of our local and world famous Rugby club. After the talk why not pop across to see our 'Scrum Down, Low Down' exhibition.

All the above talks start at 1.10pm and take place at the City Museum, Brunswick Road.

The above information is from Sarah Orton Lifelong Learning and Access Officer with Gloucester City Council who says: "all are welcome to Culture Club and like our other activities is free after normal admission charges to the Museum have been paid.

Admission is £3.00 for adults and £2.00 for concessions and this ticket allows admission to the other site within a month.

The membership scheme is very good value. Family membership is £20.00 a year and covers two adults and up to five concessions while individual membership is £10.00.

Membership allows unlimited visits to both Museums for a year, a regular newsletter about our events and exhibitions and invites to our private views".



Project update

This is a short update on Discover DeCrypt, the project to regenerate St Mary de Crypt Church and Old Crypt Schoolroom on Southgate Street. Working with experts from across the diocese and beyond, the project team have been developing ideas to bring a new lease of life to these buildings. Our vision is to create the opportunity for children, young people and families to explore Christian spirituality and heritage in innovative and creative ways. We have been consulting with local schools about our vision, and have begun informal consultation with English Heritage, amenity societies, Gloucester City Council and the Diocesan Advisory Committee about ideas for the buildings.

Over the past year much work has been put into developing a business plan, which will be used to convince those who need convincing that this is a worthwhile project to support. We are staging the project, and there is a drive to get the schoolroom back into use as a priority. Ahead of this, essential repairs have been made to timbers in the church bell tower, and stonework repairs will follow shortly. All this takes money, and with the backing of the business plan our fundraising campaign will launch in earnest this year.

Discover DeCrypt

In 2012

We continue to have the fabulous support of Civic Trust volunteers, who staff the church and keep it open from April through to October, offering a welcome to visitors and providing tours of the church and crypt on a regular basis. The church also hosts civic services, including the annual Gloucester Day service at the beginning of September, and a Christian Aid service held this year on Friday 18 May. The church will again be a popular attraction in this year's History Festival, hosting a number of events, and the Civic Trust 40th Anniversary service will be on Saturday 27 October - a date for all your diaries.

But before that, there will be a Book Launch on 25 June 2012, as a key member of the Discover DeCrypt project team, the Rev'd Dr Sandra Millar, the diocese's Children's Adviser, has two books published. We are having a celebration in the church at 4pm that day with Bishop Michael, when there will be activities for children and general merriment, as well as book signing - all Civic Trust members are invited.

Looking back over 2011

There were a number of exciting events involving children and young people in 2011. Over 500 children were welcomed to Lifepath - boys explored the life of Robert Raikes, we turned the crypt into a prison and served gruel, and Sarah Orton, Gloucester

Museum's Lifelong Learning and Access Officer, took an eighteenth century Sunday School class in Raikes Chapel.

Artists of all ages have been involved at the church. Last summer the Civic Trust's art class used it as a source of inspiration; and, students from five local schools contributed artwork in an exhibition of their interpretations of the Beatitudes.

In History Week 2011 we celebrated the 200th anniversary year of the death of Robert Raikes. Hugh Worsnip, Civic Trust member, tour guide and former Citizen Chief Reporter gave a well attended talk, sponsored by the Civic Trust; and Heritage Weekend saw the Remember Raikes! celebration at the church.

It must be acknowledged that we are hugely indebted to our Advisory Panel for their involvement over the past year, and this includes help and support from the Civic Trust's very own Alex Bailey. So, thank you very much to everyone in the Civic Trust who continues to support Discover DeCrypt - we look forward to working with you as the project continues.

If you would like any further information or would like to go on the mailing list for Discover DeCrypt's eNews, please be in touch by sending an email to: mail@discoverdecrypt.org.uk.

*Report from Rachel Court,
Project Manager*

Heritage Open Days 6th to 9th September 2012

This year's event is shaping up to be an exceptional one! Colin Youngson has brought considerable energy and new ideas to the team, Jenny Williams continues to make a big contribution and we appreciate Phil Moss's guidance. This year is the 200 years anniversary of the opening of the Lock into Gloucester Docks and this will be celebrated at the same time as the Heritage Open Days Weekend with several shared events.

Colin Youngson has been working with the guides to exploit the many specialist tours that we can produce and we hope that more people than ever will have the opportunity to take a tour this year. We have new events such as Wotton House, a grade two listed building which is home to Redcliffe College and Gloucester Brewery Tours to name just two.

So all we need is your support, if you are asked to help or would like to volunteer

please do so. Gloucester has been in the top five city nationally for the last few years which has helped greatly to put the City of Gloucester back where it belongs.

Colin Youngson, who is co-ordinating the volunteers this year would be

delighted to hear from you and can be contacted on 01452 302028 or email colin.youngson@hotmail.co.uk.

*Alex Bailey, Jenny Williams,
Colin Youngson and Phil Moss.
Heritage Open Days
Co-ordinating Team*



Audience participation outside St. Mary de Crypt Church - Heritage Open Days September 2011. (Photograph courtesy of James Davies)