

Memories of Home life in Wartime Gloucester 1939-1945

The 'phoney war' lasted for about a year, giving time for the distribution of ration books and gas masks. The later were fitted (vaguely) to the individual and were supplied in cardboard boxes with a string carrying loop. Everyone was expected to carry their gas mask at all times. In schools, a weekly session was held, when classes donned gas masks for a lesson. Great amusement was caused by the (rude) noises caused by strongly blowing out.

Dug-out shelters were made in back gardens and above ground strong, usually concrete structures were reinforced with sand bags. The dug-outs in Calton Road had seats abounding in splinters. Eric Keys took his woodwork class, from Linden Road School, armed with sandpaper, to remedy the situation.

If we were on our way to or from school, we were instructed that, in case of an air-raid, we were to seek shelter in the nearest house. One afternoon, hearing the siren as we were going down Tuffley Avenue, a gracious lady invited about six of us in, gave us biscuits and lemonade and found her grown sons' railway for us to play with.

What a disappointment when the 'all clear' sounded! For ages after that, we hung about that house on our way home, each longing for the siren to go again, but it never obliged at our desired time. However, after a night-time raid, we were allowed to arrive at school half an hour later than usual, leaving some of the cheekier boys too drift in late on other mornings and trying, unsuccessfully to look innocent, swear that they had heard the siren in the night. After a genuine raid, when the local guns had blazed, there was a scramble for pieces of shrapnel and these became substitutes for cigarette cards and other collectables which had disappeared.

Paper became very scarce and school exercise books were filled with off white, hairy

paper which caught the split nibs which we were obliged to use and caused the ink to spurt across the paper and woe betide a child who neglected to write on every single line or make their writing inordinately large. Text books could not be replaced, necessitating sharing a book between two, three or even four children.

For private homes, indoor shelters were issued - great heavy metal 'cages' with chain link bases which took up the best part of a living room, while women plastered the windows with strips of tape which was supposed to stop shards of glass flying in raids.

It was recommended that each person should wear an identity bracelet, bearing their name, address and registration number, to make possible the identification of injured or dead. (I still have mine - in silver.)

Iron railings were ripped out and saucepans donated to enable armaments and planes to be made. The WW1 tank in the Park disappeared, its metal used to fight again. The Wagon Works, in Bristol Road was converted to the production of arms, including tanks which, completely, churned up the roads with their tracks as they made their way south.

Anyone owning a stirrup pump, which could be used to put out incendiary bombs, painted a large SP on the front of their house or an L for a ladder, while scoops, on long handles, were designed to enable an incendiary bomb to be removed.

Air Raid Wardens, recruited from men too old to be called up or who were in work essential to the war effort paraded the streets, with strict words for anyone allowing a light to show beyond their black-out curtains. They were to sound claxons in the event of gas attacks and manned the sirens which announced the imminent arrival of enemy planes. These

sirens were situated on top of high buildings, where fire watchers spent their nights, and their whine made each heart beat faster. The varying sound of the 'all clear' was very welcome.

Gloucester did not have many direct enemy raids; the worst damage seemed to be from planes which had followed the River Severn, in the moonlight, towards Coventry (which was largely demolished) and dropped excess bombs on our city on their way home. Church bells were silent, as their chimes were reserved for notification of an invasion. Silver, elephantine barrage balloons floated above the outskirts of towns, their securing wires supposedly to deter enemy planes from flying low and anti-aircraft guns were placed at strategic sites, especially around the south coast.

A raid which caused particular distress was on a factory in Yate where Auntie Doris worked as a W.V.S assistant, making meals for the workers who had been engaged on making domestic appliances before the war and which was now converted to the manufacture of munitions. A German man, who had lived in England for very many years, worked with them but disappeared when war was declared. It emerged that he was the pilot of the plane which flew twice over Yate and strafed the workers as they finished their shifts, causing many deaths and injuries. It was a shock to find that loyalty to one's fatherland superseded that to one's workmates.

Bombing caused a lot of homelessness. The local W.I. had taken up the cause of Polish refugees who had managed to escape and were occupying a camp near Cirencester, but soon people from our own towns were in desperate need of accommodation. They were billeted on those who had houses deemed big enough to take them, while really large houses or other buildings were commandeered for hospitals, recovery centres, for the Armed Forces or for other agencies active in times of war.

Workers were shipped round the country to wherever they were needed; we had two young women, one Irish and one from the North of England, living with us for a while, though they were forbidden from telling us why they were here. Eric and Ette Keys gave up half their house to a Jewish family who were pitifully touched to be given a welcome after fleeing for their lives.

Una Dowding

First part of a two part article continued in the next issue of Civic News



Aircraft Murals to be Restored and Relocated

At long last the much neglected aircraft murals in the city's Jubilee Garden are to go to a new and caring home at the recently launched Jet Age Museum at Staverton Airport. Both the Trust and Gloucester Historic Buildings had expressed concern about the murals' deteriorating condition - a fact also highlighted by David Champion

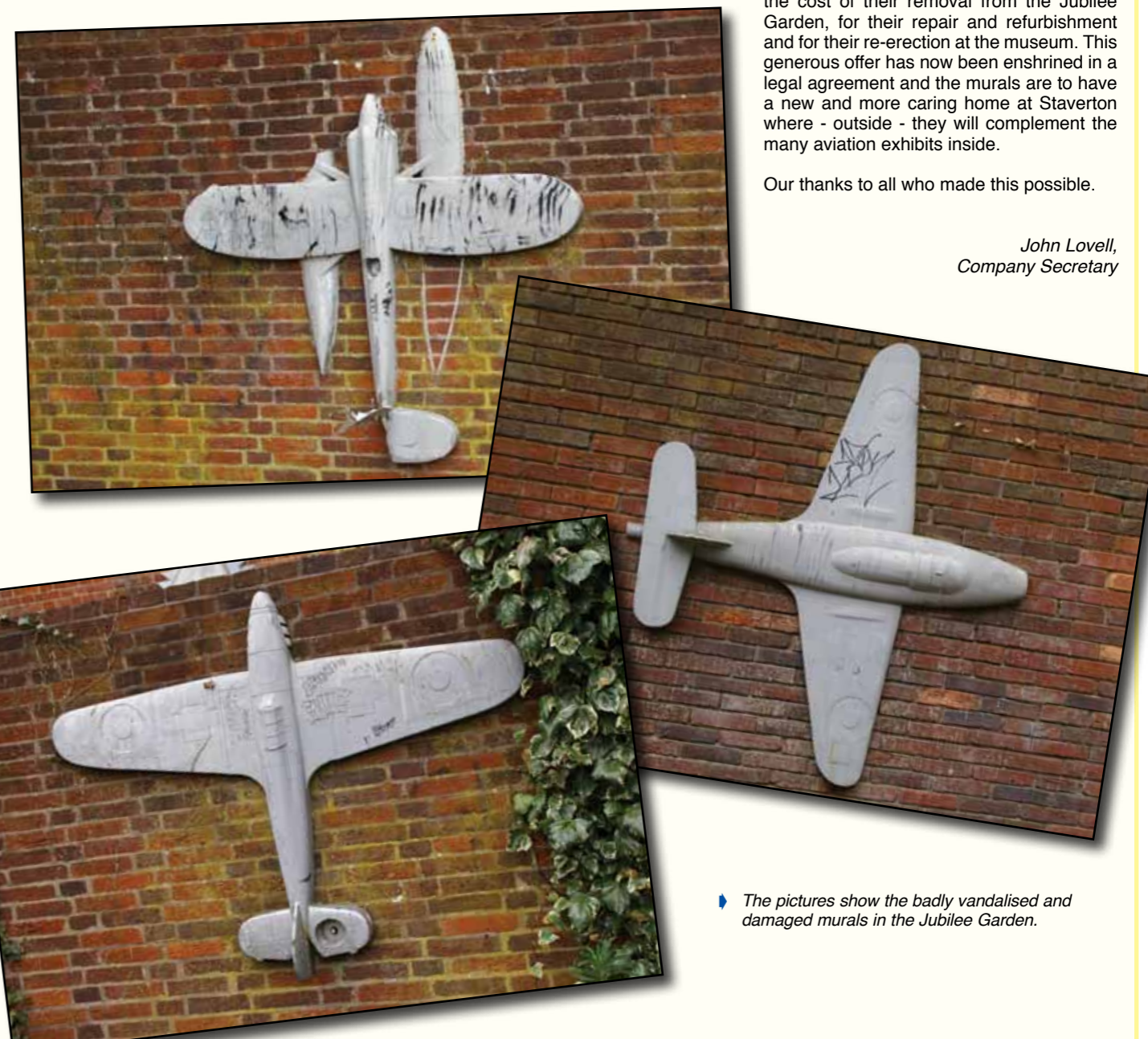
in this year's annual report to the Trust's AGM. In order to give the issue prominence I fronted a piece in the Citizen and stressed that even if money could be found for their repair and refurbishment it was a waste to do either if they were to be returned to their present 'home' and once again be the target of mindless vandals.

One of the groups which responded was the museum which offered to repair and display the murals outside their new premises. Since money was obviously tight it was suggested the murals should go there and be erected as and when they were refurbished.

It was then that an anonymous fairy godmother appeared and offered to foot the cost of their removal from the Jubilee Garden, for their repair and refurbishment and for their re-erection at the museum. This generous offer has now been enshrined in a legal agreement and the murals are to have a new and more caring home at Staverton where - outside - they will complement the many aviation exhibits inside.

Our thanks to all who made this possible.

John Lovell,
Company Secretary



The pictures show the badly vandalised and damaged murals in the Jubilee Garden.

Images from the Tower's Past



The far left image was found by Tower volunteers during their research into the history of St. Michael's Church. Dated about 1520 it shows The High Cross and St. Michael's Church. It was found amongst Rev. Herbert Braithwaite's papers. Rev. Braithwaite was Rector of St. Michael's from 1906 to 1936.

The second image shows the Cross that used to be on top of St. Michael's Church. It is now at Maisemore Bridge where it was moved to when the main body of the church was demolished in 1956.

News from the Docks



Nursery in Former Pub Kaskelot for Overhaul

The former Sir Colin Campbell pub in Llanthony Road reopened as a children's nursery for 0-5 year olds on 14 January. Known as Into-play @ the Quays, it is an off-shot of the established Into-play Nursery in Longlevens.

The tall ship Kaskelot, recently sold by the Square Sail Co, arrived at Sharpness on 17 March. On the following day, she passed up the canal to Gloucester to be overhauled by T. Nielsen & Co in preparation for a long voyage.

Beer by Tricycle

Gloucester Brewery is using a pedalled tricycle to deliver beers around the city centre. Use of the tricycle, which can carry six casks weighing 50kg each, reduces the company's carbon footprint and improves staff fitness levels. (Citizen 1 Feb 2013)

Drinking Fountain Inscription

Thanks to Gloucester City Council and Gloucester Civic Trust, stones have been removed from around the base of the historic drinking fountain beside the Commercial Road entrance to the docks to reveal an inscription saying Gloucester Local Board of Health 1863. Merchants had requested a supply of water for the benefit of their workers, and it was also much used for filling ship's water casks.



Historic drinking fountain inscription revealed.



Lifting the main top mast from Kaskelot in the large dry dock. (picture courtesy of Hugh Conway-Jones)

Lottery Cash for Museum

The Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum has been awarded a grant of £493,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to revamp existing displays and take new learning programmes out into the community. The Museum has also been given £94,000 by the people of the South Korean city of Paju as thanks for the Glorious Glosters role in the battle of the Imjin River. (Citizen 19 March 2013)

New Exhibition Open

A new permanent exhibition at the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum was opened by rugby star Mike Tindall on 16 April. It is dedicated to life in the modern army and features the essential 'black bag' which is issued to all soldiers going to Afghanistan. (Citizen 17 April 2013)

Museum Grant Approved

The Gloucester Waterways Museum has been given a Stage1 grant of £60,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund to help prepare a Stage 2 bid for a grant of almost £1 million. The project includes developing displays about the rivers and canals between the Midlands and the Bristol Channel, building a new entrance and shop in front of the existing building and refurbishing the barge Sabrina as an educational facility.

Red Wheel for Docks

A Red Wheel plaque provided by the Transport Trust was unveiled by Waterways Manager Nick Worthington on 27 April in the presence of the Mayor of Gloucester and members of the Trust. The plaque, near the entrance to the Waterways Museum recognises that Gloucester has the best preserved 19th century inland port in the country.



The Red Wheel plaque.

Offices Plan

The owner of the Lock Warehouse has applied for planning permission to use the ground floor of the building for offices as he has not managed to attract any shops or restaurants to the available units. (App Ref 13/00284)



The newly restored Lock Warehouse.

Two Rudhall Bells Return to the City

Thanks to the Civic Trust

Two Rudhall bells which were cast in the Rudhall Bell Foundry in Gloucester in the early years of the 18th century returned to the city on 23rd October 2012 and are now on display in St. Michael's Tower.

frames designed by Trust member David Champion which were then constructed by Adams French and Hare Lane Engineering.

Hung in the Church of St. Michael, Stone in Staffordshire for nearly 300 years and rung until last September, the bells were to be melted down to raise funds for the church.

The bells were purchased for St. Michael's Tower, one from the Tower's financial reserves and the second by a member of the Trust in recognition of the Trust's 40th anniversary last year. They have now been restored by Pangolin Foundry, of Chalford and set in new



LEFT: The restored bells on view in the Tower. ABOVE: Visitor to the Tower 'strikes the right note' when ringing the bells.

The 6 Shields of St. Michael

These shields portray the various functions of St. Michael

Left Hand Side

Top - The Scales of St. Michael - St. Michael weighs the souls of the dead. The white represents heaven and the black hell.

Middle - The Dragon - This represents Satan. Traditionally St. Michael is portrayed piercing Satan with his lance during their fight in heaven.

Bottom - The last Trumpet - St. Michael is reputed to sound the last trumpet on the day of judgement.

Right Hand Side

Top - Argent Cross Party Gules - This type of cross has 8 points. The old church seal of St. Michael shows an image like this.

Middle - Azure - The pascal lamb from the book of revelations this symbol represents sacrifice.

Bottom - Azure Celestial Crown - This represents St. Michael's status as prince of angels. The shields, which are displayed in the Tower, are replicas of much larger shields that used to be in the church. there is no record of what happened to them.



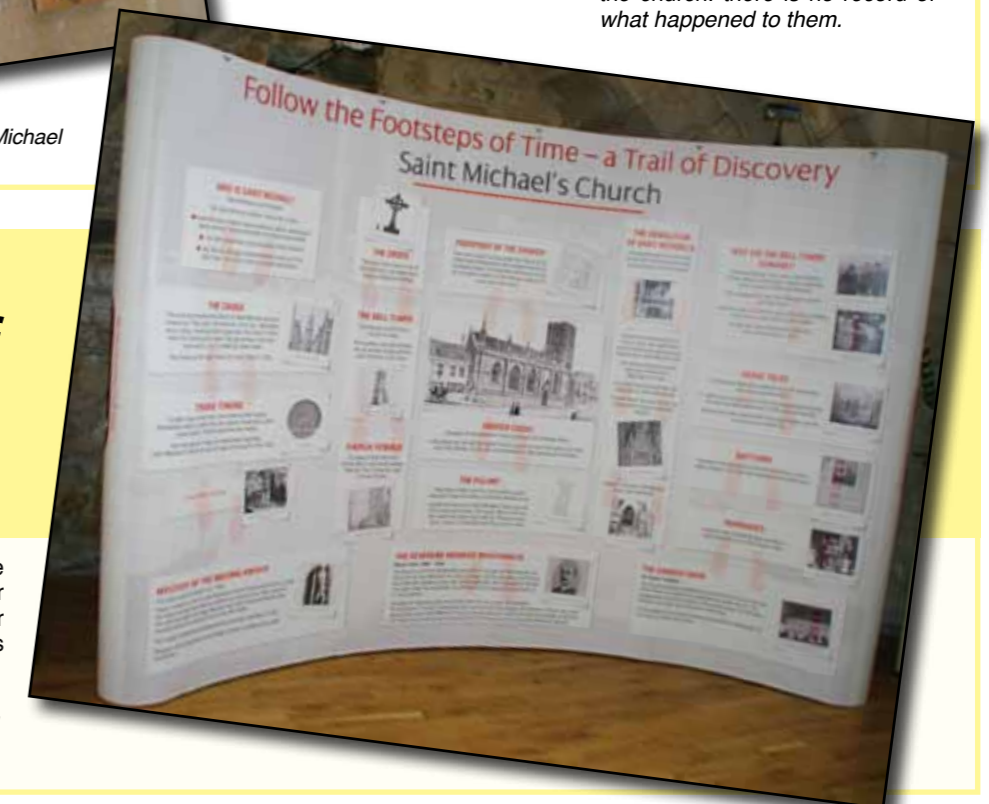
The 6 shields of St. Michael

Follow the Footsteps of Time

A Trail of Discovery
St. Michael's Church

This impressive display now in the Tower has been made possible by Tower Volunteers spending many hours last winter researching the history of St. Michael's Church and Tower.

RIGHT: Impressive display now on view in the Tower.



These notes are from Hugh Conway-Jones monthly e-mail newsletter reporting activities connected with the Gloucester 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.

Planning Appraisal Report

17th April 2013

13/00134/LBC Picturedrome Theatre, Barton Street (Grade 2 Listed Building). Alterations to provide restaurant and kitchen extraction flue for Ash Chavda.

The panel supports this project in principle, but the details are not yet right and the drawings unclear. We oppose the routing of the extraction flue for the adjoining building through the theatre. The smaller windows of the proposed restaurant are better, but we would like to see the arch of the main theatre building windows repeated in the restaurant. Where the doorway to Barton Street is blocked, the recess should be retained. Further negotiations are necessary.

13/00260/FUL. 65, Southgate Street. Replacement of shop front and awning for Rasiah Murat.

Planning permission for the proposed aluminium shop front should be refused. This building is in the most critical part of the Southgate Conservation Area, between the docks and the city centre and is highly visible. It is in a bad state.

The proposal breaks all the rules of the conservation area shop front policy. It

requires a traditional wooden shop front with smaller windows. The right design might attract a grant from the forthcoming Townscape Heritage Initiative. The panel would like to see the windows of the upper floors replaced with the correct design for the building's period.

13/00307/ADV. New restaurant at the Barge Arm, The Docks. Vertical non illuminated flag sign and three A boards for N Hopkins.

Planning permission should be refused. The panel would prefer to see a painted fascia sign with raised lettering and a conventional hanging sign at fascia level. One A board only.

13/00292/LBC. Alexandra Warehouse, The Docks. External works to floors 4, 5 and 6 to provide double glazed windows, repaired roof flashings and re-pointed brickwork for Gloucestershire College.

Acceptable.

13/00213/LBC. Claremont House, London Road. Internal alterations to the basement and ground floor.

Acceptable.

13/00325/FUL. 12, Honyatt Road. Roof lights front and rear for John Meadows.

Acceptable.

13/00313/FUL. St. Katherine's Church, Matson. Lean-to extension to provide a toilet for disabled people.

This church dates back to the 12th century. An archaeological watching brief on all excavations is essential.

13/00365/FUL. 95, Oxford Street. Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.

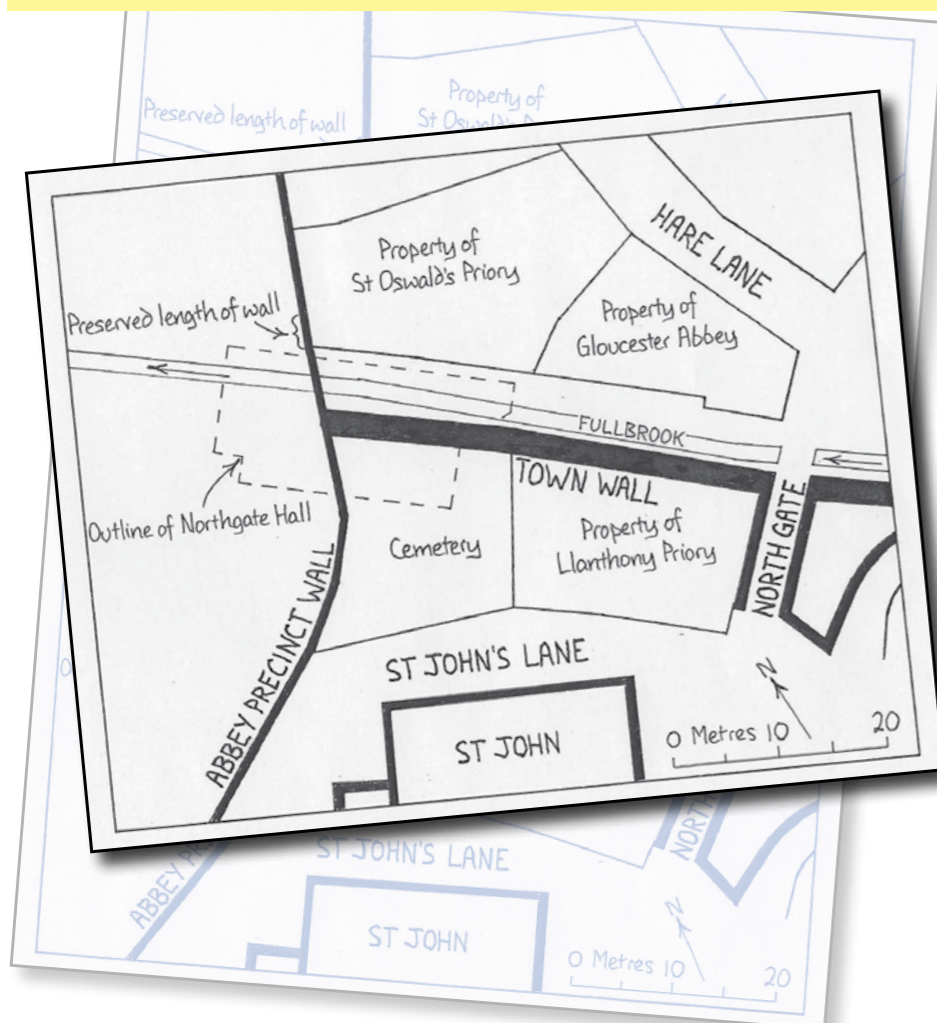
The side extension appears odd by reason of the non-conforming height of the walkway and the absence of any gate or barrier. Further information is needed.

13/00203/FUL. 78, Weston Road. Change of use from day centre to nine bedroom hostel for Gloucester City Homes.

Acceptable, provided the unauthorised plastic windows on the ground floor frontage are replaced with wooden windows of the correct design for this large and handsome Edwardian semi.

Report from Hugh Worsnip

Abbey Wall or City Wall - Another Opinion



May I take issue with Ian Holt's denial (Civic Trust News 123) that the preserved wall in St Lucy's Garden is the abbey precinct wall? The plan shows the layout there in the late middle Ages. The precinct wall is plotted from the Board of Health Map of 1851 (Glos. Archives GBR L10/1/2, sheet 5), where it is labelled 'Boundary of College Precincts'. The Fullbrook is plotted from a survey of borough property of 1826 (Glos. Archives GBR J4/12, map 54) and the town wall, so called because Gloucester was not then a city, from Caroline Heighway's report The East and North Gates of Gloucester (Western Archaeological Trust 1983).

John Rhodes

New Members

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

- ◆ Mr D Brown
- ◆ Miss J Evans
- ◆ Mr S Field
- ◆ Mr and Mrs C Haines
- ◆ Mr H Jerram
- ◆ Mr J Raybould
- ◆ Mr B Walsh
- ◆ Mr H Wilson



Members' Visit to Bridgnorth

Saturday 4th May 2013



After the coldest March for 50 years and still some quite chilly days in April would spring finally arrive for the first of two members' visits arranged by Colin Nyland for this year? Well not quite! Saturday 4th May started cool and rather damp as 23 members joined the coach for a visit to Bridgnorth.

After being welcomed aboard by Colin and our driver Gareth, we left the pickup point in Estcourt Road at 8.00am and headed out of the city towards the Northern bypass and the Golden Valley bypass before joining the busy M5 motorway.

In what seemed a very short time we were leaving the motorway at Junction 6 and taking the A449 towards Kidderminster. Passing quickly through the town and onto the A442 towards Bridgnorth, we continued through countryside now lush and green with the arrival of spring. We arrived at Bridgnorth just before 9.30am where very welcome refreshments had been arranged for us at the Falcon Hotel in Bridge Street.

It was here we met and were introduced to our guide Derek who was to take us on a guided walk of the town. Unlike Gloucester Civic Trust with our 60 guides well trained by Phil Moss and training co-ordinator Chris Morgan, Derek is very much a 'One Man Band', the only guide in Bridgnorth. However, his enthusiasm and knowledge of the town soon became evident.

Leaving the Falcon Hotel and on to Bridge Street we were quickly walking across the bridge over the River Severn from which Bridgnorth gets its name. A bridge has crossed the river at this point since the 10th century. The present bridge was designed by Thomas Telford and dates from 1823.

We now made our way down onto the Quay which was once lined with dockyards, warehouses and stables. Bridgnorth, as Derek explained, is situated on the banks of the longest river in the United Kingdom and was once a very busy and thriving river-side port. Goods were transported in barges and trows. The boats had sails but were pulled up stream by people known as bow haulers. They were replaced by horses around 1800. Many of the bow haulers lived in houses in Cartway which we were to see later in our walk.

Safe passage between Bristol and Montgomeryshire a distance of 155 miles depended on the water level. Upstream come spices, groceries, wine and rum. Downstream went coal, dairy produce, pottery, wood, leather and iron goods. Trade peaked in the mid 18th century when there were almost 400 vessels operating between Welshpool and Gloucester. River trade declined with the opening of what is now the Severn Valley Railway in 1862.

Leaving the Quay we now had the opportunity to either stay with our guide to continue our walk or take the Cliff Railway to High Town where we would all meet again later.

Those of us who stayed with Derek made our way up the very steep Cartway, at one time the only route for wheeled vehicles between High and Low Town. In the Cartway stands Bishop Percy's House which was built around 1580 and named after the Reverend Doctor Percy, Bishop of Dromore, County Down, Northern Ireland and Chaplain to King George 111.

A little further along we passed the 17th century Black Boy Inn. The Black Boy Inn, Derek explained, is the last remaining ale house of the original 20 or 30 which were once situated in the Cartway. Continuing our way to Friars Street we now overlooked the River. On the far bank could be seen the site of John Hazeldine's Foundry where in 1808 the world's first steam locomotive to haul fee paying passengers was built. The engine was designed by Richard Trevithick. The site is now a riverside park.

Also at this point our guide drew our attention to St. Leonard's Church which closed in 1976, high on the hill behind us. Now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust, the church is only open to visitors with the support of volunteers. Many members later took the opportunity to visit the church which has a superb 17th century hammer-beam ceiling. The present church dates from a very sensitive 19th century restoration.

Making our way along a further stretch of Cartway we saw several caves in the sandstone which were occupied by families until 1856 and that are still thought to contain their kitchen ranges.

Now coming to the conclusion of our walk we made our way along Castle Hill Walk which follows the line of the Castle Battlements into Bank Street and finally the High Street where we ended our walk on the site of the Postern Gate that led to the Outer Bailey of the Castle. Thanking our guide Derek for a very interesting and enjoyable morning, we now had the opportunity to appreciate the improvement in the weather, it was a lovely afternoon, to enjoy some lunch, visit the market in the High Street or St. Mary Magdalene Church whose architect was Thomas Telford.

With so much to see in the town the afternoon passed very quickly but it was soon time to re-join our coach for the journey back to Gloucester. Leaving Bridgnorth at 3.45pm and after another comfortable journey we arrived back in Estcourt Road just after 5.00pm.

Our thanks to Colin for arranging such an interesting and enjoyable visit; we now look forward to the second members' visit which has been arranged for Oxford on Saturday 1st June. A report and photographs of the visit will appear in the summer edition of Civic Trust News.



◆ In the Cartway our guide tells us we are being watched. Watched! but by whom?



◆ All is revealed, faces on Rev Dr Percy's House watch us as we pass by.



◆ The plaque reads: - This cave was occupied as a dwelling until the year 1856.



◆ ABOVE LEFT AND MIDDLE: Members at the Falcon Hotel before the start of our walk.



Report of Guides Meeting

Held at the Gala Club on Wednesday 6th February 2013

Guided walks of historic Gloucester will feature strongly in the programmes of this year's big tourist events in the city.

They are the Three Choirs' Festival (July 27-Aug 4) and the Heritage Open Days (September 12-15).

In addition to the daily walks between April and September, Gloucester Civic Trust guides will provide some 70 specialist walks on Heritage Open Days, including the docks, Roman Gloucester, Beatrix Potter's Gloucester, the Civil War siege, Robert Raikes and the Spa.

At this week's opening day of the 2013 training season, guides were told that footfall for the 2012 Heritage Open Days was 20 per cent up on the previous year, making Gloucester the third most popular venue in Britain.

Organiser, Colin Youngson, said the coupling of the History Festival with the Heritage Open Days had been very successful. He

added: "We want to consolidate on last year's success, and, following the review we held in October, we plan to again provide 70 specialist walks. The huge response from the public stretched our resources so I would like to appeal to the wider membership of the Civic Trust to help guides staff the historic buildings we will be opening this year."

Some 60 trained guides are already in place, and they will be joined next year by others who have volunteered to take the training course and examination.

Tour guides organiser, Roger Peel, said the growth area was bookings from clubs, societies, schools and professional organisations from a wide area, which had added a tour of the city to their programme of events.

"In the peak months of July to September last year some 880 people were booked onto tours, and we had 1,000 e-mail enquiries.

"This year we already have 20 tours booked - including one for Boxing Day!"

Last year the tours brought in £3,800 for Trust funds.

The meeting was told that 2012 tours of the docks had not been successful, with 23 scheduled walks attracting only 29 participants.

Terry Brooks said he had met with Gloucester Quays management and a new strategy would be tried this year - five walks between May and September on the first Sunday of the month at 2pm to coincide with the Farmers' Market. Details of the walks would appear in the Quays brochure and various websites.

Press Release by Hugh Worsnip dated 8th February 2013

Power Station Plaque



This plaque commemorated the opening of the city's first electricity generating power station, which was to the north of Commercial Road.

Towards the end of the 19th C the owner of Bearland House owned the whole block, bounded by Longsmith Street itself, the Barbican, Ladybellgate Street and Commercial Road. The City Council bought the block and,

The house became a school for girls, eventually to be the High School, now in Denmark Road.

one wing became a fire station

A city telephone exchange was installed.

The power station was built in the garden fired with Midland's coal. Triple expansion reciprocating steam engines drove DC generators for street lighting and some local connections on start up in 1900.

Electricity powered trams arrived in 1904.

Refuse from city premises was bagged up and left in the street, collected three times a week and taken to the power station to be burnt in a 'Refuse Destructor'.

Article and picture from Trust member, Richard Trelfa

Gloucester Heritage Open Days

12th-15th September 2013

The planning and organisation of Gloucester's Heritage Open Days 2013 is well under way. Over the past few years, Alex Bailey grew the Heritage Open Days programme put on in Gloucester, which gained the city its reputation as 'the best in the west'. We are aiming to maintain that reputation this year.

We expect to have about 60 venues open over the period, including 26 Westgate Street, one of the finest examples of an Elizabethan merchant's house.

There will be the opportunity for visitors to take one of 20 different guided walks, including the

City, Docks and Llanthony Priory. In all, over 70 walks will be available.

We are also planning music, talks and other events to complement the open buildings. So far, we have over 30 events planned, including two recitals by the Cathedral Organ Scholar and talks by three mayors of Gloucester.

Our ambitious programme would not be possible without all the people who volunteer their time and energies. Thank you to those who have already signed up to do tours. We still need more guides to volunteer to take the City and Docks walks. We are looking for a

couple of guides to learn the Robert Raikes Walk - the training evening is on 4 June.

We will be writing out soon asking for volunteers to act as stewards at various venues. We would like people in the wider Civic Trust to help, not just the tour guides. If you would like to help, even for a couple of hours, please contact me.

Colin Youngson
07808951918
colin.youngson@hotmail.co.uk

St. Nicholas Church Needs Your Help



St. Nicholas Church in Westgate Street is one of Gloucester's historic churches, tracing its origin back to Norman times, closely associated with the bridges across the Severn River and with the hospital of St. Bartholomew the Apostle. A prominent city landmark, best known for its leaning tower, it contains many features worthy of appreciation. It has a fine collection of monuments to civic dignitaries and tradesmen, a bronze sanctuary knocker,

noted Jacobean carving, exceptional squints and enigmatic Royal Arms.

The church is deserving of a more prominent presence in the historic landscape of Gloucester. To do this we would like to keep the church open more often. If you would like to find out more about volunteering at St. Nicholas, please contact us.

Joan and Bob Tucker -
bjoantucker@hotmail.com

LEFT: St. Nicholas Church.

Llanthony Secunda Priory

I would like to give members an update of progress with the reformation of Llanthony Secunda Priory, one of Gloucester's most important historical sites.

At the time Llanthony Secunda Priory Trust inherited the site from the City Council five years ago it comprised a scheduled ancient monument with 6 listed Grade 1 structures, all of which were on the English Heritage 'at risk' register. Progress to date, some of which I reported last year, includes:

Restoration of the West gatehouse and tithe barn so they are no longer 'at risk', and major remedial works on the medieval range and Victorian farmhouse to make them wind and weatherproof and contain the dry rot infestation in the Victorian block.

Clearance of the vegetation surrounding the pond with support from Gloucestershire College.

The production of key studies to fully understand the significance of the structures and creation of an appropriate restoration

approach. Documents include a conservation management plan, business plan and a Heritage Partnership Agreement with English Heritage, who remain extremely supportive.

A totally unexpected bonus of this work was the discovery that not only was Llanthony Secunda, in its prime, a nationally significant medieval library and producer of manuscripts, around 180 manuscripts of Llanthony provenance still exist. Believed to be the largest corpus of Augustinian manuscripts in Britain, many are held by Lambeth Palace and University libraries.

Recent studies of the brick building to the South of the site have shed some light on what is believed to be the remains of the original great stables.

All of this has been achieved thanks to the generosity of partners at Glos. Environmental Trust, English Heritage, Country Houses Foundation, Summerfield Trust and others. Trustees submitted a major Heritage Lottery Fund bid last autumn and, although it was

unsuccessful, the Trust has been encouraged to re-apply and we shall be doing so shortly.

The long term aim for the Range and Victorian farmhouse structure is to refurbish it and lease it out, providing an income to enable the Trust to maintain the site and other buildings. We hope to be able to develop the great stables as a visitor centre and ultimately borrow some of the original manuscripts and display them in the place where some were produced.

It is also hoped to encourage increased usage of the site by the local community and with this aim we plan to create a Friends of Llanthony group to work in partnership with Trustees to preserve and maintain this important site. I can provide further information should members wish to join the Friends group.

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

Archaeological Dig at the Crypt School Room

An archaeological dig took place in the Crypt School room over a two week period in early January.

Volunteers joined members of the Avon Archaeological unit who lead the dig.

Most of the items found were post medieval and included slate and styluses which were used by the children. The full results of the dig are still awaited. It is hoped to include a full report in the summer issue of Civic Trust News



ABOVE: Trust member Judy Leach, who joined the dig with some of the items found.
LEFT: Volunteers and archaeologists at work in the school room.