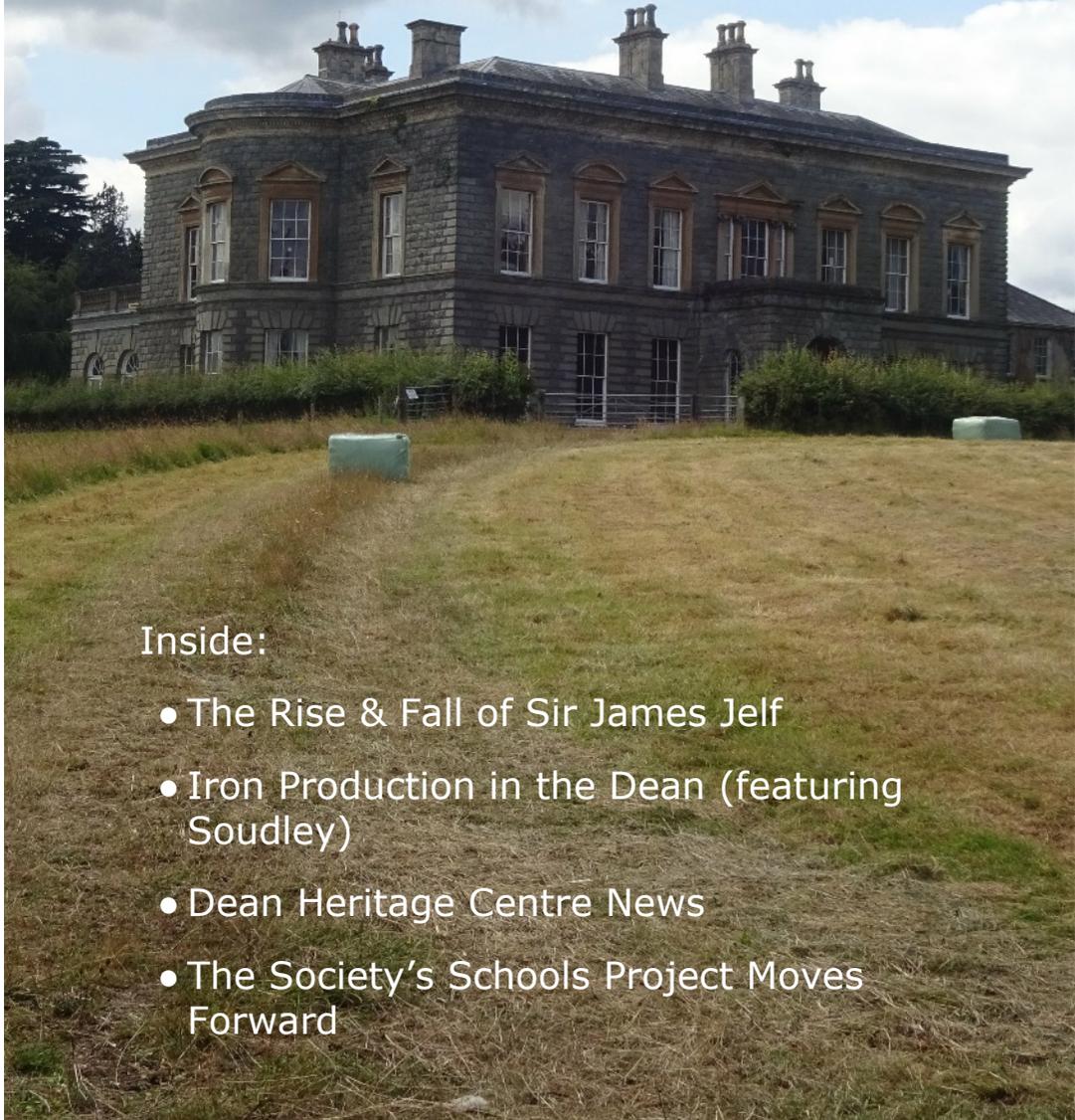


# FOREST OF DEAN LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY *news* August 2019



## Inside:

- The Rise & Fall of Sir James Jelf
- Iron Production in the Dean (featuring Soudley)
- Dean Heritage Centre News
- The Society's Schools Project Moves Forward

August 2019

**Editor:**

Keith Walker  
51 Lancaster Drive  
Lydney  
GL15 5SJ  
01594 843310

[NewsletterEditor](#)  
[@forestofdeanhistory.org.uk](#)

**Chair:**

Mary Sullivan  
01594 860197

[Chair](#)  
[@forestofdeanhistory.org.uk](#)

**Treasurer:**

Cecile Hunt  
01594 842164

[Treasurer](#)  
[@forestofdeanhistory.org.uk](#)

**Secretary:**

Chris Sullivan  
01594 860197

[Secretary](#)  
[@forestofdeanhistory.org.uk](#)

**Website:**

[forestofdeanhistory.org.uk](#)

Registered Charity  
No: 1094700

Printed by  
Inky Little Fingers

## Editors Notes

Look out for the inserts in the middle of this newsletter. Most important is the membership renewal form. The particular requirements of the GDPR privacy laws have not gone away since last year, and our hardworking Membership Secretary Cheryl Mayo needs us all to complete the forms when we renew our membership so that the Society continues to comply with the privacy laws.

If you haven't already got a copy of the Society's new book "The Forest at War", then you have another opportunity to purchase a copy via the forms in the centre of this edition. Sorry to mention the 'C' word during the summer months, but the book would make a really good Christmas present to family or friends!

The cover photo shows Oaklands Park mansion looming above the hedges of the surrounding farmland. The building has connections to two of the features that are in this edition.

The north wing of Oaklands Park was built for Sir James Jelf around 1818 when he retreated to the Forest area from Gloucester following his bankruptcy and fall from grace. Sir James was involved in one of the first serious banking scandals which rocked Gloucester society in 1815. Read more about his story in the middle pages of this edition.

Oaklands Park was sold to Henry Crawshay in the early 1840's, and he extended the mansion to what we see today. Read all about the Crawshay family connection to iron production in the Dean in Cecile Hunt's article on page 12.

Finally congratulations to Ruth Richardson, winner of our first "Where Are We" competition. The answer to the poser featured last time was Blakeney. Courtesy of Averil Kear, we have another "Where Are We" question for you to ponder in this edition.

*Keith Walker*

*Short pieces of news, views, and opinions for the Newsletter are always very welcome. Every effort will be made to reproduce articles as presented but the Editor reserves the right to edit as necessary. The Editor will assume that all necessary authorisation for attachments, photographs etc has been obtained and the FODLHS will not be held liable in the case of a subsequent query.*

## Views from the Chair



I hope you have had an enjoyable Summer, as I have. As I write this it is nearly time for our coach trip to Dyrham Park which should be an interesting variation on our usual coach trips around the Forest. The talks season will start soon and we have a very interesting season ahead of us of varied topics. Many thanks to Liz and Caroline who have jointly organised the programme which is a huge task.

Our membership in the Foresters Forest programme has led to involvement in several events involving local schools this Summer. A very successful day at Five Acres School was attended by many schools' representatives. They saw, as some of you did earlier in the year, a presentation by pupils of Lydbrook Primary School on how their curriculum now revolves around local history and will soon also include local ecology too. The children are remarkably enthusiastic about this change, very articulate in explaining it, and obviously proud of their Forest heritage. Other schools, both primary and secondary, are now interested in following their lead. I am glad that our Society is able to offer them some support and help in these efforts. If you have a school age child in the family do talk to them about their school work. And if you have lived long term in the Forest you might be interviewed for your memories.

We shall be working over the winter on a display for the GLHA day in April on The History of Education in the Forest. This could be based on one school, one town or village, even on past teachers. The theme is very open ended. If you have ideas please throw them into the pot.

October will bring another AGM and the next volume, number 34, of the New Regard. As usual this will be packed with varied and interesting articles of research. It includes an article about our Founders and the early years of the Society based on the talks I have recently given at Society meetings. I was very pleased when I saw the draft version prepared by our indefatigable Editor, Ian Standing. He and David Harris, as journal designer, turn out a splendid edition every year. They are two people to whom the Society owes much and I want to thank them sincerely for all their work.

We will, as usual, be electing a Committee for the year. I offer huge thanks to all my current Committee for their work and support over this year. They are a great group and continue to

provide all members with a rich and varied programme of events. As I said in the last newsletter, I shall need to find a new Secretary as the current jobholder has to step down after 3 years in post. I am disappointed that with so many new and keen members joining the Society and seeming to enjoy the events, that nobody has so far come forward to offer to help or join the Committee. You do not need to be an expert historian or know everything about Forest history, you just need to be willing to offer a bit of time and energy to support what is going on in whatever way you are able. Please consider if you can do that.



*Cheryl Mayo with the FODLHS stand at a recent Foresters Forest 'Schools Day'*

**Mary Sullivan**

## MEMBERSHIP



As we move towards the end of the membership year, new members joining has slowed but we warmly welcome Dick Finch to our Society. If you have friends or relations thinking of joining, let them know we are offering 14 months for the price of 12 if they join between now and the end of September.

It's that time of year again - renewals. Many thanks to everyone for sending me your forms last year. A renewal form is included in this newsletter and should be returned to me by end of October, please, so your new membership card can go out with the November newsletter. You can also find the form electronically on our website (under Membership) if you wish to download and email it to me, especially if you are paying by BACS. Looking forward to my mountain of forms! Thank you all.

*Cheryl Mayo - Membership Secretary*

### Gloucestershire Local History Association

The GLHA had a very successful History Day at the new Business School, Oxstalls Campus, Gloucester University. Participants, including a few members from our Society, enjoyed two interesting talks and a pleasant lunch whilst networking and browsing history books.

The first speaker, Dr Matt Coles from Birmingham University told us about the MA in West Midlands History that his Uni offers. Students of all ages attend day schools, go on trips and work at home on all eras of local history. A welcome returnee, Dr Alan Crosby of the BALH gave the second talk which had people enthralled. He shared his experience of editing the BALH Local Historian journal for 18 years. He believed that the draw of local history is that it comes from the grass roots, local experiences building up to explain national phenomena. He challenged local historians to move on from recording statistics to interpreting the effects on society they represent. To make local history relevant to the modern world societies should be proactive, outgoing, marketing themselves and becoming champions of heritage. The day also saw the annual Bryan Jerrard award given for the best article in a local history journal last year in Gloucestershire. Two of the 10 short listed candidates were from FODLHS. However, this year the award went to Louise Ryland-Epton for her article on the old poor law in Cirencester. Next year's day will be on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April on the theme of the history of education in Gloucestershire.

*MAS*

### FODLHS - FORTHCOMING EVENTS

<p><b>Friday 6th September - 7'30pm</b> <b>Blakeney Village Hall</b> <b>Jerry Green - "Westbury Court Gardens - History &amp; Plants"</b></p>	<p><b>Saturday 21st September - 3pm</b> <b>Yorkley Community Centre</b> <b>Jo Smith - "Forest Talk, 35 Years of Local Service"</b></p>
<p><b>Saturday 5th October - 2'30pm</b> <b>West Dean Centre, Bream</b> <b>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING followed by</b> <b>Pat Lacy - "Medieval Tintern"</b></p>	<p><b>Saturday 9th November - 3pm</b> <b>West Dean Centre, Bream</b> <b>Nigel Haig - "Newnham, a village that was once a town"</b></p>

# DEAN HERITAGE CENTRE UPDATE



## What's on

Lots of family oriented activities and events for the summer holidays. A great place to take your children or grandchildren. Our summer exhibition is Masked Identities by Jo Sutherst. Our programme of daily activities for children throughout the summer holidays is themed around discovering the wildlife of the Forest. Lots of nature based fun including mini beasts, den building and animal tracking. See our website [www.deanheritagecentre.com](http://www.deanheritagecentre.com) or call 01594 822170 for more information.

## New staff

New Director Nick Wood has a background in the management of visitor attractions and being a Forester, he has excellent local knowledge too. He is looking to make DHC more customer focused and run as a sustainable business. Dave Rudge joins the team as a Weekend Duty Manager, helping to run the Centre at weekends.

## Behind the Scenes

We are currently working on our Accreditation submission. This is a scheme run by the Arts Council which sets out nationally-agreed standards, which inspire the confidence of the public, funding and governing bodies. It does this by making sure museums manage their collections properly, engage with visitors, and are governed appropriately. DHC's project on Oral History as part of the Foresters Forest programme continues. We have now digitised and catalogued about 70 recordings. Work will continue digitising more recordings and building our database. Thanks to our great volunteers who labour away listening and typing and creating detailed records so we can access the content of these fascinating tapes. Work on a Mushet re-display had to be put on hold whilst we complete our Accreditation, but we will resume looking at this after the summer. Meanwhile the David Mushet portrait has been restored by a professional conservator and now looks great and Cherry Lewis is researching some David Mushet letters kindly donated to DHC by the family.

## Donations

DHC has a great industrial and social history collection from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries but it tails off there. We are looking for donations of objects and documents from the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Anything iconic or Forest related would be greatly appreciated. Any enquiries, contact Nicola Wynn: [nicola@deanheritagecentre.com](mailto:nicola@deanheritagecentre.com)

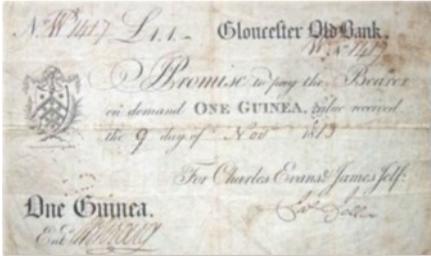
## A Date For Your Diary

The Dean Heritage Centre and 'Voices from the Forest', the oral history project funded by the NHLF Foresters' Forest, are collaborating on the weekend of 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> October to offer oral history training and showcase the Centre's oral history collection. The training event will take place on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> and interest should be registered at [forestersforest@fvaf.org.uk](mailto:forestersforest@fvaf.org.uk).

On Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>, Baroness Jan Royall will be opening an afternoon of talks about heritage and oral history. More details to follow on FoDLHS website's News page.

# The Rise & Fall of Sir James Jelf 1763 - 1842

*Despite originally living and working in Gloucester, in later life James Jelf had ties in trade with the Forest of Dean. After his dramatic fall from grace, he came to live at Oaklands Park near Newnham. This edited extract from Sir Arthur Jelf's text "Jelfs of Ashleworth & Bushley: Famous Knights of the 19th & 20th Century" describes his extraordinary life.*



*Gloucester Old Bank one guinea note bearing the signature of James Jelf*

Sir James Jelf was born on the 25th April 1763. There is no record of James Jelf's education, whether at Worcester or at Gloucester. James was apprenticed to the firm of Samuel and John Niblett, bankers, of Northgate Street. In 1789, his indenture of apprenticeship completed, he took up his freedom of the City. The firm of Niblett to whom James Jelf was apprenticed were travelling bankers, trading in the name 'Gloucester Old Bank', and carrying out their business at markets and fairs. On completing his indenture Jelf joined the firm and in the following year (1790) the brothers Niblett retired. On what

terms the young man of 27 years of age was admitted into partnership in so well established a business is a matter of conjecture. At any rate Jelf took over the business which he carried on in Northgate Street, Gloucester

James Jelf became a member of the Gloucester City Council in 1799 when 36 years of age, and fourteen years later he became an alderman of the City. At Michaelmas 1814 he was elected Mayor; and in July of the same year, on presenting an address to the Throne respecting the establishment of peace, he received the honour of knighthood.

James Jelf's next venture was the construction of a tunnel or road under the Severn from the Parish of Newnham to Arlingham. The proprietors were constituted a company by the name and style of "The Severn Tunnel Company". These were eleven in number and three of them – William Fendall, Charles Evans, and James Jelf – were partners in the Gloucester Old Bank. The Company were authorised to raise £12,000, and individual shareholders were limited in voting power to four shares of £250 each. Provision was also made for raising another £8,000 either by subscription of additional shares or by mortgage. The three partners were thus committed to no more than £1,800 each, but it is likely that the Bank took up the £8,000 mortgage with disastrous results. The Gloucester Old Bank continued its business for nearly five years after the collapse of this venture, but its failure in May 1815 was attributed to this 'improvident speculation', and to the fraudulent activities of a Swansea Bank and to the mysterious loss of £8,000 in notes in a stolen parcel. (Note that the amount lost mysteriously coincides with the £8000 mortgage that was probably loaned by Gloucester Old Bank to The Severn Tunnel Company!)

Sir James Jelf was also involved in the development of Gloucester Spa. In 1814 a new spring was discovered, southeast of the city centre, in what was more or less open ground owned by Jelf. Known as Rignor Stile Grounds, Jelf could see great financial potential in this lucky find on his land and exploited it immediately, although at the time he was under severe financial

strain, as were many bankers, due to the Napoleonic Wars. Charles Evans, (joint owner of Gloucester Old Bank with Jelf) helped him out. Initially a temporary Pump Room was built over a small spring in Parkers Row (Brunswick Road). On November 17th, 1814 the foundation stone was laid for the Pump Room and Parkers Row was widened to provide a handsome approach. This room was 40' by 20' wide and had hot and cold vapour baths. Also at this time, a piece of land, formerly part of Gaudy Green (later to become Brunswick Square) was added to the original 'pasture' and this was now thrown open too. On 1st May 1815 the new pump room was officially opened, and the venture looked well on its way to success. Walks were laid out, and it was reported optimistically that several thousand people had taken the waters.

But during 1815 Sir James' world tottered and fell, taking with it Gloucester Spa. Bankruptcy forced him to retire as Mayor and Alderman. By 26th June 1815 the Gloucester Journal was advertising the sale of the pump room, baths, saline waters and walks. The whole property raised £9,500, with the main Spa area, pump-room and walks being sold to Mr Philpotts for £7,500. There was a project by which generous friends of Lady Jelf and the family were to loan money to purchase the Spa property for their support and benefit under a Trust, but this was also abandoned in favour of a public purchase of the property for the use of the City. A certificate of discharge from bankruptcy was granted to Sir James on August 7th 1815.

Sir James was only 52 at the time of the catastrophe and he survived it for 27 years. In July 1817, he negotiated for the sum of £1300 the purchase of the Oaklands Estate, on high ground between Awre and Newnham. Sir James resided at Oaklands from 1817 to 1832. It is presumed that on his straightened means he lived the life of a modest country gentleman, and he may well have continued in the oversight of the Bullo Pill railway, of which he had an indenture of lease dated 1818. He certainly owned a marble works which operated at Bullo Pill for many years. However In by 1833 he was living at Kew Green in Surrey, but in 1839 the old couple took up residence at Oxford with his son Richard (then newly appointed Canon of Christ Church), and it was in the Canon's residence, "Tom Quad", that Sir James ended his days, to be buried in the North Transept of the Cathedral.

There is a good deal of pathos, if not of tragedy in the story of Sir James Jelf. When at the height of his powers he fell into financial misfortune, and in his later years appears to have been mainly dependent for the upbringing and education of his family upon the generosity of kindly benefactors. Sir James Jelf served Gloucester with great diligence in the offices of Councillor, Alderman, and Mayor, and besides his banking business was hugely influential in the development of the Gloucester Spa, in the earlier part of the nineteenth century when the Spa district held pride of place in the fashionable quarter of Gloucester, and was a pioneer of an early railway enterprise long before the coming of the Great Western and Midland lines.

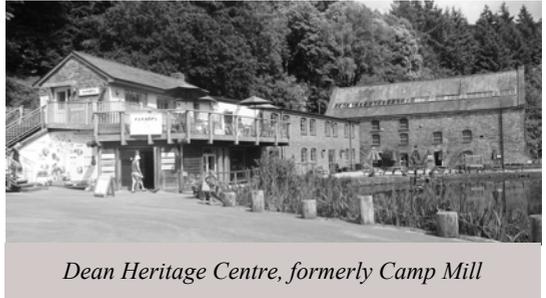


*Gloucester Spa pavilion before it was demolished.*

## Iron Production in the Dean (Part 7) by Cecile Hunt

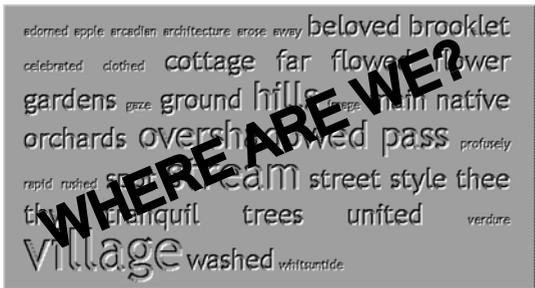
Leaving Blakeney and the quiet Furnace Valley behind the coach turned left towards Blakeney and then travelled on to Soudley. Driving through the settlement of Brains Green following the valley where Soudley Brook runs; a source of power for the many iron works that were located on it. Approaching Soudley on a sharp left-hand bend is a large square, white house, called Bradley House; pausing here awhile we learnt that this was the home of iron-founder Samuel Hewitt in 1834.

Over the bridge into Soudley on our right we looked back up a dead-end road, where there are remnants of the Lower Soudley Ironworks. In 1837 coke-furnaces were erected in the Lower Soudley valley by Edward Protheroe and Co at a cost of £10,000, the furnaces were worked for four years but were idle in March 1841. A sale particular of Hay Estate shows the land and premises occupied by Sewdley (sic) Iron works of about 13 acres, with a Rolling Mill Patch on the west of the stream. The premises included the works at the tunnel mouth - the works are just below where in 1853 the Bullo tunnel's mouth in Lower Soudley was driven. The furnace was in blast from 1871 to 1875 run by the Great Western Iron Co; they made improvements by introducing a "waste gas utilisation plant". Pig iron was produced without coal for raising the steam... only one of the two furnaces were put into blast and the daily saving with the new system was of at least £10 a day". It was idle by September 1877. Bradley Villa on the west side of the stream was built for the general manager of the Great Western Iron Co in 1876. By 1891 two furnaces were reported as 'under careful supervision but the rooks are the only sign of life'. Three sidings, used to clear slag for ballast purposes, were removed before 1920; the chimney stacks were felled circa 1900.



Passing Camp Mill Soudley we learnt that the name derived from the Norman camp nearby, and the possible site of The King Forge built in 1612-13. Also, in 1625-35, the possible site of a single forge probably destroyed in 1644 during the Civil war, its remains were sold in 1674 for demolition. A Samuel Hewlett established his new foundry in these premises probably by 1823, in which year on 19th December he leased it from William Crawshay of Cyfarthfa, father of Henry Crawshay. William Crawshay had purchased the land from Sir Thomas Crawley-Boevey of Flaxley Abbey consisting of 'iron foundry with three cottages, sawpit, tool-house, millhouse, and all the erections and buildings - it is not known who erected the extensive buildings which are still in use today. From 1823 Hewlett supplied the bulk of the Severn & Wye company plates until 1833. He continued to supply Severn & Wye company sundry castings until at least 1839.

By 1841 the site was 'sawpit, buildings, timber yard, warehouse with cottages over, turning mill, foundry and blacksmiths shop'. In 1861 Henry Crawshay sold it all to George Hewlett of Bradley house who sold it back to Henry Crawshay in 1887. The premises have subsequently been a flour mill, leatherboard mill, a sawmill, a scrap-yard for old cars and is now the Dean Heritage Centre.



*In this new series Averil Kear is setting a challenge for you to identify exactly where the text below is describing. The only help you are getting is that it is in the Forest area! To make it more interesting there will be a small prize for the first person who contacts the editor with the correct answer. Contact details are inside the front cover.*

“On again up the fields, the June sun beating fiercely down upon us as we climb, and making us full ready for a rest upon the [gate] which leads us once again into the road upon the summit of the ridge. There, half a thousand feet below, lies Newnham with its church; there, farther north, is Westbury with the Garden Cliff, and, somewhat too prominent, the workhouse with its many windows twinkling in the sun. Across the Severn stream stretches the great peninsula,



surrounded on three sides by the wide sweeping horseshoe which the river makes. It is the view from Newnham church again, but infinitely wider, fuller, than before. Late afternoon, be it remembered, is the best time to visit. Then the long sunbeams fall upon the distant Cotswolds and the Garden Cliff, and morning haze has cleared alike from river and from hills.”



## Heritage Hub Garden Party

Sunday 8th September 1.30 - 5pm

This is a **FREE** event, and allows the opportunity to see the new community garden, artwork and archival treasures. Behind the scenes tours, exhibitions, stalls and light refreshments will also be available.

Other events at the Garden Party include:

- Pitch Up - a new performance inspired by camping. The Velcro Collective will present an accessible and family friendly performance experience inspired by camping. It involves walkabout performances and an interactive performance installation.
- Celebrating 100 years of Gloucestershire Constabulary - an exhibition of photographs, documents, memories and artefacts spanning 100 years of policing in Gloucestershire.
- Display of finds by Andy Frape and Taynton Metal Detecting Club - including coins, pottery, flint and clay pipes from over 40 years of collecting, spanning all ages.
- A talk about the Saxon Warrior of Operation Shallow Grave (2pm) - in 2016 a high status Saxon burial was found in Gloucestershire, and was recently excavated.

You can find more details about the event here:

<https://heritage-hub.gloucestershire.gov.uk/summer-2019/events/heritage-hub-garden-party>

## Meetings in Review *with John Powell*



*The Newport Ship during recovery  
from the River Usk* CC BY SA 3.0

All aboard! It looks a racing cert society members will soon be offered the opportunity to pay a visit (for a second time) to see how work is progressing on the conservation of the famous Newport medieval ship. Some eight or nine years ago a small group of members took the opportunity to pay a visit. Since then, however, much good work has taken place, indeed, enough has gone on in both conservation and research for the nameless vessel to be heralded as an “international treasure”. Keeping us up to date with progress so far, Phil Cox, vice-chairman of the Friends of the Newport Ship (all volunteers), spoke enthusiastically and, of course, very knowledgeable, about all aspects of the project. His talk went down exceedingly well with a high turnout of members for a Friday evening meeting held in Blakeney’s welcoming village hall. Phil’s talk ended with an open invitation for the society to pay another visit, an offer more than likely to be taken up in the near future.

Much more is now known about the ship, the remains of which were discovered in a muddy grave on the banks of the river Usk in 2002. The ship’s importance to our maritime history cannot be overestimated. She was built 60 years before Henry V111’s *Mary Rose* and was constructed mainly of oak but with a beech keel. How she met her fate in the Usk, where she was undergoing repairs, remains a puzzle. It is believed she toppled over on her starboard side sometime between 1468 and 1470. The conservation method includes freeze-drying the timbers at a specialist facility in York after which they return to Newport to be held in a climate controlled store. The vessel has yielded plenty of clues about the crew and cargoes as well as medieval life and trade.

It was an inspiring evening, with a clear message that there is still much to be discovered. However, the high costs involved will surely be repaid as, in the future, Newport reaps the benefits of sticking with the farsightedness of those who could see some rotting old timber as important parts of our history and heritage.

Attendees at any talk or exploration led by such history society luminaries as Cherry Lewis and Ian Standing can expect to learn and also to be challenged. At the end of our pleasant bus/stroll ‘**In the Footsteps of Mushet**’ (May 19) it was natural enough to go home not only trying to remember the routes we had taken but also to give some thought to Ian’s suggestion on how we should care for our ancient monuments.



We were at Mushet’s Titanic Iron Works, hidden away in the woods on the outskirts of Coleford, when our guide threw out a string

*The remains of Titanic Steelworks at Darkhill*

of suggestions about what the future might hold for the bare walls now clearly visible but always under threat from creeping undergrowth. Explaining how the great local historian Alec Pope, of Cinderford, had backed his hunch and revealed Mushet's works, Ian went through the process which had led to the site winning acclaim and financial backing.

But, he asked, what of the future? Work was always needed there. Top suggestion was that perhaps an enthusiastic group of historians might like to form themselves into a group and become 'The Friends of Titanic'. There were no takers on the day...but you never know!

The day began at New Fancy and an explanation by Cherry on how geology had impacted locally, making the Forest what it was and what it is. Mushet had arrived in the Dean as the knowledge of underground exploration and rock formations was beginning to be understood. He had a grasp for the subject as well as for iron making and was to become recognised as a major player in helping to forge the industrial revolution.

The journey took us to Whitecliff and the Mushet furnace; Tump House, his Coleford home, and then on to the Bixslade Valley where stops were made at coal mines, iron workings and quarries. A splendid day was completed with a walk through the Oakwood Valley near Bream. Top marks for a fascinating and instructive day!



The best known statue this side of Westgate Bridge must surely be that of Neptune, he of infinite patience standing on a plinth at the head of one of the grand 'canals' viewed daily by thousands of people passing through Westbury on their ways to and from Gloucester. But, like a tiger without teeth or a lion without claws, the old boy has no spear (properly a trident) though it is evident that once upon a time he was armed. The mystery is whether he was defending the fish swimming around his feet or looking glum because he has nothing to catch them with!

Members attending June's highly rewarding visit to the National Trust's Westbury Court Gardens were at least able to clear up one local legend. Our guide, the entertaining and knowledgeable head

gardener Jerry Green, kicked into the long grass the myth that Neptune had been discovered in the nearby Severn.

Your reviewer, like many other local people, has, shamefully, to admit that until this visit he had not stepped as much as a foot inside the gardens. However, he will be going again!

There are huge slices of local history to be devoured here, the gardens reflecting the fortunes and otherwise of those who lived in the (now demolished) big house. All the plants on view would also have been displayed when the garden was first laid out and there are many surprises along the way such as a mind-boggling example of a holm oak, perhaps 300 years old, towering majestically above all else apart from an equally amazing tulip tree, a nearby companion in a race to reach the sky. This was much more than a garden tour as subjects included plants and animals grown for food such as a rabbit warren, while we were introduced to the famous family who lived there and about whom we are sure to hear more when Jerry Green visits us for a talk in Blakeney Village Hall on Friday evening, September 6 at 7.30pm.

An excellent afternoon and a grand start to our summer programme, well organised by meetings secretaries Caroline Prosser and Liz Rudge.

## The Schools' Project Moves Forward! - *by Cheryl Mayo*



I was with our Chair Mary Sullivan, and committee member/Foresters Forest Project Manager Sue Middleton at Lydbrook School recently, talking to the students and the teachers about their local history work which has been embedded in their history curriculum for the last three years.

As part of an ongoing Foresters Forest / History Society project, we are working on ways to encourage other schools to follow this wonderful lead. This was impressive work by impressive students, who are interested and engaged by understanding their roots – and for many this is literally true given their forebears are from the village. Hopefully they will be future local historians! This is part of the mural they have created in their assembly hall with a local artist – the children did the coal mines you can see in one of the photos. Excellent!

