

# FOREST OF DEAN LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

*news*  
May 2021



In this edition:

- The Lydney Roman Dog Goes Dutch
- Sir Thomas Rich (Part 3) - Connections
- Migrant Hostels in Australia
- Cinderford Inebriates Retreat

The Forest of Dean  
Local History  
Society

# News

May 2021

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## Editors Notes

Elsewhere in this edition you will find news of several forthcoming walks, which, with a touch of luck and lack of covid, will be able to go ahead on the rearranged dates.

Just to get you in the mood for the planned saunters, the front cover shows History Society members enjoying just such an occasion in 2008, when the destination was Lydney Park, and the walking party had clambered up to the Roman Temple site.

Still focusing on the Roman Temple site, thanks to Chris Sullivan who has provided our lead article, "The Lydney Roman Dog goes Dutch" (in the centre pages). Whether or not the dog in the cover photo is a 'romeinse hond' is open to discussion!

Because I am unlikely to be able to attend the forthcoming walks myself, I am seeking a volunteer or two to write short (400 words) reviews of the events. If you are intending to join one or more of the walks and would like to stretch your creative wings to produce a written sketch of the event, please get in touch with me. My contact details are shown to the left.

If you have relatives who live in Australia who emigrated there during the era of the 'ten pound passage', you will be especially interested in Cheryl Mayo's article. Cheryl describes the dubious conditions of the hostels that awaited the migrants when they first arrived in Australia. Cheryl is of course our multi talented membership secretary, and has used her research into the hostels to produce her novel 'Keepers'. Learn more on the back cover.

Thanks once again to Cecile Hunt for her continuing articles about Sir Thomas Rich and the same named school in Gloucester. There are surprising links between the Forest of Dean and how the school was funded. Read all about it on page nine!

*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 - *with Mary Sullivan*



Hello to all members, particularly to new members who have joined recently.

I have been so pleased to see how many of you have joined meetings and expressed satisfaction with the zoom- based series of talks we have enjoyed throughout the winter. I hope you will agree that we have kept the Society ticking over very well throughout lockdown. It helps so much having an active and enthusiastic membership secretary in Cheryl who is happy to keep members informed and engaged. Put that alongside our Facebook page and with Caroline uploading regular interesting items we seem to have thrived in these difficult times.

Now we are on to the easier Summer months and expect to offer three summer walks to as large a group as is permitted. I am really looking forward to undertaking a walk full of historical interest with other members, hopefully on a nice sunny day.

Behind the scenes there has been other progress. The Forest of Dean Children's History book, sponsored by LHS and funded by Foresters' Forest, is in its final stages and we expect it to be launched near the end of June. The book is being written by children's author and FoD resident, Andy Seed, and will be a wonderful addition to any family's bookshelf. More on this by email and Facebook, and a full report in the August newsletter.

I was more than a little annoyed recently when we discovered that the new information boards we had created and fixed up at the Geomap in New Fancy View had been deliberately damaged and further work and expense will be necessary to repair them. We are also investigating the possibility of getting the sculpture professionally cleaned and refurbished as 12 years of wear and tear have taken their toll.



*Damaged info board at the Geomap*

It has been so encouraging in recent weeks to see the Covid numbers in our area drop and drop to very low levels. With the success of the vaccination rollout and the reduction in new cases, and even more importantly, hospital cases and deaths, hope for a return to some kind of normality seems to be growing. Thus, I was very pleased to receive a message from the West Dean Centre that they currently expect to reopen in late June with no restrictions, though of course anybody

would be free to wear face masks if they felt happier doing so. On that basis, I have rebooked our Saturday afternoon slots from September onwards so that we can resume normal meetings with teas and the publications table as well as more fascinating talks. I shall be so pleased to see members in person again and to meet new members for the first time. If, unfortunately, circumstances deteriorate we can immediately fall back on zoom meetings again. So either way we shall be able to offer you a full programme again next season.

Meanwhile, I hope you are all vaccinated and well. And it will be good to chat to some of you on a walk in the next three months.

All best wishes.....

*Mary Sullivan*



## MEMBERSHIP

The sun is shining, lockdown restrictions are easing (at least at the time of writing this) and life is looking a lot more cheerful than in February. I hope everyone is doing well and looking forward to a little more freedom in our activities, and especially meeting up with friends and family again.

We have more new members for the Society. Here's a warm welcome to David & Dawn Jones, Mark Gunn, Jean Kiefer, Ruth Tittensor, Chris & Sammy Betson, Peter Jones, Andy Baker, Martyn Perry and David Gwilliam.

We now have some 330 individual members, which is a healthy number indeed. Here is the normal reminder to let me know if you change your email address, especially important while we are meeting by zoom. Also, there are some changes to the summer walks programme, which I will be reminding you about by email.

*Cheryl Mayo* (membership@forestofdeanhistory.org.uk)



### OPENING TIMES - APRIL TO JUNE 2021

Coffee Shop, Gift Shop & Gruffalo Trail OPEN  
Thursday to Sunday 10am to 3pm AND on May Day 10am to 3pm

From Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May the whole site will re-open  
Thursday to Sunday 10am to 3pm

May Half Term; 31<sup>st</sup> May to 4<sup>th</sup> June  
Open every day for outdoor family friendly activities

Check the website for details

[www.deanheritagecentre.com](http://www.deanheritagecentre.com)

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> May - 2'30pm - BREAM HERITAGE WALK**  
3 mile walk led by Geoff Davis  
Details will be sent via email.

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> June - 2pm**  
**A LED WALK AROUND THE SETTLEMENTS OF ELLWOOD,  
LITTLE DRYBROOK AND CLEMENS TUMP with Di Court**  
Details will be sent via email.

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> July - 1'30pm**  
**LECKHAMPTON, 'THE HOME FARM WHERE LEEKS ARE GROWN'**  
Walking tour of Leckhampton church, churchyard and village with Paul McGown  
Self drive. Meet at small car park GL53 0QJ opposite the church

All walking events will be subject to COVID restrictions in operation at the time.

All visits must be pre-booked, and you will need a current Archives and Records Association (ARA) Card, and to have preordered the documents you wish to view. Face coverings and social distancing are mandatory. Further details at:

[www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/plan-your-visit/preparing-to-visit/](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/plan-your-visit/preparing-to-visit/)

The Archives staff have been busy behind the scenes and have developed a series of talks, workshops, and children's activities to enjoy at home. Full details are available at:

<https://heritage-hub.gloucestershire.gov.uk/spring-2021/events>



## Desk Based Research - Field Names

One of the 'pandemic problems' facing researchers of local history is the potential lack of access to archives. However much can be achieved through 'desk based' research in your own home.

We are lucky in Gloucestershire, because Geoff Gwatkin has produced a series of 'research maps' for the county, drawn to a scale of 6 inches to a mile, which are based on tithe maps / enclosure /estate surveys of the 1840's. These maps show field names, land uses, boundaries and buildings and are usually supplied with a list of landowners which can be matched to reference numbers on the maps. The maps can be purchased from Geoff's web site ([www.geoffgwatkinmaps.co.uk/](http://www.geoffgwatkinmaps.co.uk/)). Normally the maps of individual parishes are delivered by post in A1 paper format, but currently are being offered via email as eight A4 sections. The cost of purchase for a parish map is £8.



The English Place Name Society has produced a couple of publications which can be used in conjunction with Geoff's excellent maps:

The first useful volume is 'The Place-Names of Gloucestershire' Part 3 (The Lower Severn Vale & The Forest of Dean). It is available via Amazon for £10 plus post & packing. This book lists and interprets field names located around the towns and villages in the Vale and Forest areas.

Probably even more useful is a more recent publication, 'A New Dictionary of English Field Names', which provides a listing and interpretation of an astonishing 45,000 field names, although the names are not tied to locations as they are in the book discussed above. The Dictionary can be purchased via Amazon for £22 plus post and packing.

Thus armed with the research maps and one or both of the books suggested above, you can have hours of enjoyment piecing together the landscape history of your local parish without leaving your desk!

# The Lydney Roman Dog Goes Dutch *by Chris Sullivan*



LYDNEY PARK ESTATE

*From Lydney Park website  
Courtesy of Rupert Bathurst*

Many readers will be aware that the Lydney Park Estate uses a greyhound-like dog as its branding.

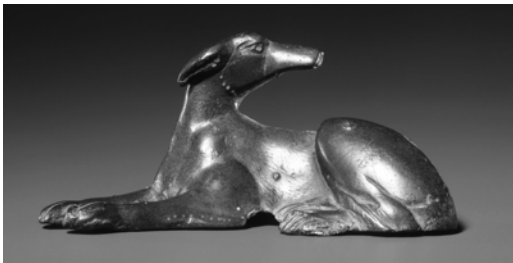
Some will know that this comes from the fine effigy found at the Estate's Roman Temple site. But how many know that the model has a Dutch cousin?

The first controlled excavation of the temple site was done from 1805 by Charles Bathurst, born Charles Brage before he inherited Lydney Park. Lydney Park has a little Museum attached to the main house, set up by a later Charles Bathurst, the one who became the first Viscount Bledisloe. He got the Society of Antiquaries to re-excavate the site in 1928-9. They sent an up-and-coming Dr Mortimer Wheeler and his wife Tessa. Mortimer Wheeler later advised on the Museum, but the key artefacts in its Roman room were saved by the older Bathurst, not by the Wheelers and their team.

Artistically the finest of Bathurst's finds was the Lydney Dog. Part of its design is very realistic, including how the coat is portrayed and its dog collar. But there are strange whorls at its leg attachments, for reasons lost to us. Bathurst left two, almost completely unpublished, notebooks from the end of his life, musing on selected finds. Of this dog, he said "*a Greyhound, quite perfect, of superior workmanship...was found at a very small distance from the wall of the Temple*". This dog was not the only one Bathurst found. The Museum shows dogs chasing hares, in styles found elsewhere, and probably everyday pottery in an area with hunting opportunities. There are paws of bigger statuettes. There are two-dimensional dogs, though one has a cat-like or human face. Bathurst found three 'votive tablets', dedicated to a previously unknown god Nodens. One of these has a little scratched dog before its text. So Bathurst wondered about the links between these dogs and the nature of Nodens, lumping the Lydney Dog with the divine rather than just being a model of a hunting dog. Subsequent archaeology in the UK is still producing doggy findings – a statue down a well, dogs buried with intact items rather than rubbish, dogs carefully buried in baskets with infants, model dogs apparently barking - adding to a suspicion that dogs were linked both to protection and to the local version of the afterlife.

The Wheelers published a full archaeological report in 1932. At one point it describes the dog as a greyhound, at another as an Irish wolfhound. The report, mainly written in a cautious, sober, style, has a passing reference to healing by dog-licking. This was one of the things that became sensationalised by Mortimer, whose previous dig at Caerleon had been sponsored by the Daily Mail.

The Wheeler dog-licking idea came from the ancient sporting and healing centre at Epidaurus in Greece. In the years before the Wheelers went to Lydney, Epidaurus had been excavated. Fragments of testimonials by healed patients had been pieced together. One of these referred to a boy having eye trouble, and another



*Een bronzen beeldje hazewindhondje in the  
Rijksmuseum van Oudheden  
RMO website - CC-BY-SA3.0 license*

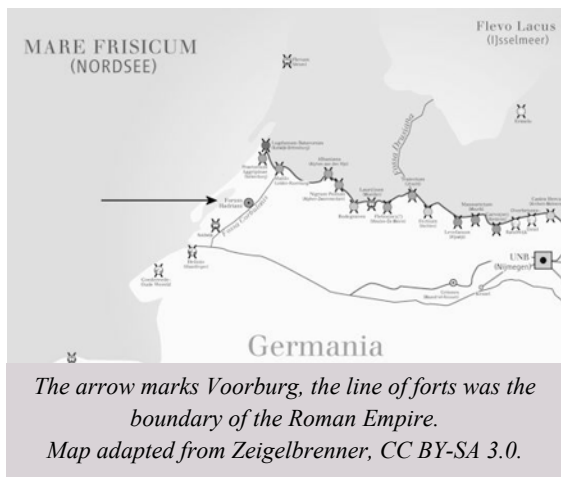


*Lydney Park replica dog photo  
Courtesy of Chris Sullivan.*

a neck growth, cured by dog-licking. (There are lots more testimonials about other ways of healing, but the relevance of that to Lydney is another story.) As our first Charles Bathurst knew, the healing god at Epidaurus was Aesculapius, who was guarded as an infant by a dog. At minimum, dogs were likely to have run freely among the sick at Epidaurus.

The dog-licking Epidaurus link is still supported by eminent scholars of Roman Britain. Including Revd Prof Martin Henig, a co-author of a paper in last year's edition of the learned journal 'Britannia'. This was on a find, south of the Severn, of a scrap metal hoard including a rather different and barking dog. This dog was sold at Christies for £137,500. ...which is why the dog on show at the Lydney Museum is a good replica. The Henig-Coombes paper notes 'a very similar bronze' from the Netherlands. These authors, rather than the Dutch author they reference, have the Dutch dog as a companion of Nehalennia, a goddess of sea traders from that area. That Dutch author takes us to item AR1024 at the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden, set up by pioneering archaeologist Caspar Reuven.

He is '4 x 8.5 cm.' so slightly smaller than Lydney's '4 in. long'. He lacks the strange limb whorls, coat hair, or collar of our Dog. That aside, he looks like another artist's take almost on the same animal. So, as with Lydney, who made, him, when and why? And what are the cultural links between the two dogs and the two sites?



The Dutch Dog was originally found on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1827 on a state-funded and remarkably well-recorded dig by Reuven at Voorburg, now on the outskirts of The Hague. That site was re-excavated in 1988 and published as Joanneke Hees' PhD thesis in Dutch (thanks, Google Translate, including for the surreal bits). I have not spotted any reference to 'Nodens' in her thesis, nor in the Dutch Museum website or collection pictures. Like us, the Dutch are very proud of the quality of their *hazwindhondje*, meaning greyhound not wolfhound. 'A very special find was a beautiful bronze greyhound dog that was found in the cellar'. The location of the Dutch dog was in a well, built in the early

200s AD. Pottery and coin finds ranged between the second half of the second century and the first half of the third. None of this proves when the dog was dumped, but it is dating context, though dates very early in the range preferred by today's archaeologists for the start of Lydney temple. The site was *Forum Hadriana*, a Roman town near both the Dutch coast and the Front Line with the Germanic tribes. The site fell into disuse at the end of the third century.

So – were both dogs

- a companion to the Dutch merchant goddess, despite her dogs always being carved as quite stocky?
- Linked to Lydney god Nodens, perhaps by sea movement of auxiliary troops – and in which direction?
- Just celebrations of beautiful hunting dogs?

In normal times, I would encourage you to visit Lydney Park Museum when it is open with the Spring Gardens, and there get your very own replica dog. Sadly, prospects for opening the Museum in 2021 look as bleak as 2020. I hope to return to Charles Bragge Bathurst and his excavations in this autumn's New Regard.

## Sir Thomas Rich - Part 3 - Connections *by Cecile Hunt*

In accordance with the will of Sir Thomas Rich of 16 May 1666, land was to be purchased with the £6,000 (£1,443,780 in 2019) bequeathed within 50 miles of Gloucester. Part of the rental incomes from the farms, fisheries, wood, dwellings and land purchased during the 18<sup>th</sup> century were to be used towards the education of poor boys at the Blue Coat Hospital (School) located in Eastgate Street, Gloucester. In 1852 a schedule was drawn up of property owned by Sir Thomas Rich's Hospital:

- *The Box Maidenhall and Hastall Farms, Awre – tenant: Elizabeth and Thomas Coucher*
- *The Hall Lypyatt and White Court Farms, Awre - tenant: Richard Morse Junior*
- *Piece of land at Awre, adjoining the River Severn called the New Warth – tenant: Richard Morse Jnr*
- *Public House, Red Hart Inn with garden and orchard, Awre – tenant: Henry Awre (late) Harriet Awre (widow). Harriet was also tenant of premises adjoining the Red Hart Inn which were held by the School under a 99 year lease dated 09/05/1832 from the Vicar & Churchworkers of Awre*
- *Also tenanted by Harriet Awre was a small cottage purchased by the Trustees of the Overseers if Awre and the Poor Law Commissioners in 1846, plus a Fishery at Awre in the River Severn*
- *Cottage and 2 Closes of land at Blakeney – tenant: Daniel White*
- *Two Closures of land at Blakeney – tenant: Thomas Holder*
- *Cottage and Garden at Nibley Green, Blakeney – tenant: Thomas Adams & Henry Davies*
- *Cottage and Garden at Nibley Green – tenant: John Trigg*
- *Driffield Farm, The Hulks including Farm House and 2 Cottages, parish of Lydney – tenant: Giles Oakley*
- *Allastone Court & Browns Farm, parish of Lydney – tenant: Thomas Williams*
- *On lease, three Cottages & land, parish of Lydney – tenant: Charles Bathurst Esquire*
- *Woods in the parish of Awre: Bushey Hill Grove, Hall Grove, Box Grove, Phipps Grove and Wood at Hagloe.*

Total rental paid by the properties etc amounted to £1,216 16s 2d in 1852 (£97,571.11 in 2017). It was decided to increase the number of boys, officially known as Blue Coat Boys, to thirty and relax the rules around their suitability but they did have to be over 10 years of age and must not remain on reaching sixteen years of age. Outgoings were not confined to administration of the School. Over the century's maintenance of the rental properties regularly occurred. The River Severn, forever unpredictable, continually damaged estate lands in Awre, especially a new Warth (circa 1832). River erosion meant building breakwaters and cribs to stop land disappearing into the river. These new works were run into, and wrecked, by the 'Forest Queen', as the skipper was at fault no costs were incurred by the School.

Railways, early/mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, were in their infancy and needed land to build on. In 1847 land was purchased from the Trustees of the School by Gloucester and Dean Forest Railway Company. However, the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Great Depression badly affected the farming community with many farmers becoming bankrupt. The Schools income came mainly from investment in farms property; this slowly declined during the depression due to reducing rents to try and keep tenants in-situ.

By 1907 the last of the properties owned by Sir Thomas Rich's School were sold off by auction. During its existence the School has moved twice: From Eastgate Street to Barton Street (1889), to its current site in Elmbridge in 1964.

*Next time: more 'Connections' to the Forest of Dean – I wonder who?*



## Cinderford Inebriates Retreat *by Keith Walker*

At first glance, the title appears to point to a problem of raging alcoholism in Cinderford. But no! This is a story of a national church funded institution which drew men of all classes from around the UK for treatment for alcoholism in Cinderford between 1907 and 1917.

Persistent drunkenness in Victorian times could lead to a fine, or imprisonment for several weeks or months. By 1876 the number incarcerated had risen to 23000. The temperance movement then began to provide medical services for inebriates. The 1879 Habitual Drunkards Act made treatment compulsory for non-criminal inebriates who could pay for it, and the later 1898 Inebriates Act allowed the committal of criminal inebriates to reformatories if they were tried and convicted of drunkenness four times in one year.

As part of the gathering temperance movement, the Church of England Temperance Society was founded in 1862 to “comfort and help those that fall”. From humble beginnings in an ‘unpretentious villa’, by 1913 the Society were carrying on their work in five large houses (with extensive grounds). One of these houses which was the Cinderford Inebriates Retreat, more properly known as Temple Memorial Home, which operated at Abbotswood House, Cinderford.

An article in the British Journal of Inebriety (1913) gave a description of Temple Memorial Home, and the following is a precis:

*Approached by noble drive, the house stands on a considerable hill, in its own grounds of 27 acres. The house accommodates no less than 50 patients of the 3 classes. The first class have their own dining room and smoking room. The large bedrooms are shared by varying numbers of patients, the classes being separated. The distinction between the second and intermediary classes lies solely in the fact that the latter are excused from all household duties. The second class take turns in performing domestic duties that the absence of servants necessitates. The intermediate and second classes share the large recreation room, in which is the billiard table. Common to all classes is the silence-room. Finally, there is the chapel. Everyone is expected to work during regular hours every weekday. The tasks are chiefly horticultural, but also include carpentering, mat-making, bee-keeping and other occupations. Thursdays and Saturdays are half-holidays when the patients amuse themselves in the house or grounds. Cricket is played in the summer, whilst winter amusements include theatricals, billiards, lantern lectures, and concerts.*



*Abbotswood House  
Cinderford Inebriates Retreat 1907 - 1917*

The 1911 census reveals a staff of 4, consisting of a First Officer, Cashier, Matron and Cook. There were 46 male patients at the time of the census, of whom 13 were shown as having ‘private means’ or there on their ‘own account’. These are likely to have been the ‘first class’ patients. It was claimed that permanent cures were effected in 50 to 60 per cent of the cases dealt with at Abbotswood, apparently a high figure.

The Home ceased to function in 1917, for it was reported in the Gloucester Chronicle of 30/06/1917 that Abbotswood had been secured by Mr Arthur J. Morgan M.P., and had been offered to the War Office Authorities as a convalescent home for soldiers.

## Meetings in Review *with Chris Sullivan & Keith Walker*



*Former Chair Ron Beard standing on a distinctive section of Offas Dyke in Worgans Wood*

Archaeology is usually a big draw on the television and on open digs like those in Foresters Forest. Archaeologist Jon Hoyle is a regular and popular speaker to the Society. So, it was no surprise that approaching 100 people Zoomed in to Jon's February talk on 'Offa's Dyke in Gloucestershire. Most of us have some vague idea that the Dyke was masterminded by some post-Roman King of Mercia as his contribution to Anglo-Welsh relations, but the evidence for this, or something different, is surprisingly thin.

On the ground, the Dyke shows itself in Gloucestershire as a quite marked feature on high ground east side of the Wye, with large gaps...but not as large as those running north to the Dee. Jon summarised past studies, and used his own practical experience and photographs, to address four questions. Is the Dyke one consistent monument? Does it date to be 'Offa's' Dyke? Why was it built? What is the status of the gaps? Jon argued that the Dyke, across its 120km recognised length of earthworks, was built to a consistent profile, and that different modern profiles were where past land use has eroded what is visible on the ground. Old maps showed landslips, or past quarrying, in some of the gaps. Using LIDAR mapping, Jon showed how the Dyke was not at the river level, nor on the highest ground, but at the steepest. It had a consistent approach to crossing valleys and turning corners. Some of it was still capped or faced with stone, making it an obvious feature on the Welsh skyline. Place-names like Symond's Yat and LIDAR suggested control of border traffic. The earliest documentary evidence was around 895 AD. Radiocarbon dates varied between post-Roman and 9<sup>th</sup> C. Offa, King of Mercia 757-796, was active on the European stage. He controlled most of the resources of England and faced constant skirmishes around his Welsh border. Possibly he saw himself as a new Hadrian in need of a symbolic western wall as his memorial. On a balance of probability, Jon saw the Dyke as a single entity from the time of Offa.

Enthusiastic questions and applause ended Jon's talk. For this viewer, a lesson is that you need to get your eye in to spot the more eroded profiles. *That's* why I've found the bits in Lydbrook hard to spot.

**C.S**

The March meeting saw 53 attendees (via Zoom) enjoy an enjoyable and eloquent presentation given by Helen Chick (Foresters' Forest Communications Officer) on 'The Foresters Forest Blue & Green Plaque Scheme'. Helen started by explaining that the Foresters Forest project team had decided that more could be done to celebrate the lives of successful local people who had made an impact through their activities during their lifetime. The project team had therefore devised a scheme for ten celebratory plaques. Five were to have a blue background and would celebrate a link between a nationally famous person and the location where it is installed. The other five would have a green background and would celebrate a person famous within the Forest and the location where it is installed. Nine of the plaques were made in ceramics by Ned Heywood, a specialist ceramicist plaque creator who is based in Chepstow.



Because of the associations of one of the plaque winners with steel production, the tenth plaque was cast in iron by a company in Derby. During March 2018 nominations were sought from the public for suitable persons to be celebrated on the plaques. Twenty-five nominations were received from the public, to add to thirty-five names already under consideration to finally produce a short list of suitable candidates. Helen then gave ‘potted histories’ of the short-listed local heroes, before ending the meeting by giving the ‘big reveal’ of the chosen ‘famous ten’ names that would appear on the plaques, and the associated locations at which the plaques would be installed:

#### **Blue Plaques**

David & Robert Mushet – Whitecliff Ironworks  
Dame Muriel Powell – Clock Tower, Cinderford  
James Horlick – Horlick House, Ruardean  
F. W. Harvey – Yorkley Community Centre  
Dennis Potter – Joyford Hill

#### **Green Plaques**

Warren James – Fountain Inn, Parkend  
Timothy Mountjoy – Cinderford Baptist Church  
Dr M.L. Bangara – Clock Tower, Cinderford  
Sir Francis Brain – Trafalgar Colliery Site  
David Richard Organ – DDFR, Norchard *K.W.*

For the April talk, Andy Mellor quick marched some 52 ‘zookees’ through the fascinating history of the famous Glosters regiment, from formation to the Battle of Waterloo. Formed in 1694 by Colonel Gibson in Hampshire the regiment was named in the tradition of the time after the commanding officer. In 1782 the regiment was renamed the 28<sup>th</sup> (North Gloucester) Regiment of Foot as part of reforms to create territorial associations.

The famous ‘back badge’ was added to the head gear after the Battle of Alexandria in 1801. The regiment were in battle when they were engaged from front and rear. The rear rank of the two lines was ordered to ‘about face’, and the soldiers fought back-to-back to successfully defend their position. To this day in Gloucester, 21<sup>st</sup> March is known as ‘Back Badge Day’.



During the period 1809 -1814 the Glosters were fighting under Wellington in the Peninsular War (Iberia) against Napoleon’s forces. During 1814 the four armies engaged in the Wars fought their way to Paris where Napoleon then surrendered and was exiled to Elba. The restoration of Louis XVIII proved disastrous. Napoleon managed to escape and on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1815 he invaded mainland France and marched towards Paris. By 19<sup>th</sup> March he had managed to seize power once again. Outraged by this turn of events, Russia, Austria, Prussia, and Great Britain declared war on France and prepared to try and defeat Napoleon for the final time. By then the Glosters had completed a tour of duty in Ireland on garrison duties and were expecting a more joyous posting in Bermuda, when the call came to join the forces being assembled in Brussels. By 16<sup>th</sup> June, the Glosters found themselves part of Wellington’s forces that started to move south to engage the French forces coming north. The first clash occurred at Quatre Bas, where the Glosters found themselves front and centre against the French forces. The day ended in stalemate, so Wellington withdrew his forces to Waterloo, where the decisive and final battle was fought. The Glosters were once again in the very thick of the action, constantly reforming from square formation to fend off the French cavalry, to in line formation to better deal with artillery attacks. Napoleon was finally defeated, and later abdicated as Emperor of France for the second and last time.

Wellington’s famous despatch, written on 18<sup>th</sup> June, mentioned only one English regiment by name, the 28<sup>th</sup> (the Glosters). *K.W.*

# Migrant Hostels in Australia *by Cheryl Mayo*

*Our Membership Secretary, Cheryl Mayo, is also a writer. Her novel 'Keepers' (under her pen name, Cheryl Burman), is largely set on a post WW2 migrant hostel in Australia. Cheryl's father's family emigrated from the UK to South Australia in 1948 and lived for a time in such a hostel. They were in use until the '80s, so many of us will know friends and relatives who lived in the hostels. Here, Cheryl shares a little of what the Brits experienced.*

Post war Britain was bleak. No surprise then, that in 1947, 400,000 Britons registered at Australia House for assisted passage to the 'land of tomorrow'. At the same time, Australia needed people, and Brits were ideal. They knew the language, shared the same cultural values. The allure of bright posters and £10 passages led 1.6 million Britons to seek their fortunes in Australia between 1946 and 1982. These hopeful immigrants came for many reasons, but whatever their motivations, their first experience of the 'land of tomorrow' was of a migrant hostel. Hostels provided a temporary base while migrants found jobs, learned their way around, and saved to purchase that great dream – a home of their own. But while the purpose was the same, the reality differed greatly from hostel to hostel.

Elder Park, on Adelaide's city edge, was the best: *"We were impressed ... it was good, it was clean ... beautiful dining room, and we didn't have to cook ... And a beautiful lounge full of chairs, settees ... and a nice verandah outside where you could sit in the sun, and the sun was beautiful, never seen anything like this ...the kids could go into the park ... they'd never seen a black swan ..."*

The location gave easy access to facilities which helped with job hunting and getting settled. City shopping and entertainment were also within walking distance. The children especially loved it, playing in Elder Park itself and swimming in the River Torrens with the local kids. But it wasn't all black swans and swimming!

The worst hostel was Rosewater, in Port Adelaide. Here, woolsheds had been hastily 'renovated' to basic standards. The tiny tar-paper petitioned rooms were extremely hot, with wire mesh ceilings giving views of rats scurrying overhead at night. Rosewater was hated with a passion: *"I remember sitting in the little room by the table, and I said, 'Well, we're not in Australia, Mum and Dad, until we get out of here!'"* (Bill Gordon, Rosewater hostel 1950, interviewed 2009)

Here's a quaint snippet of history: Rosewater was meant for displaced Europeans who were expected to be grateful for whatever they got. It was only used for Britons because of shortages elsewhere. The Europeans had a lucky escape.



Finsbury Park, pictured left, was a major hostel and was purpose-built from galvanised iron and corrugated asbestos Nissen, Romney and Quonset huts.

Here's an insightful quote: *"... arrived in late 1959 & were given one of the tiny flat-roofed huts. The floor was bitumen & you could just squeeze the beds into the bedrooms & not much else. When the summer came the fridge sank into the bitumen floor.... If you wanted to make a cup of tea, you had to turn off the fridge or the fuses blew, & showers were in the concrete shower block*

*at the end of the row of huts. All meals happened in the nissan hut canteen & the ground all around the huts was barren. We had no swings or grass or trees ... & it was hot, hotter than anything we had known in our lives. The contrast with the UK was total."*

Quotes from 'British Migrants in Post War South Australia' by Justin Antony Madden, photo of Finsbury Hostel, courtesy of Olaf Alland.

The full article is in Cheryl's March newsletter at <https://cherylburman.com/newsletter/>