

AROUND KEYNSHAM & SALTFORD PAST AND PRESENT



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AROUND
KEYNSHAM & SALTFORD
PAST & PRESENT

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Journal Production; Brian Vowles.

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Cover illustration;

The funeral cortege of Keynsham Boy Scout Ronald Sparey on 20th August 1929. He died from pneumonia after jumping in the river to cool off after playing cricket - although his death may have been caused by Weill's disease carried by rats.

Details of any of the Society's publications can be obtained from the society's website; www.keysalthist.org.uk

NOTES FROM THE CHAIRMAN

It is a pleasure to be able to write the introduction to the Society's annual Journal in this, its fiftieth, year. For a local voluntary society to reach fifty is no mean achievement; it is testimony to the hard work and enthusiasm of a great many people over the years. We owe a particular debt to the late Mary Fairclough who was the driving force in setting up the Society in 1965. However, to make any organization succeed requires not only the leaders and officers but also the members and helpers who contribute in less obvious ways. So, thank you to all those who have played their various parts in ensuring the survival of the Society through the inevitable ups and downs. Whilst many of our founder members are no longer with us, they would surely be pleased to know that the Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society is not only still alive but thriving.

The Society has published many books, some specialist and some of wider appeal, built up a valuable collection of archive material and held many exhibitions, talks and other events to promote interest in our local history. Some members have made exceptional contributions to knowledge and understanding and have taken this to an audience wider than our locality; I will mention Joan Day, Margaret Whitehead and the late Barbara Lowe in this regard, but a huge amount of high quality research and writing has been done by many others.

Local history is a particular, or perhaps I should say peculiar, combination of recording the past, which some may think of as a "dry as dust" activity, and raising awareness of it, which can take many forms and be as lively and entertaining as the participants make it. I have just read the notes by the late Charles Browne, introducing the very first of the Society's journals in 1987. He makes the important point that to-day's

present is tomorrow's past, so it should be our role not just to research and record what we think of as history but also to record our life and surroundings as they are now. That is something that we don't really do at the moment; I can see a new field of activity just waiting to be explored!

Turning to the present, we have an enthusiastic and growing membership and I am pleased that we have recruited several new members to our committee; they are taking new projects forward to celebrate this anniversary. Interest in various aspects of local history is widespread, some of it arising from family history research and facilitated by the internet, some from that human desire to explore and discover.

Harnessing this interest by making the most of new technology is a constant challenge for a small organization but we need to succeed at this if we are to carry our commitment to the history of this very special part of Somerset on to the next generation. Meanwhile, this journal appears in traditional printed format, but who knows what it will look like when the Society is another fifty years older?

Richard Dyson

Chairman

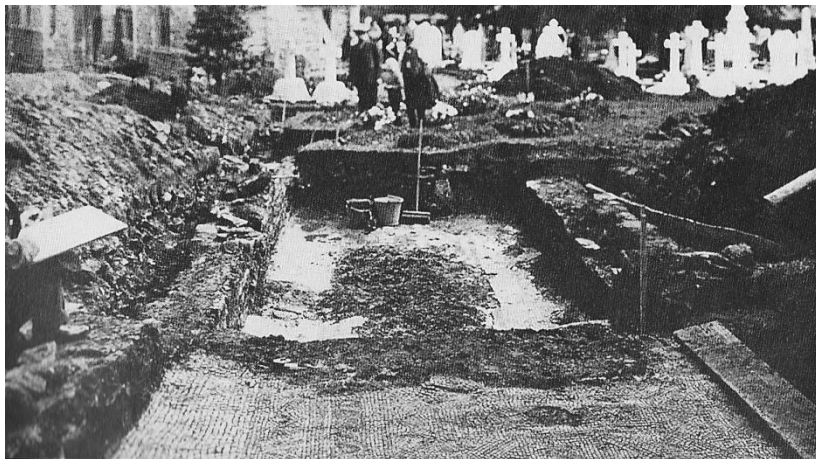
50 YEARS OLD

Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society's Anniversary

by Sue Trude.

This year marks the anniversary of the foundation of the society and from an initial handful of interested people we have grown to a membership of over a hundred.

It all began in 1965 when a group of townsfolk realised that there was very little of Keynsham and Saltford's history that had been recorded. Although the existence of an abbey at Keynsham was known, the first indication that the town had an interesting past was the discovery of a large and impressive Roman villa buried beneath the chapel in the cemetery around 1922/23. The report of this discovery, written at the time, can be seen in Bath library*.



The excavations in the Keynsham cemetery in 1922/3

So it was decided to form a number of study groups:-
“Prehistory and the Roman Period” chaired by Charles Brown,
“Genealogy” chaired by G. C. Fray, “Industry, Arts and

Crafts” chaired by Joan Day, “ Inns and Alehouses” chaired by Eric Linfield, “Domestic Architecture” with Joan Jeffreys, and “Communications” by Connie Smith. Each group then enlisted friends and other interested people into joining a particular group, one of whom would act as secretary.

The groups then began their research. The archives at Taunton, Bristol and Bath were accessed as were church records, deeds to properties and local brewery archives. An appeal was made to residents to get family members to search in cupboards and drawers for old maps, photographs - in fact anything that could throw light on Keynsham and Saltford's past. The individual groups would meet to discuss progress. These gatherings were often held in one another's houses or at the site of their research when the discoveries would be recorded by the secretary. The Inns and Alehouses group, of which I was member, decided at their first meeting, held in the Crown at Saltford, that they would meet each month at a different public house of which 12 existed in 1967.

Fortunately at that time Bristol University's Department of Extra Mural Studies was about to run a six-week course on “Local History Sources” for a fee of 15s. The tutor J.H.Betty MA dealt with major sources of information on local history and how those sources could be used to build up a picture of a local community at different periods. But research takes time and many of the group were still in full time work. Nevertheless findings were recorded and meetings were held to discuss the progress made and the difficulties raised.

By 1967 Charles Browne said *“It has long been apparent that much interesting local history material, which is being worked on by our members, deserves wider circulation. The Committee has been conscious that many of the reports it receives, notably the Archivist's reports of accessions, would be of value to all members, and to other workers in local history. This Newsletter will help to fill this need and, it is*

hoped, stimulate others to prepare material for publication"
These reports were edited, typed and duplicated and sold for 12d. Sadly no computers were available at the time.

As time went on books were published, exhibitions were staged usually in the Fear Institute over a weekend. These were very popular with some people rushing off to get friends and family to pay a visit. Photographs were pored over as people recognised grandparents, parents, aunties, uncles and could supply names and much more. It was a really worthwhile experience and it added greatly to the society's knowledge of the area. Barbara Lowe's work on uncovering the Abbey site in conjunction with Bristol Folk House, was coming to the attention of the wider world and in 1984 the Hayward gallery in London was hosting an exhibition entitled "English Romanesque Art 1066-1200" and requested the Abbey bosses to be included .



The late Barbara Lowe with the carving rescued from the route of the by-pass

Artefacts were also being acquired as was a set of 25 inch to 1 mile Ordnance survey maps covering K.U.D.C. and copies of maps of Old Keynsham were purchased from the Huntingdon Library in California. A Toll Board, thought to have been at the Turnpike at the Twerton Fork came into our possession and Connie Smith, the archivist at the time, consulted with Bristol Museum who suggested a little restoration would not come amiss. It was then lodged in Connie's porch for a while until the Bath Postal Museum

were happy to have it on display and where it still resides today on more or less permanent loan. The society then bought material from the Bowden Estate and was given documents relating to Keynsham Manor that had been found in the basement of Stone, King and Wardle Solicitors in Bath. Keynsham Tithe maps and books came to the society from Clutton Council. And so it has gone on - to the point where Margaret Whitehead has a room in her house entirely devoted to our archives.

The idea of a museum has surfaced time and again over the years and in 1986 architects were approached with the aim of submitting designs for one. Things really did seem to be moving forward but then arose the question of a suitable site. The Old Court House on Bath Hill (demolished in 1977) and the Magistrates Court (demolished in 1972) were among several venues considered but unfortunately no site was either suitable or appropriate.

We have been meeting on a regular basis in the Key Centre, but that has not always been the case. In the past meetings were held in Ellsbridge House, in St Dunstan's Church Hall, the Fear Institute and now and again in Saltford but we have outgrown the many venues that can offer space and catering facilities. In September we will return to St Dunstan's. In a way that is encouraging as it proves that the society is flourishing and there is a growing interest in local history, due no doubt to the increase in the population from...

1881	-----	2,482 residents
1931	-----	4,521
1951	-----	8,277
1961	-----	15,152
2001	-----	15,533
2015	-----	16000-20,000.

Milestones

1965 - In the spring informal meetings were held to discuss the setting up of a society and in July the first meeting was attended by 26 people. In October Charles Browne was elected Chairman.

1966 – It was decided to hold regular meetings in the Victoria Methodist Schoolroom and Ellsbridge House with one meeting per season at Saltford Village Hall.

1967 – Annual subscription...Adults 7/6d (37½p), Juniors 5/- (25p).

1968 – In February members attended the inaugural meeting of the Keynsham Civic Society. 23 paid up members. In July only 5 members attended the committee meeting as most had been affected by the disastrous flooding 24 hours previously.

1971 – Subscriptions changed to decimal amounts. Adults 50p. Juniors 25p.

Note – in the late 1960's and early 1970's committee meetings were very infrequent with only eight meetings being recorded between July 1968 and January 1973.

1976 –Saltford Brass Mill site was reviewed by Joan Day and extensively surveyed.

1977 – An exhibition was staged by the society at the Keynsham Library to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee.

1978 – Committee consisted of Charles Browne (Chairman) Eric Linfield (Vice Chairman), Sue Trude, Frank Millard (Archivist), Bob Milner (Secretary), Mr Sims, Joan Day, Mary Fairclough, Barbara Lowe, and John Dunford who replaced the recently deceased Walter Stone. In July Barbara Lowe was congratulated on her book "Medieval Floor Tiles of Keynsham Abbey.

1980 – Membership risen to 60 although only 14 attended the A.G.M

1981 – Joan Day reported on the efforts of volunteers to clear

the Saltford Brass Mills site. A “Keynsham 1851” Exhibition was staged by the society at the library.

1984 – Membership increased to 64 causing some difficulties with accommodating them at Elsbridge House.

1986 – First draft of the society’s journal “North Wansdyke Past and Present” was produced.

1987 – The subscriptions were to be raised to £3 single and £4 for couples.

1989 – It was reported that member numbers were about to reach 100. Edition No.1 of “North Wansdyke Past and Present” had cost £104 to produce and sales had only raised £102.28p.

1990 – Exhibition held in the Keynsham Library marking the 150th anniversary of the Great Western Railway with photos lent by Russell Leitch.

1991 – Committee consisted of Charles Clarke (Chairman), Eric Linfield (Vice Chairman), Elizabeth White (Secretary), Barbara Lowe (Assistant Secretary), John & Margaret Shore (Joint Treasurers), Joan Day, Barbara Lowe, Margaret Whitehead (Archivist), Len Coggins (Photo Archivist), Michael Fitter, Mary Fairclough, John Dunford.

1994 – Membership now 100 (including 6 life members)

1995 – English Heritage spent almost £200,000 on restoration work at Saltford Brass Mill.



Members of the Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society together with the Civic Society marking the 150th Anniversary of the construction of the railway on 31st August 1990.



Mary Fairclough receiving a presentation from Iris Lepinière, Patrick McGrath and John Dunford

2000 – Death of Mary Fairclough (founder member, painter and local historian)

Keynsham Heritage 2000 Exhibition staged jointly with the Keynsham Heritage Trust in St John's Church and hall.

2001 – Receipt of £500 bequest from Mary Fairclough's estate and used in part to purchase amplifier equipment. 101 paid up members plus 4 life members.

2002 – Mary Fairclough's map on display in the Keynsham Library. Committee - Sue Trude (Chairman & Programme Organiser), Margaret Whitehead (Vice Chairman & Archivist), John & Margaret Shore (Treasurer & Membership Secretary) Jon Gibbons (Secretary) Dennis Hill, Peter Godden (Equipment Secretary) Barbara Price (Publications Secretary) and Joan Day.

2003 – Dennis Hill succeeded Jon Gibbons as secretary. 73 of

the 112 paid up members attended the February meeting at St Dunstan's. Need for larger premises discussed.

2004 – Open evening held at the Fear Institute to acquaint members with the facilities at the new venue.

2005 – The society's 40th Anniversary Exhibition held at the Fear Institute.

2007 – Purchase of computer equipment, scanner and projector.

2010 – The Society's exhibition 'Remembering Somerdale' took place at the Fear Hall, Keynsham. Death of John Shore, long time treasurer of the society.

2011 – Move to the Key Centre, Victoria Methodist Church.

2012 – Death of Barbara Lowe, committee member, leading archaeologist on the Abbey site and author of a number of books on Keynsham.

2014 – Dennis Hill resigned as Chairman.

New committee – Richard Dyson (Chairman & visits

organiser) Keith Norton (Treasurer), Liz Walker (Minute Secretary), Diane Riley (Membership Secretary), Margaret Whitehead/Sue Tatford (Archivists), Peter John (Talks Organiser) Brian Vowles (Journal & Website), Hilary Smedley and Joan Day. 100th Anniversary of World War 1 Edition two part Journal produced.

2015 – Return to St Dunstan's



Eric Miles, Jon Gibbons and Dennis Hill at the Society's exhibition 'Remembering Somerdale'

My Wartime Childhood

Memories of a different world - by Brenda Stone

During the war I was “evacuated” to my grandparents Albert and Hilda Marsh at Coalpit Heath Cottage in Farmborough which they rented from Arthur Collins of Manor Farm. My father had gone off to war and my mother kept his butcher’s business going in Brislington. The cottage had no running water or electricity so oil lamps were the order of the day. Granddad was a ship’s engineer and went by motor bike and side car to Avonmouth daily to keep the ships working. My grandparents had three children; my uncle Charles, my mother Violet and her very much younger brother Jim. Jim and I were brought up like brother and sister - what a shock it must have been for my grandparents to start again! Cooking was done on the old black-leaded fire and oven, washing in the boiler in the corner of the kitchen with fire underneath and bath time was of the tin tub variety – in front of the fire (“watch your leg on the fire side”). Granddad grew mountains of food in a garden he dug after a day’s work. Gran and I picked, preserved, jammed, salted etc. until, in September, the ‘middle room’ shelves were lined with the wherewithal to survive living away from the village. Only the meagre rations that could be looked forward to were delivered once a fortnight from the Radstock Co-op or fetched from the village shop.

The ‘privy’ outside was the one-bucket version (they had a two-seater upmarket one down on the farm), so at night the torch was essential. If it was raining it meant wellies on, coat and hat (I wore pixie hoods in those days), and out into the teeth of the storm no matter what. No soft loo paper with quilting then but sheets of newspaper on a string hanging from a hook on the back of the door. After bedtime the ‘goesunder’ was a necessity beneath the bed which, of course, had to be emptied the next morning.

My mother played the piano and weekends saw friends come over to our 'best room' to share Saturday evening get-togethers. My grandmother sang and to this day I remember the words of the songs she sang. We knitted by the light of the oil lamp and at five Gran taught me to make socks on four needles – I still like hand knitting socks. The adults' dresses were cut up to make summer dresses and shorts for me and we darned socks over wooden mushrooms with wool either unpicked from other garments or, if we were lucky, from darning sock wool cards.

Milk bottles had wide necks and cardboard disc tops with a central circle you could punch out. At Christmas time I made presents of shopping bags by covering the discs with raffia in blanket stitch and joining them to create the shape. I then lined it with the best bits of a worn-out garment and added string handles. One Christmas I received a special sewing box that Uncle Charles had made for me (from a corned beef box) and lined by Auntie Doris with a piece of her old dance dress. It was painted on the outside and had a little daisy motif on the top. Inside were cottons, needles, little scissors, darning materials and some little balls of wool. I've still got a tablecloth made from a flour sack from America; unpicked, bleached, edged with bias-binding and stitched on Gran's treadle sewing machine.

We kept hens so it was my job to feed them, collect the eggs and at the weekend clean out the hen house. The ensuing muck was pushed to the compost pile for Granddad to feed his plot later. Grampy had a shotgun and he shot rabbits, pigeons and rooks which, along with Gran's boiling fowls, eked out our suppers.

On my way home from school I called in to the farm and helped to milk the three cows that didn't like the new-fangled milking gadget! Sometimes the farmer's daughter

Margaret and the land army girl Freda would ask me to help make butter. The whole milk was put into a glass jar with a paddle inside and handle on top which was turned many times (held between our knees) until at last a little bit of precious butter emerged at the bottom of the jar. I was thanked for my efforts with a tiny screw of the delicacy in a piece of re-cycled grease proofed paper to take home in triumph to a grateful grandmother. The other perk was the odd mangold that Mr Collins gave me to “take home to gran” and sometimes a ride in his cart behind ‘Ginger’ the horse. The mangold was added to the soup pot which was always on the hob and all the carcasses of granddad’s hunting trips were added to make the basic stock. This with vegetables from the garden made a wonderful stew which I recall with affection and I can still imagine that appetising smell in the kitchen. The one job I didn’t look forward to was in late winter when vegetables were in short supply and I had to put on granddad’s long gloves to collect young nettle shoots. These were washed and steamed for ‘greens’ when savoy and sprouts were finished.

At school we were encouraged to collect at least 1lb of hips a week for Rose Hip Syrup for city children who, we were told, were not so lucky as ourselves. It’s surprising how scratchy it is picking rose hips and how little they weigh. However, we were all used to collecting blackberries so we persevered and were paid the princely sum of 3d for each pound. Wow, money for sweets! However the village shop didn’t have any and the only offering was liquorice root. We chewed and chewed but the fibrous root stuck in between your teeth and didn’t even taste nice. I’d much rather collect fresh sorrel from the fields to chew on. In September I would collect field mushrooms with granddad – what could be nicer and, if there was a glut, they would be threaded on string and hung above the fire to dry along with the apple rings. Eggs when

plentiful were stored in isinglass in a crock in the cupboard under the stairs.

Being in butchery my mother used to get the mutton cloths which were covering New Zealand lamb from the shop. They were boiled, bleached to remove the lettering and dyed with cochineal to colour them pink. These were used to wrap around the pillars of the Nissan hut for dances to celebrate special events. They were draped with fresh ivy strands and crêpe paper ‘carnations’ that gran and I made by the light of the oil lamps.

The nine o’clock news was a must to hear how the war was progressing and on Friday nights, if there was still enough power in the accumulator, I could listen to ‘Happidrome’ on the wireless. Saturday morning saw me taking the old accumulator down to the local garage and collecting the one left the week before. Granddad’s news was safe again!

What a different world today.



A common source of power in areas not served by electricity, 2 Volt accumulators were used in wireless sets for the heaters of the valves. They were normally given to the local garage, hardware merchant, or cycle shop for recharging and they would give you a spare unit while this was being done.

Edwin Fray

By Brian Vowles

On 28th May 1833 the son of a carpenter from Bath, Charles Fray, was baptised at St John the Baptist Parish Church in Keynsham with the names Edwin Henry. When he was just nine he was sent out to work at the Harford and Bristol Brass Company's mill on the banks of the River Avon and continued to work for them for the next 66 years. How many of us can claim such job continuity? Amongst his early recollections were those of the construction of Brunel's Great Western Railway. This involved the creation of the great embankments that split the Hams (the wide flood plain) in two and a cutting that gouged through the town. He also remembered the pile driving necessary to build the railway bridge over the Chew.

The furnaces at the works, fuelled with bracken supplied by local farmers, were used to make pins, the



The Keynsham Brass Workers in 1870. Edwin Fray is the fifth man from the left standing in the back row

production of which involved 50 to 60 processes from ore to the finished article, some employing female labour. The Harford Company had been established in 1703 when in Edwin's words "*Birmingham was green fields*". One of the uses of the wire made by the firm was to make up the frames of the crinoline skirts fashionable at the time.

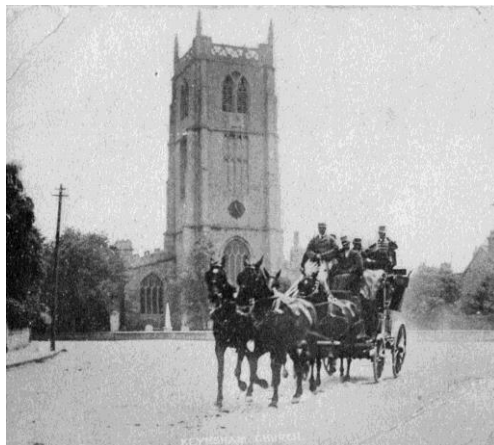


The Avon Brass Mills

The reason for its location there was of course the power supplied by the River Avon and seven or eight water wheels were used to drive the machines but often the river would overflow flooding the ovens and the machinery. This caused all work to come to a standstill until the waters had receded thus depriving the workers of their wages.

In the autumn of 1853 Edwin married Amelia Payne at the Bath Registry Office and very soon afterwards their first son was born and named John Edwin. He was followed by Hubert in 1856, Frederick in 1859 and Robert in 1861. Sadly Amelia died in 1864 aged just 34 and Edwin was left to raise his boys on his own.

In 1922 when he was 88, Edwin was interviewed by a local newspaper and gave his reminiscences of old Keynsham. He recalled the twenty to thirty stage coaches that passed through the High Street every day. The mail coaches were drawn by four grey horses with a bugler seated at the rear who blew a blast



Stage coach passing Keynsham Church about 1902

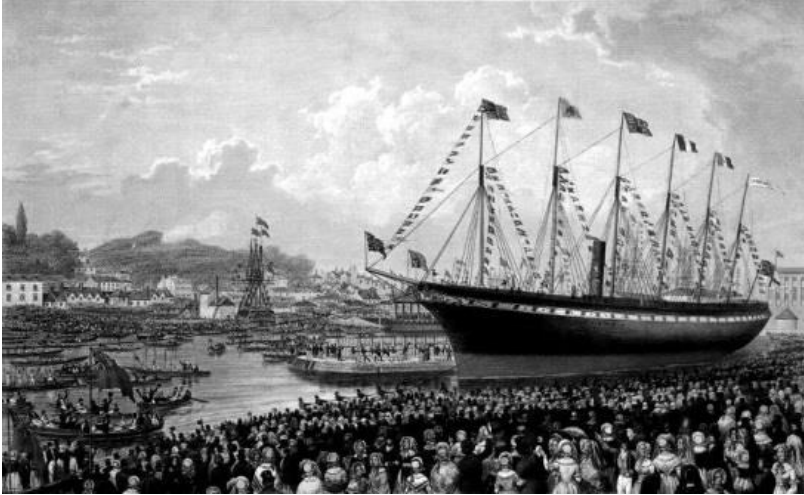
on his horn as they clattered into town. Six horses drew the coaches carrying goods with the horses being changed at the Lamb and Lark Hotel (sadly destroyed in 1970 and the site of which is currently occupied by the Poundshop). At that time, the Post Office, kept by one of the mail buglers, stood where later the Wingrove Hotel served as a venue for local events (now part of Vicarage Green).

He remembered the launch of the “Great Britain” when Prince Albert was present and the words of a specially written song containing the lines ...

“I went into Bristol Prince Albert to see;

Likewise the Great Britain, the pride of the sea”.

He also witnessed the construction of the Clifton Suspension Bridge as it crossed the Avon Gorge and watched the progress of the project.



The launch of the S.S. Great Britain 19 July 1843

The commencement of the Crimean War in 1852 was another landmark in his memory. With it came an order from the Russian Government for thirteen tons of copper tubes that the hands at the mill worked day and night to complete. This may seem a little surprising to us today as the Russians were the enemy in that conflict.

He also lamented that eighty years previously good coal cost only 2½d per cwt and the very best fetched only 6d!



Edwin Fray in 1922 aged 88

Edwin died two years after that interview at Keynsham aged 90 having lived though the best part of a century of dramatic change and on Saturday 5 July 1924 his cottage was sold by the local auctioneer, Mr Albert Ford

WEDNESDAY NEXT.
Re **EDWIN FRAY, Deceased.**
SALE of 16 and 18, BATH ROAD,
KEYNSHAM.
(ONE WITH VACANT POSSESSION.)
MR ALBERT FORD
is instructed to **SELL** by **AUCTION**, upon the
Property, on **WEDNESDAY NEXT** July 9, 1924, at
Seven o'clock in the Evening (in one Lot), the
FREEHOLD COTTAGE PROPERTY,
known as
Nos. 16 and 18, BATH ROAD,
KEYNSHAM,
situate adjoining Ivy Lodge, and fronting the
main road to Bath.
No. 16, which contains 5 rooms, is let to Mr F.
Loader at 5s weekly.
No. 18 contains 3 rooms, and Vacant Possession
of this Cottage will be given.
There are a small Garden with each Cottage,
and some useful Outbuildings, including a Back
Kitchen (with good Well) which is used jointly.
Further particulars of the Auctioneer, Albion
Chambers, Bristol; or of Messrs **FOX, WHIT-**
TUCK, PITT and ELWELL, Solicitors, Orchard
House, Bristol, and at Keynsham and Bath.

Notice of the sale of Edwin Fray's cottage on Saturday 5 July 1924

Keynsham Football Club

During the latter part of the 19thC and early 20thC a number of teams formed by common association were playing football in Keynsham. Amongst these were Albert Road Villa, West End Rovers and church teams like Keynsham St John's and Keynsham Victoria (Methodist).

In the Western Daily Press on 8 February 1894 Mr Arthur S Lloyd Hon. Secretary of the Keynsham Victoria A.F.C. fumed from Avondale, Keynsham... *"In reference to a paragraph complaining of the rough way in which football is played at Keynsham, I deny that statement and would like to complain of the rough way in which it is played by the Coronation Club"*.

West End Rovers were playing regular fixtures by 1908. For example when the Western Daily Press on Friday March 25th 1910 announced the *"Athletic Fixtures for the Holidays"*, it appears that on that Saturday in the Bristol & Suburban League Division 1 at Horfield, Horfield Garrison (an army team) were scheduled to play West End Rovers and in Division 2 at Keynsham, West End Rovers (reserves?) were due to play against Coalpit Heath.

However the first reference to the Keynsham Football Club playing in a league comes in the Bristol Mercury on 26 September 1898... *"The Keynsham Football Club on Saturday played their first league match at Keynsham with the St Nicholas and St Leonard's Club and succeeded in defeating them by two goals to one, Hacker and Trott scoring."* Certainly by 1906 Keynsham A.F.C were competing in Division 1 of the Bristol & District League.

Their first ground was on the Hams before the construction of Fry's factory but when they were displaced from there they moved to Gastons. Then it was on to Park Road where Edinburgh Road now stands. After this, games

were played off Charlton Road where Ashcroft Avenue was later built and the team moved to its present site after WW2.

Whilst investigating her family's history Rose Storkey has become very interested in the history of Keynsham's football clubs and has turned up some interesting facts.

The Early Days of the Club by Rose Storkey

I imagine my great great grandfather John Cante as a young Keynsham man out with his friends hoofing a bladder ball along a lane after work in the 1840s. Then, as a father, being excited that 'proper' football with a Football Association (of mainly amateur clubs) had been established nationally with the first FA Cup Final being held on 16 March 1872.



1909 -10 West End Rovers AFC. The oldest man with a black hat and white mutton chop whiskers is John Cante (1825 - 1911) my paternal great great grandfather. On his right: one grandson, Sid Cante (with neck stock); another: Fred Freeman (Sid's brother) middle row, second right); Percy? Tipney (middle row, first left). Others: Jack Exon back row, fourth left; Ernest Cante, back row, fourth right.

John's descendants are fortunate to have a photo of him with Keynsham footballers when he was in his 80's in the 1909-10 season.



The earliest known photo of a Keynsham football team is from the 1901-02 season, and is on display in the current Clubhouse

The Football League in England was founded in 1888 and expanded during the 1890s. This included the formation of local amateur leagues such as those around Bristol, where the first league was set up in 1894.

The first football club in Keynsham appears to have been formed by 1894.

My sister Gillian and I have memorabilia of football in Keynsham left by Bert Cante (1880-1939) who was Secretary from the age of 16 in 1896. In recognition of 25 years' service to Keynsham football, Bert was presented in 1921 with a clock and a cheque, which included money from a fixture arranged as a benefit match for his Testimonial. There is no evidence that he ever played competitive football as it is likely that he had a medical condition which precluded it.



This picture was probably taken in about 1906 and may be of West End Rovers [Keynsham], 'The Whites'. It includes Sidney Freeman (back row, first player on right); J Harvey (back row, third left); Polysulphur worker (back row, fifth right); William S Whittington (front row, second left).

We have a copy of the Minute Book for Keynsham AFC which starts with the season 1919-20 when the Club was affiliated to Gloucestershire Football Association (GFA) and was a member of Bristol and District League Division III.

1919

Although not stated in the Minute Book, the meeting on 19 June 1919 was the official resumption of the football club after the horrors of the First World War and there is a sense of men keen to rebuild social lives through sport and the entertainment it provided.



Above - West End Rovers 1908/1909 Bristol & Suburban League
Division 1

Below - West End Rovers Reserves 1908/1909 Note the kit of the first
and reserve teams: black and white striped shirts and white shorts. The
only man not in kit in the Reserves photo is in 1st team photo also, back
row, second left. Was he the Club president, manager or trainer?





Keynsham St John's A.F.C. winners of the Bristol League Knockout Cup
1911-12

The trainer of 1st team was Mr E Harvey. They needed a ground and certain landlords were to be approached. Mr W Trott was elected (pro tem) until the Hon Sec (Mr A C Cattle) had recovered from his 'illness'. (Bert had been ill in France during the war and then in hospital in England).

Numerous members (many of them players) paid their subscriptions over the next few years: their initials and surnames are in the Minute Book.

By July, the Headquarters were '*a splendid room at the White Hart Hotel (now the Lock Keeper) for meetings only*' and by August, terms were arranged and '*consent obtained from Mr Clothier for the use of the 'Hams', Station Road for the season*' at the cost of £10. The admission fee for 1st team matches was set at 6d including tax (about £1.25). '*A hearty welcome was given to the Hon Sec on his taking over duties*

and satisfaction expressed that he had so far recovered from his severe illness'.

October 1919: *'The Secretary was asked to make the necessary arrangements for conveying the team and supporters to Stapleton'*. This transport task was obviously in addition to arranging fixtures, being a selector, representing the Club at GFA and League meetings, writing the Minutes (and having returned to his full time job at the Polysulphin.)

November: the Chairman said the Hon Treasurer's report gave *'great satisfaction'* and then *'the rest of the evening was given up to harmony'*, (rather than this just describing a harmonious atmosphere, it is likely that it was meant literally, singing. In the book 'The Victorian City: Everyday Life In Dickens' London' by Judith Flanders (2012) there is a reference to meetings which were 'given over to Harmonics', also known as 'free-and-easies' when men (not women) across the social spectrum met for drinking and singing.)

25 November: Mr G Carter was elected Trainer. The Hon Treasurer was instructed to send 10/- (£25) to the Benevolent Fund of the GFA, as injured players often had no income. This was the first of many references to donations given to those less fortunate - no sign of 'compassion fatigue', which one might well have expected after the war and contributions to charities were a feature of the men's and women's teams nationally.

In December Keynsham AFC decided to have a collection for a player, W Bond, fatally injured (!) in a match between EW Pratt and Co AFC and Mardon's Res., and 'a match for the Benefit of Mr H Southway' who had been injured when playing - he later received £4.5s.0d.

Also in December 1919 the Hon Sec *'was instructed to negotiate with Redland Park AFC'* about playing a match at Keynsham: terms to be £2 and also *'3rd Class railway fares for the team'*. The offer was declined



It is possible that the photo of Keynsham Ladies' football team is from the game played in mid-1920. This photo belongs to Andrea Westlake and is included with her kind permission. It shows the some of the women in their Keynsham striped shirts and with team mascots: a teddy and two dolls)

1920

April 1920 *'Great satisfaction was expressed with the good order maintained at the holiday matches despite the 'record' crowds that were present'.*

'An application for the use of the Ground for a Ladies' match to be played for the benefit of the late Mr J Lear's family was granted'.

22 April: The (Minor) Cup Final having resulted in a drawn game was to be replayed; by the May meeting the First XI had lost the replay but won the League (see below). The League and Cup medals were to be presented at a Concert on 12 June and a team photo to be arranged.



Keynsham A.F.C in their first season following WW1

At the first Annual Meeting in June 1920: 'the Hon Sec presented his report which showed that the season had been the best in every respect in the history of the game in Keynsham. The 1st team won the Championship of the Bristol and District League 3 Division and were 'Runners Up' for the Gloucestershire Minor Cup. The loyalty and conduct of the players was excellent and no complaint or fine of any description was recorded against the Club'.

July 1920: a letter from the Secretary of Keynsham Adult School which *'agreed to forego ownership of the Goal Posts if the Club would subscribe 10/- to their fund in aid of the 'Louth' disaster'* (in May 1920 in Louth, Lincolnshire, 23 people died in floods).

Also in July 1920 *'it was agreed that the Cup should be placed on view for a time at Mr Walt Carter's in High Street'*. The Hon Sec was instructed *'to write to the police expressing*

the thanks of members for their attendance at matches during the past season and their help in good order'.

August 1920: Season tickets to be issued '*Gents 10/6d, Ladies 7/6d*'. Decisions were made about: the Trainer's Outfit; repair and dressing of nets by Mr Shaw of Hanham Mills; preparation of balls by Mr EG Head (Trainer of 1st team); whitening and sawdust; a Pay-Box and the painting of goal posts. The dressing room was to continue to be at Mr Wilkins, High Street (tea rooms).

The Secretary was to arrange '*Holiday Fixtures with EW Pratt and Co for Xmas Day morning at Kingswood. A working party was arranged to put the playing pitch in decent condition, much damage having been done by the amusement vans etc. at the Flower Show*'.

Proceeds of a gate were to go to St Dunstan's Hostel for the Blind.

September 1920: '*Mr Payne (Keynsham Motor Co) attended and presented his case for the transport of teams*'. Messrs Bence and Son (of Longwell Green) were to state their terms, but Payne was chosen. It was agreed to canvass '*various gentlemen of the district for subscriptions*'. Keynsham Town Band had offered their services on the day of the Cup match on 23rd October 1920.

23 November 1920 '*A full enquiry was made into the incidents*' in a Reserve match. It was '*decided that J Harvey be expelled from the Club and his name be struck off the members' list*' and at a later date he and C Fisher were suspended for misconduct.

1921

January 1921: the '*Hon Sec was instructed to write to the League asking that Mr A Trotman should not be appointed to officiate in any future match in which either of our teams are engaged*'.

February *'Congratulations through Capt. E Cantle to the team on reaching the Glos Junior Cup Final to be played at Bristol City ground on April 23 1921'* ('Junior' did not mean young in this context). *'The Sec was to write to the GFA Sec for permission for a Benefit Match, the proceeds to be in aid of the Testimonial Fund being raised for the Hon Sec (Bert Cantle) in recognition of his services to the Club'*.

March *'Application from the Master of the C of E School for use of the ground for boys'* was agreed, for mid-week use only – and good order to be kept.

May: the team finished second in Division II and runners up in the Junior Cup Final.

July 1921 *'It is desired to place on record that a Presentation of a Clock and Cheque were made to the Hon Sec (Mr A C Cantle) in recognition of 25 years' service to the Club'*.

30 August: Mr A Tanner resigned as Vice-Captain and was wished *'every success in his connection with Bristol City AFC'*.

In the autumn of 1921 Messrs JS Fry and Son began operations on the 'Hams' and the football pitch had to be altered.

1922.

In February 1922 the Hon Sec Mr A.C. Cantle resigned for some reason and *'the committee decided to let the matter stand over'* but soon he was re-elected for 1922-23. The Club obtained *'Mr Ollis's Field in Avon Road for the season'* (*Gastons*).

17 August 1922: Special General Committee Meeting was held to discuss the position of the Hon Sec. *They 'passed a vote of confidence in him and expressed the hope that he will carry on amicably in conjunction with the Hon Treasurer (Mr P Taylor) as Minutes passed by the Annual Meeting'*. (After

years of working with Mr WS Whittington, who had been Hon Treasurer, perhaps Bert felt there was a problem with the change of official.)

September: there had been '*exceptional difficulties*' that season - perhaps financial, as there was a '*balance due to the Treasurer*'.

October 1922: '*It was decided to hold a Free and easy 'Smoker' at the Lamb and Lark Hotel on 9th December*'.

There the Minute Book ends.

Some People Have All The Luck By Brian Vowles

In the Western Daily Press on Wednesday 1st May 1907 it was reported that...

"Yesterday morning Dr Charles Harrison was driving in Charlton Road, Keynsham when a wagonette, in which were Misses Anderson and a coachman from Queen Charlton, approached. One of the electric wires overhead broke and fell upon the wagonette horse causing it to become restive and to fall damaging the wagonette and throwing Misses Anderson and the coachman out. The horse got clear of the wire and dashed into Dr Harrison's trap. The horse attached to the latter bolted throwing the doctor and the coachman out.

The latter was thrown right over the hedge and fell upon a beehive upsetting it. The swarm of bees attacked him and he was stung severely and he had to be taken home. Both ladies were considerably shaken but not seriously hurt and the doctor was able to walk home and subsequently continue his round.

A man passing by endeavouring to clear away the wire sustained a severe shock."

The Record under the Stairs by Brian Vowles



The Renshaw Family on a pre-war trip to the seaside.

Mr & Mrs Renshaw with their two sons, Derek on the left and the author of the raids record, Brian on the right.

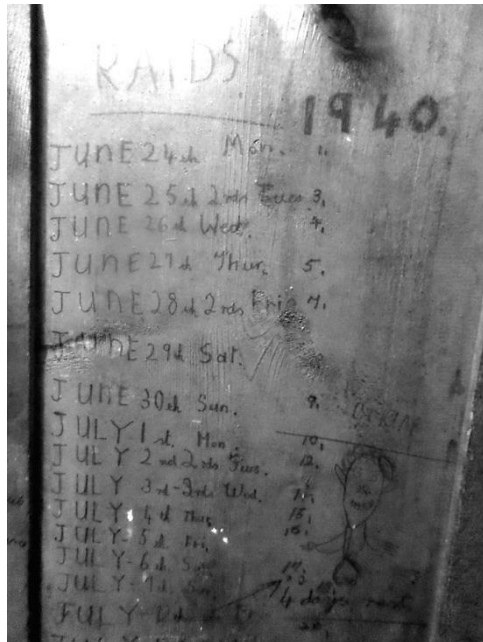
(Photo courtesy of Mrs A Hider)

On the inside of the cupboard wall under the stairs at 61 Rock Road there remains a unique pencilled record of the many air raids experienced over Keynsham during 1940. They were put there by a young lad by the name of Brian Renshaw. He had been born in the house and during the early war years he attended the local junior school on Bath Hill. Whenever the sirens went the pupils ran through a gate into what is now the Memorial Park and on down to allocated areas on the river bank to shelter. However it was then decided that if they lived within half a mile of the school they could, with parents' permission, run home taking with them another pupil who lived further away. Before the family acquired a Morrison shelter,

Brian's and his school friends' place of refuge was this cupboard and during the time spent in there the walls became covered with what is now a very special record of the events of those times.

RAIDS 1940

- June 24th Mon 1
- June 25th 2 rds Tues 3
- June 26th Wed 4
- June 27th Thurs 5
- June 28th 2 rds Fri 7
- June 29th Sat
- June 30th Sun. 9
- July 1st Mon 10
- July 2nd 2 rds Tues 12
- July 3rd 3 rds Wed 14
- July 4th Thursday 15
- July 5th Fri Bed put in cupboard
- July 6th Sat 17
- July 7th Sun 4 days rest
- July 12th 20
- July 13th 3 rds Sat 23
- July 14th Sun 4 rds 29



A section of the cupboard wall with the recorded dates.

Apart from the air raid dates there are other notes such as ...*“second prize winner for saying a little bee sat on a wall said buzz and that was all (when I was three years old)”*

Brian's brother Derek, who was four years his senior and to whom he was devoted, had been a member of the 1st

Keynsham Scout Troop and in the early days of the war had acted as a messenger for the local civil defence force. He joined the Royal Navy and after his initial training on the Isle of Man in 1941 he was posted to the battleship HMS Anson which had the dangerous role of escorting convoys to Russia on the Arctic route. Often there would form an eight inch covering of ice on the guns that had to be chipped away by hand. Sadly, as a result of his experiences Derek developed a stomach complaint and entered the hospital at Aultbea on the shores of Loch Ewe in Scotland.

On 12th September 1943 a yellow telegram was delivered to the front door of the house informing the family that Derek had died. Stunned, Brian added the details to his cupboard wall...

“September 12th 1924. Died fromwar service in RN after Russian Convoy.....19 birthday at Aultbea hospitaljoined RN age 16½September 12 1943served with Sir Bruce Frazer who became 1st Lord of the Admiralty.”

With his parents' permission Derek was buried at sea and a finely carved oak lectern was presented to the Victoria Methodist Church in his memory. His sister Dianne, the only surviving child of Violet and Arthur Renshaw, was 4 years old when Derek died and her memory of him is the roughness of his uniform material as he carried her up the stairs to bed.

More than 66,000 British sailors and merchant seamen braved sub-zero temperatures and ran the gauntlet of German warplanes and U-boats to keep the Soviet Union supplied on the Eastern Front. Until recently no specific medal had been awarded for service in that campaign but in 2012 came the announcement by the Prime Minister that these awards should be made in recognition of the great bravery of those who contributed to this very significant campaign of World War Two.



A seaman operating a signal lamp whilst risking frostbite on an arctic
convoy

Following this Diane applied this year for the “Arctic Star” on behalf of Derek.

Brian was to add some other subsequent details such as that of his father’s death and when he visited the house fifty years later, his attention was drawn to the under-stair cupboard which had been converted into a toilet. He was amazed that there, still clearly visible were the pencilled records from so long ago. The present owner had been reluctant to see this little piece of history disappear and had decided to preserve the pencil marks by covering them with a coat of varnish.

Brian died on 15th Dec 2011 and the poem he recited at the age of 3 and etched under the stairs in Rock Road, “*A little bee...*” was recited at his funeral service at the request of his grandchildren.

A description of the raids of 1940 was given in our 2007 Journal in an article written by Elizabeth White under the title “Keynsham in Wartime”.

Keynsham and its Scouts 1909-1974. By Allen (Bunny) Warren, member of the 1st Keynsham Scout Troop 1956-1971.

There can be few towns in the West that have changed more dramatically than Keynsham over the last hundred years. In 1910, it was scarcely more than a large village with a High Street of shops, residences, pubs and churches. By 2010 it was town of some 20,000 people living in large residential estates off Charlton and Chandag Roads, all funnelling into a centre, which has had two make-overs in the last fifty years. In between, it had been the centre of the Frys' chocolate factory. As a town it remains poised sometimes uneasily between its powerful neighbours, Bristol and Bath.



In 1928 a tree was planted at the new premises by Lord Strachey

One continuous community presence has been the Scout and Guide movements, situated firmly since 1928 in the

centre of the town and in a small green oasis behind George Ashton Way.

Now one of the largest Scout Groups in the country with over 200 young members and as many leaders, parents and supporters, it is an important part of Keynsham's present identity.

The Scout and Guide movements are one of the very few non-governmental voluntary organisations [the Red Cross would be another] that are at the same time global, national and highly local. Founded by Robert Baden-Powell in 1908, following the publication of his 'best seller', Scouting for Boys, there have been Scouts in Keynsham since 1909 at the latest. At first groups of boys met informally but soon acquired a Scoutmaster with a programme of camping, outdoor activities and training. Scouts provided youthful civilian service during the Great War and met in three different locations until the late 1920s.



The troop pictured in front of their wooden hut in 1936

In 1928, however, they acquired a new leader, Vivian Turner, who had recently moved to Keynsham to a house with an extensive garden to the rear of the High Street. Already an experienced Scout leader in Bishopston, he brought a whole new energy to the Group and provided the site for its first permanent headquarters. Over the next twenty years he gradually built up his property, so that a new headquarters could eventually be built on the site the group presently occupies in 1958.



Vivian Turner



Keynsham Scouts with their old trek cart at the 1932 Jamboree

More significantly, Vivian Turner remained the dominating presence in the group until his death in 1949. A pattern of annual programmes with camping at its centre was established beginning at Easter, involving attendance at a Somerset Jamboree each Whitsun and with a week's summer camp every year, usually situated in west Somerset and Devon. More remarkable was the fact that he led this activity from the early 1930s from a wheel-chair, having contracted polio. In Keynsham, the programme included regular church parades, carol singing to the elderly residents of the former workhouse, Group pantomimes and again civilian war service during the Second World War. Former Scouts, including those still active as Rover Scouts, served in both wars with distinction with one at least being awarded the Croix de Guerre.

On Vivian Turner's death, there was inevitably a period of uncertainty out of which the second of the three dominating leaders of the Group, Tom Tookey, emerged. A practical engineer with Bristol Commercial Vehicles, he had spent much of his own adolescence, hiking and camping in and around the Chew Valley; he was countryman by desire, living on the Wellsway. More than that, he was to the boys in his troop larger than life with a robust humour, practical skills in woodworking, evidence of which found in churches around the area, and an enthusiasm for his own rendering of Gilbert and Sullivan.

But as always, the Group was short of leaders. Tom had one Assistant, Peter Woolcott [Beefy], himself larger than life, whose skills in pioneering, ropes and spars, backwoods cooking, appealed to the imagination and wonder of the scouts, both at home and at camp.



Sheila Jones

In addition, there was a single Cub mistress, Sheila Jones, who worked at Fry's and was a keen hockey player and referee. In total, the three contributed over one hundred years of very active service to Keynsham Scouts.



1st Keynsham Scout Troop Summer Camp, Thorverton Devon 1957.

Included are in the back row left to right - Skipper Tom Tookey, Norman (Joe Soap) Pope, Barry Williams, Keith White, journal editor Brian Vowles, Ian Newman 'Beefy' Woolcott, Roger Reed, Ken Ball & Brian Frith. In front of Ken Ball is one of our photo archivists, Don Ogg and holding the sign - Donald Balcombe and the author of this piece, Allen 'Bunny' Warren

By the early nineteen sixties, Keynsham was expanding rapidly and the Group needed to grow or for separate Groups to be set up. Here the legacy of Vivian Turner was critical through his leaving the whole of his property, which also included what is now the adjacent car park on Ashton Way to the Keynsham Group. The moment also brought the man, Ron Duggan (Dixie), the third of the three remarkable men, who created the modern Keynsham Scout Group as a single 'super group' as it was known.

Dixie had learned his Scouting in Bedminster before and during the early part of the war, winning a gallantry award in leading the Scout rescue organisation, pulling people from their houses during the Blitz. Later in the navy, he had set up a Deep Sea Rover Crew on the aircraft carrier, *Indefatigable*. Also employed by Bristol Commercial Vehicles [he became Finance Director], Tom persuaded him to join 1st Keynsham. For the next thirty years as Group Scout Master and District Commissioner the two men dominated Scouting in the Chew Valley, joined by Dixie's wonderful wife, Dorothy.

If Vivian Turner was the visionary, Tom Tookey the practical man, then Dixie was the planner. He saw the benefits of having a single multi-unit Group serving the whole Keynsham community and he saw the value of Turner's legacy. Consequently, he secured the Group's present location, while agreeing to collaborate with the Town Council in helping it provide services for its citizens through sale of a portion of the inheritance. With the proceeds, the Group bought a green field site at Chelwood as a training centre and camping ground for the Group and other Scouts, Guides and community organisations to use.

1st Keynsham celebrated its centenary at the centre of the community in 2009 and many former members and leaders attended a re-union and brought their memories and their memorabilia. I attended that event, having been a Scout and a Leader in the Group from 1956 until 1971 and continuing an informal connection for another twenty years.

Having now retired from my career as a university teacher and historian, I suggested to Ian Carter and the present leadership that we might try to put together a history of the Group and also create a living archive of memories of the Group from among its former members. We are scoping the project at present.

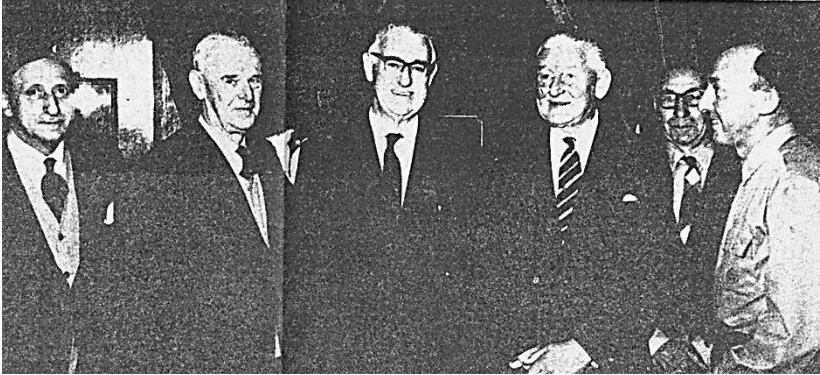
If in reading this article, some memories are stirred or you wish to show it to others, please do so as we would like your help. Families preserve memories and memorabilia long after the person has died, as we have seen in relation to the anniversary of 1914. They are the way in which we can recapture the experiences of all those young members at the beginning of their lives over the last century in Keynsham and beyond.

So if you have things that might help this project do contact either me by email - allenwarren01@btinternet.com or Ian Carter at scouts@1stkeynshamscouts.org.uk



About the author by Brian Vowles...

Dr Allen Warren (Provost of Vanbrugh College, University of York 1984-2008) joined the 1st Keynsham Scout Troop in 1956. When he retired as Provost he had been at the helm of the College for over half of its years. Dr Allen has been involved in student and youth communities through his life. At the age of sixteen he became a voluntary youth worker through the Scout movement and he received an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honour's List in 2011 for his services to higher education.



On 26th November 1969 a reunion of former members of the troop celebrated the sixtieth anniversary of its founding. L to R. – Messrs Down, Harrison, Godwin, Martin (a founding member in 1909), Down and the scout leader at the time, ‘Dixie’ Duggan. (photo- S.G.Reeve)



Forty years later, on Saturday 7th November 2009 the Keynsham scouts celebrated the 100 anniversary of their foundation with an open day and a display of photographs from their past. A reunion of former members of the troop included left to right. - Mike Broom, Ray Newman, Donald Ogg, Allen (Bunny) Warren, Hugh Elford, John Cooper and Donald Balcombe.

The Horse Thieves of Keynsham

A story of some 19thC ‘faux pas’ by Brian Vowles.

Recently, whilst researching a different matter, I came across a newspaper cutting from the Bristol Mirror printed on Saturday 28th August 1819 which reported that ...

“A gang of notorious thieves from Keynsham, were on Monday last taken into custody at Plymouth Dock for uttering seven 5L(£) forged Bank of England notes and stealing several horses, eight of which they had with them having stolen them from Keynsham and the neighbourhood a few months ago. They had sold a great number of horses at Exeter and Plymouth. Their names are Samuel and John Faux, William and Daniel Sweet, an uncle and three nephews. They are all committed to Exeter Gaol. The Public are greatly indebted to the inspired exertions of a respectable Gentleman of Keynsham (Mr Palmer, surgeon) for the apprehension of this knot of daring offenders.”

Then on Monday 27th March 1820 the Bristol Mercury announced the result of a trial held during the Devon Lent Assizes held at Exeter between 13th -21st March 1820.

“John Faux was convicted and left for execution ; George Faux, and Samuel Brimble, were sentenced to be transported for life; Samuel Faux, William Sweet, and Daniel Sweete, to be transported for fourteen years, — all for horse-stealing and passing forged notes. Our Readers will recollect that this notorious gang (who were from Keynsham near this city, whence they had stolen several horses) were apprehended at Plymouth in August last, through the spirited exertions of Mr. Palmer, surgeon, of Keynsham”.

Who were these criminals who had brought shame on the fair name of Keynsham? My curiosity aroused I pressed on with the task of discovering some of the facts behind this story.

It appears that the dedicated sleuth Mr Palmer had already suffered the loss of two valuable horses stolen with others from the surrounding areas by members of the notorious “Cock Road Gang” in 1815. These villains (mainly colliers) terrorized the parishes of Bitton and Kingswood at the end of the eighteenth century and they demanded annual protection money, with payment of half a guinea and sometimes five shillings, paid annually at the Lansdown Fair, (according to local newspapers). When one of the alleged gang members, Isaac Cribb, was apprehended in 1815 the gang stormed the Lock-Up in Bitton High Street to try to free him, and two constables, Moses Batt and Charles Bull were forced to barricade the Lock-Up before they were rescued by a posse of constables from Bristol!

The surgeon had helped to track down two of the horse thieves to Liverpool where they were arrested in February 1815 having sold animals to the value of £700. Information on the gang had been obtained by sending out handbills offering a reward and the culprits were later tried at the Lancashire Assizes. Presumably Mr Palmer had employed the same means to locate the Fauxs at Plymouth.

Although John Faux was sentenced to be hanged for the theft of a bay gelding, his death sentence was commuted to transportation for life (fourteen years). However the inhabitants of Keynsham must have been so terrorised by the gang that they sent a letter to the Home Secretary urging that his sentence not be reduced, and that any petition for clemency be ignored. They listed a catalogue of offences, and feared reprisals if he were to be released. Certainly a letter, written by John and his partner (from on board one of the prison hulks on the Thames), to the man who brought the prosecution (presumably the public spirited Mr Palmer), threatened violence against him if the men ever got the chance. The tone

of this second letter was extremely aggressive, and was not for the faint-hearted!

As mentioned all these villains were inter-related in some way. There is evidence that members of the Faux family were living in Keynsham by the end of the 17thC and the name may have Huguenot origins. The **John Faux** mentioned had been baptised on 3rd April 1797 at St John the Baptist Church, Keynsham, the illegitimate son of a Christian Faux. As he was also known by his alias of John Gregory, it's possible that his father was a Gregory (a known name in Keynsham at the time) and John Gregory b. 1774 looks to be a likely candidate.

George Faux was baptised on 26th October 1800 also at St John's, the son of William Faux and Ann Clee. His father may have been a collier and George was the fifth of nine children born to the family.

Of **Samuel Brimble** we know little of his origins but **Samuel Faux** was baptised on 24th October 1779 again at St John's. Samuel, Joseph, and John, sons of William Faux and Anne Rumsey, were all baptised on that same date. The family has other known instances of late baptisms, so his actual birth date is uncertain. Samuel Faux was known to have been the uncle of George Faux (who is believed to be the son of William Faux, Samuel's brother).

William Sweet was baptised on 30th June 1797. He was the son of John Sweet, b. 1772, and Elizabeth Faux the sister of Samuel and a cousin of George as was his brother **Daniel Sweet** who was baptised on 24th November 1799 also at St John's.

Transportation had been applied as a punishment for both major and petty crimes since the seventeenth century and from the 1800s to the 1853 abolition of penal transportation Van Diemen's Land, or Tasmania as it was later known, was the primary penal colony in Australia.

Following the suspension of transportation to New South Wales, all transported convicts were sent to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) and in total some 75,000 convicts were transported there - or about 40% of all convicts sent to Australia. This was to be the fate of the gang.

Male convicts served their sentences as assigned labour to free settlers or in gangs assigned to public works. Only the most difficult convicts (mostly re-offenders) were sent to the Tasman Peninsula prison known as Port Arthur. Female convicts were assigned as servants in free settler households or sent to a female factory (women's work prison). There were five female factories in Van Diemen's Land.

Convicts completing their sentences or earning their ticket-of-leave often promptly left Van Diemen's Land although many settled in the new free colony of Victoria, to the dismay of the free settlers in towns such as Melbourne. The inhuman practice of transportation to Van Diemen's Land was finally abolished in 1853 and the country renamed Tasmania on 1 January 1856.

But **John Faux** was granted clemency; his sentence amended to transportation and he arrived in Van Diemen's Land on 28 December 1820 on the ship Juliana.

Confusingly John Faux was known in Australia as John Gregory and his convict record still exists in the Tasmanian Archives...

Name: John Gregory als. Faux, Where convicted: Devon Assizes, When: 13 March 1820 Sentence: Fourteen Years, Native Place: Melksham, Wiltshire (?), Trade: Stone Mason and ???, Age: 23, Height: 5' 2¼, Eyes: Light Grey, Hair: Brown.

Whilst serving his time his conduct was good with only minor blemishes. On Sunday 22 June 1822 he was absent all

day and was punished with fourteen days extra labour but on 21 August in the following year the same punishment was increased to a whole month for being out after hours. John Gregory married Ann Whelan on 25 August 1828 in Hobart. According to his convict conduct record his conditional pardon, number 239, was issued on 1 September 1831. However there is a discrepancy between John's conduct record and the following Government Notice issued by the Hobart Town Courier on Friday 19 April 1833 - perhaps he re-offended after receiving his conditional pardon for the first time:

“GOVERNMENT NOTICE, No. 105, Colonial Secretary's Office, April 15, 1833.

The Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to direct, that the names of those individuals who have received either absolute or conditional remissions of their sentences, and of which His Majesty's allowance has been signified, be published for general information. The parties will therefore immediately apply to this office (or to that of a Police Magistrate in the interior, who will make the necessary application for them) in order that the instruments of pardon may be issued:

Conditional Pardons. John Gregory alias Faux.”

It is not clear whether he is also the person referred to later in many of the British national papers when a John Faux and his brother George who had also returned (if they were the same individuals) were still capable of violence. They appeared at the Temple Cloud Petty Sessions the Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette reported on Thursday 9th April 1857...

“George Faux and John Faux, (the last person being a ticket-of-leave man just returned, so he said, for good conduct after eight years servitude), were remanded to Shepton Mallet Gaol charged with feloniously assaulting Henry Jones, a police constable, on the morning of the 28th day of March, with intent

to murder him. It appeared from the evidence of Jones, that between 12 and 1 o'clock in the night of the 27th of March last, he passed two men at the cross roads at Denny, in the parish of Chew Magna, when one of them said "good night", and before he could make any reply he received a violent blow in the back of the head which felled him to the ground; being only partially insensible the other prisoner, George Faux, kicked him violently with thick nailed boots, whilst the other stabbed him twice in the side, as he lay on the ground, with some sharp instrument. They then went away – one saying to the other, "Which of them was it, was it that Webb?" The policeman is unable to do duty at present. From the description given, Policeman Webb, of Chew Magna, apprehended the two prisoners the next morning and upon the prisoner John Faux he found a large clasp knife which exactly fitted the holes cut in Jones's coat. There is no doubt but they were waylaying Webb whose beat lay that way, and mistook their man."

What the outcome was of this incident is not clear although it does beg the question about John's 'recent' return from Australia as twenty six years had elapsed since his previous sentence had been completed at the end of 1831 and they would have been 59 and 57 respectively at the time of this latest offence.

George Faux had been recorded as 'Foulkes' when he arrived on the Juliana in December 1820. Then his conduct was classed as "*Good*" and he stated that his father and mother lived at Keynsham. He was 5'9" with a scar on his right thumb. By 1826 he had acquired a wife by the name of Sarah and on 29 November she was "*bound over to keep the peace and be of good behaviour for three months for being present at an affray and aiding and assisting*". A few months later on 12 January 1827 he was charged with assisting his wife in stealing a pound note from a David Dunkley and ominously "*disciplined*". On

28 August 1827 he was charged with “*disobedience of an order and neglect of duty*” and for this he was to be “*transported to such part of His Majesty’s settlement as His Honour the Lieutenant Governor may think proper for the term of three years*”.

On 10 February 1828 he aided his wife in an assault against a William Wheeler for which he was again disciplined. Then on 23 July 1828, with his wife and William Whitehead (Sweet), he took part in the same felony from the warehouse mentioned below when they stole 11lb of tobacco and other articles but was discharged. He was also discharged a fortnight later when he was accused of taking vegetables out of the government garden without permission on 5 August.

No further disciplinary problems arose until 24 March 1830 when he was “*charged on the oaths of Robert Wallace Murdoch and William Raven on suspicion of stealing three bullocks the property of Mr Murdoch*”. Fortunately for George the complaint was dismissed and his sentenced ended on 7 April 1834 when presumably he returned to England. Whether his wife accompanied him is unknown but a Sarah Faux was certainly buried at St Andrew’s, Chew Stoke on 18 June 1864 aged 58.

The Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette, printed on Thursday 12 April 1849, reported that a James Faux and George Faux were tried on charges of “*burglariously breaking the dwelling-house of George Stock and stealing two coats and other articles; also breaking a building within the curtilage of a dwelling-house and stealing two pairs of stockings, the property of John Slocombe*”. The outcome of the trial was that James Faux was acquitted but George was sentenced to ten years transportation. Whether this was commuted is not clear as there is no one by that name appearing in the transportation records for that period. However when on 28 March 1857 he

was arrested for the same offence as John Faux (Gregory) as related above, one account mentions that George was also a returned convict so had he been transported under a different alias and returned after the system had been abolished in 1853?

At the Devon Lent Assizes of 1820, 18 year-old **Samuel Brimble** was committed by S.F. Milford, charged with *“stealing a brown mare, the property of John Press and charged with stealing a horse, the property of Thomas Hunt”*.

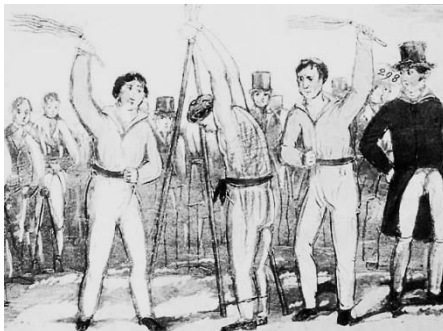
His original sentence was death but this was also later commuted to transportation on the Juliana with other members of the gang. Upon arrival in Van Dieman’s Land he stated that he had a brother in High Littleton. Although his conduct in the Exeter prison and on the hulk moored in the Thames had been good, on 20 February 1823 he *“disobeyed an order, neglected his duty and displayed insolence”*. For that he was given 25 lashes. He then appears to have behaved himself as he was given his conditional pardon on 24 March 1832.

Samuel Faux’s fate is unclear as there is no entry in either the prison records of Tasmania or New South Wales although he may have used an unrecorded alias.

William Sweet had a very chequered history. At the age of 21 under his alias of Whitehead he had been sentenced along with his brother Daniel for stealing three horses although his prison record states he had been transported for having a forged note in his possession.

His previous conduct had been classed as *“orderly”* but things soon changed in Van Diemen’s Land. On 5 February 1821 he was given 25 lashes for the neglect of duty and the disobedience of his master, a Mr Frederick Langloh. This was followed by a repeat of the same offences for which he was awarded 50 lashes and a further 50 lashes were bestowed upon him when he was charged with repeated drunkenness and absence from his master on 5 July 1821. He was then returned

to Port Arthur where he was allotted to the prison barracks 1st Class (in a hut of 20 men). On 23 November 1824 he frequently “*decoyed*” Catherine Harrop, Mr Dunning’s servant, from her master’s premises and was returned to barracks



(for this offence Catharine was given the punishment of one week on bread and water in the factory). When on 22 September he again disobeyed his master’s orders he was sent to the chain gang labouring in Hobart Town for six months.

As mentioned above, on 23 July 1828 William was committed for trial, along with his cousin George and his wife, charged with stealing from the warehouse of William Maycock in Hobart Town 1lb of tobacco, a waistcoat valued at 15s, one pair of trousers (18s) and a yellow silk handkerchief (7s) the property of William Wynne. However the verdict and punishment for this is not recorded. On 31 October 1831 he was found gambling at the Joiner’s Arms after 9 o’clock but in consideration of his previous good conduct(?) he was given a mere seven days on the treadmill.

He had married the young lady he had “*decoyed*”, Catherine Harrop on 5 March 1827 in Hobart but this doesn’t appear to have brought marital bliss as the “*demon drink*” increasingly afflicted her. On 6 January 1830 she was discovered drunk on the streets after hours - an event that reoccurred on 1 March 1832. On 17 March 1832 William was charged with violently assaulting and cruelly beating his alcoholic wife and as a result he was sent to join the Notman’s Road working party for three months and afterwards sent to the

other side of the island, his wife "*keeping a disorderly house*". Fortunately he was cleared of stealing a silver watch costing £3 from Edward Smith on 17 December 1832 as he was close to completing his sentence. He subsequently chose to stay in Australia and, according to his death certificate, moved about 1836 to Richmond, a town in New South Wales, north-west of Sydney to join his younger brother Daniel who had served his sentence there. In these more stable conditions he and his common-law wife Ann Honeysett raised nine children there before his death on 31 March 1869 aged 72 when he was referred to as 'a pioneer' and a member of the Methodist Church.

His 19 year-old brother **Daniel Sweet** was separated from the group and sent to Australia on a different transport, the Hebe, to serve a sentence of fourteen years. His departure date was 27 July, 1820 and he arrived in New South Wales on 30th December 1820 and appears in the colony on 27 March, 1821. Details of his time in the penal colony are sparse but at the end of his sentence, when he was given his certificate of freedom in 1834, he elected to stay in Australia having married Sarah Cooney, a widow at St Peter's, Richmond, N.S.W. on 30 January 1832. Sarah, who had been born in about 1790 in County Antrim, Ireland, had been previously married to a Thomas Mason who had died in 1829. In the 1841 census the couple are to be found living at Richmond, Ham Common, County Cumberland in the district of Windsor. Together they had three children before Daniel died on 2 June 1854 and was buried three days later aged 55.

So it does appear that in spite of the inhuman treatment experienced by transported prisoners, the new settlements in Australia did provide opportunities for some to start afresh and ultimately achieve a prosperity and respectability that would have been unattainable back in their Keynsham homeland.