Welcome to the PLHS Winter newsletter 2016.

We are pleased to announce our new programme of events for 2017!

Since the last newsletter we have exhibited our first public display and have begun to undertake indexing projects as a society. This year has also seen the publication of ‘Prestbury Past & Present’ Vol. 1 which has proved to be a great success. We hope to develop this into a series of similar volumes, each looking at a different aspect or period of Prestbury’s history.

In September the society hosted a successful display and guided walk for the Heritage Open days and our village history quiz night at the end of the month was an enjoyable evening. In October and November we learned about Prestbury’s early open field system, the village’s place in WWI history and the Parish’s connections to the Pittville Estate. In the coming months we will be adding research resources to the PLHS website and continuing to develop our archive.

We look forward to seeing you in 2017 for an exciting new programme of talks and events. Please get in touch if you have any comments.
Heritage Open Days 2016

The society supplied a display for the Heritage Open Day event at the United Reformed Church in Deep Street.

Rebecca & Michelle at the United Reform Church, Deep Street

PLHS joins local HOD events...

This year the society had a presence at the programme of Heritage Open Days.

A popular history walk *The Prestbury you didn’t know* was lead by Roger Beacham and a display of *Prestbury in Pictures* was exhibited at the United Reformed Church by Rebecca & Michelle.

The events provided a good opportunity to promote the society and facilitated some interesting conversations and reminiscences with local people.
Quiz Night & History Walk

Throughout the year we try to supplement our regular talks and presentations with events and activities.

This year we hosted our regular Prestbury history picture quiz at the end of September. I think all would agree that it was an enjoyable evening and a good opportunity to get to know other members and share memories and local knowledge over a glass of wine or a cup of tea.

In June we trialled a new History Walk, which was lead by David Jones. This had a great turn out and introduced us to a different part of the Parish. The routes started from the old crossroads by the church (and original location of the village stocks) across the fields to Southam and back past the moated manor and the racecourse.
New programme announced!

2017
TALKS & EVENTS

January 23rd
History of Winchcombe
Carol Harris

February 27th
Prestbury’s Military Connections
Tony Noel

March 27th
AGM & talk ‘A Trip to Southam Delabere 1879’
Michael Cole

April 24th
Prestbury Manor Court Rolls
Norman Baker

May 22nd
Prestbury’s Stables & Jockeys
Val Porter

June 26th
Prestbury History Walk
(Booking essential)

September 25th
Social Evening
Prestbury History Quiz & Refreshments

October 23rd
Prestbury School
Rebecca Sillence

November 27th
Talk by Michelle Rees
TBC

Meetings are held at 7:30pm in the WI Hall unless otherwise stated.
Upper Hill Farm

The farmstead lies a little east of the straight road, which runs along the crest of the hill to the pylons and the Common. It is only visible from Cleeve Common.

The name is at the road entrance to the farm with the information that Bed & Breakfast is provided. The farmstead was built in the late 18th century and was the base of an active farm until recent years. It was owned by the De la Bere family and farmed by tenants.

In 1931 Bill Barrett became the tenant farmer and was eventually succeeded in the tenancy by his son Patrick. I am indebted to Patrick for information and for the photographs. Patrick spent the first fifty years of his life at Upper Hill Farm and only left in 1991 when forced to do so by the sale of the farm by the De La Bere family over the tenants heads though Patrick had himself tried to buy it.

The position of the farm on the hilltop means that, like its aptly named neighbour Drypool Farm, water supply used to be a real problem. Until 1927 water was fetched daily by horse and cart from the nearest spring which was some way down the hill at Lower Hill Farm. The farm was never a dairy farm as the water quality was never of high enough standard. Electricity was a problem too but was solved by the introduction of a generator to enable them to provide their own supply. It was a great advantage in 1974 when for a time Cheltenham was in darkness!

The following photographs show Bill Barrett broadcasting seed. For many centuries seed was broadcast by hand but by the 1930s the long seed broadcaster was developed which could be operated by man or pulled by horses.
The second photograph shows Patrick (and his dog) driving the tractor with Bill sitting on the bonnet ‘playing the fiddle’! The fiddle was another seed broadcasting device enabling the user to operate the bow to spread the seed widely.

Wilhelm was at the farm until repatriation in about 1948 and Patrick has stayed in touch with him and subsequently with Wilhelm’s son. They have been able to pay reciprocal visits over the years.

In the background of the photograph is a piece of agricultural machinery of the immediate post war years. On the left is the tractor (a 1939 Marshall M, which would now be worth well over £30,000!) and on the right the threshing
machine, supplied by J R Birt & Sons, Contractors, of Prestbury. The thresher was powered by a belt drive from the tractor. The harvest was fed in by hand by the farm workers and churned out sacks of grain and bales of hay. Patrick still keeps and shows a restored 1964 Fordson Super Major tractor.

Ploughing the old fashioned way. Bill Barrett with shire horses.

*Norman Baker*

**Donations for our Archive**

We welcome all items of local interest: Photographs, letters, diaries, postcards, illustrations, newspaper cuttings, documents or anything else relating to life in the village including local buildings, people & businesses.
This pen and ink drawing appeared in the 1902 Chronicle & Graphic. It shows a view from Lower Mill towards the Priory and St Mary’s church.

“…it (Prestbury) well deserves the attention of the excursive traveller, owing to the romantic beauty of its situation, and the almost unequalled prospect it commands of the neighbouring country.”

– The Gentleman’s Magazine 1824

For the full article about Prestbury published in the Gentleman’s Magazine 1824 visit:

https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=MBREAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA577&lpg=PA577&dq=prestbiry+gentlemans+magazine&source=bl&ots=IMewcCUE-6&sig=CdVjB48ED71IoJjexSp80QWYsitI&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiN05bhyJbRAhWDNFAKHWNjAykQ6AEI

MDAD#v=onepage&q=prestbiry%20gentlemans%20magazine&f=false
Another well-known image of Prestbury is this lithographic print by local artist George Rowe. Original print held at Cheltenham Library. It is interesting to note the large crack to the tower and the clear view of the Priory.

A series of illustrated postcards were produced in the 1930s including this charming pencil sketch of Crossways by Frederic A. Barribal.

Rebecca Sillence
Prestbury Street Names:

Rather interestingly Prestbury’s street names have been getting rather a lot of airtime on Radio Gloucestershire including a recent appeal by Mark Cummings to discover the name origin of Bouncers Lane. Whilst there are many theories and no definitive answer I thought it may be of interest to share what I’ve discovered so far during my research.

Bouncers Lane is the oldest and original name for the street. The earliest document I’ve found with reference to it is a land sale agreement from 1675.

In 1700 a reference is made to ‘Bouncers alias the Gallows Lane’ (I think there were gallows near Hewlett Road). Although this has been crossed out so may be an error.

Possible word origins are listed below, although I’d be interested to hear of any other suggestions from the linguists amongst us…

- **Bonne Soeur**: good sister or nun
- **Bon Sir**: ‘Good Sir’ (slang for the land owning class)
- **Bunce’s**: belonging to Bunce
- **Bouncehorn**: place name also found in Bisley, Gloucestershire
- **Bouncer’s**: belonging to Bounser or Bouncer
After the cemetery was opened in 1864 the road was renamed for a time Cemetery Road. The burial board felt that Bouncers Lane was "a very inappropriate name" for the road to the cemetery...

The name 'Bouncers Lane' disappears completely from street directories until 1926 but still remains on some OS maps. The road eventually reverted back to the much older name Bouncers Lane, as it continues to be known today.

Rebecca Sillence

PLHS Membership 2017
Membership can be renewed at the January meeting for the cost of £10 for twelve months. We are always pleased to welcome new members and guests throughout the year.
Prestbury Police House

This first hand account was written by Prestbury Policeman Leslie Lodge. Kindly provided by his grand daughter Christine.

There was no bathroom although we were well off as regards electric light, sanitary arrangements, water etc. My first application was for a bathroom and considering the house was built in 1896 and police officers had lived in it all the time, it was about time something was done about it and I had three boys.

It was now 1939 and war was imminent and that meant getting my special Constables list up to date and getting them fitted out with their appointments etc. There were about 14 Special Constables attached to my station. They were made up from all walks of life, rich men and poor men.

War was declared which entailed a lot of extra work, beside receiving Air Raid warnings and passing it on to other posts. A section of S.C.s reported for duty every night and they used my back kitchen for their room but it wasn’t long before I found them a room across the way where they could be on call and on their own which I think was better for all concerned.

I took charge of Prestbury on 1st January 1938 which had a population of about 6,000 and the building was developing very rapid. My station consisted of 3 bedrooms, sitting room at the front, a dining room cum guardroom and a fairly large back kitchen, which boasted a large stone built boiler and a range. I knocked the boiler down and installed a gas boiler.
Air Raid warnings were coming very frequent now and it is about time that I mentioned my wife because if ever a lady deserved a medal she did. All the time I was on duty she would take over duties at the Station for no reward or payment from the Police Force, which I think was very unfair.

When Bristol was being raided I was lent out with about 20 other officers from the County to give them help. I was there for 5 days and luck was with me there, as I caught a man looting and warehouse breaking. He was tried at Bristol Quarter Sessions, which meant I had 1 or 2 trips to Bristol. The man got a month and I got a Public thanks from the chairman of the Quarter Sessions and a commendation from my Chief Constable.

I returned home to my own station and resumed duty and very thankful I was too after the upheaval at Bristol and my wife having to take charge of the station during my absence.

It wasn’t long before I had to go to Bath to help out there where they too had been hit pretty bad, also to Filton for a couple of days where a bomb hit a shelter with about 120 persons in it. They were all killed. They were let lie where they had been killed and buried and I believe a memorial was erected over the spot.

Crime in Prestbury was not great and which I will not relate although it was very varied considering the size of the district which had grown to a large locality. 1000 houses was being built at Whaddon, 220 houses at Cleeve mount, 175 prefabs near Whaddon.

I had besides this growing population an American Army camp, an English Army camp and a German prisoner of war camp and an American coloured gun crew camp about 30 yards from the Station. I was now given another officer to be stationed with me to help me out and after the war was over a Police Station was installed at Whaddon and my man was eventually taken from me to be stationed at Whaddon under a Sergeant and 4 men but I remained at Prestbury.
I must not pass without relating a very funny incident involving my wife. One night about midnight I had a phone call from the General Hospital, Cheltenham, requesting me to inform 2 old spinster ladies in Shaw Green Lane that their father was dying and would they please come as soon as possible.

I was suffering with influenza at the time and my wife said she would like to go. I tried to dissuade her but she went and when she returned she informed me that the old ladies had told her that their father had been dead for years. The same name, but the relatives of the old man in hospital lived in another district, still we did not mind if we could help the Hospital.

It was about now that I had some funny incidents, at about 7pm one evening I was on duty and stood at the cross roads near the station and I saw a motor car coming towards me without lights and going no faster than walking pace. I thought I was seeing things but when it got to me I saw that its occupant was a Captain in the Army. I stopped him and he got out and he was very drunk. I eventually took him to the Central Station in Cheltenham where he was charged and brought before 2 magistrates the next morning. He was fined £20. His licence was not endorsed neither was it publicised in the paper nor the Army authorities informed. Just one of those things that are forgotten and his career was not jeopardised.

Different to the soldier who stole a motorcycle from Cheltenham, and who I found wheeling the machine on the Prestbury Road, to hospital and on his discharge I attended the Court Martial at Shepton Mallet. He ran away but I caught him in about 100 yards after jumping on the running board of Mr Wilson’s motor. I’m afraid he hurt himself in the face. He was taken He was punished with detention. Needless to say, that motorcycle was recovered before it was reported stolen, an other commendation, just luck.

In November 1946 I developed a varicose ulcer in my foot and I went to bed for 13 weeks. Anyhow the medical got it better and the next year I went to bed with another ulcer in my left foot, which means 12 weeks off. I got better of this and up to my ulcer trouble I had enjoyed good health. I had now got 27 years service in with the Police Force and the Rural District Council offered me a new house in one of the nicest parts of Prestbury (New Barn Lane) so I seized the opportunity knowing that opportunity only knocks once in many cases.

I made application to retire on pension, this was granted and I retired on pension at the age of 51 to become a clerk at the Cheltenham Echo Office a few days afterwards. Thus ended my career in the Police Force and strangely enough 2 pals, who I had joined with and retired 3 years after I did, they were like me overlooked in the promotion list, but I can honestly say I was never jealous of a man getting promotion but sometimes envious.
Mystery Manuscript...

I’ve recently acquired an unusual piece of old sheet music called *Prestbury* which includes a lovely old image of the cross roads by Fourways looking out from Lake Street.

The seller suggested it may have been from a 1930s Cotswold song book composed by Michael Head with lyrics by Dymolk poet John Drinkwater. It seems to have been No.13 in a series of short pieces named after Cotswold villages. Others included places like Painswick, Windrush, Stow on the Wold and Bibury.

It is very unusual to see a photographic print on piece of sheet music. Whilst I do play several instruments I’m afraid to confess that I don’t read music. I will be donating a copy of the mystery manuscript to the PLHS archives so if anyone more conventionally musical would like to try playing it I would be most interested to know what it sounds like!

Rebecca Sillence
Wishing all our members a Happy New Year! We look forward to seeing you all in 2017