



GLHA Chair's Report 2017-18

The Association is now in its seventh year, and as of 31st March 2018, had a membership of 52 local history groups, societies and organisations, two more than at the same time last year.

Since our last AGM, in June 2017, we have held three Members' Forums at Churchdown Community Centre. Each meeting included a presentation on a topic of general interest to members. In September, Kim Kenny, the 'For the Record' Project Officer at Gloucestershire Archives and Angela Williams of mosaic artists 'Tomatojack' talked about the new artworks being prepared for the Heritage Hub. In December, members of the Boaters Craft Group (part of the Friends of Gloucester Waterways Museum) talked about the lives of the narrow boat women, their children and their crafts, with a display of period costume and objects. In March, Joan Hughes of Churchdown Local History Society gave an illustrated talk on 'Churchdown: past, present and future'. Numbers attending the Forums have varied, but have averaged 26 people per meeting over the past year.

Each of our Forums also received reports on the Association's own activities, from Gloucestershire Archives and from the County History Trust, and we are grateful to Kate Maisey of the Archives and to David Aldred of the County History Trust for preparing and giving their reports.

The two major events in the Association's 2017-18 calendar were a Summer afternoon meeting and a Local History Day.

The Summer meeting on 24th June, which was attended by more than 60 people, was hosted by Tewkesbury Historical Society, to whom we are most grateful for an excellent programme of talks, displays and walking tours – plus, of course, a splendid afternoon tea – and we are looking forward to what I am sure will be an equally enjoyable afternoon in Cirencester on 23rd June this year.

Our Local History Day, on the subject of 'Between the Wars: Life in Gloucestershire 1919-1939', was held at Churchdown Community Centre on 28th April 2018, and I would like to record my thanks to the staff at the Centre for their help both before and on the Day. The event – which was generously funded by The Notgrove Trust - attracted around 150 people, and featured displays by nine of our member groups. The prize for the best display – judged by Chris Sullivan of the Forest of Dean Local History Society (the winner of the 2017 Local History Day 'best display'), Kate Maisey of Gloucestershire Archives and Dr Alan Crosby, one of the event's speakers - was awarded to the Nailsworth Society Local History Research Group. The Forest's 2017 winning display, on 'Gardens for Food, Fun and Flowers', will be shown at the new Heritage Hub this Summer, and Nailsworth's 2018 winning display will be shown there at some future date to be agreed.

The Local History Day also featured displays by Gloucestershire Archives, Gloucestershire County History Trust/VCH and the Gloucestershire Police Archives, plus bookstalls organised by The History Press and two of our member groups.

Talks were given by Dr Alan Crosby on 'The local history of inter-war England: themes and challenges', by Dr Toby Thacker on "'A few fatalities would have speeded things up": the outbreak of smallpox in Gloucester in 1923', and by David Eveleigh on 'Suburban Vernacular: housing and domestic style 1919-1939'.

The Association is most grateful to the Day's sponsor, to our three speakers, to all those groups who prepared displays, to the Award judges, and to all those individuals who helped during the day, including setting out tables and chairs, overseeing the car park, welcoming visitors and serving refreshments; special thanks are due to Sally Self for co-ordinating the refreshments, ably assisted by Louise Scriven, and to their many helpers, several of whom also provided home-made cakes.

The Local History Day was also the occasion on which the winner of the annual Bryan Jerrard Award for what the judges believe to be the best journal article on an aspect of Gloucestershire's history in the preceding year was announced. The 2017 Award was given to Carol Maxwell for her article on 'Painswick's Criminal Past' in *Painswick Chronicle*, with a 'runner up' award to Mary Atkins for her article on Clanna House at Alvington in *The New Regard* (the journal of the Forest of Dean Local History Society). We are most grateful to The History Press for once again funding book tokens for the winner and runner up, and we were delighted that Bryan Jerrard was there to present the Award. As always, I am grateful to my fellow Award judges, David Aldred and Mike Greet, for their input into the judging process.

Two evening events were organised for GLHA members last year – a repeat of Ray Wilson's evening walk around Sharpness Docks and a visit to the Jet Age Museum at Staverton, both of which were well attended. We are grateful to Ray for organising the walk, and look forward to his forthcoming walk to view some of the mills of the Painswick Valley on 30th July, bookings for which open this evening. On 21st August, we shall also be having an evening visit to the medieval St Bartholomew's church on Chosen Hill, as a 'follow up' to Joan Hughes' talk on the history of the village to our March Forum, details of which have now been circulated.

We are also grateful to Ray Wilson for maintaining and regularly updating our website, including the list of meetings being held by GLHA member groups, and I would urge all our members to submit their programme to Ray, in the format stated on the relevant page of the website, the next deadline for which is 1st September. Ray is also currently in the process of updating the list of Local History Speakers and the list of Visits and Tours offered by GLHA member groups and others. Now that we no longer produce a Newsletter, book reviews are included on the website. The intention is that, as far as possible, these reviews focus on publications by local societies, and we hope to add a number of new reviews shortly; if your group or society has recently published something – however modest –and you would like it reviewed, please do contact me (steven.blake@deltonglos.plus.com) and I will forward the details to one of other of our book reviewers.

Ray Wilson has also been continuing his work on the Gloucestershire Local History Documents website ('Glosdocs'), which will form a platform for GLHA member groups to post the results of their research, including, if they wish, their Local History Day displays. We plan in due course to organise a workshop to explore the new website's potential, but in the meantime you can find out more about glosdocs at <https://glosdocs.org.uk/about-glosdocs> and you can see all eleven projects on the pilot site by visiting https://glosdocs.org.uk/search-pages/search_api_fulltext=the.

One important topic that has concerned the Association and its Committee during the past year is how to comply with the new General Data Protection Regulation, which came into force on 25th May. In order to do so we have written a Privacy Notice, stating how we will handle the personal data we hold, which comprises the name and email address of up to three named contacts for each of our member groups. A copy of this has been sent to all our email contacts and has been posted on our website. Membership Renewal Forms for 2018-19 have now been sent and once named contacts for each of our member groups have been received, our Treasurer will be contacting them to obtain their consent to be emailed with information about our own activities and those of other local history and heritage organisations. The Association is grateful to Ray Wilson and to a number of our member groups who 'took the lead' in preparing their own Privacy and Consent notices, thereby providing possible models for both the Association and other groups to follow.

The Association continues to maintain a close relationship with Gloucestershire Archives, having a place on its Customer Focus Group, while one or more of our Committee members attends the regular meetings of the Stakeholders' Advisory Board for the new Heritage Hub, in which GLHA is a partner. We also regularly contribute to the Local History section of the quarterly Heritage Hub e-newsletter, which is an excellent opportunity for us to reach an increasingly wide audience, and we look forward to holding our Forums at the newly-opened Heritage Hub from September 2018 onwards.

I wish to end my report with a number of 'thank yous', in addition to those that I have already mentioned. I certainly wish to thank all those local history groups, societies and organisations who have shown their support for the Association by joining it and we are especially grateful to those who have made additional donations to the Association, and who are listed in the Treasurer's Report. I would also particularly like to thank Kate Maisey, who acts as our point of contact with Gloucestershire Archives.

I wish to thank Joan Hughes of Churchdown Local History Society for organising refreshments at each of our Forums, and Louise Scriven for baking cakes for our December meeting. Above all, I must thank my fellow Committee members for their hard work on behalf of the Association, and in particular our Secretary, Vicki Walker, and our Treasurer, David Scriven, both of whom undertake a considerable amount of work 'behind the scenes' throughout the year, and our two other Committee members - Janet Hudson, who deals with the many enquiries that we receive via our website, and Mary Sullivan. Under our Constitution, we should have at least six Committee members and we would certainly welcome volunteers to join us on the Committee. Our thanks are also due to Sue Brown, who acts as the Independent Examiner of our Accounts.

Finally, I must thank you all for attending our Forum meetings, and in particular this AGM, and I hope to see as many of you as possible at our future Forums.

Steven Blake
Chair, GLHA
?? June 2018