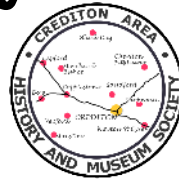


Crediton Area History & Museum Society



www.creditonhistory.org.uk



Members
and
Friends
Newsletter
September
2024

MID DEVON WALKING FESTIVAL : TWO LOCAL EVENTS

This September, Visit Mid Devon is running its first ever Walking Festival, featuring dozens of walks across the district.

CAHMS is pleased to be hosting two of those walks here in Crediton



An early photo of Crediton Station, when both gauges were being used. In the background is the footbridge with its long-gone roof.

On Sunday 15th September, John Heal will be leading the CREDITON RAILWAY SPECIAL : a short walk around local railway history. Starting on Platform 1 at Crediton's railway station, the walk will take in an historic signal box (still in operation), old station buildings and evidence of the "third rail" from the Broad Gauge era, with lots to say about the history of the railway in Crediton. This will be easy walking, totalling less than one mile.

Meet at 2:00pm at Crediton Station –

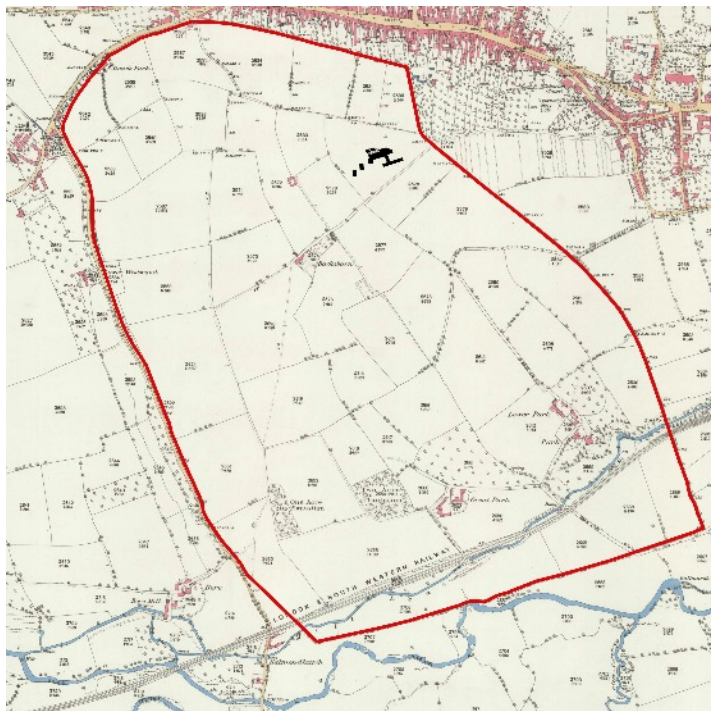
On Wednesday 25th September, Tony Gale will be leading a longer walk around The Bishop of Exeter's Deer Park at Crediton. This will be a three mile walk on the edge of Crediton, exploring a mediaeval deer park while walking our way through a 16th century map. It will be mainly on footpaths, but starting and finishing in the town. Hilly. Can be muddy in places after rain.

Lots of history (commentary by Walk Leader), lots of lovely views. There will be some steep climbs. Moderately challenging.

Start time 10:15am, meet at the Museum

Both walks are £5 per head. Book by email to credmus1743@gmail.com or at the museum.

You can find out more about all the events in the Mid Devon Walking Festival at <https://www.visitmiddevon.co.uk/walking-festival/>



The first edition Ordnance Survey 2500 scale map showing the extent of the Great Park.



THE ORIGINS OF BULLER ROAD

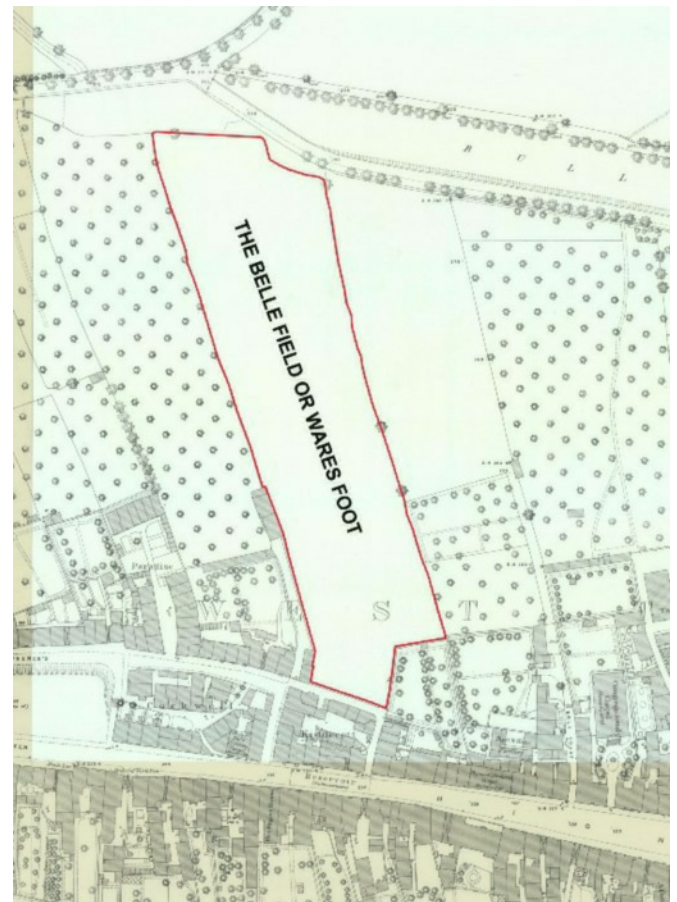
The creation of Buller Road began in 1920 when Ellen Camilla Drake of Winswood in Park Road - the same who had restored St Lawrence Chapel in memory of her late husband Henry (who died in 1913) - sold "The Belle Field" (otherwise known as Wares Foot) to Crediton Urban Council in September 1920.

During the next 2-3 years the Council constructed the new road, that would extend from Buller Park Road (renamed Peoples Park Road in 1932) to Kiddicott, located close to the eastern boundary of the Belle Field,

The council initially named the road Belle Field Road but by 1928 it had been renamed Buller Road. The council then proceeded to sell building plots - authorised by powers contained in the 1925 Housing Act, and we have documents relating to the sale of land on the east side of Buller Road, in December 1925 to Jack Park of 13 St. Lawrence Green, a commercial traveller working for Ernest Jacksons, for the sum of £25.

The 1925 Act consolidated enactments relating to the "Housing of the Working Classes in England and Wales", and the Buller Road houses were the first built in Crediton utilising the 1925 Act's powers.

But were they "working class" houses?



THE 1885 ORDNANCE SURVEY PLAN

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CAHMS events commence at 7.30pm at the Boniface Centre, with refreshments at 7.15; £2.00 for members; £5.00 for non-members. For more details and to keep up to date, visit "Whats On" on our website.

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| 3 April- | "Customs and Charms" CAHMS |
| 26 Oct | Exhibition. |
| 7 Sept | "Exeter's role in the British Empire" By Dr. Todd Gray MBE, in EXETER GUILDHALL 10-12am. Tickets £10 from the Exeter Corn Exchange website. |
| 9 Sept | "Aetheired the Unready and the South West". By Dr. Levi Roach, Associate Professor of Medieval History, University of Exeter. This follows the CAHMS AGM. |
| 11-14 Sept | Newton St. Cyres Heritage Open Day 10-12am. A guided tour of the Church of St. Cyr & Julitta. (NSCHG event) |
| 15 Sept | "Crediton Railway Special" by John Heal. |
| 17 Sept | "Telling The Bees, Folklore of Rural Craft" 7-9pm at the Museum of Dartmoor Life, 3 West St, Okehampton |
| 23 Sept | "Curiosities of Exeter Cathedral Library" |

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| 23 Sept | by Emma Laws the museum librarian. 7.15-9.15 (BDHS event) |
| 25 Sept | Deer Park at Crediton, walk led by Tony Gale. |
| 26 Sept | "The magic and folklore of Dartmoor", 7-9pm at the Museum of Dartmoor Life, by Ethan Pennell. |
| 14 Oct | "The song of the skylark". 7.30-9.30 by Liz Shakespeare, Devon-based historical researcher and novelist. (CAHMS event) |
| 17 Oct | "Devon's forgotten witches" 7-9pm Museum of Dartmoor Life, by local author and historian Tracey Norman. |
| 22 Oct | Tedburn St Mary Open Day 10am-5pm at the Little Chapel. |
| 28 Oct | "Exeter's lost buildings in the 1800s" by Dr. Todd Gray MBE (BDHC event) |
| 11 Nov | "Understanding churchyards and burial monuments" by Charlotte Coles. M.Sc MCIFA, AC Archaeology (CAHMS event) |

Bow and District History Society and Newton St. Cyres History Group events in their village halls.

A new addition to the "forthcoming Events" spot is the work of our Events Secretary Judi Binks, which gives much more detail of the CAHMS talks that she has arranged, than can be given in the newsletter. It can only be viewed online at: <https://secure.smores.com/n/rse9j-cahms-history-talks-in-crediton> .

Or email the editor for the link, and copy and paste it into your browser, thus avoiding typos! Or copy the QR code on the right.



LAPFORD BOOK DISCOVERY

By David Cann

When clearing through the house of my late uncle, George Gunn, in Lapford, my mother Ann Cann (maiden name Gunn) found various books that seemed to have nothing to do with the family even though we've been there for 75 years. Many had family names Dart, Horwill and Snell written inside. The one important one of these is a handwritten volume bound in white board, it is marked in gold on a burgundy label as being the "Overseers' Book of Receipts & Payments" for Lapford. As far as we are aware it had literally been sat in a cupboard for the last 75 years. It is hand-written inside the front cover by John Dart many times and twice adding Assistant Overseer Lapford and also by Samuel Dart and Henry Dart.

The entries are from 9 May 1848 to a last entry 6 March 1868. They are an account book registering various payments paid into the scheme and those paid out to people for various reasons, particularly when the gentleman of the household had run away leaving the family to fend for themselves. For anybody interested in village history this is a particularly important book. The Devon Heritage Centre in Exeter has various Overseers Books for Lapford and this volume appears to be missing from the collection as they only have records up to 1848. This volume ends with the account for the half year ending Lady Day 1868 and audited 9 June 1868 at about half way through, rest is blank.

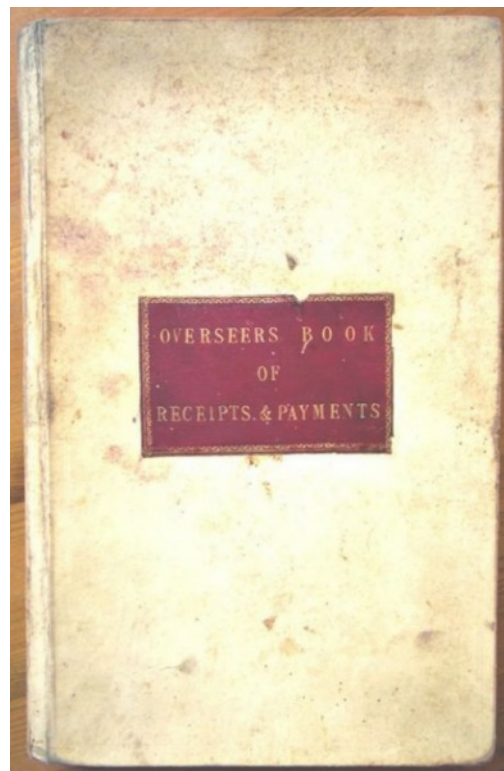
Here are just a few example entries:

1 April 1852 paid for warrant to apprehend William Rayment who has deserted his family. 2s 6d

1 March 1864 Paid George Woolway, Carpenters Bill for repairing Parish Property. £5 11s 4d

1 March 1864 Paid Magistrates Clerks fees for commitments of John Ferris for vagrancy. 8s 0d

To ensure that the information can be easily used locally, the Lapford Village Archive has photograph the book so they can work on it before it gets deposited for safekeeping at the Devon Heritage Centre. To those interested, the Lapford Village Archive (<https://lapfordhistory.co.uk>) is a mine of information about the village.



HOW ViRoL WENT VIRAL.



The Society is currently using this image from our photo archive as part of a call for volunteers.

ViRoL first appeared in the 1890s. Based on a by-product of the brewing industry, mixed with animal extracts and a range of other ingredients (lovely...), it was given a name apparently referencing 'vriil', a made-up word featured in a widely acclaimed novel of the time. Vriil was 'a latent source of energy that ... gives a person extraordinary strength and creates a superior master race'. Note the similarity to the trade name 'Bovril'. The sinister reference to creating 'a superior master race' reminds us that the eugenics movement had many supporters in Britain at that time. ViRoL was marketed as a 'highly concentrated complete food' which could be

used as an alternative to cod liver oil. Looking like toffee and tasting like honey, it was popular with children and invalids. In an era when malnutrition was widespread in Britain, and a substantial number of children suffered from rickets and scurvy, some ViRoL advertisements made dramatic claims including 'Your child needs Virol now' and even 'Virol will save your child's life'. The British Medical Journal reported on a 1924 exhibition in which ViRoL was being promoted alongside other products including Oxo, 'a new preparation in the shape of a beef essence - prepared specially for invalids when solid food cannot be taken'.

Our photograph, dated as 'pre-1910', is captioned as being of tubercular children who 'lived for periods in the open air' with a nurse on the Downes Estate, Crediton. They are being given spoonfuls of ViRoL by a smiling man. Children of the 1930s and 1940s remember 'ViRoL Ladies' coming into schools and giving children a sample of their sweet, sticky product 'via spoons strung across a massive keyring'. ViRoL continued to be sold in the UK until the 1980s.

CAHMS continues to call for volunteers : but we don't offer spoonfuls of dietary supplements as an enticement. Perhaps we should?

Tony Gale

OBITUARIES

Since our last newsletter two of our members – Judy Gale and Gillian Ware have passed away. There follows a brief obituary for each of them and we send our deepest sympathies to their relatives.

Gillian Ware.

Gillian passed away on the 12 June, after a severe stroke about four years ago and a recent short illness. She was a Kirtonian, educated at Haywards Primary School and Crediton High School for Girls. Her working career was in banking at the Midland Bank, and later at Solicitors Gilbert Stephens and Charlesworth Nicholl.

Gillian travelled to Europe a lot during her younger years. She had many interests and was a great supporter of the town and its activities, was a generous supported of CAHMS and was well known as an excellent baker of cakes! Gillian was well liked by everyone and was a well dressed, elegant, articulate lady.

Judy Gale.

Judy was the wife of our chairman Tony Gale. She passed away on the 17 June, having been suffering from Alzheimers Disease for several years. Many CAHMS members have commented how they remember with affection her quiet, gently cheeky sense of humour and were sad to see this slipping away towards the end of her life. Tony adds that Judy generously indulged him in his obsession with history, an interest which she shared - "a bit". Tony and his daughters would like to thank everyone who has shared their memories and offered their condolences.

Thoughts from the Chair

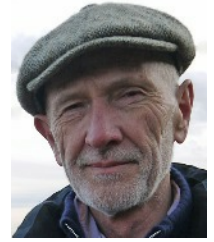
There's a lot going on in CAHMS!

We've had an excellent response to this year's exhibition at the museum – the folklore theme ("Customs, Charms & Cures") has brought in a different cross-section of visitors, helped by our collaboration with the Folklore Collection & Archive. There's been particular interest in the "Black Dog" exhibit, with several wistful comments asking if the tradition might be brought back. My answer is – we're working on it, watch this space!

It's been a great pleasure for me to lead a couple of guided walks on the theme of Crediton's under-recognised part in the Prayerbook Rebellion of 1549. An enthusiastic audience at both events convinces me that there's a lot of untapped interest in local history. The challenge ("should we choose to accept it") is how CAHMS can respond to that. I like a challenge.

Massive thanks to all those members who help us to keep this society going. And if anyone can spare a bit more time to help us preserve and promote our fascinating local history, just let us know...

Tony Gale
Society Chair.



CUSTOMS, CURE AND CHARMS

This year's exhibition at the Museum is about local folklore. We are looking at superstitions, traditions and the people who used plants and herbs for healing. Come and see the 'obby 'oss that was used in the running of the Black Dog, learn about Morris dancing, Mumming, farming traditions and superstitions, childrens' games from bygone days and much, much more.



The exhibition runs until Saturday 26 October and is open Wednesdays – Fridays 10:00-16:00 and Saturdays 11:00 – 14:00.

If you have any sayings, rhymes, superstitions and traditions that have been passed down in your family, we would love to hear them. Email: cherylalewis0304@gmail.com or pop along to the exhibition and share them in person.

www.creditonhistory.org.uk

This is the address of the museum website. It contains information about local history, an up to date diary of events and links to other museum websites.

PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE

We have an archive of more than 1000 photos in the museum. Copies of many are available to purchase. Contact us through our website.

Our Corporate Friends

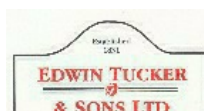
Please don't forget to support the local firms whose logos appear in our literature - see below. Without them we would not have a museum. Our income is insufficient to cover the expenses.

Crediton Museum
& Heritage Centre



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