

Anniversary 40 | Clevedon Civic Society



On



the 16th October we launched the new book by the History Group for The Clevedon Civic Society at Seeley's on Hill Road. The table was set up outside the shop front. It was manned by members of the History Group and three of the authors. Quite a few sales were made. A very good day.

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Wendy Moore and Jean Hannaford set up



Great interest was shown by passersby.

Right Ron King signs for one of the purchasers

Helpers on the day included Rob Campbell (Editor) Laurie Eager; Wendy Moore; Jean Hannaford; Barbara Connell; Derek Lilly (Author); Ron King (Author); David Fogden (Author)

Our 40th anniversary book has 'taken off' very well with advertising on the Internet (Ebay and Amazon) and requests for copies from overseas. A very worthwhile production to boost the Clevedon Civic Society and the work we do for the town.

Chairman's Piece

Happy New Year everyone!

It's also our 40th Anniversary, so let us hope that it proves to be a great year for the Society and all its members.

As you all know the Society has moved its year to the normal calendar year and with this in mind we have given much thought to the times that we issue newsletters. After lengthy discussions at a number of executive meetings it was decided that only two newsletters were necessary, one in January, after the Christmas break and the other in September, when we resume meetings after the summer break. The newsletter is an important tool of information to those who cannot make the various meetings or do not have access to our website. With this in mind it was agreed that the newsletter would increase in content and also go to colour, to mark our Anniversary.

I very much hope that more people will contribute to it, with either suggestions for future projects or reports on work that they have done. Many members have interests in family history, house history etc., please let others know of useful websites, publications or places of interest. Our newsletter will become far more interesting with your input.

To the various groups, please take pictures of your events and let the editor, Derek Lilly, have them. To those further afield, submit your memories of this beautiful town to us and of course any little amusing anecdotes.

You cannot get much further afield than Clevedon, New Zealand! I have, over the past few years, been fostering links with the Local History group there. Recently they very kindly sent me two of their publications and very good reading they make. We shall make a reciprocal offering with copies of our Red Book and Clevedon's Own.

Rob Campbell

LOCAL HISTORY REPORT

I hope that you will all enjoy the varied programme of speakers for this our 40th Anniversary Year. Please remember that History Group meetings are open to all Society members, please come along if the subject interests you and tell your friends as well. Guests are always welcome.

Report on past events:

6 October: National Archives: 18 members travelled to Kew with the W-S-M FHS and a good day was had by all.

11 October: Visit to Barn Farm: A lovely way to spend a Sunday afternoon. Thanks go to Jane Lilly for organising the event and to Roger Triggol & his wife for hosting the whole thing.

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17 October: Book Launch: It was a good job that the weather was kind to us as we held the launch outside Seeleys bookshop. 13 copies of the new book were sold.

5 November: Clevedon Court Dovecote: This was very interesting; thanks go to David Fogden & Jane Lilly who supplied the narrative.

The September and October meetings were very well attended as usual. John Crockford-Hawley was extremely amusing with his talk entitled 'Potty Parsons'. There was a change to October's programme as Bill Fairney had just published a book on Richard Stephens and his cars. We were very lucky that Bill managed such a professional presentation that evening, as on his arrival to Clevedon; he filled his diesel car with petrol!! Richard Stephens would have turned in his grave!!

For our end of year supper this year 11 members put on various displays and the standard proved to be very high. We all voted and the charming display 'Clevedon Violets' by Wendy came second, with Philippa coming first with an amazing display depicting her 'Family History'. A very enjoyable evening ensued so my thanks go to the 11 members who took so much trouble with their offerings and thanks to everyone who attended and made it such an enjoyable event.

Rob Campbell Group Chairman

FOOTPATHS GROUP REPORT

Leading up to Christmas the weather proved a problem at times, although it did not actually prevent the Group from walking. The late summer/autumn walks were all very successful with a variety of locations being visited, including the riverbank in West End, the Coast path from Clevedon to Portishead, Clifton, Cadbury Camp, Cambridge Batch, Chipping Sodbury and a local walk around the town.

All the leaders had put in a great deal of



time researching their respective routes, providing historical background knowledge and making their walks interesting, but at the same time an opportunity to stride out in the fresh air.

December is always the last Group Meeting of the year where walks for January, February and March are planned. The first quarter of 2010 should see a number of local walks being undertaken in and around Clevedon. Members are always keen to

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walk some of the many footpaths and lanes with a view to checking their condition and accessibility.

For more information regarding group walks please keep an eye on the local press, visit the Civic Society website or ring 01275 875878. New walkers are always most welcome.

Jean Hannaford – Footpaths Chairman.

CLEVEDON CIVIC SOCIETY *Executive and Group Meetings 2010*

For the benefit of members, here are details of all of the group's meetings and also the dates of the Executive Group meetings.

Should any member have a point to put forward it is always possible to contact an Executive Group member to have it brought up at a meeting.

<i>GROUP</i>	<i>Jan 10</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Ma r</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
<i>Executive Committee</i>	19		16			15			21		16	
<i>Planning and Conservation</i>	26		9	20		1	13	24	28		9	14
<i>Footpaths</i>			1			7			6			6
<i>Local History</i>	21	18	18	15	20	17	15		16	21	18	
<i>Environment</i>	13		17		12		14		15		17	
<i>Public Meetings</i>	14	11	11	8	13				9	14	11	9
<i>Newsletter Issues</i>	*								*			
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Confusion reigns.

I was amused a few days back when I was told by a friend that we should give up eating meat and lose all the cow herds and other animals. Mainly because of the methane gas said to be produced by cows. I asked them what should we eat instead. I was told "You need to have a 'Vegan' diet of vegetables and soya etc."

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I think they were rather annoyed when I pointed out to them that the CO gas produced by tractors and implements needed to grow us enough food to feed the population of this country alone would more than double the amount that cows etc generate.

The problem is that a lot of folk don't think things through to the conclusion. Theories sound very good. But then according to scientific theory it has been proved that Bumble-bees can't possibly fly.

The Avon Glen Pipe & Drum Band Ypres Pilgrimage 2009

A good contingent of Society members joined the Band and travelled to the Belgian town of Ypres to take part in the Menin Gate ceremony, which is held each night of the year at 8pm. Wendy and Rob laid wreaths for the Society and the Clevedon Branch Royal British Legion during the ceremony.

This year the trip was particularly poignant as Audrey Banks and her grandson Tom joined us. Audrey's uncle, Lance Sergeant James Masterson of the 2nd Battalion, Kings Own Scottish Borderers was killed during the Battle of Passchendaele and his name appears on panel 66-68 in Tyne Cot Cemetery.

On the Sunday we travelled to Poperinge,



where Hugh and Bob laid wreaths at the Town Memorial. We then marched to ToCH for a welcome cup of tea.

What a tragedy the First World War was.



The

following photos say it all!

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ENVIRONMENT GROUP REPORT

It has been a busy summer for the members of the Environment Group. We have completed our "summer season" of working parties during which we have cleaned drinking fountains, painted gates, railings and signs and tidied up the area around The Lookout on Poet's Walk.

We also helped Project Aware do a survey and clearance of the litter on the beach by the Little Harp. This was part of a national survey as there is increasing concern about the amount of litter in the sea, especially plastic, and its affect on wildlife.

Following the publication of our leaflet about walks through Pier Copse and Alexandra Gardens we have prepared a scheme for the improvement of the seating area in Pier Copse.

This area has great views along the Pier and sea front and at present is much neglected.

We are meeting with North Somerset Council in December to discuss our scheme with them in the hope that they may be able to help with the project. We would like this to be the Environment Group's contribution to our 40th Anniversary celebrations next year - so watch that space!

We will start our working party season next year with a BIG LITTER PICK on Saturday 27 March 2010. Please put that date in your new diary as we will need all the help we can get to tidy up the sea front area for Easter and all the visitors.

Bob Hardcastle Chairman

Conservation & Planning Group Report

Firstly, I wish to congratulate Rob Campbell and the History Group writers on their latest hard back publication "Medieval Manor to Victorian Resort", a very informative insight into Clevedon's past. Do consider buying a copy.

The Group is concerned for the residents in Marine Parade that the Planning Inspector has allowed the appeal for the development of twelve apartments and one dwelling on the site of the existing bungalow at 22 Marine Parade, without giving due consideration to the problems associated with the construction traffic access.

The contractor is required to present a "Construction Methodology Statement" (?) which we hope will be available for public comment. The early stages of this development will cause considerable disruption to the many residents in Marine Parade and possible damage to their property. The District Council wisely refused this application, in our opinion before it went to appeal.

The latest news on Royal Pier Hotel is that it is to be auctioned by Allsop's (Auctioneers) in London on 15/17th December 2009 and the guide price is £100,000+. So we may see something happening sooner than we thought!

It would be just Clevedon's luck if work started on the Hotel and Marine Parade site at the same time!



Many of the older members of the Society

will remember "The Knoll" in Chapel Hill as the Clevedon Maternity Hospital and my children were born there in the late 1950's and in 1960. When the hospital closed the building became a residential home.

You may have noticed extensive building work there over recent months and it is a pleasure to see the house being returned to a private family residence for which it was built in 1855.

There has been little other major activity to report on the planning front during the summer, but we hope we shall see some progress on a new hospital for Clevedon during 2010, once the site can be established and purchased.

Environment Award time has come round again and if you would like to make a nomination, please contact me, remembering that a new or restored building, landscaping project has to have been completed in 2009.

I am looking forward to next year's programme of talks at both the General Meetings and those of the History Group. The programme card should be enclosed with this newsletter.

On behalf of the Group I wish you a Happy and Healthy New Year in 2010, which is also the Civic Society's 40th Anniversary Year.

Bryan Osborne, Group Chairman

Talk to the Civic Society, Thursday 8 October 2009

Mr Roy Gallop

'Lost Ports and Harbours of the Bristol Channel'

From the very start of his talk it was obvious that Roy Gallop was a sailor to the core. The types of sailing boats shown in his illustrated lecture seemed to flow off his tongue – sloop, ketch, brig, schooner and trow, all of which plied their trade along the stretch of coast from Framilode in Gloucestershire down the river Severn and the Bristol Channel to Porlock Weir in Somerset.

According to Roy the favourite water craft in the upper reaches of the Severn between the 1700s and 1900 was the trow, a sort of grown-up river barge complete with sail and which carried a two-man-and-a-boy crew. The main cargo carried by the trow was coal. Roy showed us a photograph of Bullo Pill Warf where coal from the Forest of Dean was being transferred to one of these small but hardy boats before being carried south to Lydney. Another photograph showed the deck of a trow where a small cabin could clearly be seen and next to that a bucket which, Roy explained, was the toilet – a sort of 'buck-it and chuck it' arrangement!

Roy also had some early photographs of Avonmouth and Portishead docks – one aerial view of Portishead was almost certainly taken by me in the 1950s! He then passed swiftly downstream to Clevedon to retell the erroneous story of the ship which ran aground in Little Harp Bay, only to be promptly informed by members of the audience of the correct derivation of that name!

We saw a trow at Birnbeck waiting for the tide to take it up to Lydney, and a ketch unloading its cargo in Knightstone harbour in the 1930s. Roy informed us that at Uphill in the 18th century two full-time customs offices were employed to oversee the importation of cattle from Ireland. Once unloaded these beast were fattened up on the Somerset Levels and then taken down to Winchester. We heard how at Watchet iron

ore was shipped across to Wales for the iron furnaces and how at Minehead limestone from Wales was shipped in to be turned into quicklime in the kilns located on the beaches, the lime being used to reduce excessive acidity in the soil.

Throughout Roy's lecture I was reminded of the poem by John Masefield –

Dirty British Coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack
Butting through the Channel in the mad March days,
With a cargo of Tyne coal,
Road-rail, pig-lead,
Firewood, iron-ware, and cheap tin trays.

Why do I seem to remember that I was taught at school (Clevedon Secondary Modern School!) that this was written whilst the poet sat on Wains Hill looking out to sea?

Geoff Hale

Talk to the Civic Society, Thursday 12 November 2009

Mr David Bowering

'Countryside for all.'

David Bowering's illustrated talk reflected many years' working as a volunteer with the National Trust. The 'countryside' referred to in the title included a wide range of rural sites that the Trust owns and manages for the nation. Some of the parklands surrounding National Trust houses are well known to us, but the Trust also owns vast tracts of less accessible land, which in some cases are farmed by tenant farmers.

The National Trust was founded in 1895 by three Victorian philanthropists who were concerned about the impact of uncontrolled development and industrialisation; they set up the Trust to act as a guardian for the nation in the acquisition and protection of threatened coastline, countryside and buildings.

Mr Bowering informed us that Derwentwater in the Lake District was one of their first successes with, in 1902, £6500 being raised to preserve public access to the lake and its surroundings. In 1913 the mountain of Castlereagh in Northern Ireland was added to the list, and by 1945 the Trust owned and administered Hadrian's Wall Estate, 1500 acres surrounding the Avebury Stone Circle and the nearby Stonehenge Down, though not it seems the Henge itself, which is cared for today by English Heritage.

David Bowering informed us that the Trust was the first group in Britain to have a statutory obligation to preserve wildlife; he then listed various projects where this policy was being undertaken. These included Wicken Fen, in Cambridgeshire, where certain species of butterflies were being preserved, Hindhead Commons in Surrey, a heath where the natural flora and fauna was being maintained, Blakeney Point on the North Norfolk coast where sanctuary is provided for sea birds, and the tin mines of Cornwall where the Greater Horseshoe Bat enjoys a protected habitat.

By the end of the evening there was no doubt in the minds of those of us in the audience that David Bowering was every inch an ambassador for the National Trust, which he proudly claimed to be Europe's largest nature conservation organisation.

Geoff Hale

Member's contributions.

We are always pleased to get contributions from our members. If you have any interesting information concerning the Civic Society or aspects of our work in Clevedon. Any pictures (digital) should be taken with a camera of at least 6 megapixels in order to do justice to it when printed.

Pictures from a film camera can be scanned and turned into digital images with no problems. Colour or monochrome makes no difference. Now that we have gone to colour it can be nice to see an occasional black and white picture.

Always try to catch the date for the newsletter but we can accept contributions and "book them in" any time. The main concern being the seasonal connection.

Random Rovings Health and Safety or Idiocy and Stupidity?

The other day my neighbour contacted me in distress. The light in her bathroom had gone out and she was unable to change the bulb because a new fitting had been installed.

It had been done by the housing association because of Health and Safety regulations. Had they not changed it over they would have been liable for any compensation in the event of an accident. Now, my neighbour and myself have been living in the flats we are occupying for almost 40 years and there has never been any accident because of the old style light fitting. Nor am I aware of any that occurred in one of the other eight flats.

After a little trouble I was able to



take off the shade or cover and to my amazement found a completely new sort of light. I realised that under the new rules we have to change over to power saving types but this was not a bayonet fitting but a complicated square shaped light with a very small pin for the plug in part. The man who had installed her fitting had – it seems – told her that if at any time her bulb failed someone could come out and fit a new one.

He had not told her that the man who would come out would be charging £10 per hour. It was left for the young lady that answered her phone call to tell her about that, which is why she asked me to have a look at it. It was a Wednesday afternoon and with the darker nights, time was pressing. I went up and found a shop that sold them at £5 a time. Rather a lot compared to the price of an ordinary bulb.

The following day I looked into all of the shops I could think of in Clevedon but could not find one in any of the places I visited. I even ventured into Tesco! I wonder how many of the North Somerset Housing Association tenants realise what their bathroom light contains? I wonder as well how many have a spare in their possession. Now, I realise

that the Health and Safety people are needed but it also appears to me that having applied the rules to the obvious and necessary accident precautions, they are now stretching cases in order to be able to say "Yes we are still needed.. Look at all these things we are still finding. Think of all the possible accidents we are stopping and the lives we are saving. We need to be kept on the payroll!"

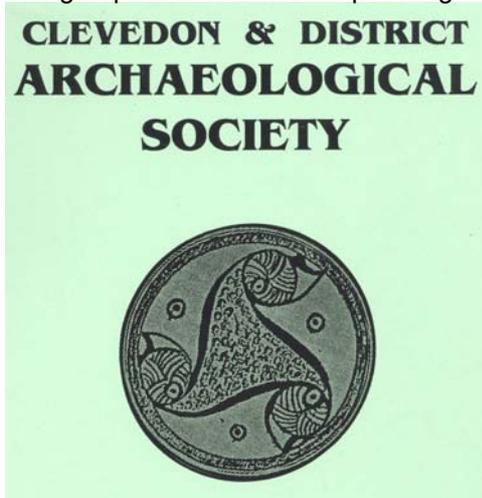
Visit to Barn Farm
Tickenham
Sunday 11th October 2009

Roger Triggol invited the Civic Society, including the History Group, along with the Clevedon & District Archaeological Society to visit Barn Farm to see his collection of vintage cars and tractors, some members were able to drive the 1909 Trojan tractor. We also inspected his collection of unusual items. A demonstration of cider pressing followed using very old equipment, and then the best part, sampling the cider. This was followed by tea or coffee and cakes. A very interesting and enjoyable day. Thank you Roger.

This was the first joint event with the Civic Society and the Archaeological Society.



The group watches the cider pressing



Roger Trigoll talks to them while they are sampling the new cider

Random Rovings

Getting old.

I was very pleased and interested in late August when I had an invitation from Roger Triggol and his son Andrew to visit their oat cutting afternoon. They not only collect veteran and vintage farm machinery but work on them to get them back into full working order.

In this case it was an old reaper/binder of



the 1920s being hauled by a tractor only a few years younger. Some 40 years ago when Bill Withey was farming at Colehouse, I used to look forward to going down there haymaking. It was a far better “toning” exercise than a visit to the gym. He had a Fordson tractor of a slightly later date than the one used and I can remember what a trial it was to get it started again if it should stop while working.

In this instance it was amazing to see how quickly the reaper could be swung into position from the set-up it was in and to haul it along the road behind the tractor.

I spent a very pleasant afternoon clicking away with my camera. When I got back home I loaded many of the pix onto www.morguefile.com and had a reply from someone half the world away reminiscing about the Fordson they used to drive on the farm where they lived as a boy. It is a very small world now isn't it?

Land Yeo Friends



On Saturday November 7th the Land Yeo friends were out again clearing the river of debris.

In spite of the rather inclement weather - it is November after all - thirteen volunteers turned-out with a wide variety of river clearing tools. On this occasion they were helped by members of the 2nd Clevedon Scout Troop, who further increased the efficiency of clearing by using a canoe, which reached the parts that other implements couldn't.

Chairman Frank Jacobs stated “You really had to admire their tenacity in that boat in driving rain and pretty cold weather.” A special thanks to Stephen and Luke!

There was the usual mountain of litter - paper, polythene, bottles and cans, and on this occasion a bike which was in relatively good condition, a supermarket trolley, a wrought iron bench, Frisbee, hub cap and a couple of traffic cones etc.

The group hope to get a better flow through the town this winter, and arrangements have been made to clear a badly blocked culvert in the town centre this month (November).

A lot of positive improvements have been noted, several developers are using the new, cleaner Land Yeo to add prestige to their sites.

I hope that Clevedon is realising what a great asset the little river is, the swans certainly have!

David Robinson – Vice Chairman & Press Officer.

Yes believe it or not

It’s another word square puzzle

T	S	N
B	A	I
N	E	T

It is quite simple really, all you have to do is find twenty of the twentyone words that my puzzle maker showed up. All the words are of 6 or more letters and I have edited them so that they are all to be found in the New Oxford Dictionary of 1998.

Each word must incorporate the letter A from the shaded block and each letter may be used only once. Plurals and proper names may be used and some words may be alternative spelling although they should be a fairly easy thing to spot.

The clue to the nine letter word is “Sobersides or is he a priest?” Some are esoteric in substance but nevertheless are shown in the dictionary.

There is only one that could be a real ‘stopper’ so all I will set you to find is just twenty.

Will you allow yourself to be beaten by a machine or will you prove that the human mind is more powerful. You will find the answers further along in the newsletter.

The Knoll

It was bought with the idea of converting it back into a family home. This has meant, un-picking a web of alterations. It was a maternity home for many years – like a lot of local people I was born there. In the 1980s it was a home for disabled young people.

The building plot for the house was bought in 1855 by the Rev. George Law Harkness, son of the Vicar of East Brent. He named the house The Knoll after Brent Knoll itself, which would have been familiar in his childhood, towering above his father's church. He seems to have built the house as an investment after selling Fairfield Villa in Elton Road in the same year, and his sister Margaret Clarke, the widow of a surgeon, lived there with their nephew James Harkness until he was appointed Vicar of Winscombe and embarked on a serious restoration of the church there.

[If you have visited Banwell Caves, you may be interested to know that The Bishop of Bath and Wells, who built the house and laid out the ground there, was the Rev G L L Harkness' grandfather, the Rt. Rev George Henry Law.]

Margaret Clarke died in 1873 and the house was bought by Mr and Mrs Richard Woodward. Mr Woodward died in 1875 and his widow Julia Woodward, lived there with her daughters, one of whom, also Julia inherited the house when her mother died in 1892.

The younger Julia took care of her mother's brother, Mr Vincent Stuckey Lean, until his death in 1899. He was a member of the Stuckey banking family who founded their business in Langport early in the 19th century. Though not engaged in the family bank, Mr Lean was very comfortably off indeed, leaving £100,000 to various charities and the residue to the children of his brother and sister.

This made Miss Woodward very



wealthy and she was able to achieve a great many good works using this inheritance before she died in 1910. She bought part of the land of Highdale Farm in 1897 and had the Excelsior Club built for the young men of St Andrew's Church choir and congregation. This is now the Trophy shop in Highdale Avenue, but when I was a pupil at St Andrew's Infant School, the room at the front was used as an extra classroom, accessed via a door knocked through into their skittle alley from the lean-to in the playground.

Another of her memorials should be number 17 Old Church Road, where she bought land which had been the Vicarage garden [when the Church House in Marson Road was the Vicarage] and built a coffee shop there to benefit the Young Men's Christian

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Association. This is now a computing and stationery shop, and if you have the chance to look at it when the lights are on indoors on a gloomy winter afternoon, the stained glass in the upper part of the shop windows lift my heart, as I'm sure they will yours.

Jane Lilly

Old Crotchety asks

What is happening about our new Hospital?



A short while ago there was an item in our local papers about the possibility of the grant to build the proposed new hospital for Clevedon running out of time.

I saw this week that North Somerset Council appear to have aquired one of the possible sites mentioned. The Clerical Medical building at East Clevedon. This was a place that I have always thought myself to be too large.

But how about the old Kwiksave site?

Pros :— Close to all of the bus routes through the town.

Large car park space. (The present hospital car park always seems to be full to overflowing.)

A very big building that could be divided up by inbuilt partitons.

Kitchens already there, just require bringing up to standards of hospital needs.

Shops alongside that would bring in rental money.

Pharmacy could be situated in one of the shop spaces.

Large hall that could be rented out if it is not wanted to incorporate into wards etc.

Plenty of side storage rooms that could be adapted for teatment rooms.

Cons :— Well down in the town.

Too close to a public house?

Would internal partitions pass planning officers?

Probably lots of objections by planners who don't seem to bother about necessity.

You will notice from the pic on this page that Old Crotchety has gone coloured as well as the rest of the newsletter.

Lo and behold 2 days after this was written it seems that the NHS agrees with me. There is a couple of paragraphs in the paper to say that they are hoping to use the Kwiksave site. Albiet with a new building series to be erected there. It would seem that I was correct in questioning the possibilty of the planners allowing the use of partitions to sub divide the interior.

Finally allow me to wish all of our readers a happy New Year.

And let us hope that we can have Peace and Goodwill to follow as well.

Here are the answers to the word puzzle.

ABSENT: ABSTINENT: BASINET: BATISTE: BATTEN: BATTENS: INNATE:
INSANE: INSTANT: INSTATE: SABINE: SATINET: SIENNA: TAINTS:
TANIST: TENANT: TENANTS: TIBETAN: TIBETANS: TISANE: TITANS: :

The nine letter word was ABSTINENT. One of the more difficult is BASINET a medieval helmet and the word that I have 'allowed' you for free is TANIST. I don't expect that anyone got that one.

It stands for the 'Heir apparent of a Celtic chief' Congratulations of you found it for yourself. If it were only possible to get them now I would award you a blood orange at Christmas.

Subscription Reminder

Please remember that subscriptions of £12 per member are due on 1st January 2010.

Payments please to the Membership Secretaries, John and Helen Bussell, at 33 Tennyson Ave, Clevedon, BS21 7UJ - or at the meeting.

Name: -

Date: -

Email: -

I will be happy to receive the Newsletter by email in the future -
Please delete as appropriate Yes/No

Are you interested in Clevedon?
Why not join the Clevedon Civic Society. £12 per year sub
8 Public meetings and 10 History Group meetings per year
Automatic membership of the 4 Society groups.
Membership Secs John & Helen Bussell 33 Tennyson Avenue.
Telephone number 01275 875528