

# MINCHINHAMPTON LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

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Minchinhampton Local History Collection,  
The Trap House, West End, Minchinhampton, STROUD, GL6 9JA

# **MINCHINHAMPTON LOCAL HISTORY GROUP COMMITTEE 2012/2013**

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## **PROGRAMME OF PAST MEETINGS**

2012	November	A.G.M. and “CHILDREN’S HOUR - Those were the Days” - Virginia Adsett and Gill Morss
2012	January	Cancelled due to snow!
	February	“JAMES AND OWEN - The story of a local business” - Peter Withey
	March	“YOUR MILITARY ANCESTORS” - Kevin George
	April	“THE MAGNIFICENT (AUSTIN) SEVEN” - Trevor Picken
	May	“MINCHINHAMPTON’S WOOLLEN MILLS” - Ian Mackintosh
	June	VISIT TO MUSEUM IN THE PARK
	September	“IT’S STILL WHERE THE COW IS KING - BUT ONLY JUST!” - J. V. Smith
	October	“SHOW & TELL” Items of Local Interest
	November	A.G.M. and “TRADITIONAL COTSWOLD CAROLS AND WASSAILS” - Gwilym Davies

## **A Real Bus Service**

**Sheila Bruton (nee Cooke)**

In the last Bulletin there was an account of the small shop in Amberley run by my aunt, Sybil Cooke, who collected the morning newspapers and magazines from the early bus from Stroud. My father Laurie Cooke often drove this; he was a driver for the Western National Bus Company for over forty years. His career began in 1923 when the Bear Hotel opened a service between Minchinhampton and Stroud and in 1967 he recalled "It was on solid tyres at 12 mph. You had a job convincing people it was safe to ride down Butterow Hill". Until 1940 he drove the same route. After a spell working at the Gloucester Aircraft Company he rejoined the bus company in 1944 and during the summer months drove thousands of passengers on excursions. He had the honour of driving one of the first coaches at the opening of the first Severn Bridge, between Aust and Beachley, in 1966.

Before the War he was allowed to take the bus home in the evenings and on winter mornings passengers gave him a push to get it started. Dad is well remembered for stopping the bus by passengers' gates and carrying their shopping to the door. Another thing, if any regular passenger failed to be at the bus stop in the morning, as Dad knew where everyone in Amberley lived, he would go to the home, give them a call and wait for them. The good old days!



# **The Gun on the Park – A Reappraisal**

**From information researched by Charlie Morriss**



**Gun Carriage**



**Captured Gun**

In “Minchinhampton Life and Times Part 3 – Landmarks”, published in 2002, there was an article that suggested the gun that stood behind the school might be a relic of the Crimean War. However, the research by Charlie Morriss into the Minutes of the Parish Council has elicited many new facts.

Minute dated 22.12.19: “A letter from Col. Sinnott offering a German 8” Howitzer Gun to the Council was accepted. Mr. Chamberlain [P.C. Chairman] offered to fetch the Gun from the Railway Station free of charge.”

Minute dated 9.02.20: “Mr. Chamberlain reported having secured the German Gun & it was laying in yard of Mr. C. W. Jones [Nailsworth]. He regretted to find there was opposition to it being placed on site near the War Memorial ...”

Minute dated 30.08.20: “The Clerk reported the German Gun was now placed in the Park by the kindness of the Golf Club ...”

Minute dated 11.01.21: “The Clerk read a letter from Comrades of the Great War re German Gun standing in Park whether it could be placed on a Concrete Foundation & properly cared for as a War Trophy but that any expense entailed should not come onto Rates ...”

Minute dated 30.10.22: “Estimates were secured for work to protect Gun in the Park: Mr. Poole - £38, Shaw and Sons £41 2s 6d, Messrs Burton £42 10s. After much discussion on spending this amount of money it was ... carried with one dissent that the tender of Mr. Poole be accepted.”

Minute dated 15.01.23: “The Clerk reported the work to Platform & Iron Railings around Gun was completed & presented a/c for same. It was agreed the work was satisfactory & a/c passed for payment.”

Minute dated 14.03.32: “As regards the German Gun in Park it was decided to have same removed.”

A press cutting from the “Stroud News and County Advertiser” dated 18.03.32, retained in one of the Parish Council Minute Books, describes more fully the demise of the gun.

*“In reference to the German gun, which stands in the Park as a war trophy, the Clerk reported that the supports of one of the wheels would shortly collapse and it was essential that the gun should either be repaired or removed. ... Mr. A. J. Dennis, who expressed the opinion of the Council when he said the trophy ought not to become any expense, and was also contrary to the spirit of the times, proposed that it be removed. As Col. Parker had brought the matter before the local branch British Legion, and no objection was taken, the proposal of Mr. Dennis was unanimously carried.”*

### **References at Gloucestershire Archives:**

Minchinhampton Parish Council Minute Book 1916-1931 (P217a PC 1/2)  
Minchinhampton Annual Parish Meeting Minute book 1894 – 1989 (P217a PC 1/13)

# From Minchinhampton to Lancefield, Australia

by Grahame Thom

Recently I was researching records at the Kilmore Historical Society in Victoria, Australia and wondered if I searched for Gloucestershire in a file of local obituaries, would I find something of interest. Here is what I found.



The Kilmore Advertiser, Saturday 25 July, 1908

The Late Mr. Alfred Hunt

The sudden death of Mr. Alfred Hunt, which occurred at Lancefield on Monday evening last week, and was briefly referred to in our columns last Saturday, caused an intense feeling of gloom throughout the town and district.

Mr. Hunt was alone at the time of his death, and his dead body was found on the floor of his dining room by his son, Mr. A.H. Hunt, on his return in the evening, the cause of death being ruptured aneurism of the aorta. The deceased gentleman was born at Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire, in June 1838, and was the son of Mr. Thomas Hunt, a noted manufacturer of cloth. He was educated at Roadhouse School, near Stroud, and came to Victoria in the ship "White Star" in 1856, having for a shipmate the late Mr. Stephen Turner. Mr. Hunt and Mr. Turner settled at Glenburnie, and worked the old Magpie and Stump station for some years. Mr. Hunt afterwards went to the diggings, and in the sixties he settled at Lancefield, and devoted his attention to rural pursuits for some years. Subsequently retiring from active business and settling down to private life at "Park View".

Mr. Hunt was a member of the Lancefield Shire Council for many years and was president on three occasions. He held the commission of a justice of the

peace, and was a regular attendant at the local Bench, being held in high esteem. He was the oldest member of the Masonic Lodge in the district, and held the office of Secretary up to the time of his death besides being a Past Grand Lodge officer. The deceased gentleman was widely and deservedly respected throughout the district. He being a man with decided convictions, honourable and straightforward. He was a widower, but leaves a family of five sons and four daughters. The funeral, which took place on the following Thursday, was the largest ever witnessed in Lancefield. The Rev. C. W. Wood, Church of England, conducted the service, both of the church and the Masonic ritual. Prior to the funeral, Lodge of Sorrow was opened, and was largely attended, sympathetic references being made by the W.M. (Bro. Meyer) and Bros. J McKinley (Kyneton), A.M. Luckie and G. B. Good (Kilmore), the latter remarking that their deceased brother had never missed an installation ceremony at Kilmore for the past quarter of a century. Fully 50 members of the Masonic fraternity preceded the hearse to the cemetery, where the impressive ceremony was gone through.

Some observations - gold was discovered in Victoria in 1851, and the likely location of the "diggings" is in the Bendigo district. Glenburnie is a rural settlement about 45 kilometres north of Melbourne and 15 kilometres south of Kilmore and Lancefield is a rural town about 60 kilometres north west of Melbourne and 14 kilometres west of Kilmore.

The website [freeBDM.org.uk](http://freeBDM.org.uk), reveals that just before sailing Alfred married Emma Butcher in Hackney during the September quarter of 1856.

The Public Record Office of Victoria website has a good collection of online indexes including passenger arrivals. I did not find Alfred and Emma in the assisted immigrants index but there they were in the unassisted index as passengers on the White Star, with both listed as being age 21.

In recent years the National Library of Australia has been digitising old Australian newspapers and these can be searched and viewed on their website Trove. I searched the Melbourne newspaper The Argus for late 1856 and found that the White Star left Liverpool on 20 August and arrived Melbourne on 5 November with 372 passengers. Being unassisted immigrants means they paid their full fare. This together with their young ages, makes one wonder if they ran away from home.

Next step, using the Victorian Births, Deaths and Marriages index on CD (these can also be searched online for a fee), I searched for relevant entries for this family, and found:

William, born 1859, Dandenong (east of Melbourne)  
Alfred Henry, born 1861, South Yarra (Melbourne)  
Harriett, born 1863, Melbourne  
Thomas, born 1865, Glenburnie  
Emma Cecilia, born 1868, Lancefield  
Clara Ann, born 1870, Lancefield  
Florence Ellen, born 1873, Lancefield  
Hubert Frederick, born 1876, Lancefield  
Percy Frank, born 1879, Lancefield



The index entry for the death of Alfred Hunt in 1908, gives his parents as Thomas Hunt and Harriet Cox. His wife Emma died in 1895 aged 62 years and her parents were Samuel Butcher and Knight (no given name). From a family tree on rootsweb worldconnect website ( [wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com](http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com) ) I found that Emma was born in Gloucestershire and her mother's name was Hannah Knight who was born in Painswick, Gloucestershire.

I then searched the freeBDM website and found Alfred's birth registered in the September quarter of 1838, in the district of Stroud. I next turned to the

1851 Census on familysearch and found the Hunt family at Horsley, Gloucestershire :-

Thomas Hunt age 49, born Minchinhampton, woollen cloth manufacturer

Harriet Hunt age 47, born Avening

Mary A Hunt age 18, born Minchinhampton

Alfred Hunt age 13, born Minchinhampton

Sarah Hunt age 10, born Minchinhampton

Benjamin Hunt, age 8, born Minchinhampton

John Hunt age 6, born Minchinhampton

William Hunt age 2, born Horsley

Using my search engine I found several trees for this Hunt family and noted that Thomas died at Cam, Gloucestershire on 22 May 1888 and his wife died at Lewes, in Sussex on 8 March 1895. On wikipedia I found that Thomas, at one time, was a partner in Cam Mill with Arthur Brend Winterbotham who was later elected a member of Parliament for Cirencester. Thomas and Harriet would have been proud of their son Alfred doing well in far off Lancefield in Australia.

## Websites

freeBDM - <http://freebmd.org.uk/>

Gold in Australia - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victorian\\_gold\\_rush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victorian_gold_rush)

PRO Victoria - <http://prov.vic.gov.au/>

Trove - <http://trove.nla.gov.au/>

BDM Victoria - <http://www.bdm.vic.gov.au>

worldconnect - <http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/>

FamilySearch - <https://familysearch.org/>

Wikipedia - <http://www.wikipedia.org/>

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# **From Minchinhampton to Lancefield, Australia More on the Hunts**

## **Maureen Anderson**

The family seem to be staunch Non-Conformists. They were using Shortwood Chapel in Nailsworth. Nailsworth is a complicated place because it wasn't created until the 1890s when it was made out of bits of Horsley, Avening, Woodchester and Minchinhampton. Thomas's birth is recorded in the Chapel in 1802. He is the third son of John and Mary Hunt. Also recorded are John 1798, William 1800, Enoch 1805, Edwin 1806, Mary Ann and James.

Thomas and Harriet married in Avening in 1827.

William Hunt had Dyehouse Mill in 1838, which is on the Bath Road (A46) which is where Thomas is living in 1851. He had 8 power looms and 22 handlooms.

In the 1840s Thomas & John were working Locks Mill. William owned Lodgemoor until it was sold to Strachens in 1865.

In 1851 John & Thomas bought Cam Mill and were joined by Winterbotham in 1858. Eventually the whole lot were joined together with the Playnes to become Strachens, Hunt & Winterbothams. Billiard cloth is still woven at Cam and dyed in Stroud.

The trade was struggling in the 1850s and maybe Alfred felt there was not enough work for him too.

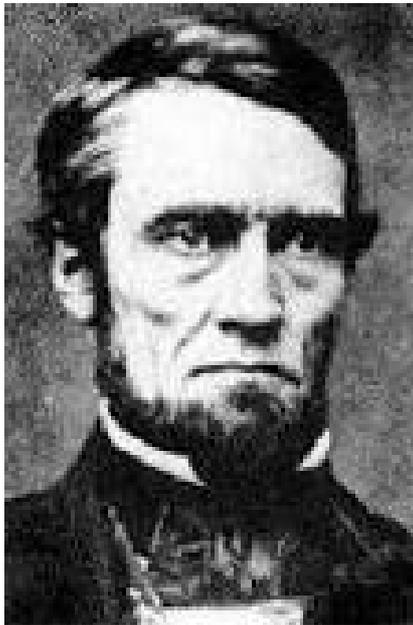
Grandfather John may have been a master weaver just as the industry was being industrialised.

# Charles Mason A.R.S. (1728-1786)

## Keith Dench

James Bradley's connection with Gloucestershire and Minchinhampton was explained by Diana Wall in Tom Long's Post in autumn 2013. James became the 3<sup>rd</sup> Astronomer Royal in 1742. As well as his observations and recording, his work involved correcting the solar, lunar and star tables of other astronomers. Some of those corrections were necessary due to James' own discoveries! Long before slide rules, calculators and computers those mathematical corrections involved lengthy, tedious calculations and re-writing of the data, so, in 1756 he employed a "labourer" on £26 a year: that was Charles Mason.

As far back as 1547 the Masons were millers and bakers at Weir (Wherr/Wharr/Wear/LittleWear) Farm Oakridge Lynch. It's still there on the O.S. map; beside the Wysis Way public footpath; not far from the school. Charles was born there in 1728. The son of Charles and Anne Damsel Mason, he later attended Tetbury Grammar School and was known to be good at maths.



Charles Mason

Following his appointment as Bradley's "labourer", Charles and his wife Rebekah moved to Greenwich. They had two sons, but, on the 14<sup>th</sup> February 1759, Rebekah died and was buried in Sapperton churchyard. Her gravestone lies flat, just to the right of the church door and I had to brush off the leaves to find it!

In 1761 the Royal Society sent Charles and a surveyor from County Durham, Jeremiah Dixon (born 1733 in Bishop Auckland) to Sumatra to observe a transit of Venus. They ended up in Capetown where their ship was attacked by a French frigate, England being at war with France!

Since 1632, when the Calvert family, and 1681, when William Penn, were granted Royal Charters for Maryland and Pennsylvania, there had been disputes (including Cresaps War) over where borders actually were on the ground. Being told by the King/Government to "sort it out, or else" Thomas Penn and Frederick Calvert employed Mason and Dixon to survey and mark

the boundaries. “And while you are there” said the Royal Society, “Find out the shape of the Earth”!

In August 1763 Mason and Dixon arrived in Philadelphia and started work just before Christmas. Mason fixed their positions using star tables and observations; Dixon “drew” lines on the ground trying to follow latitudes/longitudes that marked the boundaries revised by the Court of Chancery in 1767. Awful winter weather and inhospitable terrain was the least of their worries Armed guards were needed! Work stopped on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1767 when the troops could no longer guarantee to keep the Delaware indians at bay. They had completed 233 miles; each mile was marked with a limestone block weighing between 300 and 600 pounds and every 5 miles a crownstone bore the Calvert and Penn coat of arms. They had been shipped over from England!

Charles was elected a Member of the American Philosophical Society and continued to work for the Royal Society and the Astronomers Royal. Bradley died in 1762, Bliss died 2 years later and Neville Maskelyne was appointed Astronomer Royal in 1765.

In 1769 Maskelyne wrote to Charles c/o Robert Williams, a maths teacher (and later Headmaster) at Tetbury; so perhaps he was back in the county? By 1773 Charles was not in good health and his wife, Mary, was expecting their second child. On 1<sup>st</sup> January 1777 the Gloucestershire Journal reported that Charles had sent The Board of Longitude solar and lunar tables, in the hope he might win the Government prize for finding a method of calculating longitude at sea, and that he had done this from an address in Sapperton. Tobias Mayer (lunar tables) and John Harrison (clock) got the bulk of the prize, but Charles received £1,317.

The Mason –Dixon line was completed by Rittenhouse and Ellicot in 1784. Charles returned to Philadelphia, but died there on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1786 and is buried in Christ Church burial ground.

The M-D line and “Dixie” became demarcations in issues of slavery and the civil war, and featured in films and songs. A 1996 GPS survey showed that the greatest error in marking the M-D line was 30m! Mason has a crater on the moon named after him. A long way from Oakridge!

# Watch out if you worked at Longfords in the 50s!

## Maureen Anderson

Your sins may be finding you out. Members of the Stroudwater Textile Trust are transcribing all the graffiti on the walls of the Old Mill. They include love matches, addresses, army numbers and many little interesting snippets.

John SHORTER  
&  
PETER TURNER  
coming home on  
leave March 5<sup>th</sup>  
1966  
Wednesday  
Valerie Price  
and Anna Lee  
will be waiting

VALERIE PRICE  
1a CHAVENAGE LANE  
TETBURY  
GLOS  
ANNA LEE  
1 WOODBINE TERRACE  
BOX  
Nr STROUD  
GLOS  
VALERIE PRICE  
ANNA LEE  
JUNE PARRY  
1956

June Parry  
loves very much  
Tony Daniels

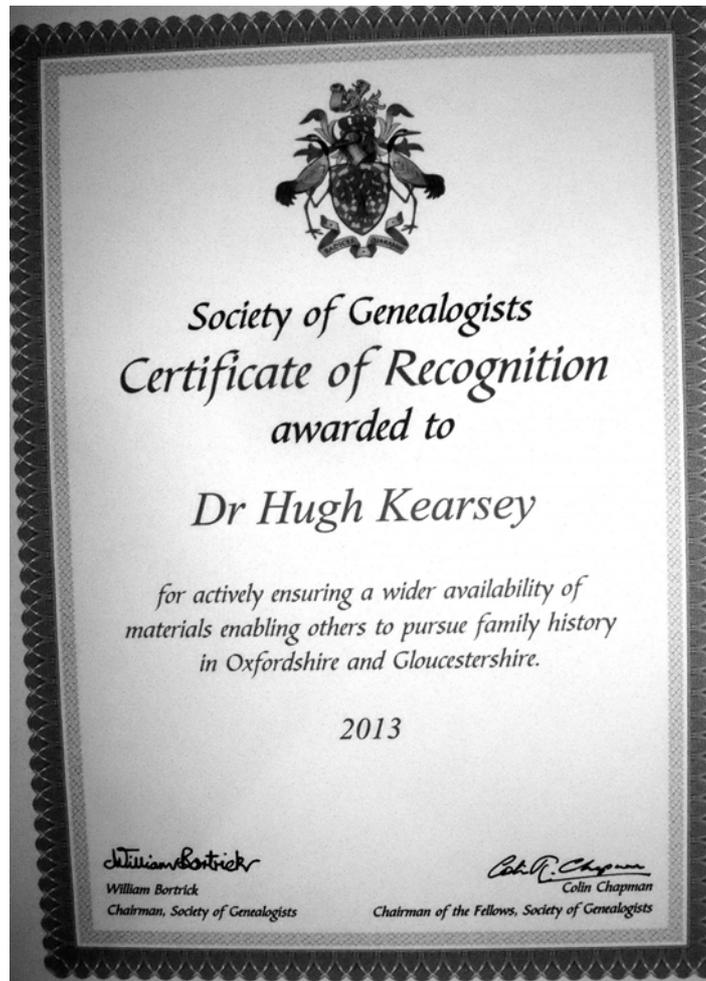
Marlene June Daniel  
David Gordon *Weaver*  
engaged 1951  
Married October

Turns for tea  
Vera Booth  
Ellen Tanner  
Margaret Dyer  
Minnie Vincent  
Isabel Hen...  
Barbara Jones  
Isabel Day  
. . . . Ellens  
Grace Gardener  
Peggy Ellens  
Betty Tanner  
Edna Smith

We would love to hear from Valerie Price, Anna Lee, and June Parry who married John Daniels. Were you on the tea rota? Did you know of John Shorter and R P Turner, who both served in the Army Apprentices School in Harrogate?

## Award for Dr. Hugh Kearsey

A special certificate of Recognition has been newly created by the Society of Genealogists to recognise exceptional contributions to genealogy by individuals and institutions worldwide. One of the first of four candidates that have been recognised by the newly formed awards panel for the new Certificate in 2013 was a member of this group's Committee, Hugh Kearsey.



Hugh was awarded the Certificate “*for actively ensuring a wider availability of materials enabling others to pursue family history in Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire*”.

Hugh is at present President of the Oxfordshire Family History Society and a member of the Committee of Gloucestershire Family History Society. He was presented with the Certificate by Dr. Colin Chapman, Chairman of the Fellows of the Society of Genealogists and President of Gloucestershire Family History Society at the Oxfordshire Family History Society Open Day on 5<sup>th</sup> October at Woodstock.



Hugh and Jean Kearsley with GFHS President, Dr. Colin Chapman and GFHS Chairman, David Howells.

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## Colonial Connection

### Diana Wall

I belong to Avening Women's Institute and this summer a writing competition was run in southern Gloucestershire – a piece of prose or poetry on the theme of “Colonial Connection” in less than a hundred words. I chose a local history theme and my entry (which won!) is reproduced here.

*Headstones of Portland Marble, bearing the Australian Flying Corps badge, in a Cotswold country cemetery – could a more poignant “Colonial Connection” be found?*

*They bear witness to the young men from the Antipodes who, in the last, dark days of the Great War, died whilst learning the tactics of aerial warfare in the skies above Leighterton and Minchinhampton. Their supreme sacrifice embodies the close relationship between “The Mother Country” and the colonies; the values for which those young men gave their lives are now enshrined in the constitution of an independent Australia. Surely this is the ultimate “Colonial Connection”?*

## **Roll of Honour Project 2013/14**

Like many other groups in the country, Minchinhampton Local History Group is undertaking a major project linked to the centenary in 2014 of the outbreak of World War I. The aim is to research the men who gave their lives in the Great War and are commemorated on the war memorials within the parish. In 1924 the embryo local branch of the British Legion compiled a list of those from the town, as well as from Box and Hyde, who died during the conflict, giving brief details of the service of each man. This will be the focus of the initial research, but it will also be extended to Amberley and Brimscombe, with the names recorded on those memorials.

A loose-leaf book will be compiled, with each man's details contained in a plastic wallet; some stories may be so detailed that they may be used in an exhibit in the local history exhibition to be held in October 2014. The loose-leaf book will be a valuable resource for the Local History Collection housed at the Trap House, by kind permission of Minchinhampton Parish Council. It is anticipated that many people who are studying their family history may wish to consult the resource, not just in 2014 but also in the future.

Many volunteers, drawn from the membership and the wider public, are engaged on researching individuals, utilising many sources including local newspapers and magazines, family resources such as photographs and postcards as well as the Gloucestershire Archives. In this electronic age the Internet is providing numerous valuable leads, through subscriptions to "Ancestry" and "Find my Past" as well as free sites such as "Long and Winding Trail", "Western Front Association", "Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum" and the "Commonwealth War Graves Commission". Whatever facts are discovered about a serviceman, whether few or many, the information will be invaluable in building a picture of this important period in local, as well as national and international history.