

From flood to freeze

Avalon almost became isles again in the heavy late-November rains. Under clear skies and a full moon on Wednesday 28 the night temperature fell to -4°C . Neill Bonham caught this view from the Actis estate toward Butleigh early on the Thursday before the ice melted. Cow Bridge and the moor roads were closed, causing traffic queues at Street.

David Thomas of the Mid-Somerset Camera Club viewed the Tor from across the ancient-and-new glass lake. The website has a link to more flood photos by them and Mike Mathias.

In past centuries – until about 1930 – it was common for people living on the Levels to travel to Glastonbury in winter by boat. John Coles tells of his father-in-law having to row to school in Meare, and then getting a clip round the ear for being late.



Ian Rands retires after 40 years planting thousands of trees *Jim Nagel*

Some 30 members attended the society's 42nd annual general meeting on Friday November 23, thanks to coverage in the local press and on Glastonbury FM radio as well as by word of mouth.

After many years of service, Janet Morland and Ian Rands stood down as treasurer and deputy chairman, having given notice several months ago. The meeting elected Kevin Mitchell and Roger Forsey (who is also secretary) to take over the respective roles.

Review of 2012 – Alan Fear, as chairman of the society, thanked the town council for organizing Jubilee events. The Conservation Society led a walk around the parish boundary, which had not been done since the 1960s, on June 2. The seven-hour walk began with 44 people and finished with 34.

He repeated thanks to Alan Gloak and Colin Wells-Brown for inviting Conservation Society members to a social evening in their garden at Coombe House this August again. The event was

well supported, and the weather was kind to us. Despite the very wet summer the garden was as beautiful as ever. He was sorry to report, though, that Colin has been seriously ill for a few months.

Further events of 2012 are recalled in Chairman's Notes on page 2.

Trees – Wearing his other hat as trees coordinator, Alan said that unfortunately no tree-planting had taken place in 2012, because grants are no longer available in this era of government austerity. During the year he had prepared four estimates for landowners interested in having trees planted, but none of them followed up.

However, on the day after the AGM Alan and other volunteers were to help the Woodland Trust plant 400 trees as a further celebration of the Jubilee. The only other winter tree-planting jobs so far booked are on Ian Tucker's land and an orchard at Bushy Coombe to be tidied. "So it's going to be a very quiet year again," Alan told the meeting. Trees

along the bypass are to get a trim.

Finances – In her final annual report as treasurer, Janet Morland said that in 2012 we spent a bit more than our income. "But we still have reserves thanks to Ian's work on trees years ago, with grants. Subscriptions are slightly down, and we are relying on the newsletter to send out reminders." A form is enclosed with this newsletter for members to update their record.

• See page 2 for a summary of the accounts and a list of the current officers and committee with contact details.

Major memories of trees

"Farewells are supposed to be sad things, but I'll endeavour to make mine a reminder of memories," Major Ian Rands said to the AGM as he stepped down from the committee after 40 years. He had served as treasurer, trees coordinator and most recently as deputy chairman. "I'm retiring because I'm too ancient."

▶ continued on page 2

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(He turned 85 this year and recently had a seventh stent.)

Ian has particularly sharp memories of the thousands of little nails that had to be pulled from the old railway canopy to move it from the disused Glastonbury station to St John's carpark. The project won a Civic Trust award for the Conservation Society in 1984.

The first big tree project was the copse on Wearyall Hill in 1989—Dennis Allen and John Morland did much of the work of slashing and clearing old trees and brush, then fencing and planting 450 young trees. Steve Leighton and children from Edgarley school extended the copse the next year with another 250 trees.

The cedar avenue at Butleigh cost £5,000 but won three large prizes for the society's coffers. The tenant farmer, Mike Chaddock, hauled water from the Brue in a tanker and then Dick Alderton, Hilary Shakespeare and Ian toiled to carry it by bucket to the 87 trees newly planted at £50 each.

And the oak row at Wick, leading to Gog and Magog: is it visible from the Moon? "Maybe it will be in its day." It's a mile long and consists of 135 trees.



Ian Rands, MBE 2006

The team planted 1,000 cider-apple and other fruit trees on many sites in Glastonbury and 10 miles around; Adrian Pearse earned the title of champion digger. At Watchwell Drove, with 150 withies plus replantings, John Ancombe worked on despite a blizzard.

At East Pennard and Pylle, Keith Matthews developed a reputation as the digger most likely to choose the very spot that concealed concrete blocks.

The routine was that Ian met the delivery of trees on Tuesdays and

Fridays, then Terry and Anne Carmen early on Wednesdays and Saturdays laid out saplings in groups of five (traditional hedges have three hawthorns and two something-elses), and then the planters set to work. At all the sites, the Carmens "as quartermasters and do-wallahs" brought along coffee and cakes.

"I have many photographs and records that cause me happy smiles," Ian concluded, "and memories of cooperation and worthwhile achievement—and friendships, for which many thanks."

• By the time Ian's heart told him to step down as tree coordinator in 2006, the society had planted 37,500 trees.

Coles on peat

After the business part of the AGM, John Coles introduced the world premiere of his latest film, fittingly entitled *Coles on Peat*. In it he interviews today's peatworkers on the Levels around Sharpham and Westhay, who compare modern methods with those of their grandparents.

Katie Marsh on film says Somerset has found it hard to compete against the grants given to the Irish peat industry. For the camera, she had a first go at digging 28-pound peat blocks by hand the way her family did for 150 years.

Her father Jimmy tells how his mother and aunt routinely used ropes to pull a boat loaded with peat along the rhyme to Sharpham Crossing; then by hand they transferred 4,000 blocks to a horse-drawn cart to go to Glastonbury station—mostly for London people who burned peat in their fireplaces. This boat is now in the Rural Life Museum.

Ben Leyland (who often appears on



Loading a peat cart at Westhay in 1905. Blocks of cut peat were systematically stacked in "ruckles" (usually much larger than the one in this glass-plate photo) so the air can dry them.

BBC *Countryfile*) says that unlike other parts of the country, former peat sites in Somerset have been left in an improved state, as varied habitats for wildlife.

The second half of *Coles on Peat* is fascinating footage probably from the 1920s of working Somerset's peat back then. John found nothing in the old silent film or its occasional title screens to identify its maker or exact date.

Annual accounts Janet Morland

Income	2011-12	2010-11
Subs	807.50	980.50
Talks	19.00	29.27
Trees		462.00
Footpath books	168.00	174.00
Donations	10.00	25.00
CCLA interest		60.33
Natwest interest	79.94	0.18
Gift Aid	0.17	110.30
<i>total</i>	<i>1,084.61</i>	<i>1,841.58</i>

Expenditure	2011-12	2010-11
Trees		322.00
Newsletters	389.16	905.06
Talks	54.00	30.00
Administration		46.26
RAFA		35.00
Display		283.18
Insurance	201.91	200.00
Glastonbury appraisal		1,000.00
Hedge trimmer; petrol	137.54	
Cage for Holy Thorn	756.00	
<i>total</i>	<i>1,538.61</i>	<i>2,821.50</i>

Balances at July 31	2011	2012
Current account	619.40	15.25
Reserve account	435.99	436.20
CCLA	9,916.21	9,996.15
Cash		70.00
<i>Total</i>	<i>10,971.60</i>	<i>10,517.60</i>
add income	1,084.61	
less expenses	-1,538.61	
= Balances 2012 July 31	10,517.60	

Chairman's notes Alan Fear

Wilfrid Road – Congratulations to the Street Society (our counterpart in Street) for a well attended Heritage Open Day at Wilfrid Road. Three houses were open to the public on a September Sunday, and at one point there was a queue to look around. I thoroughly enjoyed my visit. Let's hope we see more local open days in the future.

Blooming gold – Walking around Glastonbury High Street during August and September you could see why the town received Mendip in Bloom's Gold

award—and Southwest in Bloom's silver-gilt—for all the colourful hanging baskets and plantings. Many positive comments came from both locals and visitors. All the Union flags and flowers this summer for the Jubilee and Olympics really brightened up the town. Thanks are due to the Glastonbury in Bloom crew for all their hard work.

Clear-up at new park – During October I headed a clearance party at Northover Park (which is alongside the A39 opposite the Morland site). I contacted all the cadets and Scouts, who said they would be willing to help clear the site of rubble.

If any readers have young trees that they don't want, please let me know: we can plant them in the park this winter.

Consoc contacts	chairman & trees	Alan Fear	83 3185	treasurer	Kevin Mitchell	0796 887 6440
	president	John Brunsdon	83 1283	footpaths	Nathan Pritchard	0775 221 3128
planning	secretary & vice-chairman	Roger Forsey	83 1895	newsletter	Jim Nagel	83 3603
		Paul Branson	83 2026	talks	Stuart Marsh	83 4727
				history	Adrian Pearse (01749)	89 0216

To email, use chairman@, trees@, etc—for example, newsletter@glastonburyconservation.org.uk

2,400 flock to open day at refurbished Red Brick Building *Jim Nagel*

A student sit-in saved them from the bulldozers in January 2009, and now the redbrick buildings that the Morland tannery put up a century ago are nearly ready for their 21st-century life as studios for artists and small businesses.

Around 2,400 people came to an open Sunday on October 21 to have a look around inside. Organizers had to stop more people entering until some of the visitors came out. "It was a stunning success," said Robin Howell, the site manager.

The open day was to promote a new Red Brick Building share offer to raise £75,000 for a biomass heating system for the whole site. Shareholders and investors have already raised £320,000 for the renovation work so far. Much of the work has been done by volunteers.

A plumber is installing the heating system now and it should be running by Christmas. In January the first tenants move in—almost all space is booked in buildings A and B; building C remains as a future project.

The day also marked the opening of the Red Brick Cafe in the main building and the return of live shows on Glastonbury FM 107.1, which recently moved its studios from a hut at the football ground to the Red Brick site.

Bridgwater College is finishing plans for the lighting and electrical outlets required in its space at the back of building B. The college specializes in

construction trades, and the Red Brick Buildings make an ideal practice ground for courses in refurbishing old buildings.

Whitbread and its contractor at the Premier Inn going up next door have donated surplus building materials and offered to asphalt the main path to the Red Brick Building.



The massive wooden beams and superb north light impressed the crowds. In January, first tenants are expected to move in; nearly all space is booked.

Tesco's neon sign makes some see red

Meanwhile, the new Tesco supermarket, backing onto the old Morland-Baily tannery site, began trading on November 19, right after carnival weekend. It is open 24 hours.

The big sign on Tesco's roof facing the town, Wearyall Hill and the Tor has prompted 500 people to sign a petition against it: "A red neon sky at night is not a delight." (A Google search easily finds the petition.)

Tesco says the 25,000-sq-ft store is 90% carbon-neutral: it has timber cladding at the front, windcatchers on its curved roof and a combined heat and power plant. The public entrance is from

the A39–A361 roundabout; delivery lorries use the Morland traffic lights to get to Tesco's less attractive rear, which is on the former site of Avalon Plastics.

Nearby, the 60-room Premier Inn and Whitbread pub-restaurant have sprung up nearly as quickly as mushrooms. Their frontage on the A39 is a total contrast to the dereliction of the tannery site for the past 30 years—the first impression of Glastonbury for visitors arriving from the M5 direction.

The inside of the inn is being fitted out now, and signs are lit. The first date available to book (at £63 for room only) on the Premier Inn website is February 5.

Mendip's Heritage Champion: 'Please make use of me' *John Brunsdon*

As Mendip's designated "Heritage Champion", I attended the bi-annual conference hosted by English Heritage, at Painters' Hall in the City of London. Around 80 delegates from across the country were addressed in keynote speeches by Ed Vaizey, the government minister, and Baroness Andrews, the English Heritage chairmn.

Recent damage to Priddy Rings and the resulting prosecution were mentioned in Session 2, which was about heritage crime and the role of the private sector. Also discussed was an improved crime response system by the police, specifically related to heritage crime—including tackling the theft of lead off church roofs.

Session 3 addressed heritage at risk and local listing. Mendip is fortunate in not having the extensive at-risk buildings that other authorities have to cope with. Overall, the numbers are dropping, though. Local listing depends on knowledgeable local voluntary activists—we all have to encourage them. [The person carrying out this task for Glastonbury is Neill Bonham.] Identification of heritage buildings and educating all concerned



Red indicates the bulldozed area at one of the four 5,000-year-old Priddy Rings. Roger Penny, 73, a retired plant-hire manager, was fined £10,000 at Taunton Crown Court in October for having contractors "tidy up" by filling swallet holes with rubble last year. He agreed to pay another £38,000 toward restoration. He knew it was a Scheduled Ancient Monument and told workmen not to touch it, but part of the monument is visible only from the air. He had not consulted English Heritage before the work began. (Photo from web: Megalithic.co.uk)

owners, developers, councillors and officers is the key to appreciating and protecting an area's character.

"Article 4 direction" under the Town and Country Planning legislation is now widely being used nationally (it was introduced at Glastonbury this summer: *see Newsletter 137*). Some authorities include Article 4 direction as routine when creating new Conservation Areas. Some authorities report altered features actually being reinstated, thus increasing property values.

Session 4 of the conference looked at ways of enhancing the role of Heritage Champions. Basically, the role is about involvement and consulting. At the moment I see my role as flagging up issues and being available. Please make use of me.

The evening reception was addressed by the secretary of the Painters' Guild. He outlined how the ancient livery guilds came about and the charitable work now undertaken. The Painters' first house burnt down in the great fire of London. Today's building is full of paintings. A lovely portrait of the late Queen Mother was particularly worthy.

Preserving the Lake Village *Adrian Pearse*

The results of a three-year project to assess conditions for preserving the ancient Glastonbury Lake Village *in situ* were outlined to the Antiquarian Society in March by Louise Jones, a graduate archaeology student at Reading University.

The project, launched in 2008, investigated the sedimentary context of the Lake Village using 30 cores from across the site. It also logged changes in the depth of the water table and monitored water chemistry.

Conditions at the Glastonbury Lake Village have resulted in exceptional preservation, but these circumstances are not guaranteed for the future; the research data will guide landscape use and management practices to mitigate potential threats to the site.

Arthur Bulleid's work after 1892 revealed an Iron Age settlement lasting from about 250 BC to about 50 BC, comprising 90 mounds occupied by 40 round houses, and a mass of organic and inorganic remains. In 2004 it was noted that in summer the water table level falls below the top level of the remains, thereby threatening their preservation by introducing aerobic conditions.

However, the research project found that a silty clay layer near the surface, derived from flooding by the Brue, forms a barrier against desiccation and in winter creates a perched water table above the real water table. A fluctuating series of water tables across the site was revealed, and analysis of water pH and chemistry found these conditions to be beneficial for preservation: there was no evidence for acidification, as at Star Carr in East Anglia.

External factors such as climate change and possible falls in nearby water



Well-dressed visitors in the 1890s inspect Bulleid's discovery of the iron-age Lake Village between Glastonbury and Godney. [From a glass lantern slide in Adrian Pearse's collection]

levels make monitoring of ground conditions an essential tool in future management of the site.

Abbey excavations 1904–79

“Unlocking the evidence” was the title of Dr Cheryl Allum's review of the Abbey excavation records, in an April talk to the Antiquarian Society. A new geophysical survey enables greater understanding of the often inadequate records kept by archaeologists in the past century. It also provides new interpretations and discoveries to augment earlier findings.

The excavation archive begins with the records of Sir William St John Hope from 1903, followed by those of Frederick Bligh Bond, who worked for the Church of England as the site's new owner and the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society between 1908 and 1922. Theodore Fyfe undertook excavations in 1926–27, followed by Peers, Clapham and Horne, 1928–39. Raleigh Radford's work from

1951 to 1964 produced limited publication, and William Wedlake's in 1978–79 no publication at all.

In general, excavation reports were not comprehensive and often were biased towards various conjectures of the excavators or simply unreliable. The discovery of Radford's full excavation notes in 1998 provided an opportunity to tie together finds, photographs and notes. Geophysical evidence could accurately locate earlier excavation trenches and other features, and also enable further, non-destructive, interpretation.

A review of the evidence—the archive, the finds and geophysical examination—shows long occupation of the site to some degree. There is late Bronze Age flint, Iron Age pottery and Roman pottery and (later re-used) tile; 21 sherds of post-Roman B2 ware from the Byzantine territory have also been identified. Radford's discovery of the Saxon enclosure ditch under the north transept and chapter house has been confirmed.

The finding of Saxon glass furnaces is of international significance. There appear to be at least five. Radiocarbon dating places them in the seventh and eighth centuries—the earliest in the country thus far discovered. They were constructed from robbed Roman tile, though there is no evidence for the source buildings.

The excavation records from the 1926–28 seasons claim three phases of Saxon churches, but the limited evidence they provide is insufficient to confirm the claim. Evidence of an early cloister south of the cemetery is inconclusive. It has, however, been possible to relate the two Norman churches to the standing remains: the post-fire church was built immediately east of its predecessor.

The research project will be completed by the end of this year, and results will be published in 2014.

Winter and spring talks

- * **January 18**—“*Abbey afterlife*”: Dr Adam Stout discusses new work on the fate and fortunes of the Abbey between the Dissolution and 1825. A
- * **February 15**—“*Secular and monastic communities*”: Jon Cannon, writer of the recent BBC documentary *How to build a cathedral*, on how medieval cathedral and abbey churches in Glastonbury, Bath and Wells functioned as institutions A
- * **March 15**—“*More Glastonbury police-court records*”: David Orchard, the Antiquarian Society librarian, looks at the town in the first half of the 20th century through the eyes of the local constabulary. A
- * **April 12**—“*Glastonbury's 7th-century Saxon glass furnaces*”: Cheryl Green (Allum) of the University of Reading on recent excavations at the Abbey. A
- * **May 17**—“*Glastonbury and Rome*”: Tim Hopkinson-Ball counterbalances the usual Glastonbury mystical and occult focus with a look at the historical, spiritual and legendary ties with Rome—why was Glastonbury called *Roma Secunda*? A

Where and when

A = Glastonbury Antiquarian Society: **Fridays at 7:30pm** in library, Archers Way.

The seafaring Hood family: Butleigh brothers, Dorset cousins AP

In 1740 when Capt. Thomas Smith was travelling from Plymouth to London his carriage broke down at Butleigh. While it was being repaired he enjoyed the hospitality of the Hood family at Butleigh Vicarage. Before leaving he offered to take one of the vicar's sons to sea. The eldest, Samuel, aged 15, declined, but his 13-year-old brother Alexander took the opportunity.

Thus began the notable naval careers of the two Hood brothers from Butleigh, and also, subsequently, of their two Dorset cousins—who, confusingly, were also named Alexander and Samuel Hood. The story was narrated, complete with family portraits, to a Conservation Society meeting on August 17 by the Revd Robin Ray, who is married to Sylvia Acland-Hood.

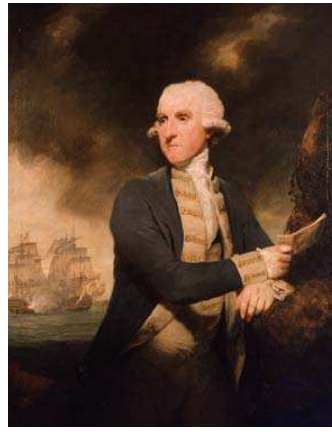
Two brothers stayed at home: Arthur succeeded his father as vicar of Butleigh, and died in his 30s; another son drowned in the Brue.

Alexander Hood in 1741 became

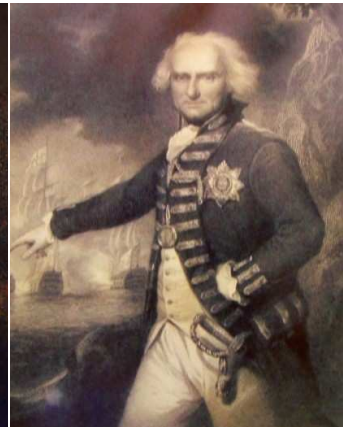
Capt. Smith's servant on HMS *Rodney*. His brother Samuel soon joined him.

The second half of the 18th century and first part of the 19th was a period of almost continual warfare as Britain established its place in the world.

Samuel Hood's naval career involved action against the French on numerous occasions, after which he became Commissioner of Portsmouth Dockyard and Naval Academy. He was a mentor to young Horatio Nelson, who reportedly called Hood "the greatest sea officer I ever knew". Recalled to active service aged 69, Hood was instrumental in the taking of Toulon. He became MP for Westminster, and was created Viscount Hood, and received



Admiral Sir Samuel Hood (later Viscount Hood), 1724–1816, born at Butleigh. The 1783 painting by Reynolds hangs in Manchester.



Alexander Hood, 1726–1814, brother of Samuel, became Viscount Bridport and lived at Cricket St Thomas, near Chard.

Nelson's body at Greenwich after Trafalgar. He lived to the age of 91.

Alexander's career showed him to be a great naval tactician. Highlights included the recapture of the 60-gun HMS *Warwick* from the French. He served in the naval theatres of the American Revolutionary War, and was afterwards in charge of the Royal Yacht and MP for Bridgwater—the first town to petition for the abolition of the slave trade in 1785. He returned to sea as Vice-Admiral on HMS *Royal George*, and was commander of the Channel Fleet. Living at Cricket St Thomas, he died in 1815 as Viscount Bridport.

Samuel and Alexander sponsored two of their Dorset cousins, a generation younger, to enter a naval career. The Dorset Alexander, aged 9½, joined in 1767, and when aged 14 accompanied Captain Cook on the *Resolution* on his second voyage around the world. In the American War of Independence he served in the West Indies. He

married Elizabeth Periam of (Butleigh) Wootton House, establishing the current branch of the family. In action against the French in 1798 he was wounded and died at the point of accepting the surrender of the French ship *Hercule*.

His younger brother—another Samuel—joined the Navy aged 14 and served in the American and French wars. He was with Nelson at the battle of the Nile. In 1805 he lost an arm in a battle and was then in action in the conflict between Sweden and Russia. He died of fever in Madras in 1814.

The 110-foot Hood column at Butleigh was erected in his honour by the subscription of his officers and men. [The mile-long cedar avenue at Butleigh originally linked the monument to the Hood family home.]



The younger Capt. Alexander Hood, 1758–98, was born in Dorset and after marriage lived at Butleigh Wootton. Singleton painted his death.



Vice-admiral Sir Samuel Hood, 1762–1814. Like his contemporary Nelson, he lost an arm in battle. His men raised funds to erect the pillar above Butleigh in his memory.

How old police courts did without ASBOs AP

Some interesting cases are to be found in records of the Glastonbury police court preserved in the Antiquarian Society's library, as David Orchard, the librarian, showed at the society's May meeting.

The police court was the name for the lowest tier of the court system—the magistrates' court, which after 1910 was held in the purpose-built courtroom in Benedict Street, where the police brought charges. The system lasted until the 1940s: the Criminal Justice Act 1948, the Justices of the Peace Act 1949 and further changes in the 1950s produced the court framework existing today.

Police courts dealt with more trivial offences and dispensed fines and

sentences; more serious cases were sent to the Assizes. Examples included that of the *Police v. Wm. Rabjohns*, charged with setting fire to a rick of hay at Meare in 1908. This case was passed to the Assizes, whereas in *Police v. Thos. Russell* the defendant was fined £1 and costs for wanting to fight his sister.

Many of the cases involved drunkenness and brawling, disorderly conduct, swearing and what is now termed antisocial behaviour as well as other "irregularities" by the generally feckless and improvident of the locality. Among the records are characters such as the Dickensianly named Shadrack Giblet, a local beer-house keeper.

In 1662 the Revd Samuel Winney, vicar of St John's Church but of a Presbyterian persuasion, felt unable to sign up to the "39 Articles of the Act of Uniformity" and the imposition of the just-published *Book of Common Prayer*. He was ejected from his living, like 2,000 others nationwide.

[The event became known as "the Great Ejection" or "Black Bartholomew's Day", because it took place on August 24, St Bartholomew's Day. Somerset had 99 ministers ejected, more than any other county. In addition, they and Roman Catholics and Jews were barred from public office, from voting and from the universities. —Ed.]

This meant Mr Winney lost his income and his family's home, he was not allowed to practise his faith, as he saw it, publicly. He did not cease to minister, though. Some accounts say 300 of his flock left St John's with him. They worshipped in a barn according to one account, in private houses according to other records.

He did not minister alone: there were some nine other dissenting ministers in Glastonbury in 1672 at the time of Charles II's Declaration of Indulgence, when they could again be licensed to lead worship.

In 1702 the "Old Church", as at least one of these groupings was known, started to meet in the upper room of the Ship Inn, which (like buildings in the Shambles in York) overhung the High Street.

By 1705 the congregation had bought the inn, which was of a wooden construction. This building began to show its age, so in 1814 the current building was constructed. At this point it became known as the Independent Chapel.

By 1872 it was described as Congregational. This is a significant description, as it points to our way of government,

on the face of it democratic: the Church Meeting, not the minister or some form of hierarchy, makes the decisions about its future—it's the gathered people themselves "discerning the mind of Christ".

Ordained ministers are part of the eldership and, as their title suggests, serve their community both within and without the church building. All are seen as ministers though as the whole people of God, as all have access to God through the grace of Christ. We are a thoroughly Trinitarian church; indeed our emphasis is more on a perfected community to mirror this Unity in Diversity than on saved individuals and so we might be criticized for being too this-worldly as we tackle head-on the wrongs of current society and seek its reform as did John Calvin in Geneva 500 years ago, to whom we owe our origin.

Forty years ago we changed our name again and became the United Reformed Church (URC)—do note the *-ed*—being a union with English Presbyterians. We saw our role as spearheading church unity and imagined by now that we would be no more, there being but one Christian Church. It was not to be, but we have, since then, united with the Churches of Christ in 1980 and Scottish Congregationalists in 2000.

We are proud to work locally on a regular basis with St Benedict's and with the Methodist church and are glad that the other churches in Glastonbury joined us on November 4 to celebrate our 350 years in Glastonbury. The

service included excerpts from a specially commissioned play and an exhibition of 350 years of service to the community, including, for a time, planting a Sunday school and leading worship in the Windmill Hill community hall.

It was also an occasion to celebrate some improvements in access to our main building.

United Reformed Church marks 350 years since ejection of St John's vicar

Evelyn Ridout



Dissenters met from 1702 in the old Ship Inn in the High Street, rebuilt in 1814 as the "Independent Chapel". The grand portico entrance was added in 1898. Presbyterians merged in 1972 and it became the United Reformed Church.



"Reflections on glass" is an exhibition of glass by various artists in the Abbey till January 27.

Membership update

A form is enclosed with most copies of this issue. Please check that your membership details are correct.

If you read a complimentary copy of the newsletter, would you consider subscribing officially? Only £5 a year.

Lavish book records Cary's oral history

A lavish new publication is newly out from the Castle Cary and Ansford Living History Group, recording the memories of local residents and adding to knowledge of the history of the area.

More Memories of Castle Cary and Ansford has some 40 chapters, reaching back to the diary of John Cannon in the 18th century and the memories of Cornelius Martin and recalling local businesses such as Donne's and Boyd's.

Many sections cover the memories of residents and evacuees during the Second World War and other aspects of local life in the 20th century. The final chapter deals with the origins of the many fascinating local street names.

This substantial body of text is supported by more than 350 illustrations in both colour and black-and-white,

many of them never before reproduced.

"The book is of interest to people who know Castle Cary or who wish to learn more about the history and life of a small country town," the leaflet says. "Also ideal as a gift, this is a book to be read, treasured and looked at time and time again."

The book is printed to a high standard in A4 format, and comes as a hardback at £25 or as a limited edition of only 50 copies hand-bound in quarter-leather at £60. Contact Chris Hicks (chrishicksbookbinder@btinternet.com, 01963 35 9019) or Adrian Pearse (01749 68 8116, avp.58@btinternet.com).

Nothing like this has been done for Glastonbury!" Adrian remarked to the Conservation Society committee.