

Trevor Adams, a long-serving member of Glastonbury Conservation Society, died on November 23 at the age of 73.

He came to Glastonbury in 1963 to join the veterinary practice of Fletcher and Brunsdon on the personal recommendation of Professor Charlie Grunsell of Bristol University veterinary school at Langford. His quiet, pleasant professional manner made him an instant success with anxious farmers and pet-owners alike, and he was soon to join us as a partner in the firm.

At first he lodged with the Harry and Florence Williams family at Coombe House in Bovetown and then, on marrying Joan Durston from Wraxall near Bristol, set up home on the Avalon estate. When the Lodge in Coursing Batch became available, they moved and raised their family—Neil, Juliet and Miles—in this Italianate Victorian house with its lovely views and large garden.

Trevor worked hard in the garden, and when farmer Len Berrow sold him more land, planted a number of trees now well established. Later he decided to keep bees, along with the succession of Old English sheepdogs that he and Joan kept, ever since month four of their marriage. A large house is a challenge, but Trevor installed secondary glazing and later solar panels. Neighbours would comment on his make-do-and-mend industry, especially in the early days of living at the Lodge.

Trevor managed all this on top of his demanding veterinary commitment. Times were changing in farming and veterinary practice generally. Trevor was quick to point out that our firm had to adapt accordingly, especially with expanding work and staffing; thanks to him we managed well and succeeded. When Brian Fletcher retired, Trevor took over the equine work. He was already active in the British Veterinary



Trevor with the Tokyo skyline behind him in 2005 — he taught Japanese colleagues about homeopathic medicine for animals.

Association and held an advanced dairy veterinary certificate.

After I too retired from the practice—which became the Orchard Veterinary Group—Trevor became increasingly interested in alternative veterinary medicine, particularly homeopathic methods. For a while he held a clinic near Bath and was invited to give lectures in Japan and elsewhere.

Trevor involved himself fully in the community. Among his many activities he was a Round Tabler, a Rotarian and a Justice of the Peace (magistrate). He raised funds to build the Scout Hut in Benedict Street and became group chairman of the Scouts. He was chairman of governors at St John's School and helped raise funds to build its swimming pool. And he served for many

years as churchwarden at St John's—quite recently with the major proposals for a new floor, general reordering and a porch for the west door. He was a long-serving member of Glastonbury Conservation Society.

He was a brave man, suffering a protracted battle with leukaemia. Along with Joan and his family we all miss him greatly. Now he is at peace in a beautiful part of the Glastonbury that he served so well.

• From the obituary by *Niall Taylor*, a colleague, in the *Veterinary Record*:

When Trevor became a partner in 1968 the Glastonbury veterinary practice was predominantly dairy-based with many small, village farms on the books and as many as 20 visits for one vet in a single morning. Facilities for small animals were limited; a waiting-room doubled as an operating theatre in the back room of the shop premises which comprised the main practice.

During his nearly 40 years with the practice he demonstrated a first-class head for business and, early on, introduced computerized herd health. Trevor oversaw the construction of two custom-build premises and witnessed both the rise of the small-animal side of the business and the consolidation of the farm side. He once remarked that on the two-mile journey to one of his last calls before retiring, he counted more than a dozen farms he used to visit when he started work that were now closed down.

Trevor was one of the most modest, compassionate and caring people one could have known, both within the profession and elsewhere. His considerate, gentlemanly manner influenced all those around him and suffused into the culture of the practice, in a way that has lasted to this day; it can honestly be said no one ever had a bad word to say about him.



**Richard Senior**, born in 1931 at Alderley Edge in Cheshire, died peacefully at home in Glastonbury on August 22 in 2014.

Educated at Shrewsbury School, Richard became a professional musician with a calling rather unusual for the time: he played electronic organ, as the backing musician for visiting artists at various pop venues. His particular skill was improvisation, to support and glamorize each artist. Usually these were young performers on their way up, some of whom went on to become big stars: Sandie Shaw, Georgie Fame, Roy Castle, Danny Williams, Faith Brown. As a child, Richard had avidly listened to every theatre-organ broadcast on the radio and could identify the individual sound of every organ in Britain.

Bereaved in 2003, he came to Glastonbury to share The Pump House, Magdalene Street, with Susanna van Rose and the two pianos on which they played duets. He became a stalwart in the local bridge scene, playing at Coxley, Street, Wedmore and Wells.

Volunteering for the Conservation Society, Richard painstakingly typed out the Glastonbury history written in 1890 by G.W. Wright, which will soon appear as a Consoc booklet.



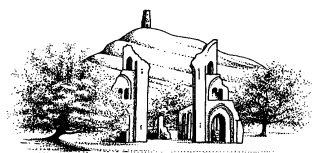
**Jeannie Wall**, when the Conservation Society three years ago needed a newsletter distributor for her neighbourhood, cheerfully said she had Alzheimer's disease, "but I can certainly do that job." She died in November 2014, of cancer.

Born in May 1938, Jeannie grew up in Bushey, Herts, trained as a nurse at St Mary's, Paddington, and became a health visitor in Watford. In 1966 she married David Wall and they moved to Glastonbury—living for the past 40 years at 1 Torview Avenue. She worked as a nurse at Clarks until twin sons Nick and Tim were born. Then came a daughter, Tracy (Williams), who lives just down the road. Jeannie was active in many local organizations, including the U3A. She was a founder of the Abbey Croquet Club and a life member of the Conservation Society.

**Consoc contacts**

<b>chairman &amp; trees</b>	Alan Fear 83 3185	<b>treasurer</b>	Kevin Mitchell 0796 887 6440
<b>president</b>	John Brunsdon 83 1283	<b>footpaths</b>	Nathan Pritchard 0775 221 3128
<b>secretary &amp; vice-chairman</b>		<b>editor</b>	Jim Nagel 83 3603
	Roger Forsey 83 1895	<b>talks</b>	Stuart Marsh 83 4727
<b>planning</b>	Jim Gosling 83 2460	<b>history</b>	Adrian Pearse (01749) 89 0216

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



**Newsletter numbering**

No issue number was printed on the "Spring 2015" newsletter that was delivered in April. It should have said 142. Hence the one you are now reading is Newsletter 143.

**Chairman's notes**

*Alan Fear*

Hello and welcome to summer. At last the weather has warmed up. Plants in and around the town are in blossom. The town centre is looking wonderful, thanks to Glastonbury in Bloom: the volunteers' time in planting and watering all the displays is paying off.

The judges visited Glastonbury on Monday July 20: they looked at the Town Hall, the allotments and the wildflowers at the cemetery as well as the town in general, accompanied by Ian Tucker as chairman of Glastonbury in Bloom and John Brunsdon. We have to wait for September to hear about prizes.

**Reclamation yard** — Michael Evans gave us a guided tour around Glastonbury Reclamation Yard on May 20. It was well attended by our members and really quite informative. Thanks, Mike, for showing us around. [Page 3]

**Coombe House gardens open to Consoc members**

**Friday July 31, from 6 to 8:30pm**



**Coombe House gardens** — Alan Gloak again invites Conservation Society members to enjoy his gardens, on the evening of Friday July 31 from 6 to 8:30pm. If you have never seen these spectacular gardens sloping down into Bushy Coombe, it is well worth a visit.

Parking is difficult, so walk there if you can. Please be aware that if you drive, you will have to park up around Wick Hollow and walk down to Coombe House (88 Bovetown).

**Footpath snippers** — Please do remember to take secateurs out with you to clip the odd bramble branch you encounter when out walking. Better still, contact Nathan Pritchard and identify a particular path you can look after regularly. Summer growth comes all at once, so report any difficulties you may come across.



With render removed to reveal the Abbey stone from which they are built, the houses at 43 and 45 Benedict Street gain character.

The two properties at right could well be a century younger. An inscription over the door of 49 says 1798.

On the left, the larger and comparatively recent Alma Flats building (41) sorely needs some tender loving care.

**Lorry crash transforms Benedict Street by revealing walls of Abbey stone** *Jim Nagel*

When a not-quite-awake reversing lorry struck the wall of 45 Benedict Street early one morning last winter and dislodged some of its rendering, it prompted a striking improvement to the neighbourhood.

The owner of the cottage, Rik Cook, decided to complete the job and removed the entire two-inch layer of cement from the front of the house, revealing Abbey stone underneath. Next door at 43, Dave Nurse followed suit. The new-old look of the 17th-century cottages has brought new life to the streetscape.

"Why was it ever rendered back in the 1950s or 60s?" Rik asks. "It was a real joy doing that job at the front, and it gives you confidence to do the rest." First he wants to reroute the cables that mar the frontage, and then a bigger job: he has planning permission to replace some shoddy work at the back of the house with a two-bedroom extension befitting the original cottage.

The de-rendering revealed original lintels of petrified oak, so solid that Rik broke three drill bits in attempting to install curtains. He has ordered special Danish oil to treat the old timbers.



A lorry accidentally knocked drab pebbledash off the right of 45 Benedict Street, whereupon the owner and his neighbour stripped it all off to show the Abbey stone of their 17th-century cottages.

At the moment he is in the process of refurbishing the front door, which will be sage green to complement the colour of the newly revealed old stone.

"Let the walls breathe," is Rik Cook's mantra. The modern cement that previous owners had put on internal walls caused them to be damp; he replaced it with traditional lime. The wall above the fireplace is decorated with classic Italian marmorino plaster—a mix of crushed marble and lime putty that can be given many textures and colours. He does this and other types of paint and polished plaster—travertine, coccio, velluto, pearlescent and so on—as a business ([www.d-eco-r.green](http://www.d-eco-r.green)).

Dave Nurse, a mechanic at Rapson's garage just along the road, has lived at 43 Benedict Street for 30 years; his wife Sue has been there even longer. Rik Cook bought number 45 at the end of 2011. In the past he ran the Market House Inn for 12 years and the Tor Leisure Centre for 13.

The Conservation Society committee wrote to both neighbours to congratulate them on their welcome enhancement of Glastonbury's Conservation Area.





Adrian Pearse collection

The Australian scene on this set of playing cards issued by "Morlands of Glastonbury" (as printed beneath the picture) underlines Glastonbury's connection with the wool trade Down Under.

▼ The article below is an expansion of the one that appeared in Newsletter 142 (spring).

## Some events around town this summer

• **Henry of Blois**, a remarkable 12th-century abbot, is the subject of the Abbey's summer exhibition. He did much to restore the morale of the monks and rebuilt on a grand scale. At the same time he was bishop of Winchester and a major patron of the arts. The exhibition is open daily until September 27.

• **Somerset Wildlife Trust** offers a wide programme of activities, including plant walks, glowworms, a coastal photography competition and various "Magnificent Meadows" events. Details at [somersetwildlife.org.uk](http://somersetwildlife.org.uk)

• **A jumble trail** on July 25 is part of the Glastonbury Brocante Fair. On August 30, the Sunday of the August holiday weekend, several streets will close for a



An initial in the Winchester Bible shows Henry of Blois, who commissioned it.

"massive vintage, antique and collectables fair" that will attract visitors from afar. Empty your attic and set up your own table outside, hang up bunting and put on vintage clothes to join in the carnival atmosphere. To be on the map, register free on the website: [glastonbrocante.net](http://glastonbrocante.net).

• **Plays in the Abbey** – Just William has grown up in *Rip-Roaring Summer Adventure* on August 22. And Falstaff adapts both parts of Shakespeare's *Henry IV* on August 28. Outdoor

showing of the film *Sense and Sensibility* on August 15. See [glastonburyabbey.com](http://glastonburyabbey.com).

**Email update** – Did our email about the garden evening at Coombe House reach you in the past few days? If not, please ring the editor or email [editor@glastonburyconservation.org.uk](mailto:editor@glastonburyconservation.org.uk)

## Reclaimed materials and curious artefacts of Glastonbury heritage JN

Mike Evans calls himself a "nerd about bricks". When 15 members of the Conservation Society toured Glastonbury Reclamation on May 20, he lovingly showed them bricks made by the Down and Merrick families since at least 1811 at the two Glastonbury brickyards that thrived along Wells Road. These were still open in the 1930s but were gone by 1950.

Glastonbury Reclamation's stock of bricks is actually quite low, he said: they have to keep constant watch on demolition sites to stop workers from simply crushing materials—like the Coxley pub, which was pulled down too suddenly this spring.

Clay roof tiles are abundant, though, and fine and fancy clay chimneys. The yard has tiles in many varieties, including some with black or blue glaze. Yet John Merrick roof tiles are rare.

Glastonbury Reclamation started in



Mike Evans of Glastonbury Reclamation shows John Brunson and Alan Fear a mould that a century ago produced clay roof tiles one at a time.

2003 with a pine-stripping tank and soon expanded. The founders were Mike Evans and his son Simon, who were restoring two

properties in Norbins Road ("making Victorian houses look like Victorian houses again"), and James Dash and his father, owner of Landmead Farm at the Northload Bridge roundabout, which is now the Glastonbury Reclamation yard.

Big polytunnels provide dry storage for a cornucopia of furniture and curios—you can spend a happy hour nosing through.

The yard appeared on television in *Salvage Hunters* and *Antiques Roadshow*, where a Scottish lady bought a quantity of old shoe lasts. For the film *Far from the Madding Crowd*, shot in Dorset and released in May, props people built a granary from the yard's rustic doors, elm beams and (polystyrene!) staddlestones.

For Mike Evans, Glastonbury Reclamation is a far cry from his previous life as a solicitor in the Gould & Swayne office in Glastonbury High Street.

## Convicted Baltonsborough boy makes good in Australia — result: his family in Somerset ends up owning the Abbey

Adrian Pearse, Jim Nagel

Owen Mace, a descendant of Austins who emigrated from Baltonsborough to Australia a century ago, provided an outline of the family story on October 9. He spoke to about 35 people in Abbey House, an appropriate venue because the Austins were its last private owners.

"Australia's prosperity rode on the sheep's back"—for decades, school histories taught this aphorism about the wool business. The statement certainly applied to the Australian Austins.

Captain James Cook began Britain's claim to Australia in 1770, and after the loss of the American colonies in 1776 it was seen as a substitute destination for deported convicts.

James Austin was baptized at Baltonsborough on August 13 in 1776, the second son of John Austin, a farmer, and his wife Sarah (née Higgins). As a second son, his prospects in this locality were poor. Australia thus was an attractive promise to him. But his father could not afford the fare.

So James and his friend John Earle organized free passage. In 1802 they stole six straw beehives and 100 pounds of honey from James's uncle Peter Higgins.



The place where James Austin and John Earle rowed cattle across the River Derwent to Hobart in Tasmania is still called Austins Ferry. Right: they astutely established an inn on each side of the river.

The Wells Assizes sentenced them to seven years' transportation. According to family lore, the judge was none other than Peter Higgins.

Thus they arrived at Hobart in Tasmania (at that time called Van Diemen's Land), after first landing at Port Phillip in Victoria, which had proved unsuitable. James worked off his sentence by 1809, and he and John Earle established a ferry across the River Derwent at Hobart, rowing 20 cattle at a time across 600 yards of water. From this modest beginning, James set up a 300-acre farm called Roseneath. By 1823 he claimed to have the largest orchard in the colony and much livestock. He died in prosperity in 1831, and John Earle in 1840.

The *Australian Dictionary of Biography* says James was almost illiterate and "wealthy but eccentric"; he never married and never returned to England.

Back at Baltonsborough, the Austin family by then owned Tilham Street Farm: the purchase was probably enabled by money James sent home.

Four of James's Austin nephews—Solomon, Josiah, another James (1809–96, the speaker's great-great-grandfather) and Thomas—left Baltonsborough and sailed out to Australia with their uncle's help, arriving shortly after he died. They



Thomas Austin built the 42-room Barwon Park mansion of local bluestone in a sweeping rural landscape near Winchelsea in western Victoria. It is said his wife Elizabeth Harding wanted it to be bigger and grander than Abbey House: it's two feet wider and two feet longer. Thomas died shortly after completing it in 1871. Elizabeth lived on there for 40 years and is noted as a founder of Austin Hospital in Melbourne and the Austin Homes for Women in Geelong. Today, the National Trust of Australia owns Barwon Park; it is substantially unaltered.

established Tor Hill Farm of 10,000 acres in sheep country.

James and Thomas took 500 sheep over to western Victoria and drove them up the Barwon River into some of the best



Thomas helped to introduce many English animals to Australia, including hares, blackbirds and partridges. People at the time praised his efforts, but today Thomas bears the brunt of blame for bringing rabbits. The picture from the Illustrated Sydney News in 1869 shows the Duke of Edinburgh in a shooting party at Barwon Park.



James Austin built Avalon Homestead, on Corio Bay near Geelong (about 35 miles southwest of Melbourne). After a fire in 1870, a nephew rebuilt the single-storey house in basalt and freestone. A carved Tudor rose from Glastonbury Abbey, which James by then owned, is set into the covered entry. Bluestone stables for the Austin racehorses stand behind the house. The land remained in Austin hands for many years but is now subdivided; part is now Avalon Airport. Avalon College, a boarding school for Asian language students, took over the house in 1998.

land in the state. Nearby, James established an estate he called Avalon and expanded to 30,000 acres. He was the second mayor of Geelong, in 1850–51.

In 1854 James returned to Glastonbury with members of his family and lived in Somerset House in Magdalene Street, which he renamed Australia House for a time. He was mayor of Glastonbury five times between 1858 and 1887. He bought Abbey House and the ruins in 1864.

His son Stanley (the founder of Austin & Bath, as the solicitors in Chilkwell Street were called for generations) sold the property at auction in 1907. By this time the Austins had married into locally prominent families: James's daughter Annie married Reginald Porch.

Back in Australia, Thomas Austin, who loved shooting, asked a cousin in 1859 to send him 20 wild rabbits from England. He could find only six pairs, so also sent some domestic rabbits. The resulting hybrid was

apparently ideal for the Australian climate. They escaped and rapidly spread across the continent as a devastating pest.

His niece Mary, James's eldest living daughter, married William Hose Bullivant. He became hugely successful with sheep, using a breeding strategy to double the wool take. Bullivant and the Austin family were major prizewinners in various aspects of the industry. Wool remained the foundation of the Australian economy until the 1950s. The families were also noted for thoroughbred racing horses.

And recent generations? By email the speaker said his father, Norman Mace, born in Nottingham, went as a surveyor to Sarawak. Escaping the Japanese, he worked for the Australian Joint Intelligence Bureau ("i.e., he was a spy") until his death in 1968.

Owen Mace studied electronic engineering, gained a PhD in physics and was an academic at Melbourne University



An early photograph of James Austin about 1849 as alderman of Geelong. Most of James's wealth came from buying and selling land in Geelong, reckoned the speaker, his great-great-grandson.



Large photo, probably 1887: James Austin surrounded by his children and grandchildren outside Abbey House in Glastonbury, which he bought in 1864 along with the Abbey. Five of his nine children were born there. At one point, kangaroos bounced outside. The house was built by John Fry Reeves from 1825 and finished in 1830; it had an "interesting ruin" in the garden. Downstairs today, the doors, woodwork, ceilings, fireplaces, windows and shutters are original.