

# THE CHEPSTOW SOCIETY

Members Bulletin

September 2021



[www.chepstowsociety.co.uk](http://www.chepstowsociety.co.uk)



## Notes from the Chair

I have long thought that we do not make as much as we could of our most famous son – William Marshal, ‘The Greatest Knight’ - and I recently learnt that the Pembroke and Monkton Local History Society have commissioned a statue of William Marshal to be placed in front of Pembroke Castle. This is a splendid statue of Marshal on horseback.

I recently had a telephone conversation with Linda Asman who is Chair of the Local History society. She told me about the challenges to be overcome in such a project and, at the end of our conversation, kindly invited me to the unveiling of the statue which is to be on or about 15 October.

I was very impressed with their initiative and even more impressed to learn that, in addition to the William Marshal statue they have also commissioned one of Henry VII who was of course born in Pembroke Castle. I set out below a picture of the Henry VII statue to give some idea of what such a statue may look like.

Consequently I am very keen to see if your Society can commission a statue of William Marshal (not necessarily on horseback!) to be placed in front of his



## OUR NEXT ZOOM TALK

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September, 7 p.m.**

<https://zoom.us/join>

Meeting ID: 562 383 2571    Passcode: Waters



**“Goodbye to the High Street...?”  
– a history of shopping**

**David Williams**

*City of London tour guide, journalist and film-maker*

castle in Chepstow, and with the existing plaque nearby to explain about him.

I think that the publicity would attract some visitors to Chepstow and would enhance the reputation of the Chepstow Society. There are of course many hurdles to be overcome, not least the cost, but I will put the proposal before your Executive Committee on 30th September, and hopefully we can take the first steps in what could be a very exciting project for your Society. I would only wish to fund such a project by means of grants and donations and without using the Society's funds.

Please let me have any comments to see what you feel about such a project.

**Geoff Sumner**

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED !!

As you can see from Geoff's notes in this bulletin, the Society is rarely short of ideas on how it might fulfil its objectives of encouraging awareness of the history and environmental qualities of the Chepstow area.

However...

We are always short of volunteers to help with this work.

In particular, the Society's committee would love to hear from members (or potential members) who would be willing and able to help with any of these:

- Securing grants for projects, and liaising with official bodies
- Engaging with the local community – particularly younger people
- Developing new ideas to promote the history of the area – including oral history
- Becoming our "natural environment" coordinator

Experience is always welcome, but enthusiasm is more important!

For an informal chat on volunteering with the Society, please ring the Secretary, Guy Hamilton on 07786 500609, or email - ghmyrtle@gmail.com



Lefelau Byw  
Living Levels

**On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September at 7 pm, there is a free online workshop for anyone interested in becoming involved in the Life on the Levels project – to help map the memories of people who have lived and worked on the Gwent Levels.**

**For further details, and to register for the event, go to**

**[www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/oral-histories-with-living-levels-tickets-165397216527](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/oral-histories-with-living-levels-tickets-165397216527)**



A plaque to commemorate footballer Eddie Parris (1911-71) – the first black footballer to play for Wales – has recently been installed outside his birthplace in Pwllmeyric, marking the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death. Although the Society was not directly involved in this initiative, it is always good to see local heroes recognised.



## MEMBERSHIP

Thank you for the recent flurry of joiners.

Some of you will have received email reminders that your membership hasn't been renewed. If you have received this in error, please let me know, so that you can be put on the correct list.

It has been very easy to lose track of memberships while we have not been having live meetings, so if you are unsure whether or not you are a paid up member please get in touch and I can let you know.

Sadly, if your membership has not been renewed this will be the last newsletter you will receive.

**Membership has remained at £10 per person, and can be paid either**

- **by bank transfer to the Chepstow Society, sort code 30-98-90, account number 18173668, or**
- **by cheque made payable to Chepstow Society and sent to me at Pen y Morfa, Mathern NP16 6JD.**

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you need any further information.

***Angela Middleditch***  
**[chepsocmemb@gmail.com](mailto:chepsocmemb@gmail.com)**

# CIVIC AND AMENITY NOTES

**The next quarterly Zoom meeting with local councillors and other interest groups, which had been scheduled for 1st September, will now take place on Wednesday 29th September at 7 p.m.**

The Society has submitted its response to Monmouthshire County Council's **Replacement Local Development Plan Preferred Strategy**.

We have again objected to the level of new housing development proposed across the county, which is higher than that required to meet Welsh Government targets.

In summary, we say that:

- The implications of the climate change emergency have been underestimated;
- The level of development proposed does not reflect the likelihood that the infrastructure required to support it will be delivered;
- Insufficient regard has been had to the implications for Chepstow of development in the Forest of Dean;
- Chepstow town centre, and smaller centres including Bulwark, need to be improved;
- We accept that Chepstow needs to take its share of future development...
- ...but, we do not agree that further development west of the A466 is needed,
- ...and we are particularly concerned that the green wedges separating Chepstow from Pwllmeyric and Mathern should be maintained.

The full response is on our website at [www.chepstowsociety.co.uk/planning](http://www.chepstowsociety.co.uk/planning)

Simon Maddison's notes on current issues around the town are attached to this bulletin.

*Guy Hamilton*

## MEETINGS 2021/22

**These will be held via Zoom, until we agree to meet in the Drill Hall again.**

**All talks start at 7 pm and are subject to change, depending on circumstances.**

***Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September***

David Williams

**"Goodbye to the High Street...?"**

***Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October***

Philip Ashford

**The Berkeley Plantation in Virginia,  
1619-22**

***Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November***

Dr Frances Hurd

**The Birth of the English Parish Church**

***Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022***

Simon Draper

**Surnames and Local History**

***Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February***

Simon Waterfield

**The Agincourt Archer**

***Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March***

Nancy Cavill

**Martha Gellhorn – local resident**

***Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April***

Paul Barnett

**RMS Carpathia and the Titanic**

***Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May***

**Annual General Meeting**





## 7QGallery seeks volunteers

7QGallery is a new, community-based, not-for-profit gallery down by the river in Chepstow. It is run by volunteers and seeks to showcase art from local artists.

We are looking for volunteers to help staff the gallery either during the week or at weekends for a couple of hours or so. Come and see some vibrant art and meet the artists.

Please contact Alan Stanley on  
07590 655285 or [alan.stanley@mac.com](mailto:alan.stanley@mac.com)

### Last of the Summer Art History Lectures

## GEORGIA O'KEEFFE

Monday September 6<sup>th</sup>  
2 - 3.30 pm

Online lecture via Zoom

To book:

[www.visitmonmouthshire.com/okeeffe](http://www.visitmonmouthshire.com/okeeffe)

Monmouthshire Museums are running one more one-off art history lecture this summer with popular local lecturer Eleanor Bird - and this time it's a woman artist, and one of the most significant artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

You can join from wherever you are in the world! So tell interested friends and family. Only one booking per household is necessary.

Price for this 90 minute talk, is £7.50

Booking will close at 4pm on  
Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September.



*Image: Georgia O'Keeffe, Blue and Green Music, 1919-21,  
The Art Institute of Chicago*

Georgia O'Keeffe was a major figure in 20<sup>th</sup> century American art for seven decades - staying true to her own vision, and yet a key part of the development of Modernism in the USA,

O'Keeffe is best known for her paintings of magnified flowers, animal skulls, and New Mexico desert landscapes. With exceptional observation, O'Keeffe created startling, detailed images drawn from her experience of living in New York and in the barren deserts of the American South West.

Recognised in her lifetime, she led a full and fascinating life - and here's the opportunity to find out about her, and her work. So, join us for an exploration of one of the dominant artists of her generation.

The 90-minute online lecture will look at the life and work of this extraordinary artist.