

## ON REFLECTION

### REVIEW OF THE BARTONIAN JAUNT

Only the bravest of the history group came along to the Bartonian Jaunt - a walk around Redfield and Whitehall Held on 18th June 2008, with one of our members acting as a guide.

There was about a dozen of us including a representative from Bristol Community FM radio station who wanted to record some of the guides knowledge to broadcast on the local network BCfm 93.2.

We met in St. George Park at 7.15 equipped with umbrellas, boots and heavy jackets for not only was it raining it was also quite chilly. This did not deter our guide who at the onset issued everyone with a copy of Tithe map for St. George 1845. He had suitably enclosed them in polythene page pockets which showed very good foresight otherwise by the end of the walk they would have been very soggy.



Our first stop was not very far away at the entrance to the park gates where we viewed the architectural landmark of St. George School built in 1894 and still standing but has not been used as a school since 1988. We were told about the site of the forge that once stood next to the gates and we looked at the plaque for Bob Hope who was a resident of Whitehall in his childhood. The erection of this plaque is one of the history Group's more recent projects.

Then moving on to the opposite corner standing near the site of the old Post Office, we looked across Church Road at the historic Fire Engine Public House dating back to around 1769, and named after the primitive steam engine used at the nearby coal pit.

Further down the road our next stop was Wetherspoons Pub - this was once the Granada Cinema and now aptly named St. Georges Hall as the original cinema was known as St. George Hall Electric Palace. Resisting the temptation to go in, as we were all getting wetter by the minute, we carried on down the road to be shown where Redfield House and its large estate once stood now replaced by Morse Road, Verrier Road and Weight Road.



Back across the road again and along Gerrish Avenue, past Redfield Methodist Chapel opened in 1884, no longer a chapel but now used as a Hindu Temple. Then into Whitehall Road and directly opposite we saw the old vicarage of St. Matthews Church. Further up the hill, at the end of Devon Road, the Doctors House was pointed out, this was the home of Doctor Cairns for many years another historic landmark you could easily miss if it was not pointed out to you.

Gaining shelter under a tree we spent a while looking and talking about Whitehall School, now long gone except for the two stone pillars where countless children must have entered into the playground, also the local sweet shop (now all boarded up) known as Monkey Morris and remembered by everyone as the sweet shop where you spent your pocket money.

Nearing the end of our journey of history and nostalgia we passed the Whitehall Zion Methodist Chapel situated on the corner of Neath Road, a 1907 structure now used as offices. Stopping opposite the Kings Head which was to be our final stop we talked about the 1900s Co-operative Grocery store, number 290 Whitehall Road and the butchers shop next door that was added later. Then looming around the corner the 'Cathedral of East Bristol', St. Ambrose Church, consecrated in 1913. An evening that will be remembered as the wettest of the Summer.

