

## **GLOUCESTER IN THE 30s AND 40s**

On Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> August an inquisitive group of U3A folk attended the Gloucester Museum, here follows a report from our travelling reporter Chris Vavasour

We were privileged to welcome an old Gloucester resident on 1st August. Harold Franks, who was born and spent his early years here, drove from his home on the Central Coast to present a fascinating picture of how Gloucester was all those years ago.

Those of us who were fortunate enough to attend this morning were fascinated by Harold's vivid descriptions of the Gloucester that he remembers from before, during and after the Second World War.

Harold started his presentation by taking us down the memory lane of Church Street. Earlier in the morning he had walked down Church Street and refreshed his memory on who were the occupants of many of the shops when he was young. It seems that the only shop still under the same family ownership is Channel's our Newsagency. Some others are still offering the same products, including Dave Fraser's Avon Valley Butchers. Many have changed and sadly there are no longer two cinemas.

Other highlights of Harold's talk included the German spy who was counting the numerous troop trains full of mostly American troops heading North before he was arrested in Taree. Harold covered the whole spectrum of life in those days: characters, the school and the teachers, bomb explosion at the school, Victory Day and sadly a fatal accident on that day as the celebrations were about to begin.

Occasionally, Harold was helped with people's names by some of the members of the audience who are of that generation but we all admired mostly his vivid memory of those times. We so appreciated that he had driven quite a distance at an early hour to enthral us for two hours.

Thank you, Harold

*We hope to follow this visit up with further expeditions, please check out the programme each term for more exciting trips.*