

Pam Lloyd  
New Grove Trust  
New Grove Farm  
Trellech Road  
Monmouthshire  
NP25 4AF

20 November 2011

Dear Ms Lloyd

Thank you very much indeed for the cheque for £825 we received last Friday. This will enable us to sell 500 books at £5.00 each and thus raise £2,500 for Age Concern Forest of Dean.

We have, perforce, to move our kitchen into new premises and as we produce 600 meals per week for individuals and lunch clubs across the Forest this money will be of great help in our fund-raising effort.

The book launch is on Saturday, 3 December at a Coffee Morning at Forest Hills Golf Club, 10.30 am – 2 pm in the presence of Baroness Royall. We should be very pleased indeed if you or any of your Trustees are able to join us there. Home-made cakes and Christmas gifts will also be on sale and we hope to have a number of the older people who contributed there as well.

We shall certainly keep you informed not only of the sale of the books which your funding will greatly assist, but also of our kitchen move which is a major project for us. We are assuming that there will be photographs of the Book Launch and will certainly forward copies to you. We will ensure that you are mentioned in any publicity that we receive for the book in the future.

Enclosed please find some publicity that appeared last week in the *Forest and Wye Valley Review* that may whet your appetite for the book. Once again, our heartfelt thanks.

With very best wishes



Daphne Pearson  
Chairman  
Age Concern Forest of Dean

# FOREST'S SS SPY REVEALED

THE story of the Forest's very own Lord Haw-Haw has been revealed in a new book.

In 'Backward Glances', recounting experiences in the Forest of Dean from 1920 to 1950, Dr Daphne Pearson uncovers the story of the farmer Benson Railton Freeman.

Freeman, who bought an estate on St Briavels Common in 1931, was an extremist who joined the British Union of Fascists.

His military experience in the 1920s meant he was recalled to the RAF becoming a flying in-

structor. But in May 1940 he was shot down, crash landing in Germany and being captured by German soldiers.

As the book recounts: "When Freeman's political views became known to the Germans he was taken to Frankfurt and recruited by German radio to assist Lord Haw-Haw after volunteering his services in the fight against Bolshevism.

"None of this was known to people in the Forest at the time and neighbours continued to befriend his wife. Various local people and those

manning the search light batteries saw German spotter planes briefly circling the area on various occasions and it is probable that they were looking for the Royal Naval propellant factory at Caerwent.

"Freeman then joined the Waffen SS receiving a salary of 200 marks a week and living under the name of Royston and vetting propaganda prepared for the British armed forces."

At the end of April 1945 Freeman surrendered, was found guilty of treason and sentenced to 10

years in prison. He was the headline story in the *Daily Mail* and as an Englishman born in England and a convicted traitor, he was lucky to avoid execution. Lord Haw-Haw was hanged.

As a twist in the story, Freeman's car, a white drop head Chrysler Coupe, was recovered from his garage in St Briavels. The local boys who came with the mechanic found the car radio didn't work. It turned out to be a short-wave radio: "Presumably used for contact by Freeman just before the war" and presumably

also used to contact the spotter planes trying to locate the well-disguised armaments factory at Caerwent.

*Backward Glances* will be launched on December 3 at Forest Hills Golf Club near Coleford.

Many of those who contributed their memories of life in the Forest between 1920 and 1950 will be there. Baroness Jan Royal will give a short address, there will be a Christmas gift stall and home-made cakes stall and all money raised from the book will go to Age Concern.