

NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the **Broseley Local History Society**

INCORPORATING THE WILKINSON SOCIETY



AUGUST 2017

MEETINGS

Meetings of the Broseley Local History Society are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm at the Broseley Social Club, High Street, unless otherwise announced. Car parking is available at the back of the Club.

Members are requested to be seated by 7.30pm to allow our speakers a prompt start.

Visitors are welcome but are asked to give a donation towards Society funds.

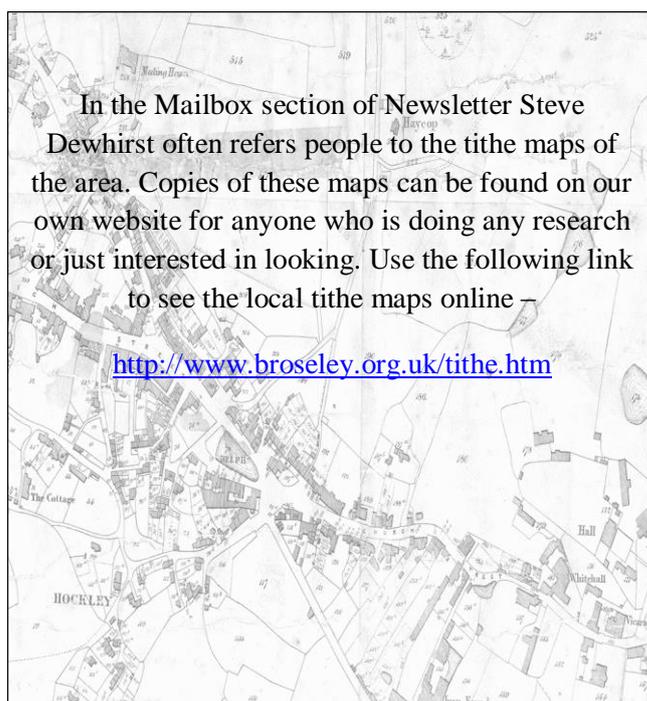
PROGRAMME

- 6 Sep *Birmingham – Home of Metal*, Vin Callcut
- 4 Oct *WW1 Postcards: a personal collection*, Diana Clarke
- 1 Nov *Archaeologists - Heroes or Villains?* Jim Clarke (Joint Meeting with FIGM, Coalbrookdale)
- 6 Dec *Christmas dinner*
- 3 Jan *Blists Hill from Day One*, Ron Miles
- 7 Feb *The Archaeology of the Jackfield Stabilisation Project*, Shane Kelleher

Further details from Neil Clarke 01952 504135.

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PREVIOUS MEETINGS

James Clifford, Entrepreneur

Members of Broseley Local History Society enjoyed a real treat when they joined the Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum at their meeting on Friday 12th May. Rose Hewlett, a member of our Society and local historian who lives at Frampton on Severn in Gloucestershire, gave a fascinating presentation on the life of James Clifford, 1534 - 1613.

The Clifford family, who still live at Frampton Court, can trace their ancestry in Frampton to 1086 with Walter de Clifford holding the manor during the middle part of the twelfth century. In 1558 his descendant James Clifford, at the age of 24, inherited the Estate which included, "two thirds of the manor of Broseley in Shropshire". He then appears to have divided his time between Shropshire, Gloucestershire and the Court of Elizabeth I.

His association with Shropshire came about through his connections with the Fox family of Ludlow and as a result he married Dorothy, the daughter of Charles Fox at Bromfield Parish Church on 6th November 1564. Initially, James only held two thirds of the manor of Broseley, but some time during the 1560s he and Dorothy acquired the remaining third, which had, until the Dissolution of the Monasteries, been held by the Priory at Much Wenlock.

Coal mining in Broseley and its neighbourhood had been a small-scale, domestic affair since the Middle Ages. With the decrease in supplies of timber James realised the potential of exploiting coal in the area, where the seams of coal were close to the surface. He began exporting coal using the River Severn, a main artery for the transportation of goods in the sixteenth century. He was familiar with the river and its trading ports all the way from Broseley to the Bristol Channel. The earliest record of James' coal mining activities in Broseley is 1575 when he was in trouble for dumping waste from his mines into the River Severn at the Tuckies, now in the parish of Jackfield. He built wooden waggonways from Broseley down to the river to transport the coal, using teams of horses to act as brakes for the wagons. Such waggonways appear to have been in existence in Broseley as early as October 1605.

Such an enterprise meant that James needed more labour and so he employed men - often regarded as undesirables - from various parts of the country. He encouraged them to build cottages on irregular plots and waste ground at Broseley Wood. The new squatters



Frampton Court in Gloucestershire

were much disliked by the resident population which caused a great deal of friction, leading to riots in the years 1605 - 1607.

James built himself a house at the heart of the old medieval settlement of Broseley which surrounded the Parish Church. A map of c. 1620 shows its position as being in a field adjoining the present day Dunge Farm, off Bridgnorth Road.

James died in June 1613 and was probably buried at Frampton alongside his wife Dorothy. Through his endeavours during his lifetime he created a system of transportation to take coal from the coalface to the consumer via wooden waggonways in such quantities as to turn a small domestic market into an export orientated one using the River Severn. Traditionally, Ironbridge has been called the Birthplace of the Industrial Revolution. After listening to Rose Hewlett's presentation at least one person present concluded that Broseley should claim such a title!

Society walk in Apley Park

On Wednesday 7th June approximately thirty members of Broseley Local History Society met on the library car park to arrange transport in five vehicles to Apley Park as parking on the estate was limited. Steve Dewhirst had arranged with Lady Hamilton our walk through the park.

The evening was damp at first whilst we walked to the front of the Hall to admire the architecture and hear about the families who had occupied the house and run the estate. The Hall is now divided into six separate residencies and separate from the estate and one occupant objected to our being there and told us so in no uncertain terms!

The present Hall (Grade II listed) is built out of Grinsill stone in the style of English Gothic Revival and was completed in 1811 with adjoining parkland and is situated beside the River Severn.

It was once the home of the Whitmore family in the 1500s. William Whitmore was a haberdasher in London. His eldest son, another William, was High Sheriff of Shropshire and his second son Sir George, Lord Mayor of London.

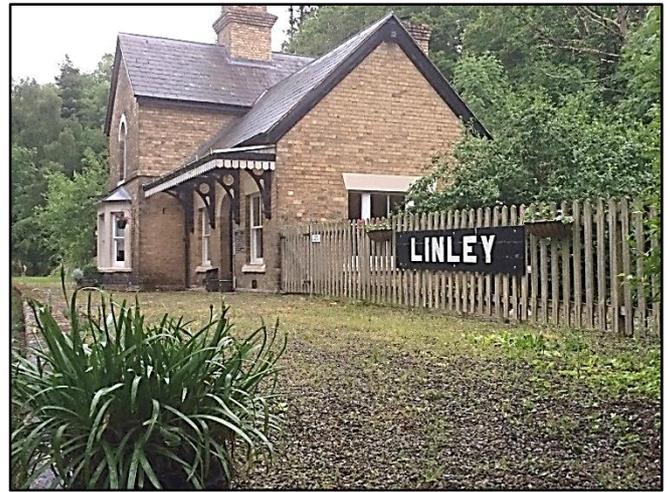
The existing house incorporates a faux chapel and turrets and battlements. In 1867 the Foster family purchased the property and it remained in the family until 1960 when the last of the Foster family died. As no buyer could be found for such a vast house in 1962 it became a state secondary modern boarding school run by Shropshire County Council and it remained a school until its closure in 1987. The house remained empty for ten years and suffered deterioration and vandalism. In 1997 it was bought by entrepreneur and conservation specialist Neil Avery then in 2004 it was sold to developers who divided it into self-contained residences. In 1980 the Hamiltons inherited the estate from a cousin and it is now managed by Lady Harriet and her husband.

We continued our visit by walking down from the Hall to the River Severn to the refurbished suspension bridge on the estate. The suspension bridge was built in 1905 by William Henry Foster who was a member of an important and wealthy family of iron founders. It replaced a ferry which once tipped over and all the luggage and belongings of the guests going to the Hall were lost. Mr Foster built it to celebrate his son's 21st birthday. What a present!

Steve had been given the secret code by Lady Hamilton which enabled us to cross the bridge and walk alongside the river where Linley Brook flows into the Severn, to the site of one of the three forges which had been built in the area, this being the lower forge.

We stopped by what was Linley Station which was built on the Severn Valley railway by Thomas C Whitmore for his guests and opened in 1862. It is now a holiday cottage on the Apley Estate. A little further on we viewed the area known as Wren's Nest which is where in 1775 the partners Wright and Jesson built forges and where the lower of the three pools would have been situated.

After an exhilarating, informative walk we returned to our vehicles and travelled back to Broseley.



Linley Station

Quarry Bank Mill

Jan Lancaster writes-

This year the Society's July trip was to the Quarry Bank Mill at Styal in Cheshire. Now owned by the National Trust it is set in extensive grounds and is one of the best preserved textile mills in the country. Initially built by Samuel Greg in 1784 as a cotton spinning factory it was later expanded to house an astonishing 305 weaving looms.

For centuries cotton yarn had been produced by cottage workers spinning on a single frame, a slow and laborious process resulting in a limited supply of yarn. In 1764, however, James Hargreaves invented the spinning jenny, a wooden frame with which a worker could handle eight or more spools at once. However, the yarn produced by this method was not very strong and it took Richard Arkwright's invention of the water powered water frame to allow the production of much stronger thread.



An original loom still making cotton fabric.



Arkwright's spinning jenny substantially increased the amount of yarn which could be spun by the cottage industry

By 1784 there were two major factors which prompted Samuel Greg to build his factory. The first was the fact that Arkwright's water frame had just come out of patent; the other was the increased supply of raw cotton from North America following the end of the American War of Independence. Greg's original mill was designed as a four storey building which included a counting house and a warehouse, but in 1796 it was doubled in length and a fifth floor added. When his son Robert Hyde Greg took over he substantially expanded the business by building weaving sheds, thus completing the circle from raw cotton to woven fabric. When Greg retired in 1832 it was the largest such business in the country.

Aptly named Quarry Bank the terrain was certainly challenging for some of us, with 61 steps from the coach park down to the mill, reception and restaurant and quite a climb up to the Apprentice House and the glasshouses. But the opportunity to ride in one of the buggies ferrying people around was very welcome and certainly gave one more time to go through the factory.

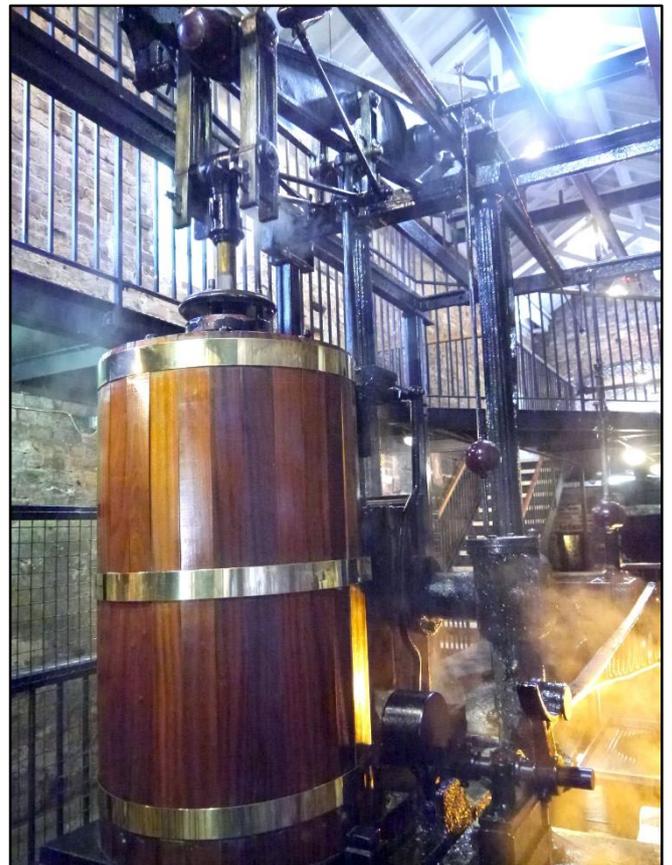
The factory itself was fascinating with the guides talking you through the whole process, from carding the cotton to straighten out the fibres, to the traditional method of spinning it into yarn and the more advanced method using spinning mule machines. The extent of this machinery was awe inspiring – and we only saw a small proportion of what would have been there originally. Then it was downstairs to the weaving sheds,



One of the spinning mules which replaced the spinning jenny.

situated on the ground floor because of the weight of the looms.

We also got to look at the enormous water wheel, said to be the biggest in Europe, which powered the machinery, as well as an original 200-year-old Boulton and Watt steam engine which was still working. While this particular engine had been recently sourced from elsewhere, we were assured that it was identical to the one bought by Greg as a back up when the water in the River Bollin was low.



This Boulton and Watt engine is still working 200 years later.

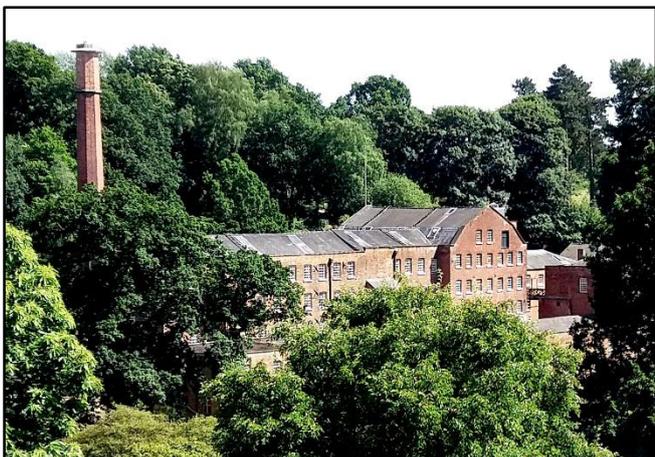
From the mill it was up to the Apprentice House where Greg housed his apprentice workers. These were children aged nine and over brought from the workhouses as 10 year indentured apprentices. By the standards of the day, they were well looked after, with three hot meals a day, clean clothes once a week, medical care and some basic education. Their hours were long, 6.00 am to 7.00 pm with a break for breakfast and lunch, though even after such long hours they were still expected to perform certain chores. They received no pay for this work but could, if they wished, earn a penny an hour for overtime. This could be because they had been fined for a misdemeanour, rather than whipped or beaten, or simply because they wanted to save up for when they had finished their apprenticeship.

Their work was largely unskilled but some of it required nimble fingers such as fixing broken ends of threads and cleaning under the machines while they were still working. No health and safety concerns in those days. This need for nimble fingers was why, of the 90 apprentices there, 60 of them were girls.

Interestingly enough, although there were the occasional runaways, the reasons they gave were not because of how they were treated but because they missed their families.

As the mill increased in size Greg converted some of the farm buildings into housing for his workers, later building cottages for them for which they paid rent. Each house had a parlour, a kitchen and two bedrooms, as well as an outside privy and a small garden. He also built a school and a chapel.

Currently all of the cottages except for one are rented out to private tenants while the remaining one is being renovated and, along with Quarry Bank House where Greg and his family lived, will be open to the public later in the year.



Quarry Mill is the best preserved cotton mill in the country. Picture courtesy of Dot Cox

Another point of interest was the gardens and the newly renovated glasshouses, all beautifully kept, although time constraints made the visit to this area regrettably brief.

Given time and energy there was much more to explore than could be fitted into one day, with the extensive grounds offering all kinds of interesting walks, and I think many of us felt that a second trip at some stage would be very worthwhile.

Meantime, many thanks to Michael and Gill Pope for organising yet another fascinating and rewarding History Society July trip.



Members about to experience a fascinating 'day at t' mill'.

The Brodie Family - continued

Michael Pope writes –

In the February edition of the Newsletter I drew readers' attention to the memorial in St. Mary's Church in Jackfield commemorating Alexander Brodie II who died on June 10th 1830 aged 66 years. He succeeded his uncle Alexander Brodie I who owned the Iron Foundry at The Calcutts, not far from the Church.

On a recent visit to The Borders in Scotland I again visited Traquair near Peebles, the Estate where the Brodie family lived and worked. This time I called at the Parish Church at Traquair and was surprised to find two large memorials to the Brodie family on the exterior south wall of the Church. The one memorial was in memory of William Brodie who died on the 19th January 1836 and of his wife Janet and their two daughters, one also Janet and Ann. The other memorial was of more interest. It reads -

In memory of Alexander Brodie Esq, Ironmaster, late of Carey Street, in the liberty of the Rolls, London and Calcutt in the County of Shropshire, a native of Traquair.

First inventor of The Registered stoves and fire hearths for ships. Had the honour of supplying the whole British navy with the later for upwards of thirty years since their introduction and was a great saving to Government. Died 6th January 1811, aged 78 years. His mortal remains were deposited in Chiswick Churchyard in the County of Middlesex. This tablet placed here by his nephews and nieces 1818.

As I mentioned in my previous article Alexander I in his will left each of his 13 nephews and nieces the sum of £13,000, a considerable sum at the time. I gather that the Brodie family were involved in the church and several of them acted as Parish Clerk to the Church of Scotland Minister.

The Traquair Estate is on the outskirts of Innerleithen, a small town on the banks of the River Tweed. That was my next port of call.

As previously stated Alexander I wanted to give something back to the place where he had been brought up and so built the first woollen mill in the town between 1788 - 1790 at a cost of £3,000. You can still find it - now an empty building which is up for sale. The original building remains but all the buildings that were added to the site have now been demolished. The building itself does not quite compete with Quarry Mill at Styal (the venue of our summer outing) but nevertheless it remains an imposing building and was in production until 2013 making ladies cashmere garments.

In order to supply power for the mill a water lade or channel extending to about a mile in length was built, extending from a lake in the hills behind the town and passing through the Brodie Mill. It was quite a feat of engineering and eventually provided power for five woollen mills, a sawmill, a printing works which is still in operation and an engineering machine shop. I quote an advertisement from Smail's the printers. "Having the advantage of water-power we anticipate being able to produce efficient work at moderate prices, and shall be pleased if favoured with a share of your orders." dated 1887. Thanks to Alexander Brodie I Innerleithen and the surrounding area became prosperous and enjoyed a flourishing community in the nineteenth century. Innerleithen had been transformed from a small village into a thriving mill town. The Brodie family had played an important part in that transformation.



Traquair church

Where's Welly?



Editor: I'm back in Broseley this month after my recent travels. Where have I been and why was there special haste to complete the first of the houses in this development?

In the last edition of Newsletter, we were trying to identify the building shown below. How many of you will have guessed that it was Wynd Cottage at the Knowle in Jackfield? The gravel track alongside the cottage is known as the Wynd, taking its name from the tramway incline which ran from here to the River Severn. Wynd cottage is said to have housed the engine which operated the incline.



Brodie Mill in Innerleithen



*Wynd Cottage, the Knowle, Jackfield.
Picture courtesy of Nigel Byard*

What's On?

Tue 5 Sept

Ketley History Group, *Did the Industrial Revolution start at Ketley Works?*, 7:00pm, Ketley Community Centre, 01952 617029

Wed 20 Sept

Wellington History Group, *The Foresters*, Neil Clarke, 7:30pm, Wellington Library, 01952 402459

Wed 18 Oct

Wellington History Group, *A Wrekin Legacy*, Wendy Palin, 7:30pm, Wellington Library, 01952 402459

Wed 15 Nov

Wellington History Group, *Wellington's Old Shops and Streets*, Allan Frost, 7:30pm, Wellington Library, 01952 402459

Fri 15 Dec

Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, *Historic postcards of Shropshire – images across the whole of Shropshire, covering towns, countryside, industry and events*, Ray Farlow, 2:30pm, Glass Classroom, Coalbrookdale, 01952 435900

The above "What's On?" is a taster of what's going on locally. Details of these meetings and more can be found at the Wrekin Local Studies Forum website.

<http://www.wlsf.org.uk/category/calendar/>

Mailbox

Could you please tell me any more about this photo taken on Benthall Edge?

Lin



Steve Dewhirst writes-

I think this is collecting wood at the time of the 1921 coal strike. Lord Forester allowed the locals to collect wood and dig for coal on Benthall Edge.

I am seeking any information regarding my great, great grandfather who died in Broseley in November 1866 at the age of 45. He and his family of wife and four sons had moved to Broseley sometime after 1861, and his widow and the sons were still living in Carvers Road, Broseley, at the time of the 1871 Census. His name was John Mitchell and he was a huntsman (more probably a whipper-in) with the Wheatland Hunt, working for a John Parton of Lye Mill, Morville. This information was obtained through the good offices of the present Secretary of the Wheatland Hunt.

Most of the family had left the area by the 1881 Census, though the eldest son, Joseph had married Anne the daughter of the local blacksmith Joseph Edwards in late 1871. She is living with her family in Lloyd Head on the 1871 Census aged 21 and described as a tobacco pipe maker. Also present is a seven-month old child described as grandson, one John Mitchell who is certainly Joseph and Anne's offspring.

Is it possible to establish when the family moved to Broseley and was Carvers Road their only place of residence? If the master of the hunt lived in Lye Mill it seems quite a way to travel for John to get to work. It is possible therefore that it was after his death that the family moved into Carvers Road. Do you have any information concerning the hunting activities?

I hope that you or one of your members may have some piece of information to help me. Thank you,
Robin Coombes

Steve Dewhirst writes-

I am sorry but I am not aware of any other source of information which will help to identify when the family came to Broseley. It is possible that he came to work for Lord Forester at Willey who I think was also involved in the Wheatland Hunt. They certainly hunted on the Forester Estate and sometimes met at Willey.

Does the Society have any information about Paupers in Broseley in the 19th century? My great, great grandmother is on the 1851 census in Broseley Wood as - Mary Havard, widow. Her sister, Elizabeth Gittoes, and 2 children are listed as Paupers, they were from Clun, Mary married John Havard at Mainstone. How did the system work in the town for the family? I know she later married James Small and lived at Madeley Wood. I am descended from this marriage.

Thank you, Pauline Bradburn

Steve Dewhirst writes-

In 1836 Broseley joined Madeley Union but the Broseley workhouse still continued to operate in some form until 1863. The purpose built workhouse at Madeley was not built until 1871. I believe that before the new Madeley Workhouse was built most people were dealt with by "out relief" that is they did not go into the workhouse but were given vouchers to obtain food etc.

There is some information on the Madeley Workhouse at <http://www.workhouses.org.uk/Madeley/> There is also a book about the Madeley Union called *Pitmen, Poachers and Preachers* by Ken Jones which is fully referenced. This covers the Poor Law in all the parishes in the Union from 1700 to 1930. I cannot find mention of the ledgers listing all the people who received relief however, the minute books are noted as being in Shropshire Archives. These may contain information about individuals.

My family came from Broseley initially, then moved to Ironbridge in the mid 1800s, presumably following work. My question relates to the 1841 census on which my great, great, great grandfather appears with his family. His name is Jeremiah Jones, and he is living at the "back of Elephant" according to the census. I was just wondering whether you would know where this was, was it in the centre of Broseley would you have any idea? I would be grateful for any information, as the name really intrigues me.

Janice Tate.

Steve Dewhirst writes-

This would be at the rear of the Elephant and Castle Pub which was on High Street. There is a small lane at the back. Below is the Tithe map of 1838 from our web site with the Elephant ringed in red. However if you look at the apportionment on the Web site (<http://www.broseley.org.uk/tithe.htm>) Jeremiah Jones is living at plot 200f which is one of the houses in the block ringed in green. This house was demolished a long time ago.



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Thank you to those members who have indicated that they would be happy to have an electronic copy of the Newsletter. If there are any other members who would prefer it this way, please contact the membership secretary, Janet Robinson, email:

janetc46.jr.jr@gmail.com

Those of you who would still prefer to have it in its printed version can continue to look forward to receiving it through the post

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