

# NEWSLETTER

## Newsletter of the **Broseley Local History Society**

INCORPORATING THE WILKINSON SOCIETY

August - 2020

### MEETINGS

**Meetings of the Broseley Local History Society are currently on hold due to the Covid Pandemic.** A further announcement will be made in November.

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

### CONTENTS

BLHS Programme	Page 1
What's On Elsewhere	Page 1
New Members	Page 1
Subscription Reminder	Page 1
Society Update	Page 1
LIDAR	Page 2
Stories from the Red Church	Page 2-3
News from the BALH	Page 3
Mailbox	Page 4

### BLHS PROGRAMME

Programme for Summer / Autumn:

**PLEASE NOTE:** Due to the current restrictions no BLHS activities are currently scheduled.

### What's On Elsewhere?

All the below are organised by **The Friends of The Ironbridge Gorge Museum** -

#### Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>. 2020

Diana Clarke, *Joseph Anstice, and his Circle* (joint meeting with IGM Friends)

Events below (should they proceed) are organised by **Much Wenlock U3A** and will all be held in the **Priory Hall at 2:00pm**, visitors are welcome:

Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>. – **Peter Dunhill:** *Shrewsbury Flaxmill*  
Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>. – **Alwyn Hughes:** *The Making of Lake Vyrnwy.*

### NEW MEMBERS

The Society would like to welcome the following new member:

Mrs Jackie Cordell      Herne Bay (Kent)

### SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Janet Robinson would like to remind members who have not paid their annual subscription since the Annual Meeting last October that the cost of membership is £7 for single membership and £12 for double membership. Could you please let Janet have your payment as soon as possible.

### Society Update

Unable to have a normal meeting, your committee met by Zoom on August 5<sup>th</sup>. We decided that, since present requirements on social distancing will make it impossible to hold our planned talks at the Social Club during the next few months, we will postpone our programme until the New Year. A further announcement will be made in the November Newsletter.

To keep in touch with our members, we have brought out the Journal earlier than usual, hope you enjoy the bumper issue. Those Members who have opted to receive their Newsletters electronically will also receive the Journal and the late Rev. Michael Pope's 'The Story of All Saints' Parish Church, Broseley', a beautifully illustrated account of the church and its furnishings. Those who receive theirs by post will receive the same package as soon as possible.

With the AGM cancelled this year, the present committee will continue in office and a financial statement from the treasurer will be included in the November Newsletter. Subscriptions will be put on hold for the time being.

At the time of writing, Gillian who has been in hospital is now out of hospital and recuperating. We wish her a speedy recovery.

### Neil Clarke 9<sup>th</sup>. August 2020

## Articles

### LIDAR

Watchers of Time Team may be familiar with this term, and it provides extra information which cannot be seen from maps or aerial photographs. Historic England describes it as:

‘Airborne lidar (light detection and ranging) measures the height of the ground surface and other features in large areas of landscape with a very high resolution and accuracy. Such information was previously unavailable, except through labour-intensive field survey or photogrammetry.

It provides highly detailed and accurate models of the land surface at metre and sub-metre resolution. This provides archaeologists with the capability to recognise and record otherwise hard to detect features.’

Much of the country has been scanned in this way, particularly the areas around the coast and rivers. A free low-resolution version can be seen at <https://houseprices.io/lab/lidar/map>. For the Broseley area, higher resolution images are available, and we have put two versions of these on our web site. They are at 25cm resolution the DSM (113Mbyte) version filters out all the trees and buildings, and the DTM (62 Mbyte) version includes these but does filter out some of the trees. All three versions give a slightly different view of the landscape.

Various features can be seen which are not shown on maps or Photographs. For Benthall, the quarries along the edge can be seen as can the tramways and two inclined planes at Pattern’s Rock. The deserted medieval village behind Benthall Hall is particularly clear. There are also several locations where ridge and furrow ploughing can be seen. It is visible in the century extension running into the field to the west. There are two particularly nice examples of this between the new Amies Meadow development Road and the Folly Farm on Coalport, which may be Medieval. There is also much evidence of coal mining with lots of small mounds in the fields. The low-resolution version covers a slightly larger area, and the mounds are particularly clear around the Deerleap.

**Steve Dewhirst 28<sup>th</sup>. July 2020**

### Stories from the Red Church

As most will know, a project is underway to restore the churchyard at the Red Church in association with “Caring for God’s Acre.” This includes finding gravestones or family vaults that have survived. Relating the inscriptions to Parish and other records offers a snapshot into the district when its industrial prosperity was at a high point. The cast iron work and some intricate craftsmanship by skilled stonemasons on some of the memorials certainly indicates significant local wealth, and, let’s face it – only the wealthy could afford tombstones.

What has been found? Among the memorials are those to blacksmiths John and George Hinsley, to watermen and brickmakers the Amphletts, to leatherworkers, cattle dealers and butchers the Booths, and several barge owners including the Yates and Williams families and others who also ran public houses. They feature Lloyds and Beard families who were amongst the most prolific in Jackfield and whose members played a part in nearly every business. Among specific people is the boat builder William Beard who is thought to have built the last trow for the river trades while, outside work, he was one of the petitioners for the new St Mary’s Church in 1863.

Over 1250 persons were buried in the small churchyard but the burial place of many is not known. They include Thomas Cochrane, Works Manager at Calcutts ironworks, brought to Jackfield from Scotland by Alexander Brodie I to be responsible for manufacturing a range of engineering devices including cannon and the famous Brodie stoves for warships in the Royal Navy. Another is Brodie’s nephew of the same name, AJB II, who inherited the works and has a memorial plaque in the new St Mary’s Church transferred from the old Church. A further magnificent memorial there is to Thomas Carter Phillips who, as a 12 year old boy, inherited a large part of the Wrockwardine Estate including land, houses, coal, limestone and iron mines, but sadly died just aged 29 along with his wife 26. We have found living descendants of the Amphletts, Beards, Lloyds, Cochranes and others including in Australia and USA. An interesting story of the Cochrane family is that Thomas Cochrane’s son was a founding member of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers and among the bridges and other eminent structures built by his grandson was the Clifton Suspension Bridge in Bristol. However, among the stories of local people is that of Pierre Stephan. Pierre was a modeller in the Tournai Porcelain factory in Belgium but was enticed to England to work at the Chelsea porcelain factory in 1770. He later joined

the Derby, Wedgwood and Wirksworth companies before moving to the Coalport China Co. early in the 1800s. He was renowned for the elegance and attention to detail of his figures. His children included Peter, William, Henry and Charles and their descendants were also involved in the china and many other businesses. Peter was recognised as a particularly accomplished artist-modeller, exhibited in many museums internationally. Sadly, we know of two members of the family killed in action during WW I – Pierre's great-grandson Frederick (1885-1916) and great x2-grandson William (1895-1917). They are remembered on the Roll of Honour in the new St Mary's Church, Jackfield and on the Jackfield Memorial Bridge. A further memorial to William is held in the Mission Chapel at Blists Hill. Pierre, his son Peter and nine other members of the Stephan family are buried at the Red Church, a site which also hosted eight baptisms in happier times for that family.

Our team would welcome contact from anyone who may have ancestral links with those buried or baptised in the old Red Church. We know of gravesites and memorials to members of the following families: Amphlett, Beard, Bill, Booth, Brodie, Davies, Dillon, Everall, Gwynn, Hinsley, Holmes, Millington, Morgan, Phillips, Richards, Turner, Williams and Yates, but the list becomes almost endless if surnames prior to marriages are included. A full list of all life events that we can accurately ascribe to that Church and Churchyard is on our website [www.broseley.org.uk/redchurch](http://www.broseley.org.uk/redchurch) or follow "Friends of the Red Church" on facebook.

Can you help celebrate the lives of those who helped built the history of the district?

#### **Graham Hollox 27<sup>th</sup>. June 2020**

##### NEWS FROM THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY (BALH)

It was, of course no surprise that the Local History Day for 2020 was cancelled but despite this the BALH awards for local historians were "virtually" presented as follows:

**For Personal Achievement:** Brian Austin from Somerset; Brian Buss from Surrey; Barry Jolly from Hampshire; Robert Ovens & Sheila Sleath (joint award) from Rutland and Bill Reed from Wiltshire;

**For Society Newsletter:** Essex Society for Archaeology & History

**For Research & Publication:**

**The David Hey Memorial Article:** Brian Hodgkinson "The Holland Causeway & Bridge End Priory" (Lincolnshire Fens)

#### **Other long articles:**

Neil Wiffen (Essex Journal); Ian Hancock (Hexham Historian); David C Neilson (Hampshire Studies); Carol Adams (West Sussex History);

#### **Short articles:**

Sean Gibbons (Hackney History); Norman A Alvin (Bradford Antiquary); Sue Andrews (Suffolk Review)

Winners' profiles & details of articles will appear in issues of the Local History News.

**A further volume** in the wonderful Victoria County Histories (VCH) the "red books" has been published for the neighbouring county of Staffordshire, Volume 12 is on Tamworth. These resources are an essential "must consult" for most local historians embarking on any research.

**Iron railings** - though "relatively little studied" are an important townscape feature, especially those dated pre-1900, according to the Oxford Buildings Record. As the Coalbrookdale Company was once a producer of these items, has any recorded any local examples? If not a Covid-19 project for someone perhaps?

**The Twickenham Local History Society** newsletter reported how a skip full of 17<sup>th</sup> century red bricks went to land fill. This ancient garden wall marked the "furthest flung boundary of Twickenham Parish" was replaced by "bland wooden fencing". A reminder perhaps to keep an eye on both our local landscape & townscape!

**World War 2** – Did your town adopt a warship? An interesting article, I could find no reference to Broseley or even Shropshire adopting a war ship on the [www.vandwddestroyersassociation.org.uk](http://www.vandwddestroyersassociation.org.uk) web site; but I have a vague memory that the Madeley Modern School (site of today's Abraham Darby Academy) did adopt a ship, possibly post war – any memories?

**A fairly local new** museum is hopefully, due to open in 2021 in Stourbridge, "The White House Cone Museum of Glass" based on the "important glass factories from the area".

**And finally** now your garden's looking spectacular and the house spick and span, with time on your hands both the Open University & the WEA (Workers Educational Association) are offering on-line courses. They are in all sorts of subjects; including of course, History, the Arts & Culture; a number of which are free. Go on give it a go!!!! "THE LOCAL HISTORIAN" contains 5 articles, including both Brian Hodgkinson's & Neil Wiffen's (see above) and a number of book reviews for local history publications; "Bridgnorth in the Great War" by Christopher Owen is reviewed online.

#### **Janet Doody 7<sup>th</sup>. August 2020**

## Mailbox

### Correspondence relating to the Rebuild of Broseley Church

Steve,

That's interesting...and puzzling, considering the distance between the two parishes.

The only reference I've come across is in VCH, vol.10, p.287 – 'In 1707 a brief was issued for rebuilding [St Leonard's] which began probably after 1710 and was complete by 1716' – with references to TSAS, x, 25 and Forester Collection SA 1224/3/771.

Neil



**From:** Stephen Dewhirst  
[<mailto:steve@broseley.org.uk>]  
**Sent:** 02 August 2020 09:24  
**To:** Neil Clarke  
**Subject:** Fw: local history

Have you ever heard of this?  
Steve

**From:** Elaine Barker  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 2, 2020 9:17 AM  
**To:** [steve@broseley.org.uk](mailto:steve@broseley.org.uk)  
**Subject:** local history

Hi Steve, I'm a local historian in the village of Peldon in Essex and am involved in a project at the neighbouring village of Great Wigborough. In the parish register we have a fragment listing four 'Church Briefs' where in 1707 the congregation collected for three churches damaged by fire and Broseley Church. I see the church, which was then called St Leonards was rebuilt then, retaining the old tower. Do you have

any more information on this, eg why it was being rebuilt, how old the original church was etc?  
Great Wigborough (St Stephens) collected 6 pence farthing on 11th May!

Elaine Barker

### Postscript from Elaine Barker:

Thanks so much for answering. Actually, Broseley is the only one of the four that doesn't specify fire so it could have just been a rebuilding to either enlarge with a growing congregation or the main body of the church was structurally unsound. I found a blog from Norfolk records Office who have the briefs for Barham Church in Suffolk and they contributed to the same four churches as Great Wigborough - again it didn't specify that Broseley was due to fire whereas it did with the other three. I'd never come across church briefs before - I now find all our local villages contributed to the rebuilding of St Paul's too. Thanks again - I love the picture!

Elaine

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<i>Chairman</i>	Gillian Pope
<i>Secretary</i>	Dot Cox
<i>Treasurer</i>	Reha Derici
<i>Membership Secretary</i>	Janet Robinson 26 Coalport Road Broseley TF12 5AZ 01952 882495
<i>Programme Secretary and Journal Editor</i>	Neil Clarke
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Mike Wallage
<i>Publicity</i>	Jennie Osborn Jocelyne Barbier Jim Cooper Janet Doody Richard Sells Steve Dewhirst
<i>Website</i>	<a href="http://www.broseley.org.uk">www.broseley.org.uk</a>
<i>Email</i>	<a href="mailto:steve@broseley.org.uk">steve@broseley.org.uk</a>

To see this *Newsletter* in full colour, visit the

website at [www.broseley.org.uk](http://www.broseley.org.uk).

### DISTRIBUTION OF NEWSLETTERS

Thank you to those members who have indicated

they would be happy to have electronic copies of the Newsletter. If there are any other members who would prefer it this way please contact the membership secretary, Janet Robinson, email:

[janet46.jr.jr@gmail.com](mailto:janet46.jr.jr@gmail.com)

Those of you would prefer to have it in its printed form can continue to look forward to receiving it through the post. Many thanks.

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