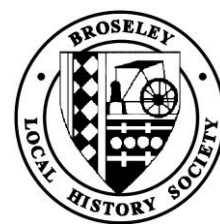


NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the **Broseley Local History Society**

INCORPORATING THE WILKINSON SOCIETY



MAY 2015

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.

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PROGRAMME

- 3 Jun *Visit to the Pipe Museum* with demonstration by Rex Key (there will be a cost of £2.50 to cover the staff opening the Pipe Works and afterwards everyone is invited back to the Chairman's house, Rivendell, 2 Dark Lane for cheese and wine. If anyone wishes to come and did not sign the list at the last meeting could they contact Gillian Pope on 01952 883960 for catering purposes.)
- 11 Jul Annual outing to Soho House and Birmingham
- 2 Sept *Shrewsbury and Newport Canal* by Brian Nelson
- 7 Oct *AGM followed by Race Courses in East Shropshire* by Jim Cooper
- 4 Nov Joint meeting with the Friends at Coalbrookdale

Further details from Neil Clarke 01952 504135.

NEW MEMBERS

The Society would like to welcome the following new member:

Paula Gittings, Northallerton, Yorkshire

We would also like to welcome back all of the members who have re-joined.

ANNUAL OUTING

For more information about the annual outing to Birmingham see the form on the final page of Newsletter or contact Michael Pope on 01952 883960

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

In February John Powell spoke to us about the Ironbridge Institute Library, which is based in the Long Warehouse, adjacent to the Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron. Collections include material on the history of the iron industry, bridge building, civil engineering, brick and tile manufacture, coal mining, the pottery and porcelain industries, railways, canals, the social history of the East Shropshire Coalfield and all other subjects represented at the Museum's sites. Special collections include the Elton Collection, strong on images of industry, and a collection devoted to the life and work of Thomas Telford.



The Long Warehouse housing the Ironbridge Institute Library

In this year's Annual Wilkinson Lecture on March 4th, Michael Darby began with an outline of the development of the coke smelting of iron by his illustrious forebears. He went on to tell the remarkable story of the saving and restoration of the Old Furnace at Coalbrookdale. In the discussion which followed, Broseley's links with the Darbys was touched on: Abraham I was buried in the Quaker burial ground here; and John Wilkinson helped Abraham III with the Iron Bridge project. We hope to publish a full version of this talk in the next copy of our Journal.



The grave of Abraham Darby I in the Quaker burial ground at Broseley Pipe Museum

In April Janet Doody gave a talk entitled A Family at War - Letters from the Western Front Sent by Two Broseley Brothers

The talk began with a brief overview of the situation in Great Britain just prior to the start of the war. At the time the British Government had concerns of its own; industrial unrest, the suffrage movement which often resulted in social violence and the Irish Question over the debate for independence.

During the early months of 1914 little was recorded in the British press of the situation in Eastern Europe that finally erupted with the assassination of the Arch-Duke Ferdinand. Throughout much of the summer the weather was fine and sunny and the population took advantage of the outdoors. In Shropshire there was great excitement as Shrewsbury was to host the Royal Show and King himself was to attend on Friday 3rd July. The local newspaper during all July was full of the show, all classes and results being listed. However eventually war was declared and could no longer be overlooked. Recruiting notices now filled the press exerting young men to enlist and many rushed to sign up.

In Broseley Bert and Cecil (Cis) Oakes the youngest sons of Edward and Eliza Oakes, originally of Salthouses, Jackfield and later The Deanery, Church Street did not rush to enlist. Cis had volunteered for the Shropshire Yeomanry in 1912 but had been discharged as "being not likely to make an efficient soldier". However by 1915 he had re-joined and drafted with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment to the Isle of Wight until he went to France in September 1916. In his letters he consistently asks for money to be sent, (usually his mother) mainly for cigarettes and tobacco and was not ashamed to use blackmail!

"I must tell you the reason why I sent you the wire to send me two pounds (it was) for an examination for the machine gun course, (this) would be beneficial to me and they refund the money when the exam is over, whether you fail or pass and (there is) a prize for five pounds, there is only two of us been asked to take the course, for I shall have to withdraw from the exam and if I pass (I get) more pay and also the stripes of a Corporal"

"You can send me sometime when you can spare the money, two summer shirts and a pair or two thin socks, for the socks we have are too thick, and our boots been (being) so heavy it plays the bear (?) up



Oakes Family Photo

with my feet, I wish I was nearer home, as I could have a pair of thinner boots to wear when I am off duty to ease my poor feet, for I am obliged to go about in my socks for I can't stand them."

"Well I must thank you for sending me the fluid, also the socks for they have eased my poor feet very much"

Other news must have been very worrying

"Well we have had three of our comrades to bury this last week, one blew his brains out in his hut, another cut his throat & another died in drink, so you see what it does for some of them, but it will not kill me. Oh by the way, you will not know me when I come down for I have grown a moustache according to military orders"

Bert enlisted in early 1916, probably just before the introduction of conscription and spent his training at Prees Heath. It is these early letters written whilst still in the UK that reveal the most; once overseas, for obvious reasons they are not so detailed. He too seems to have been worried about his socks!!

"You must thank Dolly for the cigarettes, they are the things we want, especially on the march, for when they fall us out for 10 minutes, there is no time for pipe filling. I shall not need to wash socks this week, the ones you send are very acceptable. It doesn't matter them being grey for my army socks are exactly the same colour & in our regiment they will have uniformity of dress, they stopped the fellows who wore coloured socks of their own. I've just had my dinner, viz. beef, potatoes & peas, stewed rhubarb & milk, not bad, do you think & we have pineapples, margarine & bread for tea, this is to make out for bully beef & biscuits yesterday I suppose, we couldn't eat the latter, they were too hard, just like dog biscuits."

Bert writes about life at Prees Heath

"We get up at 6 o'clock, dress & make beds then drill from 6.45 to 8 followed by breakfast. Then drill till 12, when dinner takes place, of course we do our own cleaning & washing up. Two o'clock sees us at drill again till 4 or so, then tea & when we have put

our beds ready we are allowed out till 9.30 Of course the camp is as large as Ironbridge, Madeley & Broseley all combined, so you may expect we can't go far. There is a YMCA close to our hut & there we can get this paper, listen to concerts & can get cocoa or coffee & buns or anything else we need as we all go there, of course there are a lot of YMCA huts about the camp but all are full to overflowing during the opening time.

We have two night parades on this week, one a march with full pack & the other laying barbed wire entanglements in the dark. Today we have been trench digging. I will just give you an illustration of a day's work, this is to days. Six o'clock got out of bed, dress, make bed & tidy room, first parade 6.30 am. Physical training till 7.45 am, breakfast, buttons cleaned shaving & boots till 8.45am. Bayonet fighting till 10 o'clock. Marching & other drill till 12 pm, rest & dinner till 1.45pm, Musketry till 4.00pm, the trenching digging comes in the drill from 11 till 12, so you see it is a good day. Then some nights we have an hour lecture & others silent marching to the trenches in the dark. Last Thursday night about 12, the bugle went & we all had to turn out of bed as quickly as possible & in whatever we could get into in the dark, for a fire had broken out in one of the Camps. We had to remain shivering on the parade ground in perfect order for about 1 hr. & a half till the fire was put out' It burned down the officers' mess & two huts & destroyed everything in them. This is soldiering."

Then just as Bert is making arrangements for his wedding disaster strikes!

"Measles are raging in the camp & our Company have them ...We are all isolated, but have to do our daily duties as usual. For two days we had to thoroughly clean our huts & wash everything, but today we have resumed the usual routine. We are not however allowed to mix with any of the others or go from the hut at night. It is a very monotonous They decided yesterday that we could resume our duties but we must be isolated between times & nights. We are allowed to sit outside the door but not allowed to go 20 yds. from the hut. There are police at each end to guard"

Eventually however they do get married at Broseley Church on 17th June 1916, with *"no ceremony It will be a regular war time wedding."*

They left almost immediately after on the train to spend a few days with Bert's sister Mab and her family in Coventry. Then Bert leaves for France on 10th July 1916



Cis Oakes

"My dear mother & father, I am at last, tonight saying Good-bye to dear old England for a time. We are leaving the camp about 9pm so that against you get this letter I shall either be at a Southern Port for embarkation or actually crossing the Channel. I will write you at every opportunity I can & if I write to one or the other you must pass on the news to all."

Sadly Bert and Gert were destined to spend only a few weeks of married life together as he was killed in action on 30th September 1917 and was buried in the Brandhoek Military Cemetery at Ieper (Ypres) Belgium.

Cis survived the war although he did not return home until 1919, having served in both Belgium and Germany; he married Edie Price in 1924 at Birmingham and died in 1971. Gert did not re-marry but continued to live in Broseley, she died on 21st March 1943.

BOOKSHOP

"Wheels of Providence", the journal of artist and teacher John Cox Bayliss

David de Haan writes -

A couple of years ago a distant relative gave Mike Fraser a collection of family papers which included the journal of John Cox Bayliss, born in Madeley 19th February 1812 and died in London 6th August 1866. The resulting book – Wheels of Providence – provides some fascinating details of life in the

Gorge between 1830 and 1845. John married Anne Wyke (daughter of Thomas Turner's sister Elizabeth and Shrewsbury surgeon Abraham Wyke) and together they lived in Broseley and then ran a school at The Brockholes just above the Iron Bridge. They moved their home and school to Ironbridge in 1833 until they left there for London in 1846. Their second son, Wyke Bayliss (1835-1906), became President of the Royal Society of British Artists in 1888 and was knighted in 1897. John Cox Bayliss's journal has been transcribed by Mike Fraser, a draft of which was sent to Steve Dewhurst and me in February 2014 for comments, and it was published in May 2014. More than half the book covers the years in and around the Gorge. **1831**, February 4th: *"These two days it has been snowing almost without intermission."* February 10th: *"The Severn is higher now than it has been since 1794"*. And somewhat alarmingly July 1st: *"Some electric fluid it is said fell on a house in Broseley."* **1832**, Cholera in Broseley, Monday November 25th: *"Seven were buried on Saturday and as many yesterday and today."*

Bayliss is known as the artist of several lithographs in and around the Gorge, but the dating was vague until now. His view of Ironbridge taken from a little downstream "from Severn Gate" was reproduced on Coalport china. Other views of Benthall Edge, Willey Park, Coalbrookdale, Buildwas Abbey and Hawkstone Park, are all in his set of 19 "Views in Shropshire" published in instalments from 1839, with the 5th and final part issued in 1845. The journal extracts add significant details. **1838**, September 10th: *"In returning home was enamoured with some scenery in the Dale which I must copy."* September 14th: *"Have completed two sketches of the beautiful scenery of C.B. Dale."* September 16th: *"...struck by the beauty of two scenes ... one of Buildwas Abbey ...the other of Ironbridge from a gate by Severn House."* (This is the house near the exit to the Iron Bridge car park). October 5th: *"... begun a view of Ironbridge from Severn Gate."* **1839**, 28th June: *"Have finished the views of Coalbrookdale."* **1844**, February 25th: *"Have almost finished the drawing on stone of C.B. Dale"* (which he completed on 4th March and then went on to do a view of Hawkstone Park). November 23rd: *"Have completed a view of C.B. Dale, an oil painting for Mr. Robinson of Liverpool, from a sketch I made about 3 months since for Mr. Bangham of Birmingham which he has engraved for a bill and letterhead."*

The book also includes occasional letters by their children, one of which is a description of a return

visit to the Brockholes by Wyke in July 1878, who noted the old Jackfield Church being affected by undermining.

Fraser, M. 2014. *Wheels of Providence – Over the Ironbridge in the Victorian Journal of John Cox Bayliss*. 166 pages, 32 illustrations.

ISBN-

(paperback) 9781497535657, £9.95;

(hardback) 9781291794779, £24.95.

www.wheelsofprovidence.com or search 'Wheels of Providence' on Amazon.



*Bayliss's view
of Ironbridge*

“Crossing the River: Fords and Ferries on the Shropshire Severn”

Jan Lancaster reviews Neil Clarke's new book:

Many Society members will remember Neil Clarke's three interesting talks on his research into the fords and ferries of the Shropshire Severn which he gave to combined meetings of the Society and the Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum. The first of these talks centered on the crossings of the Gorge itself, the second and third covered the Bridgnorth and the Shrewsbury areas.

Neil's initial interest had been in the various crossings in the Gorge itself, and although the bridges had been documented, there was very little to be found on such crossings as ferries and fords. So he began to dig deeper, and the deeper he dug, the more interested he became, eventually widening his research to include all the crossings of the Severn within Shropshire's boundaries.

While such crossings had been documented in neighbouring counties, there appeared to be little record of those within Shropshire itself. So when Neil was invited by the Railway and Canal Historical Society to write a book reflecting this extensive research he saw this as an opportunity not to be missed.

The result is a 64 page book detailing each and every ford and ferry crossing, with grid references, from the Welsh border down to the Stanley ferry just beyond Potters Loade. The book is structured in three parts, like his talks, and is illustrated with good, clear pictures and photographs, many from the

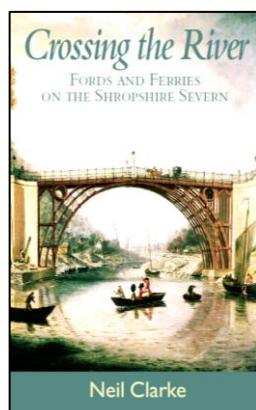
Shropshire Archives and the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust.

To launch this book an event was held on 21 March at the Museum of the Gorge when a packed auditorium heard Neil give an abbreviated description of his research into those crossings within the Gorge itself. This was followed by guided walks, led by Neil, John Powell and Steve Dewhirst, from the Dale End ford along the towpath as far as Severnside, where the late Eustace Rogers of coracle renown lived, up onto the street and back to the Iron Bridge itself.

This proved to be extremely interesting, with Steve pointing out various places mentioned in the book, for instance where the Dale End ford crossed the river from where the Museum of the Gorge now stands to the south bank where the railway viaduct, now disused and barely visible through the trees and undergrowth, was subsequently built. He also pointed out the Benthall Brook, just downstream of the Iron Bridge, which itself marks the boundary between Benthall and Broseley. Another place of interest was the old shed where the Rogers family built coracles for use on the River Severn. This shed appears to be on the agenda for conservation as a building of local and historical interest.

From there it was back to the Iron Bridge, which in 1781 had replaced the old Benthall ferry, the original link between Broseley and Madeley Wood, as Ironbridge was then called. Over at the Toll House, Steve pointed out the list of toll charges for crossing the bridge, still visible on the outside of the building. In the spirit of the Quaker ethic of equality it seems that, along with baggage and mail coaches, even the Royal Family had to pay a halfpenny for the pleasure of crossing the bridge!

So concluded an enjoyable and instructive morning. As someone remarked, “It's amazing how much there is to see, when you really stop and look, and even more so when someone points things out to you!”



Copies of this book are on sale at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum shops, or may be obtained by visiting www.rchs.org.uk, by writing to the Railway and Canal Historical Society, 4 Broadway, Lincoln, LN2 1SH or by contacting the author Neil Clarke on 01952 504135. £10.00 post free, cheques payable to RCHS.

WHERE'S WELLY?

Editor: On which Broseley building can this plaque be found? The answer will be printed in May's copy of Newsletter.



In the last edition of Newsletter we were trying to pinpoint the whereabouts of some decorative bricks. Well they can be found on the Bridgnorth road side of the Instone's building, on the gable above the barbers shop. The bricks appear to be in fabulous condition considering they are over 100 years old.



Society Artefacts

Margaret Hazledine has kindly offered accommodation for the Societies' artefacts at her home, at Rudgewood.

During the cataloguing of some of these items Jim Cooper and Jan Lancaster came across some old photographs. They identified all but one, and have scanned them and sent them through to Steve Dewhirst for his archives. The unidentified one is shown below. It could be anywhere but someone might just recognise where?



The Agricultural Activities of John Wilkinson, Ironmaster by W.H. Chaloner

It is not generally known that besides being a large scale industrialist, John Wilkinson (1728-1808), the celebrated ironmaster, was also one of the "spirited proprietors" who appear so frequently in the agricultural history during the latter half of the eighteenth century. His youthful back-ground was semi-rural, but his career as a large scale landowner does not appear to have begun until after the War of American Independence (1776-83), when it became difficult to satisfy public and private demands for cannon. Consequently his profits as an ironmaster accumulated rapidly, and some of them were invested in agricultural improvement. About 1777-8 he bought the bleak hill of Castlehead, near Grange-over-Sands in north Lancashire, then surrounded by a peaty marsh, and the adjacent Wilson House estate, with the double purpose of building a country residence on the former site, and "with a view of making iron from the peat with which the country so much abounded" on the latter. The peat-smelting of iron, although technically successful, was however not an economic proposition, and his thoughts turned "to consider what other uses could be made of so extensive a tract, in particular whether it could not be made capable of cultivation."

The general nature of the tract Wilkinson undertook to improve was extremely discouraging. According to Sir John Sinclair, M.P., President of the Board of Agriculture, who honoured Wilkinson with a visit to Castlehead in 1805, it would have been called in Scotland a "flow moss." On the average about five feet of the first stratum consisted of a soft, spongy kind of peat, which made very poor fuel. Below this, however, the black peat was deep (15 feet and over) and of excellent quality. After these two layers the bottom was "a fine strong blue clay" capable of being used as a top dressing after being burnt in small heaps with peat, but otherwise "unfriendly to vegetation until it has been long exposed to, and ameliorated by the atmosphere."

Wilkinson's first attempts to improve about four or five acres of this waste marsh, on which animals could only be pastured in frosty weather, began in 1778 and were unsuccessful. The surface was breast-ploughed and then burnt. But the drainage trenches were cut too far apart and the "proper management" of the sod-kilns in which lime for spreading on the moss could be produced "was not then understood." Later Wilkinson tried a more complex system of drainage trenches which proved more successful.

Special spades and ploughs were used, and the great ironmaster's inventive brain even produced a special 10-inch circular patten for the hind feet of the horses used in the work of reclamation, so that they could be employed even in the soft parts of the moss. "Before this invention," remarked Sir John Sinclair. "the ploughs were wrought by the strength of men till the moss had consolidated." By 1805, after an elaborate rotation of crops and a considerable and costly spreading of clay, sand, or mould on the surface, the reclaimed moss had produced hay, turnips, oats, winter rye, barley and potatoes, the latter being "of a quality peculiarly excellent." It is typical of the man that he threw himself wholeheartedly into this new sphere of activity, for in 1787 he was the only person who took the trouble to send the Royal Society of Arts samples of Chinese hemp fibre in "a state fit for the purpose of manufactures" after the society had distributed seeds of the plant to a large number of persons for experimental growth.

It was not only at Castlehead that Wilkinson undertook agricultural improvements. In 1792 he brought the Brymbo Hall estate, and later added to it a number of smaller estates and farms in the bleak township of Brymbo in Denbighshire, north Wales. On his death in 1808 the whole concentration amounted to about 872 acres. The original soil was naturally poor, "being a hungry clay on a substratum of yellow rammel or coal schist." By good tillage and heavy manuring with lime (10 tons per acre) Wilkinson so improved crop yields that the township's corn tithes increased by £40 per annum in value. "A crowned head had assisted him in the making of his compost manures. Offa, King of Mercia, had employed men to bring together the soil; and Mr. Wilkinson went to the expense of lime, to be mixed with it. Large cavities, of the shape of inverted cones, were cut at convenient distances, in Offa's Dyke, which runs across Brymbo Farm. The cavities were filled up with the limestone and then burnt."

At Brymbo, too, he experimented with powdered "sweet coal" i.e. coal with a very low sulphur content, as a top dressing for grasslands. As compared with land manured with a compost of soil and lime, the area so treated produced the best and earliest grass.

His lime making activities in north Wales were not, however, confined to the township of Brymbo. At some date before 1798 he had secured a lease of forty two years of land containing limestone adjacent to Lord Derby's estate at Hope in Flintshire.

Here he had erected large lime kilns of which he wrote: "my present lime work being so near coal of my own enables me to sell it on easy terms to the country and to meet any competition whatever."

The general impression derived from a study of Wilkinson's farming and reclamation activities is therefore of large scale, long term ploughing of industrial and mining profits into agriculture on marginal lands at a time when a rapidly expanding population and Government expenditure in connection with a series of wars resulted in a rising price level, a buoyant economy, and towards the end, a considerable degree of inflation. Wilkinson was perhaps fortunate in that he did not live to see the depression in agriculture during the years immediately after 1815

Two new buildings to open in 2015 at Blists Hill

Blists Hill Victorian Town is adding two new buildings to its ever expanding site in 2015.

The Spry, the last remaining Lower Severn Trow, is being given a new home, which is due to open during the summer. Trows were used to transport raw materials and finished goods up and down the River Severn before the railways took over this role and are one of the unsung heroes of the Industrial Revolution. The new building will protect The Spry from the elements and contain a fascinating new exhibition about the boat, while a walkway over the



Spry in sail 1908 - image by permission of Gloucester Folk Museum

deck will allow visitors to see the boat from a whole new perspective.

Elsewhere around the Town, the transport story continues as another new building is being created to house the Museum's replica Trevithick Engine, arguably the world's first steam powered locomotive, along with two other historic boats, a Canal Ice Breaker and Canal Tub Boat. For further information, contact the Ironbridge Tourist Information Centre on Tel: 01952 433424 or visit www.ironbridge.org.uk.



Harold Grice (volunteer) with Trevithick locomotive
Picture courtesy of IGMT

**WIN A SHARE OF
£20,000**

**For the Broseley
Heritage Centre**

By collecting



Tokens

**Tokens will be printed every
day in the Shropshire Star
from Thursday 16th April to
Saturday 23 May.**

**Please put your coupons in the
boxes around town or in the
porch of All Saints' church.**

**The more tokens we collect,
the greater our share of the
£20,000 for the Heritage
Centre**

What's On?

Tue 19 May

John Benson, *Family History and Canals*,
7:30pm, Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum,
Call 01952 433522 for more details

June - September 2015

*To Check the Tide of Prejudice: John Cooke Bourne
and the London & Birmingham Railway*

Exhibition of lithographs, original sketches and
wash drawings which were widely used to address
criticism of the construction of the London &
Birmingham Railway in the 1830s

Open 10am-5pm Monday - Friday

Coalbrookdale Gallery, Coach Road, Coalbrookdale,
Free admission

For details call 01952 433 424 or visit

www.ironbridge.org.uk

Tuesday 2 June

Archaeology Seminar - A talk by Mike Shaw
entitled 'Medieval Town Planning in Staffordshire,
Cheshire and Shropshire'; part of a new series of
free archaeology-related seminars by the Ironbridge
Gorge Museum Trust and the Ironbridge
Archaeology Volunteer Group for members of the
public with an interest in archaeology.

Museums of The Gorge, 6pm

For details and to book a place call 01952 435946 or
visit www.ironbridge.org.uk

Sat 6 June

Shropshire F.H.S. Family History Fair, Shirehall,
Shrewsbury, from 10:00am. 11:00am Peter Park,
The manor, its records and its people. 2:30pm Eve
McLaughlin, *Illegitimacy and Adoption – historical
background*. Shropshire Family History Society.
Contact 01694 722949

Wed 17 June

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust, *Summer Tree
Identification*. A stroll along the Silkin Way to
identify a vast range of trees in their summer leaves.

What is the difference between one native tree and
another? What easy ways are there to identify and
remember leaves? By the end of this walk, you will
be able to identify a number of trees by their shape,
leaf, smell, bark and fruit. Fee: £10

Meet: Shakespeare Inn car park, Coalport,

To book, email: bookings@severngorge.org.uk or
call 01952 433880

Wed 24 June

Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum AGM and talk by Richard Bifield, *The Best of Shropshire's heritage and landscapes*, 7:30pm Board Room FIGM. Call 01952 433522 for more details

Wed 22 July

Jan Doody, *Thomas Parker, Engineer Extraordinaire*, 7:30pm, Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Call 01952 433522 for more details

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/calendar.html>

Mailbox

I know this is a bit of a long shot, but I was wondering if any society members would have any information or photographs relating to the staff at the Lady Forester Hospital in the 1960's. I can't find anything online apart from old photos of the building. I am not able to come along and do my own "digging" as I live in Cornwall.

Marion

Steve Dewhirst replies-

I don't have anything myself but I will ask for your query to be included in our next newsletter to see if any of our readers can help.

I am currently writing a book about the St John first aid medallion. I believe that in WW2 the Order relocated to Willey Park. I wonder if you have any information about this?

Alan Sharkey

Steve Dewhirst replies-

I can only find reference to this in the following documents from 1940:

BROSELEY CLUBS REVIEW THE YEAR

A very successful year's working, with a credit balance for the first time for many years, was reported at the annual meeting of Broseley Social Club on Friday. In spite of the bad weather there was a large attendance, although members were disappointed that Lord Forester, the president, was unable to be there.

In a review of the club's finances the secretary, Mr. T. Goodall, said that total receipts were £1,249, compared with £1,062 in the previous year. The sale of refreshments totalled £1,176 (£985 in 1938). Total expenses, excluding refreshments, were £339 (£313) and cash in hand was £280 (£265). There was a credit balance of £10 against a loss of £59 in 1938 and £51 in 1937. The healthy state of the finances was a great credit to the management committee, and the steward and stewardess, Mr. and Mrs. T. Meredith.

Although membership last year was the same as in 1938, 28 members have already been elected this year. They include members of the staff of the St. John Ambulance Association residing at Broseley, to whom the committee extended a welcome during their stay.

LABOUR PARTY WHIST

A special drive was held in the Town Hall on Tuesday by the Broseley Labour Party, organised by Mrs. C. Hall and Mrs. N. George. Prizes were presented by Mrs. W. Perks to: 1- Mrs. P Chatham, 2- Mrs. A. Jones, 3- Mrs. L. Fielding. 1- Mr. W. Bowen, 2- Mr. T. Overall, 3- Mr. C. Watkin, specials- Mrs. H. Hall and Mr. A. Cartwright. The M.C.s' duties were carried out jointly by Mrs. N. George and Mr. W. Garbett. A competition was also held and the winners were Miss Brown (St. John's, Willey) and Miss A. Oliver. The proceeds of the competition were for the soldiers' and sailors' fund.

ST. JOHN HEADQUARTERS

Since shortly after the outbreak of war Willey Hall has been the headquarters of the St. John Ambulance Brigade, which moved there from Clerkenwell. A staff of about 60 has been evacuated from London to deal with the clerical work and the quantities of first-aid equipment, text books and other stores.

Among the missing articles the most valuable is a squirrel fur coat, valued at £60. Two other fur coats are valued at £10 and £6 6s. A metal money box belonging to one of the children, believed to have contained about £1 in cash, was forced; and two or three petrol coupons belonging to Lord Forester and the return half of a railway ticket, Wellington to Slough, are missing. Other articles missed are: a gold fountain pen inscribed with the name "Cecil"; a man's watch of gun metal colour, valued at £20; a leather wallet with £4 or £5 in notes; and a brown leather links box, containing three miniature medals (British war, victory and coronation), two gold

studs, a pair of gold cuff links and another pair of cuff links in the shape of a star:

In spite of an intensive search over a wide area the police had up to last night made no arrests in connection with the burglary at Willey Hall last week-end. None of the missing articles has been recovered.

HOME NURSING AWARDS.

Lady Forester attended at the Town Hall, Broseley, on Wednesday evening and presented St. John Ambulance Association home nursing certificates to 29 ladies who had passed the recent examination. The candidates had been coached by Mrs. W. Andrews. Lady Forester urged all present to work and help the men who were at this time doing all they could do for us. Certificates were presented to Gladys A. Davies, Dorothea Harris, Agnes M. Thomas, Estelle Davis, Annie Roberts, C. Annie Lloyd, Olwen Bennet, Evelyn Bennett, Cicely Bill, Dora E. Instone, Louisa Smith, Mabel A. Powell, Mary E. Taylor, Helen M. Marston, Annie M. Goodall, Freda Meredith, Annie Lloyd, Gwendoline Jones, Isabella Fox-Edwards, Elizabeth Renwick, Lucy Briscoe, Margaret Brickley, Pattie Davis, Janet Hamilton, Gladys Harrison, Enid Jackson, Florence E. Ward, Dorothy Grocott and Sylvia R. Harvatt.

I am sending you this scan because of the Broseley connection maybe you can find a use for it? I have no information on Herbert Danks but if you do I would be grateful for it.

Tom Cooper.



Steve Dewhirst replies-

Many thanks for the fascinating photo. According to the 1911 census he was a House Painter and lived in Barber Street with his sister. He was 41 and was born in Minsterley. In 1901 he was also living in Broseley with his mother and had the same occupation. I then had a look at an earlier census

(1871) and it turns out his father was a Veterinary Surgeon so the link with horses makes sense.

We will be visiting the United Kingdom on our next trip to Europe from Australia in September this year. I was hoping to visit Broseley while in the UK; it was where I grew up and where our family operated a number of businesses. I understand that people in the town still recall us, a family that enjoyed the town and its people for three generations. For his part, my father, now deceased, helped resurrect the tennis club after the war and along with my mother contributed to the annual fair and serviced the town with groceries and drapery through the shops that once operated at 76 High Street.

It has been decades since I have seen my home town, let alone the shores of England, and I was wondering if the society might assist me in connecting with people who recall my family with a view to paying my respects while I am there.

Your assistance in this matter will be greatly appreciated, and perhaps I can reciprocate with details and images of the town as I have done in the past.

David Roberts

Canberra, Australia

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Broseley Local History Society Summer Outing

Saturday 11th July 2015

This year our Summer Outing will be to Birmingham, a power house of industrial Britain in the Victorian age and into the twentieth century. The city boasts some fine architecture, excellent museums and an art gallery with one of the finest collections of paintings in the country.

We shall be dropped off in the centre of the city near Birmingham Cathedral which will provide easy access to a number of attractions. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery is nearby in which one could easily spend a day. It also has an excellent cafeteria serving light meals and snacks. Not far from the Museum is Victoria Square with its fine buildings and a statue of Joseph Chamberlain who did so much to put Birmingham on the map.

Outside the House of Sport on Broad Street stands a statue of "Boulton, Watt and Murdock" – nicknamed "The Golden Boys." Other attractions include the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, the Canal system and the newest visitor attraction "The Wonderful World of Trains and Planes." Dare we mention it! There is also, of course, the iconic new Library in Centenary Square which is now under threat of closure!

The coach will pick us up again at 1:30pm and we shall travel the short distance to Soho House. It was here that Matthew Boulton, one of the country's first industrialists, entertained the leading scientists and inventors of the industrial age, including James Watt, Erasmus Darwin, Josiah Wedgwood and Joseph Priestly. Matthew Boulton lived in the house for 43 years until he died in 1809. During that time the area surrounding the house was developed into a 200 acre estate and the country's first major factory was created. On arrival we will be given an introductory talk. The coach will pick us up again at 4pm

The coach will leave Broseley at 8:30am from the Broseley Square Bus Stop. There is ample free parking in the car park next to the Library in Bridgnorth Road. We aim to be back in Broseley between 5 and 5:30pm. There is an admission charge for Soho House and for the introductory talk which is included in the cost of the trip.



BOOKING FORM

SUMMER OUTING TO BIRMINGHAM SATURDAY 11TH JULY 2015

NAME/S _____

ADDRESS _____

POST CODE _____ TEL.NO. _____

NO. OF PERSONS @ £13 PER HEAD _____ INCLUDING ADMISSION TO SOHO HOUSE

TOTAL PAYMENT _____

Please make cheques payable to Broseley Local History Society and return this form, together with payment, by no later than July 4th to Michael Pope, Rivendell, 2 Dark Lane, Broseley. TF12 5LH
Telephone No. 01952 883960

