

Newsletter

Newsletter of the Broseley Local History Society

Incorporating the Wilkinson Society



November 2004

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Meetings

Meetings of the Broseley Local History Society are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30 pm 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 7.30 pm to allow speakers a prompt start.

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

Programme

- 1 Dec Christmas dinner
- 5 Jan *Ancient Bridleways in and around Broseley*, by Derek Pountney
- 2 Feb *A tribute to Eustace Rogers*, presentation by Ken Jones and Ron Miles
- 2 Mar *John Wilkinson, Copper King?*, by Vin Callcut

For further information contact Neil Clarke on 01952 504135.

New Members

The Society would like to welcome the following new members:

- Ann Derry, Ironbridge
- Roger Edmundson, Shrewsbury
- Graham Hamilton, Little Wenlock
- Sheila Hewish, Coalbrookdale
- Peter Jones, Broseley
- Michael Pitchford, Bewdley
- Dorothy Rolfe, Bearsted, Kent

Society News

Christmas Dinner

Date: Wednesday, 1 December
Venue: Lion Hotel, High Street, Broseley
Time: 7.30 for 8.00 pm
Cost: £17.50 per head

The Society's Christmas dinner will be held at the Lion Hotel, High Street, Broseley on 1 December; the cost will be £17.50 per head. If you would like to attend, please complete the form on page 13, indicating your choice of menu and return it, together with your cheque made payable to Broseley Local History Society, to Janet Robinson, 26 Coalport Road, Broseley, TF12 5AZ, by not later than Saturday 27 November.

Benthall Book Launch

The book *Benthall Edge, Five Historic Guided Walks*, published by the Severn Gorge Countryside Trust, was finally launched in September when Society members were among some 70 people who gathered at Benthall Hall for an evening walk down to Patten's Rock, before joining the less agile in front of a blazing fire in the Hall itself.

The book, which was the result of the Society's first joint venture, has been over a year in the making, but the wider interest it occasioned has made it well worth the wait.



An evening walk down to Patten's Rock was followed by a welcome glass of wine back at Benthall Hall



John Freeman, Chairman of the Society, left, with Ian Baker, Chairman of the Severn Gorge Countryside Trust, at the launch of the book Benthall Edge, Five Historic Guided Walks

Photographs courtesy of the SGCT

The idea of holding the launch at Benthall Hall also brought other parties into the arena. Eve Madeley, who is a member of the Society, is also the curator of this National Trust property and together she and the SGCT put on an evening to be remembered. The company was great, the food and wine even better and the venue superb, and both Eve and Pauline Levesley of the SGCT, in particular, are to be congratulated on making this such a very special occasion.

Proposed visit to Castlehead

David Lake was recently in Cumbria where he took the opportunity of visiting Castlehead and Backbarrow furnace. This is what he has to say about his trip.

When John Wilkinson was a teenager, working the Lindale furnace with his father, nearby Castlehead must have been a magical place for him. The great

hill rose out of the plain above Morecambe Bay and when the high spring tides rolled in they transformed the hill into an island.

So when in later years John's genius had made him the great and wealthy John Wilkinson, Ironmaster of Broseley, and he could build his dream house, Castlehead was the site he chose.

When members Frank and Fev Dawson retired from teaching careers in Africa, they bought Castlehead and created a Field Studies Centre for school groups. Whilst in Broseley earlier this year to give the Annual Wilkinson Lecture, Frank cordially invited other members to visit them, to be shown the house, have lunch in John's dining room and climb the hill to the walled garden he built on the summit. The Society hopes to take advantage of this uniquely interesting opportunity with a visit in the summer of 2005. The tentative date is Saturday 2 July so, if you would like to be one of the party, please contact David Lake on 01746 762813.

Backbarrow furnace was where Isaac Wilkinson and his son John lived for some years, developing skills in the working of what was for the time a major ironworks.

Their house was Bare Syke, across the road from the now derelict blast furnace, and the Society is fortunate in that Bare Syke is now occupied and under renovation by Robin Beadle, a friend of the Society.

Members able to visit the Backbarrow site could well contact him in advance: Robin Beadle, Bare Syke, Backbarrow, Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 8QF.

New owner of the Lawns

At the September meeting John Freeman introduced Mel Mars, a glass and ceramic designer who has just bought the Lawns, John Wilkinson's former home in Church Street.

According to Mel the building is currently in a very poor condition and needs a considerable amount of work. He does, however, have great plans for it and these include renovating the kitchen, which has the largest cast iron range, with a complicated looking spit driven by a chimney fan, in the county.

Although he now works in glass only overseas, Mel says he intends doing some ceramic work at the Lawns, and has plans to hold an open day next year

to introduce people to the making and decorating of ceramics.

Ceramic Industries in the Broseley Area

The subject for this autumn's Memories Evening was *Ceramic Industries in the Broseley Area*. This covered everything from drain pipes, through decorative floor and roof tiles to chinaware and tobacco pipes. While much of this industry is already documented, there were many recollections that evening which had not made the reference books.

David Lake, for instance, recalled buying land drains in the mid 1960s from Benthall Potteries, one of the last clay industries to be working in the Broseley area. He had also taught the two sons of the owner, Edward and Richard Bennett, who claimed that it was their family who had developed a process for extruding hollow land drains and which had led to them taking over Benthall Potteries.

This company had originally made encaustic tiles, employing 40 people in 1938. The following year, however, they changed to making sanitary ware before moving to the production of land drains. The works finally closed in the late 1970s when plastic drains took over the market.

Broseley is, of course, famous for its encaustic floor tiles and Eve Madeley, curator of the National Trust property Benthall Hall, said that they had a good collection of these, in particular on the floor of the entrance hall which had been used by the Maw brothers as a showpiece. Neda Meyrick remarked that when visiting her native Denmark with her grandchild, they had gone into a church near Copenhagen and had been delighted to find Broseley tiles on the floor.

David also commented on the increasing interest in Caughley china and Roger Edmundson, author of *Benthall Pottery, Shropshire and its Salopian Art Pottery*,* said that although the Caughley works were mainly known for their blue and white printed chinaware, research now showed that it had been made in a number of different colours. The main problem had been in identifying what was actually Caughley china, as it was easy to confuse it with such other wares as chinese and spode.

Ivor Southorn then passed round some of his extensive collection of Coalport china, while keeping the meeting amused with stories from some of the characters of the time. One was of a driver, Jackum, who could neither read nor write, but found his way by asking for directions in each town. Once, when about to return from Soho in London, he stopped a policeman to ask him how to get back to Broseley. This time, however, his usual tactics failed him for, as Jackum told it, "do you know, the silly fool didn't even know!"



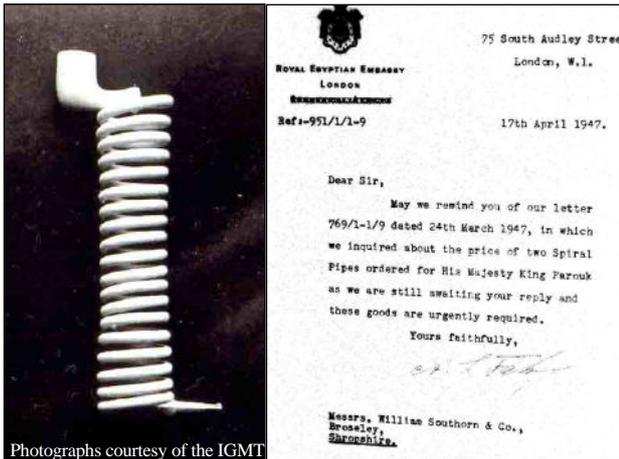
Photograph courtesy of Roger Edmundson

This loving cup, which has a view of Benthall Hall on one side and Benthall Church on the other, is a unique example of the work of Arty Hartshorne, head of design at Benthall Pottery in the early 1900s

Lena Evans' daughter remembered her mother working at the Benthall Potteries putting spouts on teapots, while Vera Francis said she had a small bowl made of red clay with a high black glaze, known as Jackfield Ware. In the 18th century there had been three kilns below Jackfield church all making such ware. The making of this type of china became so widespread that the term Jackfield Ware eventually became a generic name.

Another industry which grew up in Broseley was the manufacture of clay tobacco pipes. Broseley pipes became famous all over the world and by 1890 the Southorn factory was employing 90 people. The pipes were made in a variety of shapes and sizes, the churchwarden probably being the most well known.

A variation on this, a pipe 216 inches long and coiled like a spring, made by Ivor Southorn's father, came to the attention of King Farouk of Egypt, who immediately decided he had to have one. By the time this was made and packed ready for shipping, however, King Farouk had been ousted in a coup and never did get his pipe!



Photographs courtesy of the IGMT

One of the spiral pipes made by Southorns, left, and a reminder from the Egyptian Ambassador that King Farouk was still awaiting his pipe

The Southorn factory eventually closed in the late 1950s and is now part of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum complex. Member Rex Key spends his weekends there demonstrating this almost forgotten art.

Broseley also became famous for its brick and roof tile industry. Of these manufacturers, it was the Exleys who had been the most successful, being the first to introduce mechanised processing. They were said to use a special type of clay for their roof tiles on which moss would not grow, a fact to which John Freeman could attest, living as he does in the former home of the Exley family and which still has some of the original tiles. The Exleys also made bricks renowned for their durability. Obviously a successful business, their warehouse could accommodate a million tiles ready for shipping.

Vin Callcut then handed round some broken Broseley bricks which clearly displayed a mix of stone and possibly slag on the inside with a smooth hard outer skin. This could well indicate that as the supply of high grade clay diminished, so did the quality of local brick.

By the beginning of the second world war many of the factories had closed and were requisitioned by the government to store ammunition. After the war, the owners declined to take responsibility for them and they were allowed to become derelict and the clay pits to flood, possibly contributing to the various slips which occurred in the area in later years.

Ed: When we moved to Broseley from South Africa some five years ago, I wrote to my former boss there, a born and bred South African, saying that we were settling in Broseley. His response was "Is that Broseley where the tiles come from?"

A full transcript of this meeting, as well as of other Memories Evenings, is available from Janet Robinson at a cost of 50p each.

**Copies of this book are available from Roger Edmundson, 83 Woodfield Road, Shrewsbury, SY3 8HU. The price of £6.25 includes post and packing.*

China Painters

Gill Pope has this to say about her family's involvement in the ceramics industry in Broseley.

My great great great grandfather, Thomas Dixon, who was born in Broseley in 1797, was a painter at the Coalport china works. Thomas' wife Sarah and his three daughters were all employed there as burnishers and from about 1845 his sons John, my great great grandfather, and William also worked there as china painters.

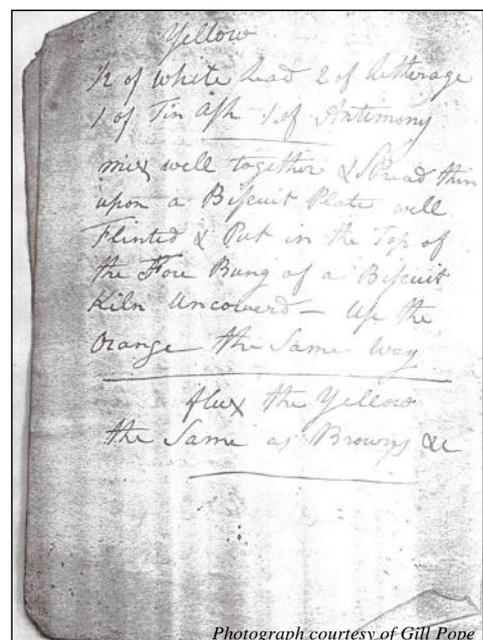
Thomas Dixon worked at the Coalport factory all his life and was responsible for some of the best flower painting on porcelain up to the 1870s. There are 67 designs in the factory pattern books which are attributed to him and from some of the documents and designs we still have it appears that he may have visited some of the French factories.

Some of his designs featured birds and we still have pieces of his practice porcelain at home, as well as a note book containing some of his formulae for producing the various colours used in the painting.

Although John Dixon continued to work at Coalport, it is understood that William left and went to work at the Minton factory.

One of Thomas Dixon's formulae for the mixing of yellow paint.

Thomas worked at Coalport china works all his life and was noted for his flower paintings



Photograph courtesy of Gill Pope

More Memories of Maws

When Neil Clarke signed up for work at Maws tile works, he was following in the footsteps of at least three generations of his family.



Neil's mother worked at Maws

Both my maternal great grandmother and grandmother (Browns of the Lloyds) had been employed at Coalport china works in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and my mother and uncle worked at Maws tile works in the 1950s and '60s. My mother worked in the faience department, using a silk screen to put patterns on tiles, while my uncle worked in the fireplace assembly shop.

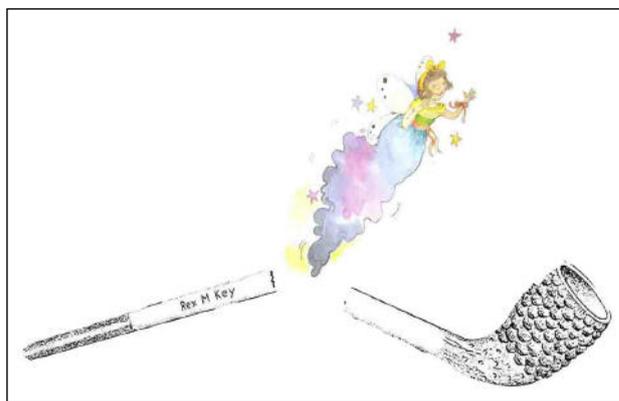
My spell at Maws was during the summer vacation of 1959. Turning up one morning in July as a keen, fresh-faced university student, I was quickly brought down to earth when handed a pick and shovel and told to break up a concrete floor! Having had no chain-gang experience, I failed miserably and was soon moved to another job (under the supervision of Walter Venn) which I managed with ease – loading and unloading boxes of tiles onto lorries in the despatch department. This was housed in a building, now demolished, immediately to the west of the main entrance of the works and parallel to the Severn Valley railway. What more could a railway enthusiast wish for?

Clay Pipe Conference

Broseley was recently represented at an international gathering in Belfast when pipemaker and researcher Rex Key, together with his wife Libby, attended the annual conference of the Society for Clay Pipe Research. Rex has this to say about their visit.

The conference, which took place over two days at the Ulster Museum, was attended by more than 20 enthusiasts from as far afield as Sweden and Holland, as well as from Northern and Southern Ireland and mainland Britain.

There were nine presentations directly or indirectly connected with pipes and Broseley, as perhaps the spiritual home of clay pipe making, received frequent references. Of particular interest was a talk by Irish archaeologist Theresa McDonald on Irish wakes and customs with regard to pipe smoking, as



Legend has it that pipes which are to be buried in a grave should first be broken to make sure the fairies can get out

well as the curious discovery of a cache of late 19th century/early 20th century pipes which had been buried or stored in an unmarked grave in a cemetery. This contained more than 20 pipes, some of which appeared to have been broken on purpose* while all were apparently unsmoked.

Dr David Higgins, a well known clay pipe authority who spent several years with the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, gave details of a 19th century pipemakers' guild banner which he had acquired from some one who had bought it at an auction in Ludlow.

The large painted banner appears to date from the 1840s and features clay pipes and shamrocks, so an Irish connection is evident. Research now suggests it belonged to a hitherto unknown guild based in the Irish town of Limerick.

During a business meeting Rex spoke about the pipes he makes at Broseley Pipeworks Museum – and even sold several examples.

Belfast heritage expert Nick Brannon conducted a walking tour of Belfast's historic sites which interestingly included streets in the Falls and Shankhill Road areas where para-military murals were much in evidence.

Refreshment was later taken at the Crown Liquor Saloon, one of the finest examples in existence of a High Victorian public house with rich ornamentation, including decorative tiles, gas lighting and snugs, still intact. Owned by the National Trust it has survived 42 bombings.

**One of our members, Tony Mugridge, has been heard to suggest that this was to let the fairies out, but perhaps that was just the poteen talking!*

Annual General Meeting



The Society's AGM always has a good turn out

The Society's AGM was held in October at which Chairman John Freeman said that it had been an eventful year with a series of interesting lectures and outings as well as the sad loss of some of our senior members. He also extended the sympathies of the Society to Richard Hartley, who had made us all so welcome in his lovely home Golding Hall last year, and who had recently lost his son in a tragic accident.

John mentioned two books which have appeared this year. *Benthall Edge, Five Historic Guided Walks*, published by the Severn Gorge Countryside Trust, had drawn much of its material from information supplied by Society members, while Joan Griffiths' *Broseley, the People and the Past*, had sold over 1500 copies since January.

The Society was working with the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust to bring local history to local schools and Joan, who has already started on her next book, has indicated that she, along with some seven or eight others, would be willing to take part in this project.

The Society's website was performing a valuable service and, with some 14,000 hits in the last six years, was being accessed by people all over the world. This had certainly helped boost membership, which now stood at 148.

The deaths of Jack Owen and Mary Smith had left vacant the positions they had held as life presidents of the Society. It was now proposed that these positions be held for a two year term and Noel Ward and Vera Francis were asked if they would

like to fill these vacant posts; they were both delighted to accept.

There being no new nominations, the outgoing committee was re-elected en bloc.

Membership fees are now due and will remain at £3.00.

New Presidents of the Society



Brother and sister Noel Ward and Vera Francis are long time residents of Broseley, having been born in Hockley Road in what used to be called the Jubilee Cottages.

Called up at the beginning of the second world war, Noel was sent to Derby Technical College before being posted to Haifa where he saw the birth of the state of Israel.

After the war he worked at GKN Sankey before marrying and building a house in Broseley Wood. Outside of work, he built up a reputation as a successful amateur auctioneer even, at one Scout fundraising function, managing to auction the Christmas decorations!

Vera, meanwhile had been called up to work on the railways. She soon met her future husband, however, and they were married in 1942. But the war was not so kind to her. Two years later her husband was killed in action and six months after that her daughter was born.



Vera worked hard to supplement her widow's pension and it was some years before she married again. Tom Francis' family had been tenant farmers at Lodge Farm for generations but, as Vera said, she married a farmer, not farming, and she and her new husband moved into Holly House in King Street.

When Noel's marriage failed some years ago he moved into Holly House with them and today thinks of it as his home as much as Vera's.

The Sutton Wharf Tramway

Following the AGM Paul Luter gave a talk on the reasons behind the construction and early demise of the Sutton Wharf Tramway.

In 1796 John Bishton, a partner of John Onions, began construction of the first stage of a tramway which was to run from Hollinswood to Sutton, a route which roughly followed the line of the existing Shropshire Canal.

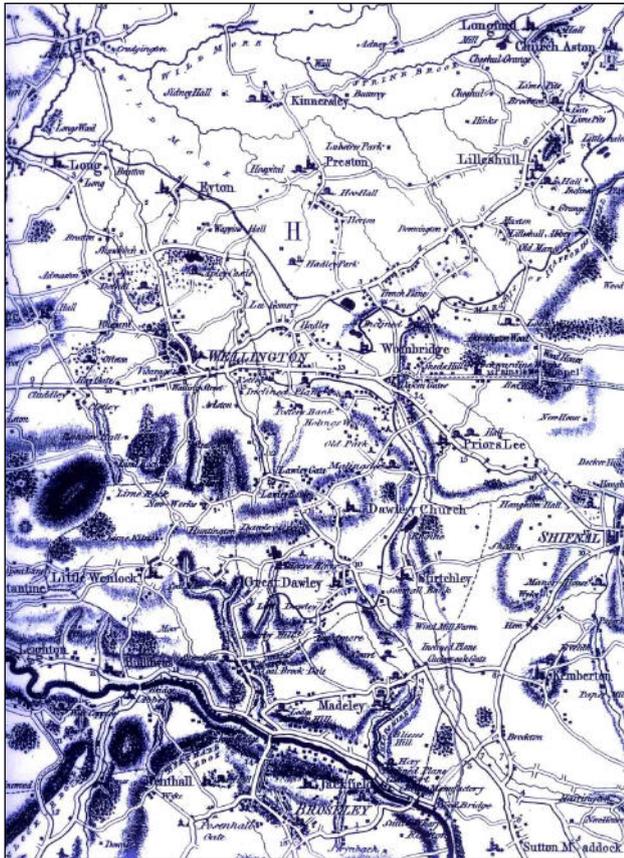
This canal had only been opened for four years, but in that time had increased its prices to such an extent that the ironmasters were threatening an embargo. The construction of a tramway would provide them with an alternative form of transport.

Not only was Bishton's railroad much cheaper to build – it cost less than a tenth of the Shropshire Canal – but it was faster, more convenient, and did not need the use of inclined planes. It could, therefore, charge considerably lower tariffs than those of the canal.

In addition to being faced with highly competitive prices, the canal company had been suffering

Baugh's 1808 map shows the route of both the new tramway and the existing canal

Photograph courtesy of Paul Luter



various other setbacks, all of which had discouraged people from using the canal in favour of the new railroad.

Bishton completed the railway in 1802, the same year he and others formed the Lilleshall Company. Because of the conflict with the canal company over tolls, this company was prohibited from using the canal. Instead it used the railroad, a situation which further exacerbated the canal company's troubles.

When Bishton died in 1806, his investment in the railway passed first to his son John and then to his younger son Thomas. Thomas, however, did not share his father's ill feeling towards the canal company and offered to let them dismantle it provided they allowed the Lilleshall Company to send their goods along the Shropshire Canal. His motives for this olive branch, however, may not have been entirely philanthropic. It has been suggested that the size and weight of the castings being made by the Lilleshall Company were becoming too heavy for the railroad and they needed to revert to using the canal tub boats.

In 1814 the railroad was dismantled and it was only once this had been done, and the competition had disappeared, that the Shropshire Canal Company began to pay a reasonable dividend.

There is little doubt, however, that during this period the use of canal transport was proved to be less commercially economic than that of railways, and the Shropshire Canal Company's difficulties in becoming a viable operation were simply a foretaste of the battle other canal companies were to face as tub boat transport gave way to rail, and the canals fell into disrepair and disuse.

Copies of Paul Luter's 'A Short History of the Sutton Wharf Tramway' are available at a cost of £2.00; contact him on 01902 671569 or email PL210658@aol.com.

November Meeting

The Wolfsons of Jews' Jitty

The Wolfson family, who for some years during the 1930s and '40s had run the potteries in Bridge Road, were the subject of the November talk, which was to have been given by Ivor Southorn and Ray Johnson. In the event, Ivor was unable to be there and it was left to Ray to recall some of his memories of that time.

The Wolfson Potteries were one of several in the Broseley area, although unlike the others they apparently made mainly undecorated plates and dishes. But it was the practice of the Wolfson family's Jewish customs which caused the most interest in the community. The lighting of candles for Shabat and for Hannukah, the Festival of Lights, was something that Ray particularly remembered as the family used to pay him handsomely for doing this. The daughters' habit of mikva, or ritual bathing, in the Spout in Spout Lane was also a cause for comment – it seems that that particular paper round was always popular!



The Spout where the Wolfson daughters used to perform their mikva

In 1939 one of the daughters married a German who set up a factory across the road from the New Inn. One of their products was china petals which they sold to Woolworths and Ray recalls helping the girls to make these as the petal cutters were too heavy for them to manage easily.

They also made china dolls' faces

which were painted by the women, who would occasionally take trays of these home to work on.

Probably because of their culinary laws, the Wolfsons did not socialise with the rest of the community, but they were well respected and were regarded as generous employers.

The start of the second world war was, not unnaturally, to have an adverse effect on the family. The son-in-law was interned in the Isle of Man, business fell off and the company was declared bankrupt.

Their memory, however, lives on – Jews' Jitty still runs from Quarry Road down to the site of the old pottery on Bridge Road.

Society's Artefacts

David Lake then spoke on the continuing need to find a home for the Society's artefacts and handed round several items of particular interest. One was a cast iron mirror frame in which the hangers were

an integral part of the casting, another was a hollow cannon ball found on the site of the Willey furnace

This collection used to be housed at the Lawns but since the death of the then owner, Ralph Pee, has been stored at the Tile Museum. One of the Society's aims is to find a permanent home where these and other articles can be available to the public.

Shirlot (or Shirlett?) Hearth Iron

by Vin Callcut

At the Smithies near Shirlot (sic) iron making appears to have been carried on for many years past. F. H. Hartshorne, Esq. has a singular iron plate of rude manufacture which he obtained from a man on Shirlot, who said that it came from under an old house built of stone. It may have served as a hearth stone; it has a very primitive looking border and the letters IR on each side, with the figures 1080 in the centre thus:-

IR IR
1080

So writes John Randall on page 99 of his *Broseley and its Surroundings*.

Now this item, or one similar, has been found under the hearth of a 1950s fireplace recently taken out of a living room at 50 Church Street in Broseley. From 1872 to 1878 this was the home of Frederick Hezekiah Hartshorne, MD, who seems to have been a friend of Randall.

The plate is about 30 inches wide and was found in three pieces but the lettering is still intact. The

This hearth iron was recently found at a house in Church Street, Broseley, when a 1950s fireplace was removed

Photograph courtesy of Vin Callcut



thickness varies across the width due to the casting mould not having been level. It is one inch thick on the right, tapering to about half an inch on the left. The weight is about 160lb (73kg).

The plate has been seen by Roderick Butler, a leading member of the Antique Metalware Society. He is of the opinion that this is a significant simple early fireback and that '1618' would be the casting date and 'IR' the initials of the iron founder or perhaps the original owner (or both!).

The shape can best be described as half an octagon and a beaded edge has been cast round the top three edges of the hearth backplate. The lettering actually reads

1618
IR IR

with the '6' miscast to look more like a zero. There is a crossbar at the middle of the 'I'. On one of the edges the beading is largely eroded.

The plate is still at 50 Church Street but has yet to be given a place of honour.

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust

Christmas occasion

In conjunction with the Greenwood Trust, the SGCT will be holding a Christmas occasion at Coalport Village Hall on Sunday 12 December from 10.30 am to 4.00 pm. Join them in hedge laying and creating your own Christmas decorations as well as enjoying Christmas fare. Call Su Barber on 01952 433082 for more information.

Silkin Way

A questionnaire run by the SGCT last year highlighted the lack of a safe connection between Sutton Wood and Coalport; as a result, they have instigated a number of improvements. These include the construction of a new footpath link from Coalport to the western sector of Sutton Wood, improvements to access from the Shakespeare car park to the Silkin way and upgrading of the steps alongside the incline plane. They are also carrying out woodland work at Haywood and along parts of the Silkin Way.

Further publications

Following the publication of their most recent book *Benthall Edge, Five Historic Guided Walks*, the SGCT has commissioned Michael Pooley to write

another in the series covering Haywood, Sutton Wood and Preenshead. As with the Benthall Edge project, he will be interested in hearing local stories and reminiscences and anyone who feels they could contribute may contact the SGCT at 01952 433880.

Jackfield Tile Museum

The Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge recently held an open evening to celebrate the completion of stage one of the renovation of the Jackfield Tile Museum. Thanks to a grant of £2 million from the Heritage Lottery fund, as well as other funding, stage two is already in progress.

The interior design and layout of the museum is very much the brainchild of curator Michael Vann and the effect of the tiled floor design at the entrance and the art deco foyer is one of surprise and delight. The exhibition itself has a fascinating collection of decorative tiles, not least of which is a mural of nursery rhyme scenes rescued from the wall of a children's hospital.



This mural, which was taken from a children's hospital, was set at cot height so that the children could easily see it

The Museum will be holding a series of tubelining workshops over the coming months. Anyone interested should contact Jennifer Hill on 01952 884124.

Bookshop

Benthall Edge, Five Historic Guided Walks

by Michael Pooley

This book, published by the Severn Gorge Countryside Trust, is the result of a combined effort between the SGCT and the Society. A walk along Benthall Edge last year, together with a Memories

Evening, provided much of the historical content of this book, while the wealth of information on the ecology of the woodland itself, and of the wildlife to be seen along the walks, follows the lines of the first in the series, *Coalbrookdale, Three Historic Woodlands Walks*.

It is available from Broseley Library or from the SGCT, tel: 01952 433880, at a cost of £3.99.

The Making of Shrewsbury

by Vivien Bellamy

The Making of Shrewsbury is a concise but very readable history of Shrewsbury from 120 AD through to 2004, noting key events and trends including the economic and political forces that helped shape the town's development.

The author examines Shrewsbury's position as a market town lying between Wales and the Midlands and gives a fascinating insight into its historic role as a fortress town, most recently during the Civil War, and its later evolution into the resort of the 18th century.

It also looks at trading in the town, including its international business of wool trade, religion and church life, communications, 19th century industry and social change and the buildings of Shrewsbury.

The book has numerous illustrations, many of which are original drawings and paintings, and uses maps, plans and images to portray the town's changing role.

An essential introduction to the rich, complex and sometimes surprising heritage of this beautiful town, this book also makes an ideal Christmas present.

Available in paperback at a cost of £10.99 from bookstores.

Maggie Humphrey's Shropshire

Only just launched, this book contains a collection of some 60 paintings of Shropshire by the Broseley artist Maggie Humphrey.

Available from GET Publishing, tel 01746 766477 or email Shropshire@getservices.org.uk, it costs £25.00 plus post and packing.

Mounted or framed prints of all the paintings in this book are also available.

John Wilkinson, Ironmaster Extraordinary

by Ron Davies

Copies of this biography of John Wilkinson are still available and make ideal gifts. The price is £6.95 with local delivery free. Further afield post and packing costs £1.50. Contact David Lake on 01746 762813.

Mailbox

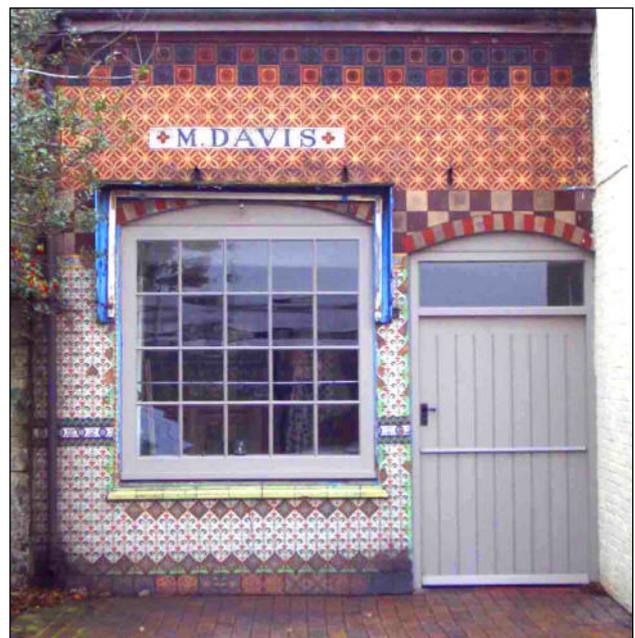
Cheryl James is looking for information on her family. Her father, Dennis James, who was born in 1933 and died in 1994, used to live at Woodside Farm at Rudgewood. Her grandfather, Thomas William James, was born in 1874 and died in 1964 at the Dean Cottage, Bridgnorth Road at the age of 89. Her grandmother was Fanny Wilkes who was born in 1890 and died in 1965.

Anyone who can help may email her on cheraz18@aol.com.

Trevor Instone writes that both his parents and grandparents were born in Broseley and he himself lived there for several years before leaving to join the royal navy during second world war.

Since retiring in 1989 he has written two family histories. The first one dealt with his mother's family the Davis's. Her father was Mathew Davis, who built the butcher's shop at 21 King Street, and her grandfather was Francis Davis of the Dunge Brick and Tile Works.

The old butcher's shop in King Street as it is today



His father was the son of Edward Robert Instone, who had a grocer's shop in Lower Church Street, now demolished. He was a cousin of R A Instone, also a grocer, who built the so-called 'Instone building' in the Square.

The Instone history is much shorter and was completed earlier this year.

Although these books are only available to family and friends, Trevor is willing to let members of the Society have copies for purposes of research. Anyone interested in these may contact him at 1 Pool Mill Cottages, Hennock, Bovey Tracey, Newton Abbot, TQ13 9NS.

The last issue of the Newsletter included an article on Harvey Eginton, the designer of All Saints' Church in Broseley. That article was based on a pamphlet written by the **Rev'd Alan Postlethwaite**. In a letter he says:

I am glad you are helping to keep Harvey Eginton's name alive as I regard him as a seriously undervalued designer. He was sometimes let down by a poor choice of materials (eg the dreadful sandstone used for Catshill Church) but the detailing of his work is quite remarkable. If you do not know Holy Trinity Church at Trimpley near Kidderminster (the one for which the original leaflet was produced) it is well worth a visit. The key is always available from Val Corfield at nearby Holbeache Bungalow.

I wonder if you have come across the pamphlets produced a couple of years back by Dr Stanley Raymond of Lindale to celebrate the life and local links of John Wilkinson? I enclose a copy of each in case they haven't come your way.

Ed: The originals of these pamphlets have been returned to Rev'd Postlethwaite, but copies have been made and may be obtained from Janet Robinson

Chris Ragg is looking for information on his grandfather who was a solicitor based somewhere near the Forester Arms and Deanery in Broseley. If anyone can help his email address is chris@ragg.org.uk.

Phyllis Maiden writes that she was born in Wellington in 1950 but was quickly taken into council care. She has recently discovered that her

grandfather was born in Duke Street, Broseley in 1854, making him nearly 60 when her father was born. Both her father and grandfather's names were William Maiden.

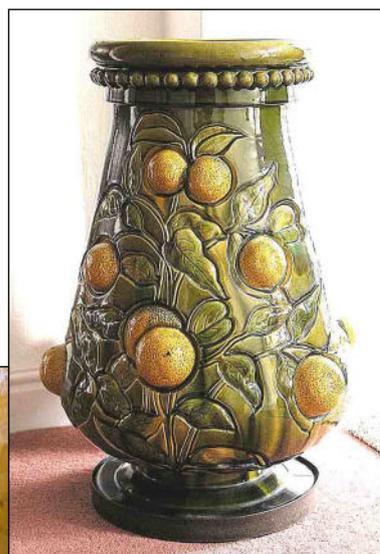
She seems to have reached an impasse in finding out anything further, although she feels she is on the track of the right grandfather as on both the 1901 census and on her father's marriage certificate he is recorded as being a postman. She did visit Broseley last year and met Clive Maiden of the Old Butcher's Shop wine bar but concluded he was no relation.

Anyone who can help may contact her on email phyllis.maiden@ntlworld.com.

Paul Lowe is looking for help with regard to a vase which has been in his family's possession for some time. He thinks it may be about a hundred years old. The base apparently has some minor damage and Paul is unsure if the vase has sufficient value to

This unusual vase is thought to be about 100 years old

The stamp on the bottom of the vase states SALOPIAN and has stars in the corners



make repair worthwhile. The vase stands some 25 inches high with a diameter of approximately 18 inches. He feels it is fairly unusual and would be grateful for any information. As he says, it does have a strange design and he appears to be its only fan!

Anyone who can help should contact him at cdspattingham@aol.com.

Glynn Tucker is researching his family tree on his mother's side which is Amphlett. His great grandfather Thomas Amphlett appears in the 1851 census for Pensnett, Staffordshire, and his birth place is given as Broseley. Glynn believes that one

of the Amphletts had his name inscribed on the Iron Bridge. He also notes that in the Pigots 1822-3 directory a brickworks was owned by Amphlitt & Co.

Anyone who can help him find out more may email him on glyn_t@btopenworld.com.

A J Allen has a number of items for sale relating to people in Broseley. Memoriam and wedding cards with names, addresses, dates and ages mostly date from the early 1900s; gift cards are Victorian and Edwardian and some are signed by friends and family of the Oakes.



A small selection of some of the cards available for purchase

If anyone is interested in these or any other items they should contact her on email collectables@leafs29.freemove.co.uk.

David Fryett, who lives in Sunderland, is researching his family history which, as he puts it, is a bit complex.

His mother was born in Hastings in February 1918. Her mother was widowed in 1915 when her husband was killed at Ypres with the Royal Hampshires. Two years later she became engaged to a Canadian soldier and banns were read at St Andrew's Church in Hastings; church records show the name of the soldier as John Gough. Unfortunately, he turned out to be already married with a wife in Toronto.

The Canadian Army repatriated him after he had recovered from wounds sustained in France and David's grandmother never heard from him again. His mother was brought up under the name of Harfield, his grandmother's first married name.

David did trace a John George Gough as having been in Hastings in June/July 1917 and also having been repatriated to Canada in December of that year. His attestation papers also showed him to have been married in 1916 and living in Toronto.

More interestingly the same papers recorded his birth place as Shrewsbury and his date of birth as 13 September 1884. David then obtained a copy of his birth certificate which showed that he had been born in Hockley Road, Broseley. His father was James Gough and his mother Sarah Ann Gough née Hartshorne. James and Sarah were married in Broseley some time between June and September 1881

No trace was found of them after John's birth in 1884 and they do not appear in the 1901 census. They seem to have had some connection with Wales, however, because John's daughter Ellen Martha recorded his parents' birth place as Wales on his death certificate. He died in September 1971.

Anyone who can help David find his family roots in Shropshire may contact him on fryett@msn.com.

Civil Parkinson, who lives in Yorkshire, writes that she is the great great great granddaughter of Edward Blakeway who lived at Broseley Hall and whose first wife was John Wilkinson's sister-in-law.

On a visit to Broseley Church she was interested to read an inscription on one of the tombstones which recorded the death of George Potts and his wife Civil. This name, which is hers also, is so unusual that she felt there might be a family connection. Research has shown that there had been a number of Civils in her family, some of whom appear to have come from the Broseley area, the surnames in question being Wilde, Lister and Potts.



The tombstone in the churchyard of All Saints', Broseley, which bears the unusual christian name of Civil

Civil would like to hear from anyone who has any knowledge of these families; her address is 1 Dunwell Avenue, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO12 5HT.

Ed: If anyone is able to help any of these correspondents, please copy the Newsletter on our email steve@broseley.org.uk; other people may benefit from your help.