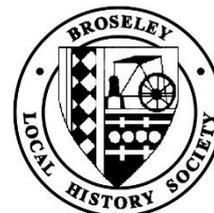


NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the **Broseley Local History Society**

INCORPORATING THE WILKINSON SOCIETY



February - 2020

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.

BLHS PROGRAMME

Programme for Spring/Summer:

March 4th. - **Diana Clarke:** *Annual Wilkinson Lecture – ‘The world turned upside down: Joseph Priestley and Revolution’.*

April 1st. - **Jim Cooper:** *‘The Shropshire Banking Fraud of 1855’.*

May 6th. - **Sarah Roberts:** *‘The work of an archivist’.*

June 10th. - *Summer Walk (Leader **Steve Dewhirst**).*

July 4th. - *Annual Outing: Coventry (details and **Application Form** in this Newsletter).*

What's on Elsewhere?

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

February 26th 2020

Soldiers of Shropshire A talk by Richard Gough, the Director of the Shropshire Regimental Museum 2.30pm in the Glass Classroom

February 29th, 2020

John Powell Day (A previous member of Broseley Local History Society) A day of talks in memory of the late Museum librarian 10am - 4pm in the Glass Classroom. Tickets £5

March 25th 2020

The History of the kitchen fireplace. From the open hearth to the Aga, via the kitchen range. A talk by David J Eveleigh. 2.30pm in the Glass Classroom. Coalbrookdale.

April 1st 2020

Early images of the Ironbridge on ceramics. A talk by David De Haan 7.30pm in the Glass Classroom Coalbrookdale.

April 22nd 2020

SS Great Britain: The History & Ground-breaking Conservation of Brunel's Iconic Ship. A talk by Robert Turner. 7.30pm in the Glass Classroom. Coalbrookdale.

May 20th 2020

Coracles of Ironbridge. A talk by Marion Blockley of the Coracle Trust., 7.30pm in the Glass Classroom. Coalbrookdale.

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

Feb. 12th. – **David Bowgett:** *The Quakers of Ironbridge.*

Oct. 14th. – **Peter Dunhill:** *Shrewsbury Flaxmill*

Nov. 11th. – **Alwyn Hughes:** *The Making of Lake Vyrnwy.*

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NEW MEMBERS

The Society would like to welcome the following new members:

Pat Bracegirdle (Shrewsbury)
Robert May (Much Wenlock)
Sarah Armstrong (Broseley)

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.

Exhibition and Open Day 2020 – Sat. 28th March.

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND! Your society will be holding an exhibition and open day in the Victoria Hall on Saturday 28th March; it will open from 8.30am for anyone helping and to enable the setting up displays; then from 10.00am until about 4.00pm for the public. There will be displays by members' of their researches; items from the society's archives and photographs, many of which the society is still trying to identify. Photographs and documents such as sports or entertainment posters or programmes are a wonderful resource; if you have anything of interest please bring them along as Steve will be there with a scanner to take copies without damage or to have to keep your original. For more "solid" items such as trophies (sporting, horticulture etc.) there will be someone there to take details and photograph the item. If you have recently undertaken any local research yourself and would like to display your results, please contact a committee member as display boards are available. There will also be a number of other local societies and clubs attending. Last time such an event was held it was extremely busy with hundreds of people attending; your committee would be delighted and grateful of any help from members. A list will be available at the next two meetings for names to help with stewarding or tea/coffee making.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Both sides of the River: The Friends & the BLHS – Neil Clarke

This year's joint meeting with the Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum in the Glass Classroom at Coalbrookdale on November 6th was attended by 99 people and a dog! Neil began by reminding

the audience that both our groups grew out of the developing interest in industrial history and archaeology that began in this country in the 1950s and gathered steam in the 1960s and 1970s. They were formed within three years of each other, the Friends in 1969 and the Wilkinson Society (the forerunner of the BLHS) in 1972. He then went on to explore what similarities – and differences – exist between the two groups, what they've learned and what help they've had from each other, and how they have organised joint activities. The annual joint meetings over the last ten years have covered various aspects of the history of the locality (Fords & Ferries on the Severn, Calcutts China Works, History of Much Wenlock, the Foresters) and gone further afield with 'Archaeologists: Heroes or Villains?'. We thank the Friends for hosting them.

Neil Clarke 02.12.2019

Annual Dinner 2019.

A record number of members attended the annual Christmas Dinner at the Lion Hotel in Broseley on December 4th. The dining room had been made to look very festive by Barry and Margaret and an excellent meal was served promptly and efficiently by the staff. Janet Robinson had made some lovely place names for the tables and she also organised a short celebrity quiz to end the evening. An excellent evening was enjoyed by all. A few photo's catch the mood!

Gill Pope 04.12.2019





The Forgotten Churchyard of Broseley – A Talk by Graham Hollox – 9th January 2020



Background

In 1767, the Red Church was built in what was delightfully described as “the village of Jackfield in a remote part of the Parish of Broseley.” The much smaller “mother” Church of St Leonard couldn’t cope with the increasing population attracted by work in the district in the earliest days of the industrial revolution.

There’s an air of mystery about the Church. It was funded by a bequest from a Mary Brown but no copies of the original documents or her Will can be found. The only references to these are in 1766 and 1767 after her death in 1761. There’s also no sign of any Memorial to the lady whose generosity

enabled a Church to be built and it’s as if the Brown family contribution has been erased. The Church was also known as the Francis Turner Blithe Memorial Church, after the former High Sheriff of Shropshire who inherited Mary’s estate and completed the building. Baptised as Francis Turner, he adopted the Blithe surname as required to inherit his uncle’s estates. Francis Turner Blithe was without a male heir to continue the surname and it seems that the Church was promoted as a Memorial Church to celebrate his family name, although this was never formalised.

To his credit, the Church was magnificent. However, it suffered from subsidence as it was built on previously mined land. Its congregation declined when Broseley replaced the old St Leonard’s with today’s All Saints’ Church in 1845. When Jackfield was created as a separate Parish in 1862 with its new St Mary’s Church, the old church and graveyard were part of that transfer. Attempts were made by local industrialists to have the old Church demolished so that the mineral resources under it could be mined. The congregation objected as it would destroy the graveyard, but they were unable to stop deliberate undermining. Even after repairs, the Church was used only intermittently and gradually decayed. The last service was in the 1930s.

The old church and graveyard were vandalised in the 1950s and for safety reasons, demolition in 1961 was the only affordable option. The rectors of Jackfield felt no allegiance to the old structure and graveyard. Debris scattered over the site failed to protect many of the memorials for many figures notable in local history.

After two years of negotiation, permission has now been given by Shropshire Council to allow a properly constituted volunteer group, open to all, to restore the site. The “Friends of the Red Church” is working with a team from the “Beautiful Burial Ground” project run by the national organisation “Caring for God’s Acre” based in Church Stretton. For a more detailed history, please see www.broseley.org.uk/redchurch/

Graham Hollox 09.01.2020

Articles

Clay Pipe Manufacture in Broseley

Members of the Broseley Local History Society will not need reminding of the importance which clay tobacco pipe manufacture once had for the town, not only in providing employment but also by carrying the name of Broseley throughout Britain and beyond. The Pipe Works Museum, housed in the former Southorn Pipe Factory in King Street, is a unique time capsule of an industry which few people today even know existed. Last year an

initiative was launched to revive and raise the profile of the museum. A small team of volunteers has been recruited and trained to support the museum staff in guiding visitors and demonstrating the craft of pipe-making. Volunteers are also working with museum staff to improve the presentation and interpretation of the exhibits. It is hoped that the enhanced experience will bring in more visitors and promote the site. However, to sustain these developments, the museum needs more volunteers. If you are interested in joining the team or would like more information, please contact the curator, Kate Cadman (kate.cadman@ironbridge.org.uk) or ring 01952 686542. Alternatively, you can find out more at the Broseley Local History Society Open Day on the 28th. March.



Two images of the old Southern Pipe Factory

NEWS FROM THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

LOCAL HISTORY NEWS: the BALH has a new website with lots of local history information so do take a look. The BALH Local History Day 2020 (the one Jim Cooper and I attended last year) is on Saturday 6th June at the Institute for Historical Research, London for details see the website, if you would like to go please contact me. A searchable on-line database of county prisons and local lockups project has been set up and now requires local historians to contribute information; a number of Shropshire sites are listed see: www.prisonhistory.org.

To commemorate the 200th anniversary of James Watt's death the Tipton Civic Society have unveiled a red plaque at the Anglo Ring Company in Bloomfield Road, which states "near this spot in 1776 the first commercial steam engine to the design of James Watt (1736-1819) was erected by Boulton & Watt to pump water from Bloomfield Colliery", see www.jameswatt2019.org. The Postal Museum in London has a temporary exhibition until April 2020 exploring crime and the post which includes the Great Train Robbery which took place on 8th August 1963, check out the web site www.postalmuseum.org. I am almost certain the Severn Valley Railway's Engine House at Highley which houses a travelling post office sorting carriage also has details of the robbery, together with a wonderful film narrated with a reading of W. H. Auden's "The Night Mail". THE LOCAL HISTORIAN has articles on 'Gooseberries for the Fleet- the Home Front Kitchen in Devon in WW1' (BALH 2019 Award winner); 'Importance of Midsummer Day 1700' (Devon); St. Eadgyth of Polesworth', an Anglo Saxon saint; the landscape in medieval documents and cartographic history in Ireland. Back Issues of The Local Historian journal and recent copies of the Local History News are available to members at our Broseley meetings **Janet Doody** (janet.doody27@googlemail.com)

Mailbox

Dear Fellow Members,

GEORGE PRITCHARD (1793-1861)

Some eagle-eyed amongst you may have spotted our new leaflet about George Pritchard a true man of Broseley; it was written by member the **Rev. Michael Pope** and produced by your Society. The leaflet will be available in local outlets, at our meeting and on our website; please take the time to pick up a copy and read about this fascinating man.

Janet Doody

Hi everyone

I walked the town today and took many pictures, you discover new things everyday really! As requested I managed to take a picture of what it says at the back of the Victoria Hall, I must say I never knew it was there and it was really difficult to see, someone taller might have been able to take a better picture.

I am not even sure I got the complete wording but here you are. The resolution of the photo is not high because I am sending it via email, I will upload with full resolution at a later stage.



Jocelyne Barbier

Addendum (Courtesy of Steve Dewhirst)

Many thanks for this Jocelyne. Some of it is definitely covered up as it is from the bible - 1 Timothy 1 verse 15

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

It must date from the time the hall was used by the Plymouth Brethren and the tiles would have been by Maws. **Steve Dewhirst**

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

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.

Newsletter Editor:

Could I possibly ask all Contributors to this Newsletter to try their best to see that all content reaches myself by the last week of the month.

Email address is:

mike.wallage@btinternet.com

Mike Wallage

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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**BROSELEY LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY
SUMMER OUTING – SATURDAY 4TH JULY 2020**

This year our Summer Outing will be to the Cathedral city of Coventry. As you may know this was chosen as City of culture for 2021. During the morning we have arranged a guided Tour of the Cathedral, which also includes entry to the Blitz Experience Museum. You could also “Climb the Tower” which, once you have ascended the 180 steps, will reward you with fantastic views over Coventry City. This does have an extra charge of £4 per person (no under 8 year olds) and please indicate on the booking form if you wish to take this opportunity. The Cathedral has a shop and a 1940’s themed Rising Café.

After this your day is free to explore the City Centre of Coventry; within easy walking distance is the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum (free entry) which houses not only galleries of British & European paintings but displays of Coventry’s social and industrial history, archaeology and the natural world – discover the REAL legend of Lady Godiva!

Coventry Transport Museum is also close by and houses the largest publicly owned collection of British cars, cycles, motorcycles and commercial vehicles telling the story of how Coventry changed the world through transport. The museum has recently introduced admission charges (just our luck!), £14 adult, £10.50 over 60’s; however, these are NOT day tickets but are valid for 365 days.

A little further is the historic SPON STREET; an area of medieval buildings, not all original to the site as some have been re-located having been saved from demolition.

The coach will leave Broseley at 8.30am prompt from Broseley Square Bus Stop. There is ample free parking in the car park next to the Library in Bridgnorth Road. The cost for the day will be £20 which includes coach travel and the guided tour of the Cathedral, to “climb the Tower” would be an extra £4 per person. We aim to be back in Broseley between 6 & 7 pm.

**BOOKING FORM
SUMMER OUTING TO COVENTRY – SATURDAY 4TH JULY 2020**

NAME/S:

ADDRESS:

POST CODE: TEL. NUMBER.....

NUMBER OF PERSONS @ £20.00 PER PERSON

TOWER CLIMB: No. of Persons @ £4 extra per person

Please make cheques payable to Broseley Local History Society together with payment by no later than Friday 26th June 2020 to Janet Doody, Rosehill Moss road, Wrockwardine Wood Telford TF2 7BJ,

email: janet.doody27@googlemail.com tel: 01952 610000 or 07548 804179