

Newsletter

Newsletter of the Broseley Local History Society

Incorporating the Wilkinson Society



August 2011

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

- 7 Sept *The Wenlock Olympian Society*
by Helen Cromarty.
- 5 Oct Annual General Meeting followed by a talk by John Powell *The Coalbrookdale Institute*.
- 2 Nov *Fords and Ferries on the Shropshire Severn, Part 2* by Neil Clarke (joint meeting with Friends of the IGM at Coalbrookdale).
- 7 Dec Annual dinner.
- 4 Jan *More Memories of Broseley* with Joan Griffiths.
- 1 Feb *Historic Shropshire Churches* by Richard Bifield.
- 7 Mar Annual Wilkinson Lecture, *Joseph Priestley and the Wilkinsons* by Diana Clarke.

Further details from Neil Clarke 01952 504135.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Annual General Meeting

The Society's AGM will take place on Wednesday, 5 October when the agenda will include the election of the committee. Anyone interested in putting their name forward should contact secretary Dot Cox on 01952 883568 for a nomination form. This will be followed by a talk on the Coalbrookdale Institute by John Challen.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Loamhole Dingle

This summer the Society's June walk was through Loamhole Dingle in Coalbrookdale down to the Upper Furnace Pool. It was led by Chris Rayner, a geography and geology teacher, who said that she normally preferred to start at the bottom of the hill and walk up, but on this occasion, in deference to certain elderly members, she had been persuaded to start at the top.

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Chris Rayner, far right, gets ready to start the walk through Loamhole Dingle



The group inspecting the Lydebrook sandstone which can be seen in the old quarry

So on a lovely summer evening, members met at the Severn Gorge Countryside Trust's new premises in Darby Road, from where they made their way along the Rope Walk, across the steps bridging a gully, up to the old disused quarry. There Chris pointed out the Lydebrook sandstone which can be seen there. This is brown/orange in colour, indicating that iron compounds are present. She also explained the reason for the layers of sandstone being irregularly bedded, apparently evidence of one time shifting currents and wave action when the area was covered by a shallow sea many millions of years ago.

The name Loamhole Dingle would suggest that this was the place where they quarried sandstone for the production of moulding sand, or loam, which was made by crushing the stone. This moulding sand was much used at the Coalbrookdale Works for making sand moulds for the casting of their iron products. The paths along the dingle are presumably the routes of old tramways which would have been used for transporting the stone down to the works.

Then it was back along the Rope Walk and down some steep steps to the muddy bank of the stream where can be seen some Upper Wenlock shale. This type of rock quickly disintegrates and at this point had slipped forming scree. It was here that Chris said fragments of fossils such as trilobites could sometimes be found.

Once over the stream and up the other side it was an easy downhill walk to the Upper Furnace Pool, with Chris pointing out the horsetails and ferny vegetation which were miniature descendants of the horsetails and giant tree ferns which once grew in profusion in the Upper Carboniferous Period when the coal seams in the area had been laid down.

From there it was back up the hill to the Countryside Trusts's premises, where members were given a tour of the building by Cadi Price. This is a very attractive and eco-friendly building which has been constructed using local timber and sheep's wool insulation. Established in 1991, the Trust manages more than 270 hectares of land for the enjoyment of the public and last year took on the Telford Access to Nature project of which Cadi is the Partnership Officer. This project encourages people to join in outdoor activities and learn traditional skills such as hedge laying and coppicing.

The Society would like to thank the Trust for the use of their building and for their hospitality and Cadi in particular for not minding being kept out so late. Anyone interested in doing volunteer work for the Trust should contact Cadi Price on tel: 01952 433880, email: cadiprice@severngorge.org.uk or visit their website: www.severngorge.org.uk.

A glossy pamphlet entitled *Ironbridge Gorge, Rocks make the Landscape*, which is published by the Shropshire Geological Society, includes a section on Loamhole Dingle. It may be obtained from Chris Rayner, tel: 01952 510463 or email: chris.rayner@virgin.net, price £1.95 plus post and packing.

Blaenavon Ironworks and the Big Pit

This year's coach trip was to the Blaenavon World Heritage Site in South Wales, where the Big Pit, once the last working coal mine in the area, is now an award winning national museum. First sunk in 1860, at its peak it employed some 1,400 men producing steam coal, ironstone, fireclay and house coal. Obviously a source of pride to the miners, they claim this latter was 'the best smoking coal in the world'.



Blaenavon Big Pit is an award winning national museum

One of the great attractions of this site is the opportunity to ‘go down the mine’ just like these miners once did. So no sooner had the group arrived than the more adventurous were lining up to don their compulsory safety gear. Mining regulations decreed that everyone had to wear a hard hat, a safety lamp and 5kg battery pack as well as a re-breather emergency supply; they also had to surrender watches, cameras and mobile phones – indeed anything containing a dry cell battery.

Once properly equipped, they were taken down 300 ft in the mine cage before going on a fascinating and realistic tour of what working life was like for the miners at the actual coalface. This entailed walking along narrow and low passages, where even stooping occasionally resulted in bumped heads. At one point, all the lights were doused to imitate the conditions children, some as young as seven, were expected to work in as they remained for twelve hours at a time opening doors for the coal as it came up through the mine.

For those not anxious to join the underground tour there was still plenty to see as the museum includes many historic buildings which supported the work of the mine. These included a blacksmith’s forge, stables, miners’ canteen,

Members getting kitted out to ‘go down the mine’



Inside the old blacksmith’s shop

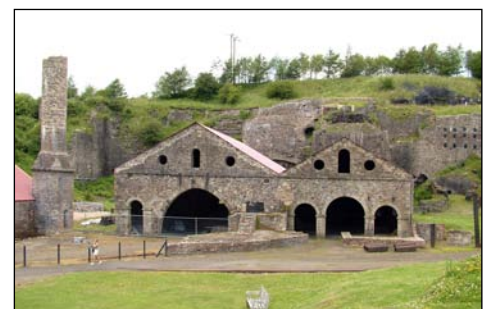
explosives magazine and the winding house, as well as the pithead baths, recently voted Wales’ best national treasure.

After lunch the coach took the group across the valley to the Blaenavon Ironworks, the best 18th century preserved ironworks in existence. These ironworks were originally opened in 1789 and were critical in the development of the use of cheap, low quality, high sulphur iron ores worldwide. In 1904, however, they ceased normal production, although the forges at the site helped produce steel shell during both world wars.

Now restored one can see what a complete ironworks would have looked like in its heyday, even down to the workers’ cottages which were of a relatively high standard for their time.

The site had originally been leased and developed by three gentlemen from the Midlands, Thomas Hill, a banker with industrial interests, Thomas Hopkins, an ironmaster and Benjamin Pratt, who had connections in earlier Welsh ironworks. The site was strategically planned, with the charging banks being built against a hillside and a balance tower raising the wagons to the upper level. The molten iron could then be tapped at the base of the furnaces and run out into cast houses, some of which still stand.

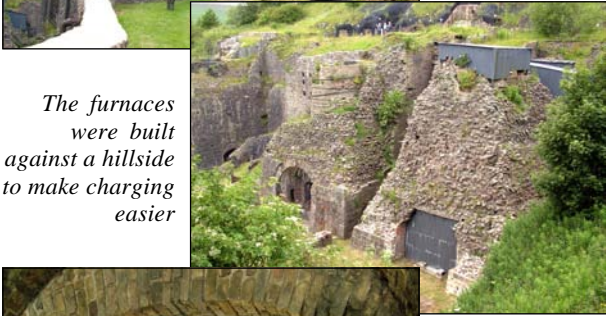
By the 1800s it was clear that South Wales was becoming the foremost iron producing region in the world and the partners decided to invest



Two of the remaining cast houses at the Blaenavon Ironworks



The balance tower was used to hoist the wagons to the upper level



The furnaces were built against a hillside to make charging easier



Furnace 2 was one of the earliest on the site

further. Subsequent developments included a new Boulton and Watt blowing engine and the building of another two furnaces, making five in all.

Today it stands as a monument to those entrepreneurs willing to take a risk in what must have been exciting times, as well as being a site well worth more than one visit.

BROSELEY CEMETERY CHAPEL

On a wet and windy day in July, happily brightened by a canopy of colourful umbrellas, the newly renovated Broseley Cemetery Chapel was formally opened by the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Derek Armstrong, as a place for quiet reflection for visitors to the cemetery and a possible information point.

A canopy of colourful umbrellas brightens a wet opening of the restored Cemetery Chapel



In her introduction to the ceremony, Gillian Pope, a member of the Broseley Partnership, said that the chapel was originally built in 1885 and the land on which both it and the cemetery now stands, originally known as Duck House and Brand Lea Meadows, was bought by the Local Board from a Major General Jenkins at a cost of £175. Built by local craftsmen from local products, the roof tiles and bricks were more than likely produced within a short distance of the site



Gillian Pope, a member of the Broseley Partnership committee, and Deputy Mayor Cllr Derek Armstrong at the official opening of the restored Cemetery Chapel

The first burial took place on 10 July 1885 and a plaque, provided by Broseley Local History Society recording this, appears on the front of the porch.

The chapel building had for some time been used by Broseley Town Council as a storage and work place, but in recent years the structure had begun to deteriorate. In 2008 the Broseley Partnership sponsored an application for funding for its restoration from The People's Millions but, despite reaching the finals, the application was unsuccessful. All was not in vain, however, as the publicity inspired by this eventually led to the Broseley Partnership acquiring alternative funding.

With this funding a portacabin was bought for the use of the Town Council employees and the chapel cleared of their equipment, to reveal a beautiful tiled floor of exceptional quality. Research carried out by Jackfield Tile Museum indicated that these floor tiles had been manufactured by Craven Dunnill of

These beautiful floor tiles were probably manufactured by Craven Dunnill between 1868 and 1879





One of the attractive light fittings, rescued from Barrow Church, now installed at the chapel

Jackfield between 1868 and 1879 and were part of the same consignment as those used in the Palace Chambers in Westminster, then part of the Foreign Office. These buildings have since been demolished, so the floor by itself is of significant local historical interest.

Over the past three years restoration work on the building has continued. Both the inside and outside have been redecorated and new electrics installed, including four lovely Victorian light fittings from Barrow Church, while leaking gutters have been repaired and the bell tower structure strengthened.

The eventual aim of restoring the chapel is to not only offer shelter to visitors to the cemetery, but also to promote Broseley and the surrounding area. To this end Broseley Local History Society has donated two cabinets which now display a number of their artefacts. In addition, local resident Joan Griffiths is in the process of computerising the register of graves in the cemetery since its opening in 1885 and the first five will shortly be available in printed form in the chapel. Ultimately it is hoped that all fifteen will become available in digital form and will prove invaluable for genealogical research.

Further ideas on how to expand this facility would be appreciated and anyone interested is asked to contact Michael Pope, tel: 01952 883960 or email: gill.h.pope@googlemail.com

BUILDING DEVELOPMENT OFF DARK LANE

Many readers will already have heard of the proposal to develop a high density housing estate off Dark Lane in Broseley. This proposal has caused much concern in the town, not least of which has been the possibility of destroying objects of historical and archaeological interest. Certainly early coal mining was carried out in this



Concerned residents being given a site visit by Paul Belford, extreme right

area and documentary records suggest that an early wooden railway once crossed this land.

In view of public concern a recommendation was made to undertake an archaeological evaluation of the site prior to planning permission being given, with the aim of assessing the presence and significance of any historical remains. As part of this evaluation an earthwork survey was carried out and archaeological trial trenches dug. The result of these activities indicated that the site had been extensively mined over a considerable period and that the remains uncovered were of local significance. Despite only 4% of the site being excavated a remarkable number of shafts and pits, 15 in all, were revealed.

It was also discovered that later mining activity had partly obscured mining remains from earlier periods. Apparently because of safety reasons no trenches were excavated below the post mediaeval mining activity. To the disappointment of many, no evidence of the wooden railway mentioned in the documentary records of 1605 was discovered.

Before the trenches were filled in Paul Belford, former archaeologist at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust and the person in charge of the survey, invited members of the public to join him on a tour of the various trenches. This proved to be very interesting with Paul pointing out several

These remains of a retaining wall were discovered during excavations



Distinct strata, including a coal seam, are revealed in this previously untouched part of the field

interesting finds including the remains of a retaining wall for a mine tip and evidence of a road leading down the south side of the site.

The report on this survey concludes that this site does have some archaeological and historical significance and that any below ground remains could be affected by the proposed building work. It, therefore, recommends that a programme of archaeological work be made a condition of any planning permission.

COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

The Society has recently installed the last in the current series of commemorative plaques on what is commonly known as the Burnt House on the corner of Cape and Queen Streets. It acquired this name after it was partially burnt down in 1883. In the 1920s it was used as a Social Club by the Liberal and Labour Parties. By the 1980s it was standing derelict until restoration work was started to convert the building into three residences. According to one of the present owners, charring of some of the beams can still be seen in his cellar.



The inscription Inigo Acton 1712 appears on its façade. This gentleman was an ancestor of Society Chairman Gillian Pope and certainly lived in the house at some time. Gillian has in her possession a beautifully embroidered tapestry depicting the Burnt House, though the date of this is not known.



Although the main structure is still the same today, it is interesting to note the various alterations to doors and windows which have been made over time.



Above left. This beautifully embroidered tapestry has been handed down to Gillian Pope, whose ancestors once lived in what is now called the Burnt House

The Burnt House today

THE RED CHURCH GHOST

So do you believe in ghosts? Well, certain customers of E Davis Ironmongers in Broseley High Street evidently do. On Saturday 4 June this year proprietor James Hurdley was told by a Jackfield resident that it had been exactly 68 years to the day that he had definitely seen a ghost near the now demolished old St Mary's Church in Jackfield.

Perhaps Mr Hurdley should not have been surprised for this church, which was built up the hill to the west of the present Ironbridge Road, is surrounded by a number of mysteries. One of these is who was actually responsible for it. Some say it was built in 1759 by Francis Blithe Turner in memory of a female relative, others that it was paid for by Mrs Mary Browne and was built only in 1766; some attribute its design to Thomas Farnolls Pritchard, designer of the Iron Bridge.

On the more nebulous side, however, is the story of the haunting of the church by the ghost of a young girl wearing a bonnet and a flowing cloak and carrying a lantern. This legend apparently stems from the fact that the deceased female relative in question did not want the church built east to west as is customary, and each night rose from her grave to push down the work completed during the day; hence the church was eventually built north to south.

However, the building, which had been designed to save people living along the river the long trek

Legend has it that the Red Church was haunted by a young girl wearing a bonnet and flowing cloak and carrying a lantern. It was demolished in the 1960s



up the hill to Broseley church, quickly became unsafe and regular services ceased in about 1860; it was demolished a hundred years later.

Commonly known as the Red Church from the colour of the local brick used, it was also called the New Church when first built, while in the 19th century it was known as the Church on the Hill. Its replacement, the new St Mary's Church further down the hill in Jackfield which was consecrated in 1863, was built as a memorial to George Pritchard, a well known and well loved Broseley philanthropist.

JAMES CLIFFORD - A TALE OF TWO HALVES

In the August 2010 Newsletter Rose Hewlett wrote asking for information on James Clifford, lord of the manor of Broseley during the late 16th and early 17th centuries. According to one of the swingposts on the Broseley Jitties Trail, he was the person who encouraged immigrant workers to build their squatter cottages in Broseley Wood in the late 16th century.

Rose is secretary to the Frampton Court Estate and the Clifford family who were primarily based in Frampton on Severn and Fretherne in Gloucestershire. Although the Clifford archives are vast it seems that, despite a reference to Broseley in certain documents, no one had investigated this aspect of James Clifford's life. As Rose says, they weren't even sure where Broseley was!

In May Rose visited Broseley and met Steve Dewhirst, who had known nothing about James' Gloucestershire connections or that his Clifford descendants were still alive. As a result of this and other research, Rose will be writing an article for the Society's Journal. In the meantime here is her brief report on her findings to date.

To the Clifford family of Frampton on Severn, Gloucestershire, James Clifford is the ancestor who built a magnificent house overlooking the Severn in neighbouring Fretherne, hoping in vain to attract Elizabeth I on one of her progresses.

To the people of Broseley and the Ironbridge Gorge the name of James Clifford conjures up images of an industrial pioneer who exploited his coal through the use of wooden railways at the

very beginning of the seventeenth century. Today he is considered to have paved the way for the Industrial Revolution.

The Clifford family can trace their ancestry in Frampton to just after the Norman Conquest, the most famous of James' ancestors being "Fair Rosamund", the favourite mistress of Henry II.

James Clifford was born in 1534 and inherited the Clifford estates in 1558. These included the Gloucestershire manors of Fretherne, Swindon (a small village north of Cheltenham), Boulden (near Newent) together with land and property in Frampton on Severn. Two thirds of the manor of Broseley together with the advowson of the church had been added to the Clifford's estate through James' grandfather, another James, who had married Ann Harewell, sister and heir to Thomas Harewell. During the 1560s James Clifford married Dorothy Fox, the daughter of Charles Fox of Bromfield, and James also acquired the remaining third of the manor of Broseley enabling him to benefit from its lucrative coal measures.

The earliest record of James' coal mining activities in Broseley is 1575 when he was in trouble for dumping waste from his mines in the river Severn at The Tuckies. These were litigious times, and much of our knowledge of James comes from his dealings in the Star Chamber and other Courts.

James Clifford built either the first or second wooden railway in England and, through his use of wagonways to transport coal from the face to the waiting boats, was able to turn a small scale domestic industry into one that became export orientated. The river Severn and its trading ports were very familiar to James. Indeed, whenever possible, he would have travelled between Gloucestershire and Shropshire by river rather than by road.

James Clifford built Priory House in Broseley in a field adjoining the present day Dunge Farm. In Fretherne, in addition to his fine house, he built large sea defences to protect his valuable grazing land along the Severn. These expenses, together with the costs of coal mining, living part of the year in the Court of Elizabeth I and endless litigation, were a huge drain on James' financial

resources. In order to help mitigate his debts and secure the future of his estates, he married his only child, Mary, first to a wealthy distant Clifford cousin and secondly to John Cage whose grandfather, Sir John Harte, had been Lord Mayor of London.

From 1608, James' coal mining activities in Broseley appear to have been managed by John Huxley, son of the vicar of Broseley, who married James' niece, Mabel. The Huxleys became tenants of Priory House at this time.

On 28 October 1612, James Clifford of Fretherne "being very aged" gathered his family around him and made his will in "good sound and perfect memory". On 1 June 1613, at the age of 79, the vicars of Frampton and Fretherne were called and in their presence James' will was confessed and allowed. James was probably buried at Frampton alongside his wife Dorothy, but the parish registers do not survive for the period covering their deaths, and no memorial remains within the church.

Like many entrepreneurs, he did not live to see large enough returns from his investments to pay off all his debts and, a few years after his death, Mary and John Cage were obliged to sell his estate and coal workings in Broseley to ensure the stability of his Gloucestershire holdings.

Since my original plea for information about James Clifford one or two of you have contacted me with information for which I am grateful. If anyone knows anything about James or early coal mining in Broseley please let me know.

Rose Hewlett
clifford@framptoncourt.wanadoo.co.uk

WHAT'S ON?

Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Festival

Ironbridge

Sat 24 September, 12.00 pm onwards

The seventh Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Festival will have something for everyone from a giant street market to a spectacular light show and firework display against the backdrop of the Iron Bridge. There will also be a variety of community and art activities as well as street entertainment. Please note the Wharfage will be closed during the day.



The More Children of Corvedale

Edge Arts Centre, Much Wenlock

Fri 30 September, 7.30 pm

Broseley resident and author Phil Revell talks about a 500 year old Shropshire story.

The Mores are a long established Shropshire family with a large estate at Linley near Bishops Castle. In 1616 Katherine More's four children were taken from her and transported to America in the Pilgrim Fathers' ship, the Mayflower. Three of the children died but the fourth, Richard More, lived to witness the Salem witch trials. As a Mayflower passenger, Richard More is regarded as one of the founding fathers of the United States.

In his presentation Phil will challenge the accepted version of this story. His fictional treatment of the More story, *A Spurious Brood*, will be available at the presentation.

Tickets £5.00 available from Phil Revell, tel: 01952 882055 or email: philrevell@btconnect.com; Downes, High Street, Broseley; Wenlock Books, Much Wenlock; or the Castle Bookshop, Ludlow.

Footprint Gallery

Jackfield Tile Museum

Up to 30 Sept

10.00 am – 5.00 pm

A free exhibition depicting historic images alongside contemporary photography. Anyone with interesting photographs or special memories of the World Heritage Site may still contact the Museum with a view to their memorabilia being included in the display; further details can be found on www.ironbridge.org.uk.

Gorgeous Craft Fair

Sat 8 and Sun 9 October

Enginuity

Seventh annual Gorgeous Contemporary Craft Fair.

Speed

Sat 22 – Sun 30 October

Enginuity

All things speedy at Enginuity this half-term.

Blists Hill Victorian Town

Ghostly Gaslight

Sat 29 October, evening

Creepy crawlies, ghosts and ghouls and a spooky atmosphere at Blists Hill Victorian Town.

Blists Hill Victorian Town

Fireworks Night

Sat 5 November, evening

Family fireworks extravaganza.

Furnaceman's Dream

Enginuity

Sat 12 and Sun 13 November, 7.30 pm

Telford and District Light Operatic Players (Tadlop) will take inspiration from the Ironbridge Gorge's industrial heritage when it stages an imaginative production combining Shakespeare with musical theatre. In a 'dream', the Furnaceman relives the great storm of 1801, in which he sees the interference of fantasy characters, such as Puck and Ariel, in the lives of ordinary working men.

Tickets: £12.00 from the box office, tel: 01952 613055; or for more details visit www.tadlop.com.

Our Sporting Life: Sporting Heroes

Coalbrookdale Gallery

Open Mon-Fri until 29 February 2012

You may be surprised to discover what a fine sporting heritage Shropshire enjoys.

Our Sporting Life: The Science of Sport

Enginuity

Open daily until 9 September 2012

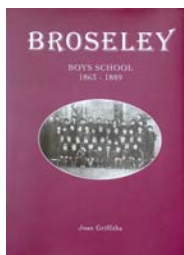
An exhibition giving a far greater understanding of the science behind today's high performance sports.

For further information on all activities at the Ironbridge Gorge Museums contact 01952 433424 or visit www.ironbridge.org.uk.

BOOKSHOP

Broseley Boy's School, 1863-1889, by Joan Griffiths, hardback, 118 pages, illustrated, published 2011.

When Broseley resident Joan Griffiths, whose family has lived in the area for generations, began researching her family history, she had no idea it would lead to the publication of her highly successful book on the history and peoples of this town. *Broseley, the People and the Past*, appeared in 2003 and is a valuable source of information for anyone interested in the history, peoples and traditions of Broseley.



While researching the material for this book, Joan was offered two large boxes full of registers, from 1863-1889, of what was then known as the National School in Bridgnorth Road. These proved such a rich source of material that she decided to publish a further book. *Broseley Boy's School, 1863-1889*, reflects the diligence of the various headmasters in recording the attendances and achievements of the boys under their care, as well as the reasons for absences and the punishments meted out. It also offers a fascinating glimpse of the social history of the time for, to quote Dave Wallace in his review, "the book reads like a ship's log, charting fearful disciplines, pastoral worries, curriculum, tragedies and poverty, all forming the lives of young pupils. This touching diary, combined with Joan's wide local knowledge and use of contemporary images, demonstrates the considerable historian she has become."

Another project which has been occupying Joan's time is the computerising of the register of graves in Broseley cemetery since its opening in 1885. With five books already finished and another ten still to go, these will eventually be made available to the public in digital format. In the meantime, the first five will shortly be available in printed form in the newly restored Cemetery Chapel.

Broseley Boy's School, 1863-1889, is available from E Davis Ironmongers, Broseley High Street, or from Joan Griffiths, tel: 01952 883074, email: joan@griffiths883074.freeserve.co.uk, price £12.95 excluding postage.

Wellingtonia, the twice-yearly magazine of the Wellington History Group edited by Allan Frost, is again available in printed form. Issue 10 was published in May and issue 11 will be out in October. Articles present the researches of members of the Group and others on the history and heritage of Wellington, the Wrekin Hill and the Weald Moors, together with papers of a more general nature.

Issue 10 includes articles on Hesba Stretton, Wellington's former market house, the Willowmoor hoard and mounds, Norah Wellings' luxury dolls, researching those who served in World War II and Royal Arms in churches.

Costing £2.00 per issue (plus £1.00 p&p), copies of the 20-page (four in colour) publication are available from Neil Clarke, Cranleigh, Little Wenlock, TF6 5BH, tel.01952 504135.

MAILBOX

In the May 2011 Newsletter Dot Cox wrote regarding the bakery in King Street where, it was reputed, the house cat could often be seen sleeping on the warm loaves in the window. Now Iris Welch, who was born in Broseley and lived in the now demolished cottages along that road, writes to say that she does not remember a cat being there when it was a bakery. What she does remember is that it was owned by Mr and Mrs Kenyon and that they had a metal sign in the shop advertising Fry's Five Boys Chocolate.* She also remembers that, being wartime, things such as raisins were in short supply but, if the bakery did manage to get hold of some, Mrs Kenyon would make her famous rock buns. These were a real treat and just the smell of them takes Iris back to that shop and those days.

At some stage the bakery closed and the premises were bought by a Mr and Mrs Farlow. It seems it was they who had the cat, though by that time there were no warm loaves in the window for it to sleep on!

Iris does, however, remember one shop in Broseley with such a cat. This was the butcher's shop in the High Street next to the Albion which was kept by two sisters, the Misses Instones, whose cat could often be seen snoozing in the window; this is now the Old Butcher's Bar. Next door to this was a fresh fish shop in what is now part of the Albion. This shop had a notice saying "Handsome is as handsome does/And though the fish looks funny/You'll find it's very good to eat/A value for your money."

Thanks, Iris, for sharing your memories with *Newsletter*. Such reminiscences are always welcome, just contact the *Newsletter* on tel: 01952 884766 or email: steve@broseley.org.uk.

**According to the Cadbury's website, Fry's Five Boys Chocolate was launched in 1902 and was once the most famous chocolate bar in the world. It had five pictures of a five-year-old boy showing*

emotions from Desperation (no chocolate), to Realisation (finding out he's got Fry's Chocolate). Apparently at the photo session, the boy was not looking miserable enough for the first photograph, so his father (the photographer) tied a cloth soaked in ammonia round his neck to achieve the 'Desperation' face! The bar was retired in 1976.



The advertising sign in the bakery

I am trying to trace the history of Barratts Hill, Broseley, to see if it was named after a particular person and wondered if anyone knows where I could find this information.

Lyn Woodman
lyn.pix@hotmail.co.uk

I assume it was named after someone called Barratt but I do not know who that would have been. The road is shown on maps in the 1600s but it is not named. The first reference I can find to the name is in the 1841 census.

Steve Dewhirst

I have recently bought an end-of-terrace house in Station Rd, Madeley. I believe there were fields between my house and the old station (where there are now new houses). On the side of my house there is an old painted advertisement which reads 'Sugar coated pills made by Parkinsons make life worth living'. I am trying to find out more and wondered if there could be any link with the sign that Dr Ivor Brown remembers from his childhood regarding Pilkington's Pills, which was reported in your *February 2011 Newsletter*.

Jo Kudlacik
jokudlacik@o2.co.uk

The painted sign which Ivor Brown saw on the side of your house when he lived in Madeley was indeed that which you quote in your email. On checking the handwritten notes he gave me many years ago, I find he put 'Parkinson's pills are good for you' - I obviously misread Pilkington's for Parkinson's, but his memory let him down on the rest of the slogan. I trust this clears up the confusion.

Neil Clarke
neil@cranleigh19.plus.com

Readers might like to refer to page 10 of the May 2011 Newsletter where Rob Breeze wrote in to correct the original report. Rob runs Madeley Print Shop which prints this Newsletter and is very knowledgeable about Madeley.

Editor

I am a trainee surveyor living in Much Wenlock and have recently started work on Angel House, 17 High Street, Broseley. In an attempt to understand the history of the site I have been scouring archives of maps, deeds, newspapers and photographs. However, I seem to be no closer to understanding it and am absolutely baffled by the property! I realise it was originally known as the Angel Inn and am fairly certain there was once a brewhouse of some sort there. I may be completely wrong but I thought that perhaps the Hand and Tankard Inn was also on this site?

Having seen the wonderful work you have done on your website in recording Broseley's history, I wondered if you could shed any light on the property. It is a truly intriguing building and I should be very grateful for any information.

Rachel Morley

rachelamorley@hotmail.com

Unfortunately I cannot find out anything about Angel House but perhaps some of our readers may be able to help.

Steve Dewhirst

Angel House in Broseley High Street is substantially Georgian in style. It was once an inn and still has etched glass panels in one of the front windows dating from that time



The unusual cast iron window frame above the door of Angel House

I am trying to find information on John Evans who was born in Broseley in 1816. According to the 1851 census, when he was 35, he was married to Sarah (born Sedgley) aged 36 with a son Enoch aged 11 (so guess they were married before 1840?) a daughter Sarah age 7 and son Noah aged 6. Noah is my great, great grandfather.

I have searched through several links about Broseley families and can find many similar names with possible links but cannot find any birth registers to see who his father was.

Do you have any relevant CDs or books I could purchase?

Martin Kerry

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I would suggest you contact Shropshire Family History Society as they may be able to help with the registers. I believe the originals are at Shropshire Archives. Also have a look at the tithe map index <http://www.broseley.org.uk/tithe.htm> which mentions at least one John Evans, however it was quite a common local name.

I am afraid we do not have any publications relating to family history.

Steve Dewhirst

I am a member of the Penticton Geneology Society in Canada. I understand that one of my great, great, great grandfathers, John Ellis Browne, may have been born in Madeley in 1793; his parents John Browne and Mary Ellis were married in Broseley, Shropshire, in 1792.

I am searching for documents for these events and any related parentage for both of them and wonder where I might be able to locate such information.

I have been also been trying to find some records as to where John Ellis Browne may have trained as a doctor. Since he was born in Madeley in 1793 I wonder where he would have got such training at that time. He is listed as a surgeon in Norwich in 1825.

Bonny (Browne) Billups

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I do not have any direct references to John Browne although the extract below from Randall's History of Broseley, describing a J H Browne's part in alleviating the desperate situation in which many workmen found themselves during and after the Napoleonic wars, may possibly refer to him.

I suggest you contact Shropshire Family History Society who may be able to help.

Steve Dewhirst

The years 1795, 1815, 1817, and 1819, were periods of great distress; furnaces were blown out, pits were put to stand, and one third of the Shropshire banks failed. A description of the suffering of the people at the former period, may be found in a letter by Richard Reynolds.

“The wants of the poor are far beyond what has been at any former time experienced, and from the best account that could be collected, the quantity of grain of all sorts in the country is three thousand bushels short of the consumption before harvest. There are many families now in want of bread, and the present supply is very scanty in proportion to the increasing demands. The colliers, &c. have hitherto been prevented from rising by assurances that the gentlemen of property were disposed to contribute liberally to their relief, as well as to

adopt measures for obtaining from different parts such aids as can be procured; and I have by their direction sent to Liverpool for one or two thousand bushels of Indian corn; but such are the increasing wants, and such the consequent murmurs of the poor, that it is impossible to say what will yet be the consequences, and I should not be surprised if they applied in a body at those houses where they expected to find provisions, or from which they thought they ought to be relieved. They already begin to make distinctions between those whom they consider as their benefactors and those whom (as George Forester expresses it in the annexed letter) are at war with their landlords; and I fear those whom they would consider as deserting them in their distress would not only incur their disapprobation, but might be the next to suffer from their resentment.”

On that occasion Squire Forester, together with J. H. Browne, and Richard Reynolds, advanced £700 each to purchase corn, and gave £105 each, to which sum were added Cecil Forester's £105, and the Coalbrookdale Co's £105. Language cannot paint the deep distress which existed. Men, with wives and families dependent upon them, saw their only ground of hope taken from them. Starving by thousands, and yoked like horses, they might have been seen drawing materials for the repair of the roads, or convoying coal into Staffordshire. Disturbances were frequent; mobs of men collected, and went about taking food where they could find it, whilst the militia had often to be called out to quell disturbances. Not only ironmasters, but manufacturers generally, were reduced to despair.

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