

NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the **Broseley Local History Society**

INCORPORATING THE WILKINSON SOCIETY



FEBRUARY 2014

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.

PROGRAMME

- 5 Feb *Family History* by Geoff Harrison.
- 5 Mar *Annual Wilkinson Lecture: John Rose of Coalport* by Kate Cadman.
- 2 Apr *Mills on the Linley Brook* by Steve Dewhirst
- 7 May *The Romans in Shropshire* by Shelagh Hampton
- 4 Jun *Woodland Walk, Coalbrookdale* – details to follow
- 6 Jul Annual outing, Manchester Salford Quays.
Further details from Neil Clarke 01952 504135.

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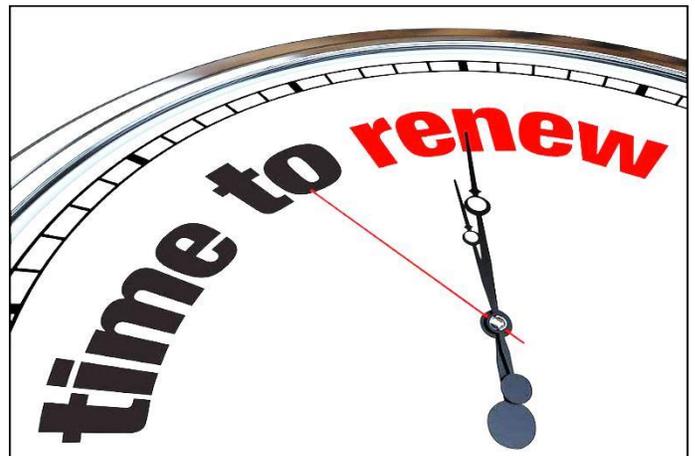
NEW MEMBERS

The Society would like to welcome the following new members:

Jim & Pat Clarke, Broseley
Stephen Jones, Tenbury Wells

MEMBERSHIP

Membership subscriptions are now due. For those who have not yet paid there is a form on the final page of the Newsletter that gives details of how to pay. Subscriptions are now £7 single and £12 couples.



PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Fords and Ferries

At the annual joint meeting with the Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum, held at Coalbrookdale in November, Neil Clarke gave the third in his series of talks on the Fords and Ferries on the Shropshire Severn, this time covering those on the river in the Bridgnorth area.

There were crossings of the Severn in the Bridgnorth area in prehistoric and possibly Roman times, but the earliest recorded is that in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 895 during the period of the Danish invasions. The early Norman settlement established at Quatford was removed to what became Bridgnorth at the beginning of the 12th century, and the first bridge there dates from that time.

Upstream from Bridgnorth, two ferries served the Apley estate and another the settlements of Newton and Astley Abbots. Below Bridgnorth, and with no vehicular road bridges before Bewdley, fords and ferries were important for the communities on both sides of the river. The ferries at Danesford, Quatford, Hampton Loade (including its ford), Potters Loade and Stanley(Highley) all survived into the 20th century, with that at Hampton Loade now the only ferry on the whole of the Upper Severn still to be operating (albeit seasonally).

The ferry boat at Hampton Loade is attached by a pulley to a cable across the river and utilises the current against the rudder to propel the vessel from one bank to the other. At the other crossings, the ferryman would pull the punt-like boat hand-over-hand on the rope stretched across the river.

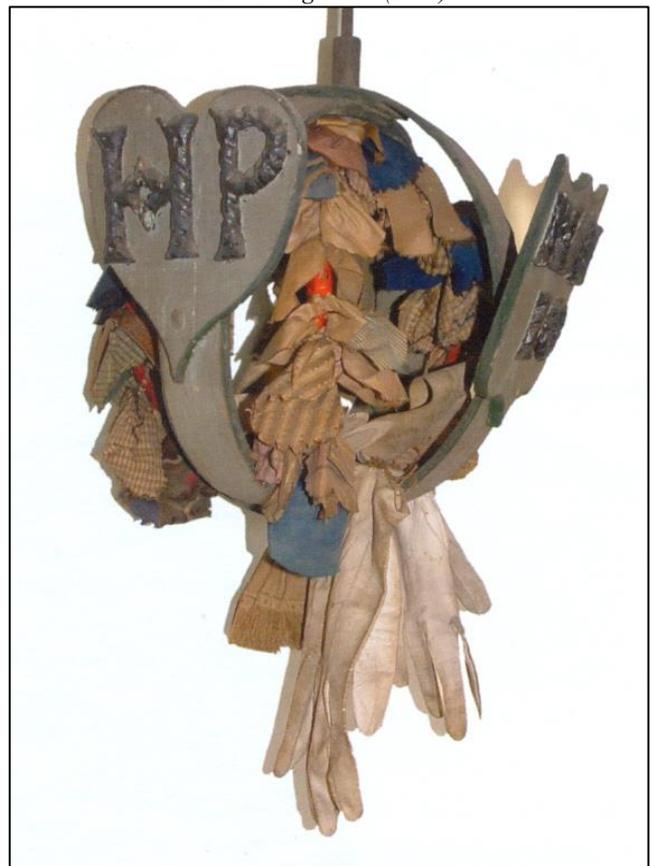
Hampton Loade ferry (2013)



Quatford ferry (early 20th century)

There were many dangers in crossing the River Severn, and of the accidents recorded none was more tragic than the death of Hannah Phillips. She was crossing the river on the ferry boat from Newton to Astley Abbots to prepare the church for her wedding the next day, May 10th 1707, and somehow fell in and was drowned. The maiden's garland (made for the funerals of unmarried women of 'blameless reputation') still hangs in an alcove of St Calixtus's church stands as her memorial.

Maiden's garland (1707)



Christmas Dinner

In December Society members celebrated another successful year with a festive dinner at the Lion Hotel. Once appetites were satiated and collars loosened the assembled members were treated to a fantastic photographic quiz that had been compiled by Jan Lancaster.



Members enjoying good company and good food at the Lion Hotel

The photographs in the quiz were taken in and around Broseley and many of them have appeared in past Newsletters. Some were easily identified and others were a little more obscure and difficult to place. The quiz caused great discussion, some scratching of heads and some collaborating on answers!

Dot Cox and Michael Pope listen keenly to the quiz answers



Below is a selection of photographs from the quiz. Answers will be in the next edition of Newsletter or the full quiz and the answers can be found on the Broseley Local History Society website –

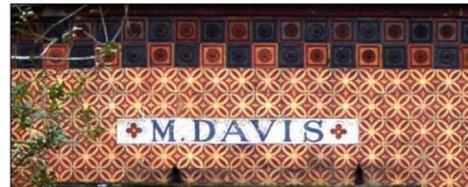
<http://www.broseley.org.uk>

Q 1. Name two famous people who lived in this house in the 18th/early 19th century.



Q 3. Where is this shop?

What was M Davis' trade?



Q 6. What does this plaque commemorate?

Where is it?



Q 17. On which building would you find this?



Q 9. In which old pub would you find this window?



Q 14. On which building would you find this?



**Q 23. Where is this plaque?
Who is buried here?**



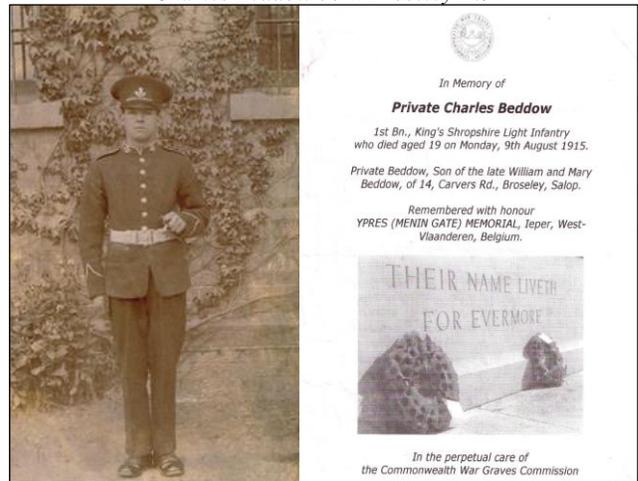
More Memories of Broseley

War Years and the Remembrance Poppy was the theme of the first meeting of the year when Joan Griffiths presented a poignant talk commemorating 100 years since the start of WW1.

An insight into life in the trenches was given when a series of letters written by Charles Beddow, to his brother William Beddow (Joan Griffiths' Grandfather), were recited. Although the letters told something of the hardships experienced the full story could never be told. Charles wrote, "Well dear brother you say I don't tell you much news about the war. I could tell you a lot if we were allowed to; if I was to write and tell you news of the war I should get into bother."

Charles Beddow was born in Broseley in 1896 to William and Mary Beddow, the eighth child in a family of nine. He and his brother Fred both served in WW1. Fred returned home but Charles was killed in the trenches at Ypres.

Charles Beddow born Broseley 1896



Another casualty of WW1 was Reverend Wynyard Alexander Warner who was rector of All Saints Broseley from 1922 until his death in 1926. Previous to his time in Broseley he served as Army Chaplain to the forces in France during the Great War. He attended to the spiritual needs of the men on the front line and rest areas until he was invalided out, possibly from being gassed. Unfortunately the war left its impression on him and the last few years of his life were years of suffering. During the two years to his death his illness rendered him incapable of continuing his duties which were carried out by Reverend Evan James, curate in charge.



*Reverend
Wynyard
Alexander
Warner, Rector
of Broseley 1922
- 1926*

During the war years many fundraising events took place in and around the town. In the schools girls were knitting scarves, belts, and mittens for the soldiers and contributions were made to the national egg collection.

After the end of WW1 a large gathering of towns' people watched the unveiling of Broseley War Memorial on Sunday 20th March 1921. The cost of £350 was raised by public subscription and the memorial carried the names of the 52 men who died for their country in the Great War.

Unveiling of the War Memorial 20th March 1921



WW2 was declared on 3rd September 1939 and Broseley, like every other town in the country, faced the fact that life would never be the same again. Men were called up to serve their country and women and families left at home to cope. Air raid shelters were built in gardens and schools, windows were taped to avoid shattering in the event of a bomb blast and street lights were not permitted as enemy bombers would be able to use them to help locate their targets. Everyone was issued with an identity card and gas mask and rationing began in January 1940.

Children from the big cities were evacuated to the rural country towns in the hope they would be safe. There were evacuees in Broseley and some stopped on after the war with some families still in the town today. With food and clothing rationed people had to economise and make do with what they had or mend things where possible. Clothes were repaired, woollens unravelled and reknitted, socks darned and gardens dug over for vegetable growing.

Women played a new role with many taking on jobs that they would not have had during peace time. Some worked on farms, some were munitions workers, some drove buses and some joined the forces themselves.

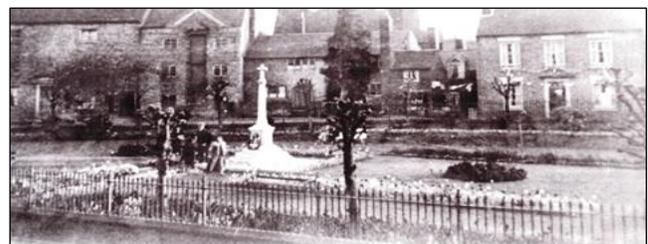
Leslie Griffiths (Joan's husband) was born in Ironbridge in 1925 and was called up to the Royal Navy in 1943, aged 18. After his training he served on merchant ships on convoys to Argentina. In 1944 he was involved in an incident on deck and suffered burns. He and two other sailors involved were sent to hospital in Edinburgh and while there he was diagnosed with TB and invalided out of the Navy. He was sent to Shirlett Sanatorium where he spent about a year recuperating. He talked of Dr. Turner during his time there and also of unauthorized visits to the Pheasant pub at Linley. He also told of times in outdoor huts in the winter with snow on beds and visitors shivering from the cold.

Again there were many casualties during WW2 and memorial tablets were added to the War Memorial which had previously been erected in the memorial gardens on Delphside. These were unveiled on 14th August 1949.

Next was a selection of pictures from Joan's wonderful collection. Prominent was the Town Hall which was built in 1777 with money from Charities that was left to the poor of Broseley. The Town Hall was demolished in 1963 and replaced by the SPAR supermarket.

The evening was concluded by a montage of wartime pictures playing to music and reflecting on the last 100 years.

The War Memorial seen with iron railings (removed during WW2)



Vera Francis

It is with sadness that we report the death of Vera Francis who died in hospital on Christmas Day at the age of 93.

She had been a member of Broseley Local History Society for many years and was a past President. Vera was well known in the local community having lived and worked in Broseley all of her life.

She attended Broseley C of E School and Coalbrookdale County High School.

In 1943 she married Charles Marrion who was unfortunately killed in France in August 1944. Her daughter Cheralyn was born some few months later.

In 1954 she married local farmer Tom Francis and they set up their family home in King Street where they lived happily for forty years and where she lived out the rest of her life. Latterly her brother Noel Ward, also a past President lived with her until his death.

Vera worked as a secretary for various local businesses and spent the last thirty years before retirement working as medical secretary/almoner at the Lady Forester Hospitals in both Broseley and Much Wenlock.

Not content with working all day she imparted her love of shorthand and typing to many pupils at evening classes in Broseley, Madeley, Oakengates Technical College, Blessed Robert Johnson in Wellington and the Phoenix School Dawley.

Vera was a very social person, belonging to many societies and clubs in Broseley and it was at one of these, when she arrived, as usual, late, that a certain Gentleman of the Town christened her "The late Mrs Francis". She took it all in good part but it never made her any earlier. Inevitably she would arrive at Society meetings at the last minute with a glass of wine.



Vera Francis.
Past President of
BLHS.

She loved clothes and especially bright colours, hence the request that at her Thanksgiving Service at All Saints Church, the congregation should wear bright colours.

Broseley and the Society has lost a colourful character.

BLHS Research Fund

Last year the Society set up a Research Fund to encourage members to explore topics in line with the aims of the Society – that is the research, preservation and promotion of Broseley's unique heritage. Grants can cover costs such as reasonable travel, postage, photocopying and photography. On completion of the research the recipient is required either to give a talk to the Society or write an article for the Journal.

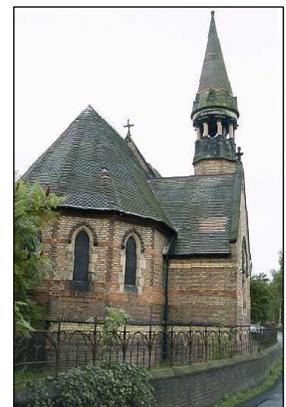
Funds are sourced from an initial grant from Society reserves, donations at meetings and from businesses and individuals.

In 2013 Peter Taylor was the first recipient of a grant from our Research Fund and he has completed his research and prepared an article for the next Journal on 'The Early River Severn Trade in Broseley Tobacco Pipes'.

Any member keen to take advantage of this fund is asked to email steve@broseley.org.uk or contact Gillian Pope, 01952 883960.

Jackfield Church

Last year during clearing work at St. Mary's Church a building was revealed at the east end of the Church garden. Graham Hollox is looking for more information about the structure.



St. Mary's

Graham writes-

During clearing of vegetation around St Mary's Church in Jackfield, a strange building was revealed (see photo) for the first time in some years. Several people have suggested it is a coal house and indeed,

local residents recall it being used for exactly that when the church was still heated by coal. However, I wonder if that was its original purpose as the design is not really good for purpose i.e. it means that coal was delivered through a hole in the church wall, and stored in a very strong building (the roof has three layers of bricks) that would be difficult to get it out from?

Ordnance Survey maps suggest that it was built after 1887 and before 1903. There have been a number of other suggestions but before the coal house is accepted as conclusive, does anyone please have any other ideas? As it is adjacent to Salthouse Road, could this be a salt house? What details are there available about the design and use of these?

Coal house at St. Mary's?



If anyone has any information or theories that they would like to share about this structure then please let Graham know or Email Newsletter with your ideas.

editor@broseley.org.uk

What's On?

Thur 6 February

Tim Booth, Shropshire's Wind and Water Mills, Wrekin Historical Group, 7:30pm, St Georges Parish Rooms, 01952 613331

Wed 12 February

Ancestry taster session at Madeley Library 10:30am – 12:30pm. Call 01952 382950 to book a place

Tue 18 February

John Shearman, A Family Historian's History of the English Parish, Shropshire Family History Society, 7:15pm Shirehall, Shrewsbury, 01691 653316

Wed 26 February

Janet Doody, The Mystery of H. Speake and researches on local WW1 Memorials, Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum, 7:30pm Boardroom, Coalbrookdale, 01952 433522

Mon 3 March

Rex Keys, The Broseley Tobacco Pipe Industry, Albrighton Historical Society, 7:30pm, Red House, Albrighton, 01902 372744

Fri 14 March

Gareth Williams, Lost Houses of Shropshire, Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum, 2:30pm Boardroom Coalbrookdale, 01952 433522

Wed 19 March

Brian Nelson, Shrewsbury & Newport Canals Trust, Wellington History Group, 7:30pm Wellington Civic Offices, 01952 402459

Wed 26 March

Dr Ian West, How Technology Transformed the Country House, Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum, 7:30pm Boardroom, Coalbrookdale, 01952 433522

The above "What's On?" is a taster of what's going on locally. Details of these meetings and more can be found at the Wrekin Local Studies Forum website.

<http://www.wlsf.org.uk/category/calendar/>

Ironbridge Gorge Walking Festival

Now in its ninth year the festival offers a choice of over 50 free, varied and rewarding walks in and around the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site.

From challenging all day hikes for the more experienced walker, to family friendly trails and short informative walks, this year's Festival has something to whet the appetite of all ages and abilities.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War, on Saturday 10th May a guided linear walk around The Gorge will visit memorials to the fallen, as well as sites connected with both World Wars.

Other walks include an early evening family outing on 7th May to explore the nature and wildlife in the enchanting woods at Loamhole Dingle, Coalbrookdale with a surprise for all, and an opportunity to learn about the variety of wild flowers in Lodge Field under the guidance of an expert from Shropshire Wildlife Trust. There will also be additional nature walks with information to help identify trees and birds and an early evening ‘quiz walk’ around Coalbrookdale finishing at a local inn.

Popular tried and tested walks being repeated explore historic trails and the part played by The Gorge in the Industrial Revolution. There’s also a gentle two-hour family treasure hunt suitable for pushchair and wheelchair users, alternatively experienced walkers can join a strenuous 15 mile circular hike over the Wrekin, ideal for walkers happy with steep climbs and rough terrain.

For those wanting to discover more about the heritage of the area there is a walk that takes in the history of the river bridges and a 15 mile circular walk skirting the edge of the World Heritage Site. Three walks explore the many churches and other places of worship in and around The Gorge on 6th and 9th May.

All walks are free however pre-booking is essential; well behaved dogs on a lead are welcome on most walks but please check before booking. To reserve a place or request a copy of the programme contact the Ironbridge Visitor Information Centre by email at tic@ironbridge.org.uk or call 01952 433 424.

Details of the festival can also be found on www.visitironbridge.co.uk/walkingfestival.

Broseley Local History Society is holding an exhibition to commemorate the start of WW1. With this in mind does anyone have any photographs or family information on these soldiers who are either buried in Broseley Cemetery or commemorated on a memorial stone on a family grave there: Arthur Reynolds, Harry Burton, Levi Evans, Joseph Edwards, James Harrison, G Abbey, Frederick Arthur Jones, William Rose Barnett, Edward Colley, Louis Alexander Nicklin, Ernest George Boden, Wilfred John Boden, Joseph Henry Barnett Onions. Any other interesting artifacts relating to this time would also be considered for the exhibition.

Rosemary Clegg 12 Brookes Road, Broseley, TF12 5SB

Heirloom Displayed

A family heirloom found amongst possessions of a late Broseley lady is to have pride of place in a local building. It is a bible which belonged to Richard Alfred Instone (R.A. Instone), the grandfather of the late Jean Instone-Chatham, great grandfather of Richard Smitherman and great, great, grandfather of Patrick Smitherman who now occupies the building. Patrick, managing director of Harwood The Estate Agent of Broseley, was a great nephew of Jean who died recently approaching 90. She lived on the Willey Estate for almost 60 years.

The bible, dated October 29th 1890, was originally owned by R.A. Instone, and will be framed and displayed in the Instones building as part of what Patrick describes as “a lovely piece of Broseley history.”

Ironbridge Miscellany

By David de Haan.

Locals have often mentioned the fact that the Bridge deck has risen in their lifetime. The story usually goes that “when I was young you could stand by the Tollhouse and see the front door of the Tontine, but you can’t now.” I have tried to measure just how big this change of angle is by looking at the archives, notably engineering drawings and photographs. It is all to do with the fact that the span has reduced, and as the two base plates moved inwards, so the crown must have been pushed up.

The original span was recorded as 100ft 6in and can be scaled off the 1782 engraving as being measured between the Lower Ribs where they sit on the base plates (figure 1 below). It came free with the Michael

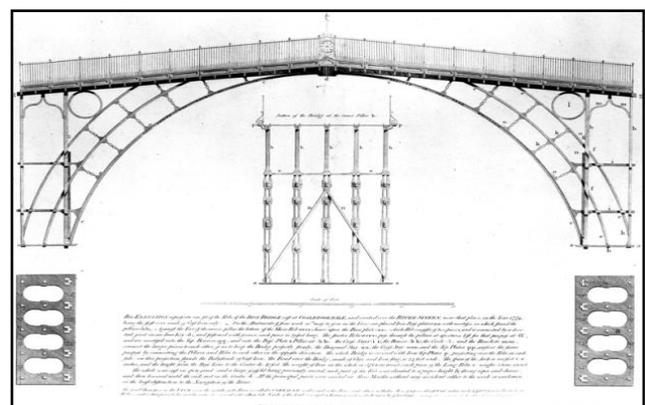


Fig1 - 1782 engraving (IGMT)

Angelo Rooker view and usefully includes a scale. A 1972 photogrammetric survey done by Plowman Craven for the Department of the Environment shows the span to have reduced to 30.043m (98ft 7in) (figure 2 below). The difference is largely explained by the tilting inwards of the verticals. Measured from this survey drawing, the Inner Vertical nearest the water on the Tontine side leans towards the River at an angle of $1\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ and the Tollhouse side leans at $2\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$. The base plate on the south side is shown to dip down towards the River by $\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, but this is not equal across the entire abutment base, probably due to the large fracture in the base plate between frame D and E at the downstream end

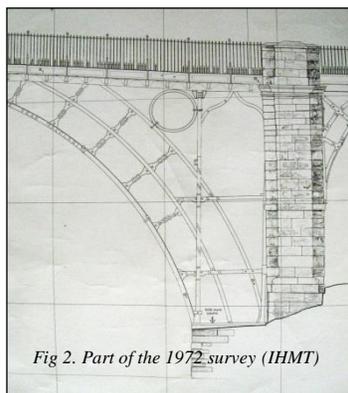


Fig 2. Part of the 1972 survey (IHMT)

which is thought to date back to the great flood of 1795. Something big must have struck the rib of frame E, which is canted out towards the River by 3 inches. However, the verticals on the Tollhouse side have always leant at an angle, which can be measured against the slim masonry pier which was added in 1802. At base plate level the Inner Verticals stand proud of the piers – in fact you can put your hand behind them – but as they rise they become buried within the stonework. The pier was built vertical but the ironwork went up before the abutments and settled at an angle from the very beginning in 1779.

The 1782 engraving shows the deck rising at an angle of $5\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$. By 1972 this had dropped to 5° , the opposite of what we would expect from the local story. And the most recent survey – a highly accurate laser scan done in May 2013 by Ramboll – shows the angle is now 4.64° on the Tollhouse side and 4.98° on the Tontine side. In fact the crown of the arch has fallen slightly. How can this be?

The culprit is found in the fractures in the deck beams at the top of the Inner Verticals, which can be spotted in photographs as early as the 1890s and one can clearly see that the deck changes angle at this point. As the deck was being squeezed, instead of rising up, the deck beams broke and the rest of the beams dropped. To remedy this weakness, in November 1926 large bracket supports were made by Brymbo Steel Co,

part of the Coalbrookdale Company, which tie the fractured beams together (Shropshire Records 6001.3.3701).

So how can we explain the stories about being able to see the door of the Tontine from the Tollhouse? It could be something to do with the Severn Valley Railway because if the level crossing gates were closed you had to go over a footbridge which brought you back down to the road at a slightly higher level than now. Or is it that the area around the Tollhouse has dropped? There is still movement here, measured since 2008 by inclinometers. Both banks are still moving slowly towards the river, a difference of 3mm having been recorded between 2008 and 2011. At deck level on the Bridge this is evident by the buckling of the road over the two land arches, both of which curve upwards.

Mailbox

I'm not sure if you are able to help me but my partner has recently purchased 40-41 Church Street, Broseley, and we have been informed that years ago it was a sweet and tobacco shop.

After hours of searching the internet we are still unable to find out what the shop was called. I'm not sure if this is maybe something you could help me with or maybe you could put me in touch with someone who would be able to help?

Gemma Jones

Editor: Joan Griffiths replies-

"It was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Molyneux until his death last year, it has now been sold. I went to the sweet/tobacconist shop when I was a child and remember buying sweets and taking a dish to the shop for ice-cream which was sold there. It must have been about 1945-47 as far as I can date this. I have been looking through the trade directories for this shop details and from 1926/1929/1934/1941 the shop was in the name of George E Taylor - tobacconist/confectioner, I have a photo of the property as a shop. Mr. Taylor was the grandfather of Mr. Molyneux.

Earlier dates do not give a house number so I have just written a shop owner Upper Church Street in 1891 as a Mrs. Charlotte Clarke - shop keeper-grocer, however on the 1891 census she is a 47yr old widow, and this is 40-41 Church Street. In 1885 there

is a Charles Rowe confectioner, Church Street but I do not know if this is the 40-41 property.”

My father, Mr John Cooksey, wrote a book on brickyards - Brickyards of The Black Country - A Forgotten Industry. Unfortunately, my father passed away in May this year.

My reason for writing is whilst sorting through his vast amount of books; I have come across one - The Broseley Heavy Clay Industry - brickyards & roofing tile manufactories, written by A.J. Mugridge (2001). I was wondering if you know of anyone who may be interested in purchasing this book?

If there are any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me via Steve Dewhirst steve@broseley.org.uk

Julie McCauley

Seeking John Harrison - I am hoping that perhaps someone may assist me in locating my dad’s cousin, John Harrison born about 1940 to Eric Harrison and Florence Harrison (nee Glaze). They were married in Much Wenlock. The man in the sepia photo is Herbert Huntley Harrison, with his wife, he is the brother of Eric Harrison and the B&W photo is my father, John Robin Harrison, now in Australia. I have attached the photos as perhaps someone knows the whereabouts of John Harrison and might show him these images to confirm our connection. He is aged about 73. I would greatly appreciate any assistance and information.



Jason Harrison, Australia.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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DISTRIBUTION OF NEWSLETTERS

Thank you to those members who have indicated that they would be happy to have an electronic copy of the *Newsletter*. If there are any other members who would prefer it this way, please contact the membership secretary, Janet Robinson, email:

pandjrobinson@hotmail.com. Those of you who would still prefer to have it in its printed version can continue to look forward to receiving it through the post

To see this *Newsletter* in full colour visit the website at www.broseley.org.uk.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2014

Subscriptions are now due for the year 2013-2014. If you have not paid please complete the form below and return to Janet Robinson, Membership Secretary BLHS, 26, Coalport Road, Broseley, TF12 5AZ. 01952 882495

The cost of a year's subscription is now £7 or £12 for couples.

Cheques should be made payable to Broseley Local History Society.

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