

Newsletter

Newsletter of the Broseley Local History Society

Incorporating the Wilkinson Society



February 2008

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.

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PROGRAMME

- 5 Mar *John Wilkinson and his Transport Interests*, by Neil Clarke (at the Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum)
- 2 Apr *South Staffordshire Ironmasters with Broseley origins*, by Paul Luter
- 7 May 'You try and stop me!' Part II. Walk around Coalport and Jackfield, led by Ron Miles
- 4 Jun Installation of John Wilkinson plaque at a Summer Evening at The Lawns
- 28 Jun Trip to Gloucester Historic Dockyard
- 12 Jul Wilkinson Bicentenary Day School at the Great Warehouse, Coalbrookdale
- 13 Jul Trip to Brymbo site
- 10-13 Jul Pageant at The Lawns set around John Wilkinson's life
- Further details from Neil Clarke 01952 504135.

NEW MEMBERS

The Society, which now numbers over 200 members, would like to welcome the following newcomers:

Alan and Sheila Hall, Benthall
Tony Hyett, Burbage
W Gary Jones, Much Wenlock
Margaret Jones, Wellington
David Lloyd, Wilstead
Anton and Alison Maree, Castletown, IOM
Helen Shelton, Broseley
Margaret Taylor, Broseley
John Wooldridge, Kingswinford

GIFT CARDS

Membership of the Society makes an unusual birthday or Christmas gift, so next time you need a present, why not buy one of the gift cards now available from any member of the committee? These incorporate a picture of Broseley Church and cost 50p plus £5.00 for a single subscription or £8.00 for a couple.

NEIL CLARKE AT THINKTANK

Date: Wednesday, 5 March

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum
The Society's March meeting will take place at the Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum, when Neil Clarke will give a talk on *John Wilkinson and his Transport Interests*. This lecture forms part of the Newcomen Society's 2007/2008 Public Lecture Session and visitors from societies such as ourselves are welcome. Admission is free and parking on site is accessible from Jennens Road.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Visit to Gloucester

Date: Saturday, 28 June

Cost: £20.00 per person

Dep: 8.00 am Broseley Square

8.10 am School Road, Coalbrookdale

Ret: 7.15 pm Coalbrookdale

7.25 pm Broseley

This year's summer outing will be to Gloucester Historic Dockyard and the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway.

The Dockyard has a magnificent variety of attractions and is within easy walking distance of other museums and shops. There will be the opportunity to visit such places as the National Waterways Museum, Gloucester Regimental Museum, Mariners' Church, Gloucester Cathedral, Museum and Art Gallery. The price includes group admission to Gloucester Historic Dockyard museums.

The return trip will include a half hour journey on the award winning standard gauge Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway, which has a good variety of preserved main line GWR steam locomotives maintained and run by an enthusiastic group of qualified volunteers. From the main station at Toddington the scenic ten mile run will end at Cheltenham Racecourse.

Further information obtainable from Vin Callcut, 01952 882508, or complete the form on page 13 and send it with your payment, by not later than 31st May, to Michael Pope, Rivendell, 2 Dark Lane, Broseley, TF12 5LH, enclosing a sae should acknowledgement be required. Cheques should be made payable to Broseley Local History Society.

Wilkinson Bicentenary Celebrations 2008 Installation of plaque and Summer Evening

Date: Wednesday, 4 June

Time: 7.30 pm

Venue: The Lawns, Church Street, Broseley

Installation of plaque commemorating John Wilkinson at a Summer Evening at The Lawns.

Wilkinson Bicentenary Day School

Date: Saturday, 12 July

Time: 9.45 am – 4.30 pm

Venue: Long Warehouse,
Coalbrookdale

Cost: £10.00 to include copy of

the day's proceedings on publication

A Day School presenting recent research into the life and achievements of John Wilkinson on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of his death.

The programme will include the talks

The Wilkinsons at Bersham

by Steve Greuter

*Iron Ships in Green Fields: Wilkinson's
Legacy 1777-1833*

by Richard Barker

Wilkinson's Trade Connections

by Eric Alexander

*The Importance of the Women in John
Wilkinson's Life*

by Frank Dawson



There will also be a choice of activities in the early afternoon; either a field trip to local Wilkinson sites, a guided walk to the Iron Bridge or a visit to the Museum of Iron (this will carry an extra charge).

Tea and coffee will be available but lunch is not included. However, there are several restaurants and pubs within easy reach.

Further information available from Neil Clarke, 01952 504135, or to book complete the form on page 13 and send it with your payment to Michael Pope, Rivendell, 2 Dark Lane, Broseley, TF12 5LH. Cheques should be made payable to Broseley Local History Society.

This event is sponsored by Broseley Local History Society, the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust and Friends, Shropshire Archives and Wrekin Local Studies Forum.

Trip to Brymbo

Date: Sunday, 13 July

Dep: 10.00 am, Broseley Square

Ret: 5.15 pm

Cost: £8.50 per person

To round off the Society's Wilkinson Weekend, a coach trip has been arranged for a visit to Brymbo, the site not far from Bersham which was purchased by John Wilkinson in 1792. The blast furnaces and foundry which he built there were the basis for Brymbo Steelworks, an enterprise which closed only in 1990. The Brymbo Heritage Group has offered to lead a tour of the site, which includes John Wilkinson's old No 1 blast furnace, his contemporary foundry, the drift mine and agent's house, and the more recent machine shop. The Heritage Group will supply tea and coffee but participants should take a packed lunch.

Further information may be obtained from David Lake, 01746 762813. To book complete the form on page 13 and send it with your payment, by not later than 13 June, to David Lake, Avebury, Stocking Lane, Nordley, WV16 4SY. Cheques should be made payable to Broseley Local History Society. Bookings will be refundable until 13 June.

Wilkinson Pageant

Dates: 10, 11, 12 and 13 July

Venue: The Lawns, Church Street, Broseley
BROADS, Broseley's amateur dramatic society, will be staging a pageant centred around the life of John Wilkinson. Local school children will also be involved and, with a grant having already been received, this promises to be an exciting and colourful event. Keep watching this space!

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

In 2002 Vin Callcut and his wife Hilary moved into Alison House, No 50 Church Street, Broseley. Although a spacious family home in good repair, they decided to make some alterations and it was while these were being carried out that they realised the building had already undergone considerable changes. So Vin started doing some research and five years and a lot of restoration work later, he gave a talk to the Society in November on the history of the house and some of the families who had owned it.



Alison House, No 50 Church Street

The original house was built in 1713 by Richard Hartshorne, a carpenter of Broseley, and he and his descendants were to own it until 1884. In the meantime, various extensions and conversions had been carried out and when the estate was finally sold for £525.00 it consisted of Alison House itself as well as 'two cottages, garden, stable and hereditaments'.

The Hartshornes were a well known family in and around Broseley. One owner, a Dr Frederick Hartshorne, had at one time supplied water to the town for a nominal sum of £10.00 a year, but after the Council stopped paying had cut off the supply. In 1776 a John Hartshorne had bought a small share in the building of the Iron Bridge, while another Hartshorne, Charles, had for some years been the curate of Broseley.

In 1929, the house was bought by Charles Instone, who ran the butcher's shop next door and the slaughter house at the rear. He in turn gave it and the goodwill of the shop to his son Gerald, who now lives in Broseley on the site of the old slaughter house and who sold No 50 to the Callcuts in 2002.

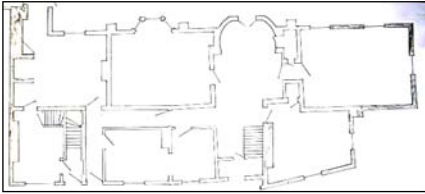
Although Alison House is built very near to the street a seven foot wall hides much of it. Once behind this wall, it becomes obvious that the building was not originally just one house for a vertical line shows where at least two buildings have been joined at an angle of about 5°. The larger part of the present house lies to the left of

Charles Instone's butcher's shop was next door to No 50



The rear of No 50





Plan of the ground floor of No 50 Church Street

this line and may have been formed from two smaller houses; it was also joined through to the shop on the left. At some stage the house was extended at the back, a large hall, reception and bedrooms being added.

When trying to understand the history of the house, the first thing done was to draw up floor plans showing the layout of rooms and chimneys and deciding which walls were loadbearing. This was a great help in trying to work out the changes which had been made.

The street door leads into what was probably the oldest part of the house, with a blocked up stairway on the left and a breakfast room on the right. Ahead is an oak beamed parlour which, once the concrete floor screed was removed, was seen to have a well worn but reparable floor of six inch red and black tiles. This was one of five rooms which had been used as a kitchen and Hilary and Vin were lucky enough to find and install an original 1886 cottage range made by the Coalbrookdale company.

A more recent kitchen off this room once had access to the butcher's shop next door and has a doorway to a steep, much modified flight of stairs to the first floor.

The Callcuts, however, decided that what had once been the doctor's dispensary would make a much

better kitchen with a wall knocked through to the breakfast room, only to discover that there had already been a door there at some stage. While removing the modern fireplace in the breakfast room Vin found a very old cast iron hearth back. Dated 1618, it is mentioned in Randall's *Broseley and its Surroundings* as having come from Shirlett and being at the house of F H Hartshorne Esq. Another interesting find was a worn threshold stone, part of an old slate gravestone dated 26 June 1717, which formed part of the slate floor.

Having discussed the alterations in the old part of the house, Vin then turned his attention to the newer extension at the back which was architect designed and could have been the work of Edward Haycock (1790-1870) of Shrewsbury. The hallway is circular with Regency style doors and reception rooms to either side. A short passageway leading to the sitting room has a built-in Coalbrookdale wall safe and store cupboard which form part of an unusual corridor. According to Steve Dewhirst this type of corridor also occurs in other Broseley houses.

The sitting room itself is part of the single storey section of the house and was at one time used as a schoolroom. The fact that the brass furniture on the original box shutters is marked William Tonks & Son and dated 30 June 1869 may indicate when the extension was built.

The study leading off the hallway must have been built over the steps leading up from the cellar kitchen and, like the sitting room, is single storey.



CHRISTMAS 2007

Ron Miles kept members of the Society amused at their Christmas dinner which was held at the Lion Hotel

To the right of the fireplace is evidence of chimney flues suitable for a kitchen range. It is possible that the room had been designed as a kitchen to replace the cellar kitchen below and was one of five rooms to have seen such service!

The interesting thing about this room is the chimney flue arrangements. From the range fireplace in the cellar below the chimney splits into a V shape. One leg comes up near the present fireplace into the main chimney breast while the other comes up by the study doorway, missing the chimney altogether and surfacing just where the cellar steps used to be – an enigma so far unexplained! In the attic above this single storey room the chimney breast shows marks where a fireplace was once installed. Presumably it was once a two storey building.

Another enigma is the steep staircase up from the old kitchen. This has been much modified and at one time replaced the one that came straight up from the front door. Oddly, it has a curve at the top that directs it straight into the existing banisters.

Only the attics over the original house are accessible. With oak boarded floors and lime plastered walls these could well have been servants quarters and, later, bedrooms for boarding school pupils.

Of the two cellars, the larger was probably used as a kitchen, there being arches and flues for a kitchen range, a bakery oven and a laundry/brewery copper. During the war this cellar was used as an air raid shelter.

The much modified staircase leading directly into the banisters

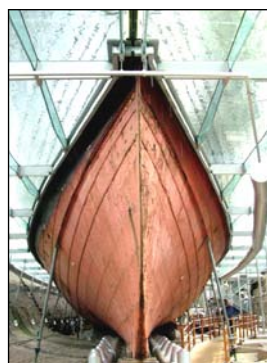


At the end of his fascinating talk Vin summed up his research by saying that the earliest part of the house could date from around 1713 at which time it would have been part of the development of the Church Street trend for small groups of terrace houses and businesses. Later some of these houses would have been combined to make larger family homes, with No 50 in particular having been extended and modified significantly.

JANUARY MEETING

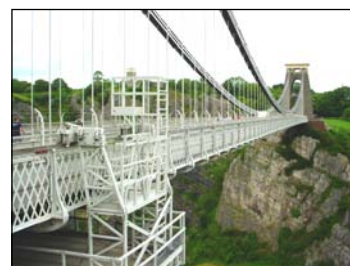
In January members enjoyed a fascinating evening when John Freeman shared his reminiscences of the Society's activities over the past two years. It had, said John, been an extraordinary period. Not only had there been a full programme of talks and lectures, there had also been two summer outings; a trip to Bristol to see Brunel's newly restored ss Great Britain and his Clifton suspension bridge, and a visit to North Wales along Telford's Holyhead Road to Llangollen where a nostalgic steam train ride was followed by a trip along the Llangollen Canal and over the Pontcysyllte aqueduct. This was followed by a visit to John Wilkinson's ironworks at Bersham.

These are just some of the photographs and drawings John showed which took his audience back over the happenings of the last two years.



*The hammerbeam roof in Brunel's Temple Meads station
The newly restored ss Great Britain, floating on her 'sea of glass'*

Brunel's Clifton suspension bridge with its 702 ft span was eventually completed in 1864

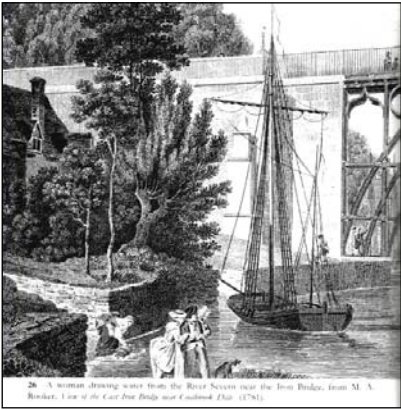


The 'stream in the sky', Telford's 1007 ft span Pontcysyllte aqueduct, which took £47,000 and ten years to build



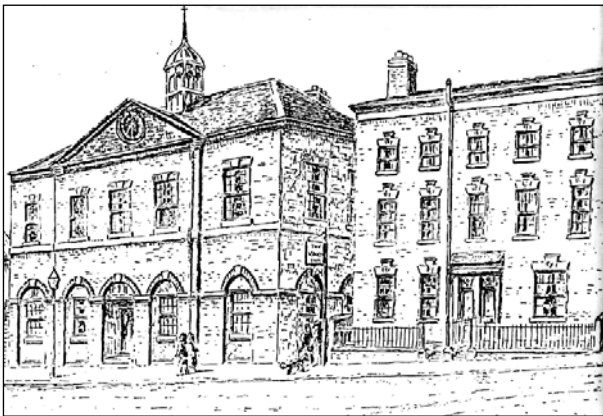


This photograph of the dedication of the War Memorial in 1921 was part of Steve Dewhirst's presentation of photographs of old Broseley



Malcolm Wanklyn showed this view of the Iron Bridge in 1781 during his talk on Bridgnorth and the River Trade. The Severn trow, which dated back to 1411, could by the late 18th century be up to 60 ft long and 16-20 ft wide

The old Town Hall, Broseley, which was demolished in the 1960s to make way for a supermarket



THE DOWN WELL

In the *November 2007 Newsletter* it was reported that restoration work was being carried out on the Down Well which is situated off Dark Lane in Broseley.

This well, which at one time was the only public water source in Broseley, was originally built in 1885, and only then after considerable discussion by the Broseley Local District Board.

According to Derrick Pountney, who has researched the history, it was in 1876 that this Board met to discuss the supply of water to the town and negotiations were begun to bring water from the Mines Spout in Benthall. These proved

fruitless, however, and in 1881 it was decided to try and source water from a different area.

In November of that year a shaft was sunk on the Hay Cop on land owned by a Mr Burnett. There water was found at a depth of 90 feet, quickly rising to a depth of 49 feet. A previously sunk shaft on land owned by Mr R Instone was also located, the new shaft opening up a supply from this shaft. This water was analysed and its purity approved.

The following year a proposal was made to build a tank with a capacity of 40,000 gallons at the back of the Down Well, although it took another two years of negotiations before the owner, General Jenkins, could be persuaded to sell the land on which the tank would be sited. In 1885 the Down Well, with its three holding chambers, was finally built.

According to Derrick, however, the story does not end there. In due course a hand pump was sited near the top of Clench Acre to bring water from the Down Well closer to the centre of the town. However, by the time it reached the Clench Acre the quality of the water had deteriorated and it was deemed unusable for public consumption.

The well itself, nonetheless, still provided a source of drinkable water for many years, and it is said that one old woman used to go around the town with a yoke and buckets of water which she would sell for a halfpenny, while James Hurdley of E Davis Ironmongers in the High Street remembers being sent by his mother to collect buckets of water from the well during the hard winter of 1947 when all other water sources in the town were frozen.

The well has now undergone major refurbishment and Adrian Miles, whose idea it was to restore the well, says that the outer brick skin has now been completed and a new door at the far end fitted; an inspection window will shortly be installed. A battery powered interior light for occasional use has also been fitted.

In December divers explored the interior of the three chambers, declaring them to still be in excellent condition. The depth of the water was measured at approximately 3.5 metres. Perhaps to



Divers found no skeletons in the Down Well, only a flaxen haired doll

the disappointment of the interested crowd, the divers found no skeletons, only a flaxen haired doll. She was left sitting on one of the ledges, like the mermaid one of the divers had hoped she might have been!

Work is now well advanced in clearing the site down the valley and restoring the holding pool. The project has the support of local schools which hope to use the area for school projects.

A Hay Cop Conservation Fund has now been set up and is actively seeking financial aid to complete this project. Anyone who would like to make a donation, or is interested in helping in any way, should contact Adrian Miles on 01952 882318.

OBITUARY

Newsletter was saddened to hear of the death in early January of Natalie Hodgson, the Lavender Lady of Astley Abbots. A member of the Society, 95 year old Natalie had been looking forward to attending the January meeting.

Natalie first came to Shropshire with her family in 1952. She very soon became a County Councillor, serving as an Independent for many years. After the death of her husband in 1989 she ran a PYO lavender farm in the grounds of their home as well as managing an apiary of some twenty hives.

A lady of many talents, she wrote her first book at the age of 93. *Fateful Beauty* was the true story of Frances Coke whose father, Sir Edward Coke, introduced the Petition of Rights into Parliament.

David Lake, who knew her and her family well, remembers her with affection and admiration.

At 95 Natalie Hodgson was still very active and was marvellous company – clever, well-informed and generous. Her ancestry included the Dundonalds (Mad Lord Dundonald of the Tuckies and the distillation of coal) and in the early years

of the Wilkinson Society had contributed a talk on John Wilkinson.

Unable to come on the 2007 visit to Llangollen and Pontcysyllte, Ray Johnston and I took her for a memorable day out to the great aqueduct. As we followed her across she was giving encouraging words to people walking the other way, some of them 90 years younger than she but who were looking apprehensively at the drop to the river below us.

She had been a schoolgirl at Sherborne and subsequently a student at the Sorbonne before going to Dresden for her “smattering of German” as she modestly described it. During the war she was at Woburn Abbey producing black propaganda to mislead the Germans; she said that after a few years of this one’s idea of what was truth tended to become a bit shaky.

After the war Natalie moved to Astley Abbots with her husband Benji. As well as producing their three children and their spectacular garden, she worked as a children’s librarian in Wolverhampton and became a well know expert on beekeeping.

We have been privileged to know her and will miss her very much.

Readers might like to refer to the article *The Lavender Lady* which appeared in the *May 2006 Newsletter*

Editor

SOCIETY ARTEFACTS

The Society has a considerable collection of artefacts which it has acquired over the years but, with nowhere to display them, these are currently in storage. Now, however, following his suggestion in the *November 2006 Newsletter*, Robbie Pickles has begun making a photographic archive of these and will be displaying them on the website.



Above right, an antique miner’s lamp which could be quite valuable to an interested collector

Below a cast iron mirror frame, possibly from the 1860s

BROSELEY IN BLOOM

Last year Broseley's entry in the Britain in Bloom Heart of England competition reaped impressive results when, for the second year running, the judges gave the town a Gold Award. In addition, Broseley was named Overall Winner in the Small Town category and was presented with a beautiful glass vase.



Broseley was Overall Winner in the Small Town category as well as being awarded a Gold for the second successive year

This year, in their aim to make it a hat trick, Broseley Bloomers will be picking up on the Royal Horticultural Society's theme of *Local Roots* and linking in with the Society's celebration of the 200th anniversary of the death of John Wilkinson.

As a reflection of this, the floral colour scheme throughout the town will be bright oranges, reds and yellows – the colour of furnaces against the night sky. The judges will also be taken to see the plaque which is to be installed at The Lawns as well as made aware of the pageant which will be staged in July.

NEW CLOCK FOR BROSELEY



The clock in Broseley High Street which has been installed on the front of the Victoria Hall in memory of Roy Lane.

Roy, who died in 2007, was awarded an MBE in 2002 for services to the town.

The clock, which was financed by the Clock Committee and the Victoria Hall Committee, was built by J B Joyce & Co of Whitchurch

WHAT'S ON?

Birmingham Group of FIGM

Monday 17 March, 7.30 pm

New Church Centre, Winleigh Road, Handsworth
Illustrated talk by Vin Callcut on *Birmingham Brass and Copper* giving a brief history of metalworking in Birmingham, as well as some of the products and firms that made them.

Ironbridge Gorge Museums

Blists Hill Victorian Town

Wednesday 23 April, 7.30 pm

St George's Day evening when guests will be invited to join the performers for a night of music, monologues and memories – costume optional. Tickets, to be purchased in advance, £10.00 per person to include sausage and mash supper.

Further information 01952 884391.

Coalport China Museum

24 May onwards

Summer display showing the symbolism of flowers on Coalport china and how plants and flowers may have been used in the everyday lives of people.

Shropshire Scribes

Saturday 19 July, 2.00 pm

St Mary's Church, Shrewsbury

Seven Centuries of Scribal Genius.

Lecture on illuminated manuscripts and medieval history by Prof Michelle Brown.

Admission £5.00, book in advance.

Telephone 01743 355384 for further information.

Wilkinson celebration weekend in Lindale

Saturday and Sunday 19 & 20 July

Lindale, Cumbria

Lindale Parish Council are finalising plans for a weekend of John Wilkinson celebrations. These could include unveiling a new interpretation panel at the Wilkinson Monument, an open afternoon at Castlehead, home of John Wilkinson and now a Field Studies Council centre, and an exhibition of pictures and village memorabilia. There may also be an evening lecture and guided walks around Lindale and the surrounding area.

Further information from Jane Hall, 01539 532102 or email Jane@janehall.wanadoo.co.uk.

BOOKSHOP

Much Wenlock Racecourse by David Cole, 16 pp A5 booklet, illustrated.

This booklet traces the history of Much Wenlock Racecourse from around 1733 to its eventual closure in 1939. First sited at Westwood Common outside the town, in 1807 it fell victim to the Land Enclosure Act and was moved to a new site along the Bridgnorth road. As interest in flat racing declined, however, the course was rebuilt for steeple chasing with one of the annual events being a Hunter's Plate of Fifty Pounds offered by Lord Forester.

The booklet also includes reminiscences from local residents, one person recalling the race when the second placed runner, Tipperary Tim, came in 15 lengths behind the winner. That same horse, however, subsequently won the Grand National – albeit the only horse to finish without a fall!

Available from David Cole, 01952 728861, price £2.70.

Transactions of the Wrekin Local Studies Forum 2007, covering the *Proceedings of the Thomas Telford Day School 8 September 2007*, edited by Neil Clarke. Reviewed by David Lake.

Barrie Trinder contributes *Thomas Telford in Perspective*, a brief but brilliant introduction which counsels care in our evaluation of the great man's autobiography. Roger White writes about Telford as an archaeologist and emphasises that although Telford's excavation at Uriconium was meticulous, he could not be expected to see matters as would a present day archaeologist.

Telford's improvements to Holyhead Road in East Shropshire are the subject of Neil Clarke's detailed and helpful article, which includes Telford's failure to convince Shrewsbury that the bypassing of the town by a direct route from Ketley to Chirk would be an improvement.

Shelagh Lewis gives an interesting account of *St Michael's Church in Madeley* designed by Telford, whose engineering judgement was evidently economical; he designed the tower for a peal of six bells and a well intentioned post war increase to eight brought structural problems.

Chris Morris's *Photographing Telford's Legacy* is spectacularly beautifully illustrated; this alone would make the acquisition of a copy of these Proceedings very desirable.

Price £4.50, which includes postage, available from Neil Clarke, Cranleigh, Wellington Road, Little Wenlock, TF6 5BH, tel: 01952 504135. Cheques should be made payable to Wrekin Local Studies Forum.

MAILBOX

I should appreciate any information your readers may have on my uncle, William Smith, who was born in Broseley on 5 September 1910. He was a miner and moved with his brother to South Wales. I understand that their father was a professional footballer in the late 1890s.

Colin Smith

I am looking for details of an ancestor born in Broseley, Monmouthshire, in 1811. Would your Broseley be the same one? I am trying to get hold of his birth certificate and would be grateful if you could tell me which registrar covers Broseley.

Tracy Barham

Our Broseley is in Shropshire and is a long way from Monmouthshire. There will be no birth certificate as registers of births were not introduced until 1837. The christening would be recorded in the parish registers and for Broseley these are held at Shropshire Archives.

Steve Dewhirst

Whilst visiting family and friends in the area two years ago I came upon Daly Cottage near the Honeypot. I was also taken on a walk to Thrift Wood which is superb and which I have chosen to make the focal point of my final year's study for my Art Degree. I intend to take photographs of this area throughout the changing seasons and also, hopefully, follow the brook from its start to its entry into the Severn. Does anyone know anything about the area that could help me with research, in particular the Honeypot?

Tony Hyett

I know the area called Darley quite well and I can understand your fascination. It is a little like the land that time forgot. It is part of the Willey Estate and I assume that it has been left to decay because of the lack of road access. At one time it was a small hamlet. You can still find the sites of the houses as lumps in the landscape.

Steve Dewhirst

I read in the November 2007 Newsletter of a Hartshorne watch offered on ebay. It led me to wonder whether any Hartshorne records survived, particularly of apprenticeships. My paternal grandfather, George Howells, was a watchmaker, apparently surfacing in the trade in Broad Street, Hanley. He was born on 12 December 1873 in Broseley Wood.

Richard Howells

I am not aware of any Hartshorne records surviving although they were quite a large clan. The best place to try is Shropshire Archives. There seems to be very little information on watch and clockmakers in Broseley.

Steve Dewhirst

I belong to the Regional Furniture Society which researches regional traditions of furniture-making, and am looking for help on the history of two high quality pieces of oak furniture which were sold in 1990. They are a mule chest with the name Jane Corbett and the date 2 February 1657 and a panelled chair with the name Thomas Corbett and the date 1657. They have many common decorative features and are likely to have been made by the same craftsman.

According to the Familysearch website Jane (Eves) and Thomas Corbett were married on 2 February 1657 in Broseley, Shropshire, and it is therefore reasonable to assume that the pieces were made for this couple.

I should like to find out if anything was known locally about them. The pieces would have been expensive so the family may have left some trace. The Corbett pieces are particularly important since, as most furniture lacks documentation, that would allow its regional origins to be traced.

I have also read that Benthall Hall was in a Catholic area, presumably when it was built. I wonder whether these Corbetts would have been Catholics.

Christopher Pickvance

There were Corbetts in Broseley notably at the Dean. The better known Corbetts were large landowners in the Marches and owned Moreton Corbet house.

I think it unlikely they were Catholics as the son-in-law of Richard Corbett of the Dean, who died in 1684, was rector of Willey. However there were ten papists in Broseley in 1676 so it is possible.

Randall does state:

By the middle of the 16th century Willey had passed into the hands of the old Catholic family of the Lacons one of whom, Sir Rowland, held it in 1561, together with Kinlet; and from them it passed to Sir John Weld, who is mentioned as of Willey in 1666. He married the daughter of Sir George Whitmore and his son, George Weld, sat for the county with William Forester, who married the daughter of the Earl of Salisbury, and voted with him in favour of the succession of the House of Hanover.

Steve Dewhirst

I read in your February 2007 Newsletter that a Norman Wyke remembered a family of gypsies named Locke – his description could very well be that of ‘my’ Lockes whom I have been trying to track down for years.

I know for certain that they travelled in the Shropshire area, that they managed to avoid any contact with the law, that they traded in horses and that they travelled in horse drawn caravans with other families named Shevlin, Boswell and Finney. Also that they used the surname of Price and Thomas as well as that of Locke and Davies! The family consisted of James (Jim) and his wife, Jane Locke, and anything up to eight or ten children.

I should appreciate knowing if Norman Wyke’s remembered Lockes are also my Lockes! This is the first time I have ever come across anyone who might have known the family and I

just can't pass by this opportunity!
Jill Hartwright

The family of Lockes which I remember came from near Church Stretton (about 18 miles from Broseley). They used to come round the area in their caravan and help with threshing while the women would go door to door selling wooden pegs. A catchphrase in the area was that they would 'skin a rabbit for ninepence'. It was the job of the children to look after the horses as they grazed along the roadside. There was also a family of Lockes in nearby Astley Abbots.
Norman Wyke

I am the third great granddaughter of Thomas Baugh, b 1796, Broseley, child of John and Sarah Baugh. I would like to hire a researcher to learn more of this family. I would also like to purchase the *Pedigree of the Baugh Family from 1707* dated 1826, reference # 731/2/2513.
Lois in Michigan

The best people to contact are the Shropshire Family History Society <http://www.sfhs.org.uk/> as they are the experts in this field. I am not familiar with the book but there may be a copy at Shropshire Archives.
Steve Dewhirst

I am keen to learn more about two relatives who lived in the Broseley area in the 1700s, both called Joseph Broadmeadow. Because this is a very rare name, and since the family was to be found at Enville in Staffordshire, any Broadmeadow linked to Broseley, Ironbridge or Coalbrookdale would certainly be related to me.

I have records of a Joseph Broadmeadow taking a mortgage on a house at Buildwas in 1756 and his son, also Joseph, was born about 1753 and married an Elisabeth Simmonds at Broseley in 1777.
Alan Broadmeadow

Broadmeadow is certainly an unusual name and I can find no record of them in Broseley amongst the items that I have collected. The fact that your

Joseph took out a mortgage suggests that he had a reasonable income. Buildwas is mainly agricultural and did not have particularly close links with Broseley.

I assume that Elisabeth was his second wife. Simmons was a name local to Broseley with a number being shown in the early registers (see the website). The family is also shown in various 19th century censuses (available on Ancestry). In later times there are a couple of mentions of Simmons in the local papers (also available on the website).
Steve Dewhirst

I could not find any history on the Forester Arms pub on your website. I wonder if you have any ideas where I could find out even the basics such as when it was built and who used it?
Selina Graham

*The main reason we do not have many details of the pubs of Broseley on our website is that they are covered in the book *Inns and Alehouses of Broseley* by Dave Shinton which was published in 1993. The extract below is from this book.*

The Forester Arms . . . was first licensed in 1820, although I gather that a building is shown on this site on the Broseley Estate map of 1728. . . .

. . . The first licensing of the house, parts of which appear to predate 1820, may be associated with Cecil Weld Forester being raised to the peerage by George IV in 1821. It stands close to the centre of mediaeval Broseley, . . . (and) the importance of the inn must have grown with the opening of The Avenue in 1828 as a direct link from the Iron Bridge to the Bridgnorth turnpike. The first coach ran along this road on 18th November 1828.

The Forester Arms some time between 1888 and 1922



Photograph courtesy IGMT



The Forester Arms today

. . . Lord Forester owned the property in 1838 and it still belongs to the estate. . . . A building at the rear is still referred to as the Forester's Room. Here tenants came on rent days and on occasions a breakfast was held.

The pub does not seem to be mentioned very much in the newspapers so the landlords must have kept an orderly house.

Steve Dewhirst

The Forester Arms is currently being renovated and is said to be opening as a Thai restaurant.

Editor

Film historian Ian Payne is looking for information on Hermione Baddeley, the film actress who was born in Broseley in 1906.

Ian Payne

01922 627522

Newsletter has already had some correspondence on Hermione Baddeley. You might like to refer to the May and August 2006 and February 2007 issues which appear on our website www.broseley.org.uk.

Editor

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Following Lavinia Mitchell's request for information on George Potts in the *November 2007 Newsletter*, John Francis has sent in this undated photograph of a George Potts, together with an obituary which appeared in 1946. This George Potts, however, was born in 1866 and died in 1945.

According to this obituary, George Potts qualified as a solicitor in 1892 and worked with his father until the latter's death in 1911. He then practised on his own account and in 1934 took over the family practice. He was also registrar of Madeley County Court until 1939 when he resigned due to ill health.

He was a keen sportsman and his greatest enjoyment was fox hunting when he would follow the hounds on foot, often with John's father Tom. He was also interested in botany and entomology and had an abiding interest in the whole world of nature.

From left, George Potts, Tom Francis, William Griffiths and Tom Griffiths



Photograph courtesy John Francis

Newsletter is sympathetic to the concerns of certain of its correspondents who are reluctant to see their email address appear in the public domain. If there is anyone who does not wish their contact details to be published, they are welcome to make use of the Society's email address steve@broseley.org.uk. Any respondent without access to email may pass on information to any member of the committee.

To see the Newsletter in full colour visit the Society's website broseley.org.uk. Almost 34,000 hits since its launch in 1998!

BOOKING FORM
TRIP TO GLOUCESTER SATURDAY 28 JUNE 2008

Cost £20.00 per head, covers the coach fare, entry to the dockyard museums and the train journey on the standard gauge railway, as well as gratuities for the day. There are restaurants in the dockyard area, otherwise please take your own food.

Name/s: _____

Address: _____

Post code: _____ Tel: _____

No of persons @ £20.00 per head: _____

Total payment: _____

Place of pick up: Broseley Square _____ School Road, Coalbrookdale _____

Please make cheques payable to Broseley Local History Society and return this form by **not later than 31st May** to Michael Pope, Rivendell, 2 Dark Lane, Broseley, TF12 5LH. Tel: 01952 883960.



BOOKING FORM
WILKINSON BICENTENARY DAY SCHOOL 12 JULY 2008

I/We wish to book _____ places @ £10.00 per head for the above Day School and enclose cheque for £_____

- Preference for early afternoon session
1. Field trip to local Wilkinson sites _____
 2. Guided walk to the Iron Bridge _____
 3. Visit to Museum of Iron _____ (carries extra charge)

Name/s: _____

Address: _____

Post code: _____ Tel: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Please make cheques payable to Broseley Local History Society and return this form to Michael Pope, Rivendell, 2 Dark Lane, Broseley, TF12 5LH. Tel: 01952 883960.
Enclose a sae if acknowledgement is required.



BOOKING FORM
TRIP TO BRYMBO HERITAGE SITE 13 JULY 2008

I/We wish to book _____ places @ £8.50 per head for the trip to Brymbo and enclose cheque for £_____

Name/s: _____

Address: _____

Post code: _____ Tel: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Please make cheques payable to Broseley Local History Society and return this form **by not later than 13 June** to David Lake, Avebury, Stocking Lane, Nordley, Bridgnorth, WV16 4SY. Tel: 01746 762813.
Bookings will be refundable until 13 June.