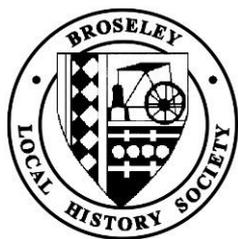


NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the **Broseley Local History Society**

INCORPORATING THE WILKINSON SOCIETY

February - 2021



MEETINGS

Meetings of the Broseley Local History Society are currently on hold due to the Covid Pandemic.

Meetings will continue to be on hold for the foreseeable future. Members will be notified via this newsletter as soon as the situation changes.

Meetings of the Broseley Local History Society are normally held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm at the Broseley Social Club, High Street, unless otherwise announced.

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BLHS PROGRAMME (PROVISIONAL)

Provisional programme, Autumn 2021:

Sept.1st – Annual Wilkinson Lecture: '*Wilkinson and the Darbys*', Neil Clarke

Oct. 6th - '*Red Church Update*', Graham Hollox

Nov.3rd - '*John Anstice and his Circle*' (joint with FIGM), Diana Clarke

Dec.1st - Annual Dinner.

(NB – This depends on the present restrictions being lifted and the meeting locations being available. Arrangements will be confirmed in the August Newsletter.)

A walk in June is also being considered – further details in the May Newsletter.

What's On Elsewhere?

BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

During this peculiar time when there are no 'face to face' meetings taking place the BALH as organised a series of online webinars (online seminars I presume!), workshops and talks. The online skills workshops and webinars will be available free throughout 2021 for individual members and for a small charge for non-members; for society members (i.e. members of Broseley Local History Society) there is a discount available using our society discount code.

The first of the workshops are as follows:

Saturday 13th February 2021 – 10am-12 noon

How To Get Your Local History Research Out There: Public Engagement & Collaborative Working (a student special) with Claire Kennan (BALH)

This workshop will offer practical guidance on how academic research can be communicated to wider audiences, the opportunities that are available for collaboration and partnership working and how your research can have an impact in the wider world. In particular, it will focus on the specific support and opportunities offered by the BALH ranging from writing blog posts to producing podcasts, working with teachers, local history societies, museums and much more.

Please note that this session is only available to students registered on a recognised Masters or PhD course of study at an HEI. ECR's who are within 5 years of completing their PhD are also welcome to attend.

Booking open until 9.00am Wednesday 10th Feb.

Wednesday 10 May 2021 – 6.00pm-7.00pm

Digital Webinar: How To Grow Your Local History Society's Media Presence

BALH's Social Media Fellow Daniella Gonzalez will provide an introduction to the various social media platforms available and how local history societies can best use them to promote, then work and engage with the wider history community. Practical guidance will be offered and there will be plenty of time for Q & A.

Booking open until 9.00am Monday 8 March

Janet Doody 8th. January 2021

NEW MEMBERS

The Society would like to welcome the following new members:

Mrs Violet Ball from High Ercall
Anthony Roberts from Warboys, Cambridgeshire

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions to the Society are currently being waived due to the Pandemic preventing all the usual activities.

Society Update - A Further Update of The Society

In the previous newsletter I wrote that the Committee had hoped that our meetings would be able to resume in the Spring. As we all know this will not be happening as the country is in the midst of a total lockdown due to Covid 19 and it doesn't seem as though restrictions will be quickly lifted.

The Committee met on Zoom last week and discussed the situation and arranged a provisional programme for the Autumn. This of course depends on how the virus has reacted and reduced during the summer and whether we are allowed to meet, and the Social Club is able to hold meetings.

We will publish further newsletters in both May and August in order to keep you connected and informed.

I imagine many of our members will have received a first vaccine and I hope that everyone is keeping safe and well in these most unusual and historical times.

Gillian Pope

Articles

The Dissolution of Local Monasteries

Although works of fiction, Hilary Mantel's three novels about the life of Thomas Cromwell, Henry VIII's chief councillor during the 1530s, have been well researched for historical accuracy. The third and most recent book, *The Mirror and the Light*, throws interesting light on the Dissolution of the Monasteries and prompts another look at the fate of local religious houses.

By the beginning of the 16th century, the monastic ideal had been severely tarnished. Religious houses were still places of prayer which provided hospitality to travellers and care for the sick; but revelations of immoral behaviour within the walls of some houses and the wealth accrued by the abbots of many of the larger establishments did not sit well with the monastic vows of poverty and chastity. And some houses could barely function with their declining number of inmates. A handful of nunneries were closed before Cardinal Wolsey in 1520 suppressed 29 assorted religious houses in order to endow new educational institutions. The closure of further houses between 1536 and 1540 was the result of the break with Rome and the government's wish to get their hands on the wealth of the monasteries; and Thomas Cromwell masterminded this in his role as Vicar-general.

The Act for the Suppression of the Lesser Monasteries in 1536 in fact closed houses with less than £200 a year in income. Locally, this included Wombridge Priory (£72-15s-8d) and Buildwas Abbey (£110-19s-3½d); and those marginally above that figure, Lilleshall Abbey (£232-16s-6d) and Haughmond Abbey (£249-13s-7¼d), voluntarily closed in 1538 and 1539 respectively. The largest of the local religious houses, Wenlock Priory, was dissolved as a result of the Second Suppression Act of 1539. Wenlock had an annual income of over £400, and its deed of suppression was signed by the prior and monks on 26 January 1540. Monastic income came mostly from farming leases or rents on their estates, but two of the local houses had income from other sources. On the demesne of Wombridge Priory there were two coal pits bringing in £5 annually and also a small ironworks worth 13s.4d. Part of the income of Buildwas Abbey was derived from tolls for use of the adjacent bridge over the Severn.

Most of the monks were pensioned off, with some becoming parish priests. Valuables and lead from the roofs were stripped from the monastic

buildings prior to the estates being sold off by the Crown. At Wombridge, the remaining four monks received a pension; at first leased to William Abbot, the priory lands were purchased by James Leveson and sold in 1547 to William Charlton. Eight monks were pensioned off at Buildwas, and the abbey and its estates were granted to Edward Grey, Lord Powis. At Lilleshall, eleven monks received a pension; the site of the abbey was granted to William Cavendish, then sold to James Leveson, who in 1543 also purchased the manor of Lilleshall from the Crown. Eleven monks were pensioned off at Haughmond and the abbey site, at first purchased by Sir Edward Littleton, was later sold to Sir Rowland Hill. At Wenlock, thirteen monks received a pension; in 1545, Thomas Lawley bought the priory site and demesne lands from the royal physician Agostino Agostini, and further of its former monastic estates were later purchased by his sons from the Crown.

Wenlock Priory was in the last group of religious houses in the country to be suppressed. The architect of the Dissolution of the Monasteries, Thomas Cromwell, was himself only to live for six more months, being executed for treason on 28 July 1540 at the age of 55.



Neil Clarke 7th. December 2020

The Deer Leap



The Deer-Leap at Wolsley Park, in Staffordshire, on the borders of Cannock Chase.

Most society members will be familiar with the Deerleap woods which are off the lane from the Baptist Chapel to Lodge Lane but where did the name come from?

The eastern edge of the wood can be seen from Chapel Lane by the Baptist Chapel which forms the boundary between Willey and Broseley parishes. The estate at Willey had, over time, three parks: one medieval, known as the Old Park, one in the 17th century and the last in the 19th coinciding with the building of the new Hall. A park was first mentioned in 1291, and by 1618, when John Weld bought the estate, it comprised 432 acres. On acquiring the estate, he stocked it with deer and dug fishponds. Maps from the early 17c show that the whole 'Willie' Park was mainly woodland, surrounded by a pailing fence to keep the wildlife inside the park. Thus, the boundary of the estate along the Deerleap wood would have been fenced. By the mid 18c, the park was no longer enclosed, and the new park created in the 19c ended at the Barrow road, so it did not include the Deerleap.

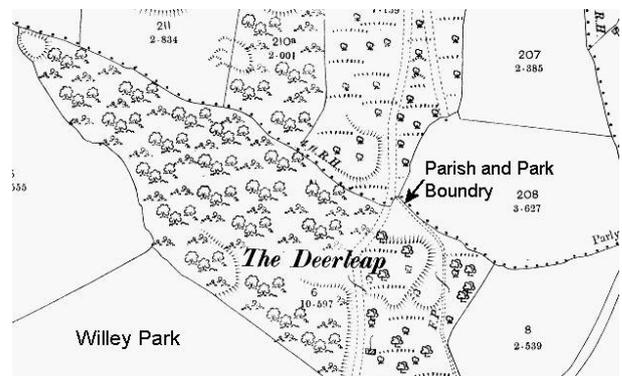
J. E. Harting wrote an article in *Field and Country Gentleman*, 19th January 1884 which gives a full explanation of the term deer-leaps. They are said to be an ancient contrivance for taking deer which may date back to at least 1018 and were associated with Forest laws which regulated the ownership, preservation, and management of the king's venison. Harting states:

One of the articles of inquiry in the Court of Swainmote was: "Whether any man have any great close within three miles of the forest that have any saltories [saltatorium], or great gaps, called *deer-lopes*, to receive deer into them when they be in chasing, and when they are in them they cannot get out again."

Fosbroke in his "Abstract of the MS. Lives of the Barone of Berkeley, by John Smith, Esq., M.P. for Midhurst," temp. Jac. I. (p. 77), explains "dear-

leaps" to be private parks adjoining forests, allowed by royal licence to have places where the deer might enter by leaping and be retained." More accurately speaking, of course it was not the park "allowed to have such a place," but the place itself, which in its formation varied in different localities according to the nature of the ground and the general surroundings. Sometimes it was merely a low place in the park paling over which the deer could easily jump, but having on the park side a ditch with a long slope towards the park, rendering return difficult. In other cases where no paling existed a deep fosse was dug along the boundary line, and a perpendicular wall (some seven or eight feet perhaps in height) was built from the bottom of the fosse to the level of the ground on the forest side ; While on the park side the ground was gradually sloped away from the bottom of the wall towards the park, the result being that a deer could leap-down from the forest into the park, but could not so easily get back again.

The Deerleap has been shown as wooded since the 1600s, and on the 1840 Tithe apportionment, it is also listed as Wilde's Coppice. The area was mined for coal between the early 1600s and the late 19c, so the ground in the wood is now much disturbed.



THE LOCATION OF THE DEERLEAP

Stephen Dewhirst 17th. January 2021

Clench Acre and its Origins

We recently had a query for a researcher asking where the common was at Clench Acre, but where is this common land?

The name Clench Acre is said to derive from an enclosed area of land. It is first shown on a mid-17th century map on which there is one area of enclosed land called Clench Acre Glebe with an adjacent open area also called Clench Acre owned by Thomas Langley. The 1840 Broseley Tithe map shows two plots: Little Clench Acre (3 roods 20 perches - 0.35 hectares) between Dark Lane and

the footpath (which now contains houses) and Clench Acre (2 Acres 2 roods – 1.01 hectares) which was meadow and is now known as the Fair Field. Both were owned by John Onions of Whitehall and sold by the family in 1877 on his daughter and heir Penelope's death. The mine in Clench Acre Field was re-opened in 1866 by the Coalbrookdale Company to extract ironstone from under the land now covered by the Haycop Rise housing development. It was still working in 1877 when the mining was causing damage to the sewers; however, the mine had closed by 1882. The field now comprises a levelled-off mine spoil heap, and the shafts have been filled.

The main common was Priory Common in Broseley Wood which comprised the area between the Benthall Brook and King Street and which is now associated with the squatter community. This slowly disappeared in the 17th and 18th centuries as it was enclosed, and houses built on the land; however, there was no formal enclosure as happened to the common at Shirlett.

The Government register of common land (<https://data.gov.uk/dataset/05c61ecc-efa9-4b7f-8fe6-9911afb44e1a/database-of-registered-common-land-in-england>) lists the Clench Acre common as having an area of 200 square metres. It comprises a small portion of unenclosed land where the footpath meets Dark Lane, and appropriately there is a cast-iron street sign which must date from the late 1800s. Although traditionally commoners could graze livestock and cut wood, this is unlikely to apply to this small piece of land. There is no record of this being an ancient common, and it would be interesting to find out when and why it was registered as common land.



The triangle of land to the right of this picture is Clench Acre Common!

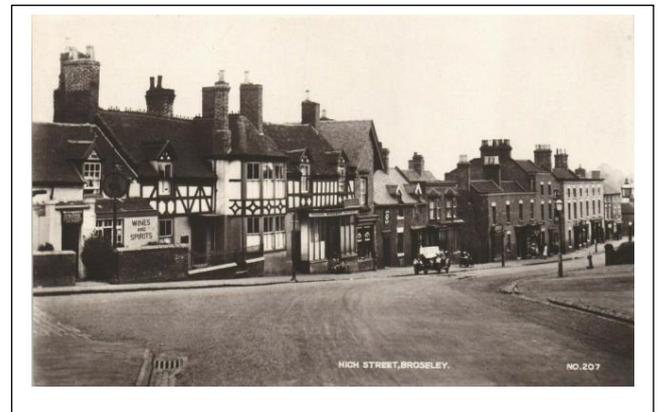


Stephen Dewhirst 17th. January 2021

MAILBOX

Received from Stephen Dewhirst

Broseley High Street (Then & Now)



THEN (Circa 1930)



NOW (Courtesy of Jocelyn Barbier)

Received from Stephen Dewhirst

As many members will know, the 'Friends of the Red Church' was formed a year ago to restore to a more respectable condition, the old and

almost forgotten churchyard in Broseley. They also aimed to celebrate the achievements and contribution to local heritage by those who made the site their last resting place. Now, "Tales of the Red Church 1" has been produced with the first series of these fascinating stories, about, for example, a very young 'Lord of the Manor', a brickmaker whose life was ruined by the railway, a family tragedy, major industrialists that fed the Royal Navy and an artistic family of national importance. All this in 14 pages, in colour, professionally produced and 'worth keeping for future generations,' according to one review. The preferred distribution method under present restrictions is by mail at an inclusive cost of £5. Please contact grahamhollox@sky.com to purchase a copy. See the image below:



Stephen Dewhirst 29th. January 2021

Received from Gillian Pope

A snippet from "Church Notes for the Archdeaconry of Ludlow" dated April 1912.

A delightful little book on Shropshire has just been published amongst the "Oxford County Histories for Schools." It is written by Prebendary Auden and it will be well indeed if boys and girls read it and learn how much of interest has taken place in the county in which they live. It is well printed, with many illustrations, a useful Chronological Table, a map and good index. Price 1/6.

I wonder how many children read it? A bargain at 1/6 or was it?

Gillian Pope. 28th. January 2021

DISTRIBUTION OF NEWSLETTERS

Thank you to those members who have indicated they would be happy to have electronic copies of the Newsletter. If there are any other members who would prefer it this way please contact the membership secretary, Janet Robinson, email: janetc46.jr@gmail.com
Those of you would prefer to have it in its printed form can continue to look forward to receiving it through the post. Many thanks

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