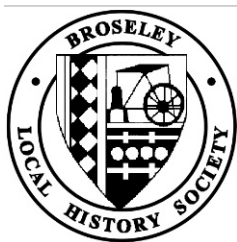


# NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the **Broseley Local History Society**

*INCORPORATING THE WILKINSON SOCIETY*

May - 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, Summer / Autumn 2021:

July 13<sup>th</sup>. Annual Walk (**COVID RESTRICTIONS PERMITTING**) 13<sup>th</sup> July at 7:30. Meet in the Library Car Park.

A stroll of 2 miles across the Fiery Fields, then along Lodge Lane, Chapel Lane, Mill Lane and finally Hockley Bank.

Parts of this can be uneven and muddy, and there is a small hill on Chapel Lane.

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

Oct. 6<sup>th</sup> - *'Red Church Update'*, Graham Hollox

Nov.3<sup>rd</sup> - *'Joseph Anstice and his Circle'* (joint with FIGM), Diana Clarke

Dec.1<sup>st</sup> - 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.)**

## What's On Elsewhere?

### BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

I don't know how many look at their website but it's well worth a visit, all sorts of interesting bits and pieces and even more so with lock down.

There are digital workshops which are free for full members and discounted for Society members (see me for discount code); they are represented on all social media platforms; webinars and podcasts; as well as interesting 10 minute talks on all sorts of subjects.

I have listened/watched one of the talks, "Miss Browne's Pluck – A Suffragette in North Wales" and it was excellent, an illustrated talk with slides and additional notes to download. Really enjoyed it and shall definitely listen to others.

Both of the following BALH publications (including back issues) are available to members at our talks (eventually!)

### THE LOCAL HISTORIAN

Interesting articles on the game of camping! A strenuous ball game played extensively in eastern England "a manly, though perhaps hazardous game"; Wall Hall in Hertfordshire, a WW2 SOE training centre; (is this a sign we're getting on a bit – history seems to be catching me up!); Women's Suffrage in Basingstoke; British inter-war cookery books.

Book reviews:

The Victoria County History (VCH) of Wem – The VCH books are an absolute 'first call' for any local history research and are available in most libraries (when open!) and also freely available online.

The Broad Gate – A Ludlow House and its inhabitants

Celebrating Coventry – an affectionate account the 'rebuilding and rejuvenation' of the city since WW2

LOCAL HISTORY NEWS (also available to download)

While Out Walking – photographs of the unusual, whilst seen by contributors on their lock down ‘escapes’; have you taken anything whilst out and about and wondered what it was all about?

Celebrating 100 years of the British Legion 5<sup>th</sup> May 1921, 4 national organisations of ex-servicemen established after WW1 united to form the British Legion Project “Telling Our History”.

Website: [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)

Dr Nigel Tringham was awarded MBE in the New Year’s Honours List in recognition of compiling volumes of the Staffordshire VCH (Victoria County History) for 40 years; he is also a member of the BALH publishing committee.

Michael Wood (not the M5 services), but historian and broadcaster were awarded an OBE; known for a number of TV series on history especially the Anglo-Saxon period during in the 1980’s and dubbed “the thinking woman’s crumpet”. I admit to having no interest in the Dark Ages and Anglo Saxons until then!!!

Allan Frost devoted 33 years to researching Wellington honoured with first ever “The key to Wellington” by Wellington Town council founder chairman of Wellington History Group; has edited 28 issues of its magazine “The Wellingtonia” as well as writing over 40 books and giving illustrated local history talks

**Janet Doody 1<sup>st</sup>. March 2021**

## NEW MEMBERS

The Society would like to welcome the following new members:

Tony and Jean Fenn -	from Broseley.
Brenda Cockcroft -	from Broseley.
Pam Sheldon -	from Broseley.
Davina & Patricia Handley-	from Castlecroft.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

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

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## Society Update - A Further Update of The Society

Elsewhere in this newsletter are details of a walk which is taking place in July.

The Committee felt that that it would be a good and safe way in which members could begin to participate in the Societies activities once again.

With the success of the vaccinations, it seems that the Government will be able to allow people to meet together later in the summer.

We hope that we will be able to hold our meetings once again in the Autumn and a programme has been arranged for September onwards.

The committee will be able to give you full details of the programme in the August newsletter and how our meetings will be able to meet the necessary safety measures.

We hope that you have an enjoyable summer.

## Where’s This in Broseley?



Answers will be in the next Newsletter. No prizes, but you are allowed to feel a little smug!

**Gillian Pope.**

## Articles

### CAUGHLEY SOCIETY

Next year (2022) marks the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the porcelain factory at Caughley. The Caughley Society is planning a programme of events to commemorate this, and our Society will be making a contribution. The following, the introduction to the catalogue of an exhibition held at Shrewsbury Art Gallery in 1972, is a useful summary of the history of Caughley.

### Caughley Porcelains - A bi-centenary exhibition:

It is generally accepted that porcelain was not produced on a commercial scale at Caughley until 1775, but it has long been held that 1772 marks the true date of the foundation of the factory. The earlier date is in part confirmed by the presence of Thomas Turner, its proprietor, at Caughley

during 1773. His name was even then associated with those of Browne (the owner of the estate) and Gallimore who was operating the Caughley Pottery.

Gallimore, who apparently came from the Stoke area, had been working the Pottery since 1754, and most authorities have held that after 1772 he and Turner were in partnership for only a brief period before he withdrew, leaving Turner in sole charge. However, his name is associated with the Works until at least 1787 and is recorded in the municipal records of Much Wenlock until November 1790. He was an important local personage and may well have continued as a person of some importance and influence within the Porcelain Works. He was, too, the uncle of Turner's first wife, Dorothy, and his removal or retirement from public affairs about 1790 may lead one to speculate as to just how important he had been in the preceding years, bearing in mind the apparent decline in Turner's business fortunes during the 1790s.

Thomas Turner himself was born in 1749, and was apprenticed at the Worcester Porcelain Manufactory, where he acquired the technical knowledge necessary for the production of porcelain, and with the benefit of this knowledge, it was he who was to become responsible for the emergence of a significant and prolific porcelain factory at Caughley. The Works were adapted and enlarged, and in 1775 there appeared advertisements drawing public attention to the productions.

From the outset, Caughley concentrated upon the manufacture of tableware, most of which were in 'blue and white', and many in imitation of the imported Chinese porcelain which was then so fashionable. The factory's prosperity was based largely upon the technique of transfer-printing which Turner had learned at Worcester, and indeed in 1775 the Company was joined by Robert Hancock, the most celebrated engraver for porcelain of his age, although his work on Caughley was little.

French styles were soon introduced, while another and later significant class of ware was that decorated with underglaze blue and overglaze gilding, which represented an altogether more sophisticated taste and perhaps indicated the mutual advantages of Turner's links with the decorating establishment of Humphrey and Robert Chamberlain at Worcester. That relationship soured during the 1790s, however, and the Chamberlains began production

of their own porcelain. It may well have been this factor, coupled with the rise of John Rose at Coalport, which led to the eventual decline of the Works. In 1799 it was announced that 'for reasons of ill-health' Turner declined to continue in production, and Rose bought the Works and its contents. He continued producing porcelain there until 1814 (though much was transferred to Coalport for decoration and finishing) but in that year Caughley was finally closed.

This exhibition is concerned with the production of Caughley as an independent factory from 1772 to 1799. The output during that time was immense and, for the most part concentrated upon the more utilitarian objects which most people required rather than upon purely decorative pieces, there still can be no gainsaying that in the range and (more importantly) the quality of the porcelains in its chosen field it stood comparison with most of its contemporaries.

**Catalogue compiled by Michael Messenger, Curator of Shrewsbury Museums'**

**Neil Clarke 25<sup>th</sup>. February 2021.**

#### **BROSELEY'S SINGING COWBOY**

Mr Robert Johnson, although having only lived in Broseley a few months has become a familiar figure at concerts throughout the local district for his repertoire of American songs, so said the Wellington Journal on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1938.



**ROBERT JOHNSON**

Born in Glasgow, Robert served with the Scottish Rifles during WW1, both in France and Ireland; it was in the latter that he was wounded and captured by Sinn Fein, later escaping, taking his young guard with him. In 1921 he left the Army and returned to his home city, working for the London Midland Scotland (LMS) Railway; 'itchy feet' took over and this time he joined the Royal Navy. In the West Indies he left the Navy went on to live a life of adventure finally ending up in New York working the clubs and restaurants. He left this city travelling throughout the states picking up work where he could, from the cities to the cattle ranches, where he learnt the old cowboy songs. By 1928 Robert was back in New York entertaining on the tourist river boats. Johnson returned to the UK in 1930, playing and singing as he drifted around the countryside, but

mostly busking for theatre queues in London's West End. It was here he was spotted by the BBC and broadcast on "In Town Tonight"; a Saturday night radio programme and by 1938 he was in Broseley.

I would love to know what happened to Robert Johnson or if anyone remembers him performing locally.

**Janet Doody 18<sup>th</sup>. March 2021**

#### **NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS FROM 150 YEARS AGO.**

Eddowes's Salopian Journal 11<sup>th</sup> January 1871

**BROSELEY TREAT TO SCHOOL CHILDREN.**- On Tuesday week Mr. G. Maw treated the whole of the Sunday School children of the different denominations of Broseley parish to a tea at the Town Hall. The children and teachers of the Wesleyans, of the Primitive Methodists, of two divisions of the Baptists and the Congregationalists, some 400 altogether, including friends and 17 school children from Benthall, were present, and partook of an excellent tea, provided by Mrs. Bourne. The Benthall brass band attended and added to the interest of the entertainment by their excellent playing. The Rev. R. H. Cobbold addressed the youngsters in an appropriate manner, pieces were sung, and Mr. T. Lawrence attended with his magic lantern to amuse the juvenile., which he did to an extent which drew forth hearty peals of laughter by " Whittington and his Cat," and other mirth-provoking exhibitions and descriptions.

Shrewsbury Chronicle 24<sup>th</sup> March 1871

#### **BROSELEY**

The following is the Inspector's report of the Boys', Girls', and Infants' Schools: —Boys' School: "The boys are in good order. The weak point is the reading of the middle classes, in which the boys must be got out of the habit of spelling words before they utter them. The reading of the first class and of the little boys is very good. In other respects, the elementary subjects are well taught. In intelligence, brightness of mind, and general knowledge the boys of this school are quite equal to any in my district. The singing is very good."—Girls: "The girls are in excellent order, and are very clean, cheerful, and well-mannered. The elementary subjects are very well taught. The whole of the first class read with ease a piece of poetry not previously seen by them. They also repeated with accuracy and expression another piece of poetry which the mistress had taught them to understand thoroughly. The scholars worked sums requiring thought and passed creditably in geography. The singing is very

good." — Infants' "The infants are taught with great spirit and kindness. They should get out of the habit of spelling their words before they utter them."

Shrewsbury Chronicle 7<sup>th</sup> April 1871

#### **PETTY SESSIONS**

Theft: William Owen was charged with stealing seven eggs of the value of 5d., from a cowhouse, the property of Sarah Lloyd. Sarah Lloyd deposed that she was the wife of a platelayer on the Severn Valley line of railway, at Stanbourne, in the parish of Barrow, and that on the 28th ult. she saw defendant walking along the line. She also saw him get over the fence into their field and go toward the cowhouse. She went to the cowhouse and he was just coining out. Witness, seeing some loose bricks on which she had stood half-an-hour before to count the eggs in the hen-roost scattered about, looked into the nest and found that the eggs were missing. Defendant, who pleaded not guilty, was sentenced to one month's imprisonment.

*Stanbourne still exists but is in a vary dilapidated state having suffered severely from subsidence. This is a very isolated location so perhaps Owen was walking along the line from Bridgnorth to Broseley as a short cut. It is strange that he was not also prosecuted for trespassing on the railway.*



**STANBOURNE**

Whitehaven News 13<sup>th</sup> April 1871

**THE BETTER-HALF.**—At Broseley, the other evening, a man who lives in one of the principal streets of the town was turned out of doors by his better-half. Here he remained for some time, kicking the door, and mildly entreating his spouse to let him in; but all of no avail. Finding this to be of no use, he obtained a ladder and got round to the back window, and by that means got an entrance, when he was again ejected by his inexorable wife, and was to be seen afterwards

carrying back the ladder, to the no small amusement of the lookers-on, and the poor man had to remain outside till her ladyship's wrath had cooled.

Shrewsbury Chronicle 28<sup>th</sup> April 1871

COALPORT

Pleasing evidences of Spring are numerous just now along the valley of the Severn. Swallows are numerous on the Severn. The cuckoo utters his well-known cry from the wooded heights on the valley sides, and at night a nightingale is heard piping sweetly in the Lloyd's Coppice. There were two, one on the Broseley side, opposite to Coalport, but one of the Broseley poachers upon the people's privileges, a man named Roberts, it is said, captured the bird a few nights after it came.

**Stephen Dewhirst 4<sup>th</sup>. April 2021**

### **THE MYSTERY OF CORNELIA CORBET**

Tucked away, almost out of sight, embedded in a wall of an outhouse at Benthall Edge Cottage there is an ancient gravestone. It has stood the test of time for 352 years with its inscription largely intact and legible:

**HEARE LIETH  
...RIED: CORHELIA THE W...  
CT RICHARD CORBET WHO  
DEPATED THIS LIFE THE  
7 DAY OF MAY 1669**

When carved it probably read, with spellings modernised/corrected:

**HERE LIETH  
BURIED CORNELIA THE WIFE  
RELICT RICHARD CORBET  
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE  
7 DAY OF MAY 1669.**

Relict is a term that meant widow.

Beneath the gravestone is another stone plaque set into the wall that looks as though it was probably also inscribed, although what it said is lost in the mists of time.

But who was Cornelia and why is she buried there?

Local legend has it that, at some time in the distant past, a woman out riding jumped a hedge and fell, horse and all, into the quarry on Benthall Edge resulting in the demise of both horse and rider. This, according to legend, gave rise to the name of the nearby Red Pool which periodically

produced an algal bloom that turned a sinister blood red in winter.

Examining the Broseley parish registers I have been able to establish the following:

Cornelia Bowkley was baptised on the 16th of April 1637. She was one of ten children and the fifth daughter of Johannis Bowkely and his wife Elizabeth. Two of Cornelia's sisters died as infants, a very frequent occurrence at the time.

On the 14th of August 1654 Cornelia married Sylvanus Myvert. He was the son of Silvani Myvod and Elizabeth. She was, therefore, 17 at the time and Sylvanus was two years her senior.

Their first born, also called Sylvanus, was baptised on 7th August 1655 but buried the next day. Their second son, another Sylvanus, was baptised on 15th December 1657. I couldn't find a register entry for his burial but a third son, also called Sylvanus, was baptised on 7th March 1660.

Cornelia and Sylvanus also had a daughter Elizabeth who was baptised on 17th November 1659 but was buried on the 13th of October 1661 shortly before her second birthday.

Although I found no record of burial for Cornelia's husband Sylvanus it was clear that he had died by 1664. Cornelia Myvert, a widow, married Richard Corbet on the 8th of September 1664. She would have been 27.

The identity of Richard Corbet is another part of the mystery. There aren't any other Corbet's in the Broseley parish registers around that time. There *was* a Richard Corbet (a gentleman) of the Dean in Willey. He was married to a Judith. He passed away in 1684 and she died in 1691 so I don't think *that* Richard Corbet is part of this story.

Cornelia and Richard had two daughters. Sarah, baptised on 29th May 1666 and Joane, baptised on the 14th of July 1668. The girls would have been aged two and 10 months respectively when their mother died.

According to the gravestone Cornelia died on 7th May 1669. She would have been 32. Interestingly the parish records give her date of burial as 5th May 1669, some two days before her death! Unlikely. I suspect the gravestone was made sometime later by which time her date of death might have been mis-remembered.

I think it most unlikely that Cornelia died as a result of a riding accident. Fox hunting wasn't a sport in those days and deer hunting was the preserve of the aristocracy. For anyone else, even if they could have afforded a horse, it would have been kept for work or transport purposes and not generally ridden by a woman with young children to care for!

Nor, I think, did she die in childbirth as her youngest child was only 10 months old at the time. There are of course many, many other possible causes of death and we shall never know. It does appear though that she was a widow again by the date of her death although the Broseley registers don't record a burial for Richard Corbet.

But why was Cornelia buried on Benthall Edge in unhallowed ground?

During the Civil War in 1665 Benthall Hall was attacked and the church damaged. The church had, however, been repaired by 1667, although burials weren't allowed to take place there until the early 1670s. Burials in 1669 had to take place in Much Wenlock.

I think it unlikely that the gravestone has been moved any significant distance from the place of burial. This wasn't and isn't a custom.

My theory is that Cornelia was not allowed to be buried in consecrated ground because she had committed suicide. Maybe losing two husbands in less than ten years and half of her six children proved too much to bear? Perhaps she was buried on Benthall Edge as that place had significance for her family. Someone clearly cared enough and had the means to commission a long-lasting gravestone in her memory.

**Jo Revell**      **30<sup>th</sup>. April 2021**

## MAILBOX

**Received from Janet Doody 1<sup>st</sup>. March 2021.**

**BROSELEY GOLF CLUB**

It was reported on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1909 in the Wellington Journal that first general meeting of Broseley Golf Club took place at the Victoria Institute when prizes for the Easter tournament also took place:

1. Mr H. A. Russell;
2. Mr A. Edge;
3. Mr Ashby;
4. Dr E. G. Boon

This appears to be the only mention of the Golf Club in the press; anyone know anything - where did they play for instance? **Replies to Janet Doody please.**

**Received from Janet Doody 1<sup>st</sup>. March 2021.**

### FILMS IN SHROPSHIRE

REEL STREETS ([www.reelstreets.com](http://www.reelstreets.com))

Reel Streets Ltd was formed in 2008 to "investigate, record and disseminate" film locations; their website identifies places that have appeared in feature films, both for the big screen and television. Their list includes the following films shot in Shropshire;

**Gone to Earth** (1948) starring Jennifer Jones and filmed in and around Much Wenlock; a bit dated now but a number of local people were used as "extras" (so my Mom told me!). Does anyone remember it being filmed or even starred in it?

**Absolution** (1978) starring Richard Burton and Billy Connolly filmed in and around Ellesmere and Ellesmere College

**A Christmas Carol** (1984) starring George C Scott and filmed in Shrewsbury;

**Clockwise** (1986) starring John Cleese, filmed partially in Much Wenlock,

**An Englishman Went Up A Hill But Came Down A Mountain** (1995), starring Hugh Grant, partially filmed on the Severn Valley Railway

**The Signalman** (1976) starring Denholm Elliot, filmed on the Severn Valley Railway.

I'm afraid I don't know much about the rest (other than a Christmas Carol) anyone have any comments?

**Replies to Janet Doody please.**

**Received from Stephen Dewhurst 30<sup>th</sup>. April 2021**

Hello

Ironbridge Rowing club saw its 150th year in the Ironbridge Gorge in 2020. As part of our ongoing celebrations to mark this milestone, we are looking to source any archival material

photographs, records, articles etc. that may be relevant to rowing on this stretch of the Severn and with particular relevance to the club itself. Is this something that your organisation may be able to help us with? We would also like to capture any memories that local people may have of watching or participating in rowing here or at our annual Regatta – again either photographic or oral.

We will be launching a website in the next few weeks to promote this project and to invite people to contribute and we would welcome any material or suggestions that you or your members may have.

Can you let us now if you may have anything of interest please?

Many thanks

Catherine Sargent, Chairperson  
Ironbridge Rowing Club

Replies to: [ironbridgerowingclub.co.uk/](http://ironbridgerowingclub.co.uk/)  
[@ironbridgerow](mailto:@ironbridgerow) (Attention: Catherine Sargent)

## 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.jr@gmail.com](mailto:janetc46.jr.jr@gmail.com)

Those of you would prefer to have it in its printed form can continue to look forward to receiving it through the post. Many thanks

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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<i>Secretary</i>	Dot Cox
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