

# NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the **Broseley Local History Society**

*INCORPORATING THE WILKINSON SOCIETY*

August – 2021

Issue: 50

## MEETINGS

Meetings have now resumed, and details can be found in this newsletter of upcoming events.

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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**PLEASE NOTE: To avoid any inconvenience, either check the website or contact the event organiser to confirm prior to attending, that the event is still going ahead.**

Sept.1 – *Wilkinson & the Darbys*, **Neil Clarke**  
(Annual Wilkinson Lecture)

Oct.6 – *Red Church Update*, **Graham Hollox** (and AGM)

Nov.3 – *Joseph Anstice & his Circle*, **Diana Clarke\***

Dec.1 – Annual dinner

(\* Note: We await final arrangements for the afternoon joint meeting with the IGMT Friends)

## 2022

Jan.5 – *The Shropshire Bank Fraud of 1855*, Jim Cooper

Feb.2 – *The Work of an Archivist*, Sarah Roberts

March 2 – *The Wives and Daughters of the Lunar Society*, Kate Croft.

**Neil Clarke 6<sup>th</sup>. August 2021**

## What's On Elsewhere?

### LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION NEWS AUGUST 2021

LOCAL HISTORY NEWS: contains a thought-provoking article on the effects of Covid on local history, on societies, on archives and on the very act of researching. Richard Hoyle questions if we will “*ever get back to researching in the way we were used to.. pre-requisitioning documents, social distancing and shorter opening hours... may be the way of the future ... (but) there looms a crisis of a different sort. Local Authority cuts are on the horizon .. compared to the social care budget ... who cares about archives? ... Our momentum, whether as individuals or societies may be hard to recapture but we must. I will know (he says) that the epidemic is really over when I next stand in the tea queue!*”

Alan Crosby notes the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the introduction decimal coinage (15<sup>th</sup> February), hardly creditable 50 years since pounds shillings and pence. After teaching a class of dumbstruck 19-year-olds on the intricacies of 12 pennies, 20 shillings, a guinea, a tanner and that wonderful threepenny piece’ one student commented “You must all have been bloody bonkers!”

The aim of the *Viae Regiae* project, working with a national network of volunteers is an attempt to discover early signs of industrial development in England and Wales between 1530 and 1680, for more information visit [ViaeRegia.org](http://ViaeRegia.org)

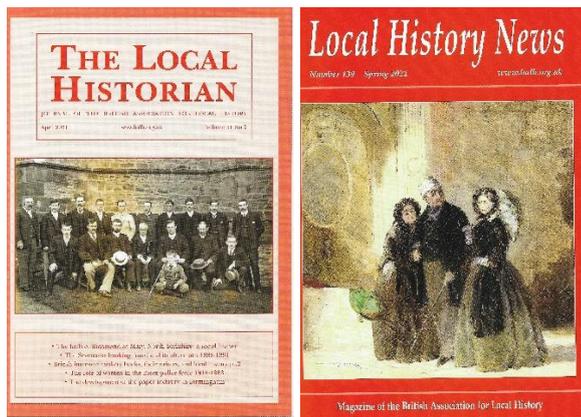
### THE LOCAL HISTORIAN

Usually has an article to interest someone, this time a rival to Jim Cooper and his Shropshire Banking Fraud research, Sevenoaks in Kent had similar experiences, although a little later (1888-1891). Other essays include: British inter-war cookery books and their writers; women in the Essex Police force (1914-1985) and a bit closer to

home, the development of the paper industry in Birmingham.

There are a number of book and article reviews together with recent local history publications, including "Milk Herefordshire" and "Health Herefordshire". There are also listings of local history society newsletters and journals including the "Salopian Recorder" the Friends of Shropshire Archivers newsletter.

Until we get back to our meetings the Local History News can be accessed from the BALH website which also has some excellent 10-minute talks, mini-illustrated power point talks covering any number of interesting topics well worth a look!



**A Couple of Interesting Front Covers**

**Janet Doody 6<sup>th</sup>. August 2021**

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### NEW MEMBERS

The Society would like to welcome the following new member:

Mary Clark - Broseley

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### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions to the Society are now resuming and can be paid either in cash or by cheque as before.

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### Society Update - A Further Update of The Society

We are pleased to report that the Summer Walk did indeed take place and is covered in the article by Janet Doody further on in this Newsletter. We are also extremely pleased to let everyone know that the Programme of events is back on. Full details are available on **PAGE 1** kindly provided by Neil Clarke.

### Where's This in Broseley?



And the answer is ..... On the corner of the Wine Bar. How often have many of us walked past and not noticed it!

**Mike Wallage.**

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### Correction

The article titled "The Mystery of Cornelia Corbet" in the in the printed version of the May newsletter was incorrectly attributed to Steve Dewhirst. It was actually sent to the society by Jo Revell and has created much interest. We apologise to her for the error.

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### Obituary



**Cicely Taylor 1930-2021**

The Society has lost a long time Member and Supporter in the recent death of Cicely Taylor at the age of 91. She is fondly remembered by many. I am sure we all extend our condolences and kind thoughts to her many friends and family. The following words from **Neil Clarke** eloquently sums up his fond memories of a lady who will be greatly missed:

"I'd heard the sad news of Cicely's death from friends in Wellington who'd kept in touch with her in recent years. I first met Cicely 60 years ago when I did three weeks' teaching practice at the school in Madeley where she taught. This primary school experience was a requirement of the year's post-graduate teacher training course in

secondary education which I then went on to undertake.

I well remember how helpful Cicely was during those three weeks and how we reminisced about the school on the occasions we met in subsequent years. She was a regular at our Broseley meetings and the IGMT Friends meetings, and we were both members of the Friends of Shropshire Archives and the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society.”

Below is an extract from a 2008 Newsletter when Cicely had been elected as a President of the Society:

Cicely Taylor was born near Craven Arms but became very familiar with the Broseley area when, as a small child, she spent many a school holiday with relations in Jackfield. Despite being war time the journey there, she says, was easy – train to Buildwas in charge of the guard, then into the care of the station master who made sure she caught the right connection. She says it was her liking for this area that, in 1979, led to her buying her cottage at Preen’s Eddy where she has lived ever since.

After leaving school Cicely trained as a primary school teacher and taught at Madeley C of E Junior school for many years as well as at Bishop’s Castle and Morville. She also held the headship of Stockton Norton but when the school closed in 1991 she decided to officially retire.

That did not stop her teaching, however, and she continued to do voluntary work at Sherrifhales until 2001. It was only then, having broken her wrist and then her ankle, that she finally decided enough was enough and turned her energies in a different direction.

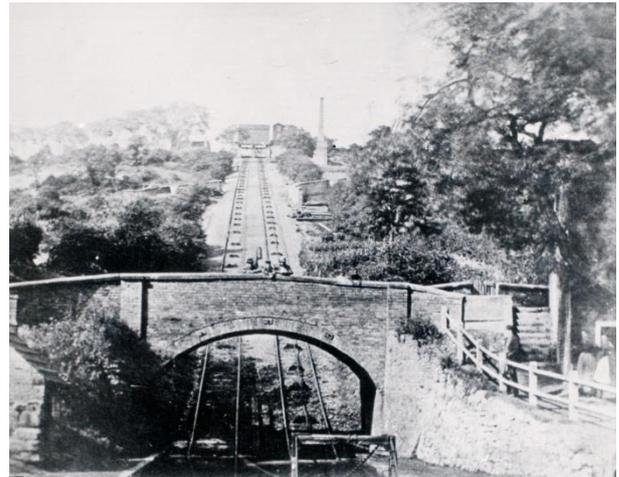
So she joined Dr Sylvia Watts’ palaeography class to learn to study old documents in the original latin. Initially feeling overwhelmed by this undertaking, Cicely gradually began to make sense of some of the texts, saying that it was not only that one had to be able to read latin, but that one also had to learn the abbreviations, as well as become familiar with the script. She has recently been studying documents about Bewdley and Bridgnorth written before the 1400s.

A long time member of the Society, she says she enjoyed teaching the industrial history of the area to her primary school pupils, but nowadays prefers studying her latin texts!

May she rest in peace.

## Articles

### THE HAY INCLINED PLANE



THE INCLINED PLANE WHEN IT WAS OPERATIONAL

The remains of industrial activity cover the landscape of the British Isles, not least within the small area of the Severn Gorge; and whilst we know, in the majority of cases, the function of these relicts, their day-to-day operation is often lost. However, the practical working of such machinery and the men who worked them can sometimes be uncovered in the most extraordinary places.

The basic operation of the Hay Inclined Plane in Coalport is well known; tub boats from the Shropshire Canal were lowered to a short canal that ran parallel to the River Severn where goods were offloaded to be shipped down river. But whilst researching family history I glimpsed through a “window” to the employment of men and machinery on the incline plane in December of 1886.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> December 1886 my 3 x great grandfather JAMES HOUGH (sometimes recorded as Hoof) “drowned in the waters of the Madeley & Coalport Canal”, and on his death certificate it stated he was a retired boat builder of Coalport. To my shame I assumed he died on his way home from the Shakespeare Inn, but the inquest reported in the Wellington Journal and Shrewsbury News of 25<sup>th</sup> December 1886 told a different story. He may have been retired but in the days before pensions it appears he was now working for the London & North Western Railway Company hooking and unhooking the tub boats at the bottom of the Incline. James Oldfield was the brakesman and Robert

Whiston the engine driver and they stated that Hough “always waved his hat as a signal for them to lower the laden boat.... The boat always stopped itself within 20 yards of the water when the engine was applied”. However, on this particular day it seems that James crossed over the canal as the boat was arriving from the top and a witness, 6 year old Willie Bowen who was playing on the bridge says he saw Hough knocked in the canal by the boat. Henry Rochelle, a plate layer quickly took “the boat off the carriage” and saw Hough’s body laying “outside the metals”. “The Coroner said there was no-one to blame but deceased, for there was a bridge provided by the company for him to go over instead of crossing the river (*bottom canal*). A verdict of “death by drowning” was returned.” So much for health and safety and employer responsibility!!!!



THE INCLINED PLANE AS IT IS TODAY

Janet Doody 27<sup>th</sup>. May 2021

#### FIERY FIELDS WALK – Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> July

What a glorious evening for a stroll!! The weather couldn’t have been better for the members who gathered in the library car park; the numbers almost reached the maximum of 30, all of us so glad to meet up and see friends, some after 18 months!



READY FOR THE OFF!

The walk across the Fiery Fields was a trip down memory lane for me as my grandparents’ house in Bridgnorth Road backed on to them, me and granddad (Edward Hough) walked over these fields many times some 60 years ago (where does the time go?)

Steve (Dewhirst) explained the anonymous “lumps and bumps” throughout the fields were the remains of industrial workings, and we learnt the name originally applied to a smaller area adjacent to Park View but that over time has grown to take in the whole. A lot of the details of the industry have been lost in the mists of time leaving the interpretation of the landscape as evidence of mining and quarrying with water dammed to provide power for machinery. In 1863 though colliers employed by Messrs Langfords’ did find some old workings which contained some “primitive articles”; a basket, still containing “small coals”, an axe, a dan and a gaun, the latter being containers for transporting coal underground. Although these discoveries were recorded at the time the actual items themselves have sadly been lost.

From the fields we walked up through Park View and into Mill Lane; a route that must once have been wide enough for carts travelling to the Mill; but in places today just a footpath width between properties. Then into Chapel Lane and a diversion for a specially arranged visit to the now “truncated tower” of what once was a wind powered corn mill which is on private land, (more details can be found in an article by Tim Booth in the Society’s 2010 Journal No.32 reproduced on the society’s website).



THE REMAINS OF THE WINDMILL

The Baptist Chapel in Chapel Lane, must be one of the oldest buildings still in use in Broseley, built in 1741 and tucked away at the end of the lane with a tiny but intriguing churchyard it is well worth a visit. (Have the headstones ever been transcribed?). From there the walls of properties surrounding Harris's Green came under inspection with an interesting observation of the lined patterns on some of the old bricks. These, it is believed were caused by both bricks and tiles being packed close together in the kiln; an instance that, as far as is known only occurs locally.

Broseley's parish workhouse, now a home, is situated in Chapel Lane; a lot of history and myth surrounds workhouses and prior to the 1834 New Poor Law Act every parish was responsible for its own parishioners who fell on hard times. The "Oliver Twist" image of these institutions is represented by the later Union Workhouses, when adjacent parishes combined and all the "able-bodied" parishioners on becoming destitute were offered the workhouse or nothing. For Broseley "The Beeches" in Madeley parish became the local Union workhouse; Shropshire Homes have now developed the site "offering a diverse range of quality homes" and have retained most of the original buildings; (The National Trust Southwell Workhouse in Nottinghamshire is worth a visit).

Next to the old workhouse is the coach house previously attached to "The Grange" a large house now demolished that had been occupied by a branch of the Potts family of Broseley solicitors; the present occupier very kindly allowed the group to view the house and garden.

As evening began to close we turned down Woodhouse Lane; not its original name we discovered; it had been known as Workhouse Lane but its residents had, at some-time felt the name no longer desirable! We strolled the little

paths and alleys or Jitties between the houses (Chris is always amazed at the intricate ways winding through the properties) to Smithy Bank and the back of the Victoria Hall. This had been originally built as the Gospel Rooms for the Plymouth Brethren, then back to Delphside, and the Memorial Park to end at the foundation stones of the Pritchard Memorial.

A very enjoyable and interesting evening, a pleasure to see our members face to face again and hopefully it won't be long before the evening meetings at the Social Club can begin.

**Janet Doody 21<sup>st</sup>. July 2021**

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### **The Red Church and the Brodie Family.**

On Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> July, a small group of us met in the churchyard of the old Red Church, Jackfield. Graham Hollox, who formed the Friends of the Red Church in December 2019 with the aim of restoring the church yard and developing stories of those buried there, had been contacted by David Whitaker. David is a descendant of the Brodie family, important industrialists of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries with connections to this area. David along with his wife are researching the Brodies and wished to visit the area to find out more, although they already have a wealth of information.

They were delighted to be staying at Calcutt House which Alexander Brodie 1 purchased in 1786. Alexander Brodie was born in 1733 at Traquair in the Scottish Borders, his father was a black smith and after a falling out with his father initially moved to London before purchasing the Calcutt mine in Jackfield. He died in 1811 and his nephew Alexander 11 became ironmaster of the Calcutts Ironworks and in 1818 built his home Rock House just below the Red Church.

Alexander Brodie 11 was buried in the Red Church churchyard and he is remembered on a memorial plaque in St. Mary's Church Jackfield which was transferred from the old Red Church.

David and Sarah were very keen to see the old church yard and enjoyed seeing the restoration which had already taken place revealing some of the old grave stones but the grave of Alexander Brodie 11 and his wife (a Broseley girl, Bridget Griffiths!) was not identifiable.

Afterwards we were entertained to tea and delicious scones by John and Heather Freeman, the present owners of Rock House. During this time David and Sarah shared with us some of their vast research into the Brodie family which is still on going. During the morning they had visited the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust and the archivist,

Sarah Roberts, had shown them a copy of the Border Magazine of 1906 in which there was a picture of the Brodie Vault. This picture may help to identify where in the churchyard the vault may be. There is a slab lying on the ground which looks similar.

John and Heather had very kindly laid out documents and photographs pertaining to Rock House for David and Sarah to see and photograph. David and Sarah say that they will keep us updated on any further findings.  
A thank you to all concerned.



The Group Visiting the Churchyard including David and Sarah Whitaker and Graham Hollox



The Plaque Marking the Completion of Rock House by Alexander Brodie II

**Gillian Pope 7<sup>th</sup>. August 2021**

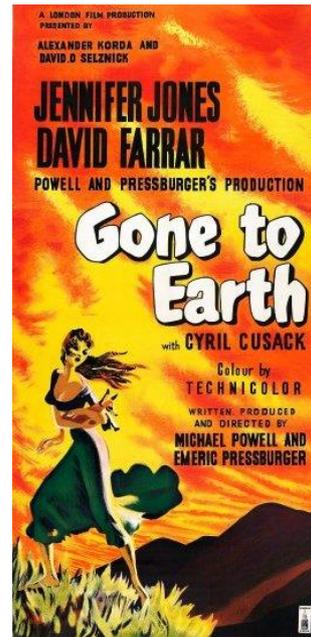
**Addendum:** Michael Pope wrote two articles on the Brodie family for the newsletter in the February and August editions of 2017.

**MAILBOX**

**FOLLOW UP TO FILMS IN SHROPSHIRE**

Many thanks to Mrs Hudson who in answer to the films in Shropshire in the last edition tells me that her mother, Mary Grainger, played an extra in *Gone to Earth* (1950); her uncle Tom Warburton also played a monk in film *Clockwise* (1986) which

was partially filmed in Shropshire. See images below:



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

Hello Everyone

We have been sent details of a free online conference which you may be interested in. I am copying below the complete email for you to consider.

Best wishes  
Dave Morris  
SECRETARY

The Register of Qualified Genealogists (RQG) is pleased to announce that our 2021 conference "Genealogy and Social History: Know your Ancestors" will be held online via Zoom on 25 September 2021.

You can now register for this free genealogy and family history conference!

The main speakers include:

Helen Johnson, Professor of Criminology at the University of Hull and Professor Heather Shore, Professor of History, Manchester Metropolitan University speaking on focussing on their research into criminal ancestors.

Melanie Backe-Hansen, a historian specialising in house histories who was involved in the recent BBC programmes 'A house through time', speaking on her research on house histories

David Annal, speaking about his research focussing on the impact of illegitimacy on the records our ancestors leave behind and the ways in which they are recorded.

We will also have several short paper presentations based on the abstracts submitted through the call for papers.

To Register Free:

[HTTPS://WWW.QUALIFIEDGENEALOGISTS.ORG/2021](https://www.qualifiedgenealogists.org/2021) - CONFERENCE

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Submitted by Graham Hollox 26<sup>th</sup>. July 2021

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#### Query on Caughley

From Roger Thornhill of the Caughley Society  
One of our members has written an article about the sale of a particular Caughley dessert service in 1980 and has included the attached cutting from a Telford Journal of the same year. As you can see, it features a Rachel Dodd of Broseley, and it would be interesting to find out what part she played in the sale and what has happened to her since.



The caption reads: *Rachel Dodd of Broseley holds part of a set of 18th century Caughley porcelain. The complete set is valued at over £4,000 and is believed to be the only service of its kind in the country other than in a museum.*

I wonder if any of your members knew or know of her and her current whereabouts? If you can

help, it would be very useful to be able to include a bit of human interest into the story.

#### Query regarding John Jones of Benthall

We receive a query from John Lethbridge regarding John Jones and his father also called John married Rebecca Grice and lived at Coppice House Benthall.

#### Reply:

According to the 1841 census John Senior was born in Shropshire. Unfortunately, there are several possible candidates in the Broseley area, so we cannot be sure exactly where he was born. Rebekah Grice was baptised at Leighton on December 26th, 1784, the daughter of Francis and Elizabeth Grice. In the census returns she lists her birth place as Leighton or Garmston which is near Leighton. This ties in with the marriage in 1812 at Wombridge. I assume the Stoke referred to in the marriage document is Stoke on Trent and this suggests John jnr was learning his trade there. There were close ties between the pottery industries in the Broseley and Stoke areas. Stephen was baptised at Broseley on 1st October 1815. John snr was listed as a China painter living at Benthall - As John Senior's occupation is given as China Painter which means he would probably have been working at the Coalport China factory but may previously have been working at Caughley.

I cannot find any record of Eliza or Lucy's baptisms. Warren Taylor was baptised at Broseley on 4th March 1821. John Jnr was baptised on 6th June 1824 when John snr was a China Painter In 1835 the Benthall pottery partnership of J Lloyd left his partnership with J. Jones and E Bathurst so John was now at the Benthall works.

The 1840 Benthall Tithe has him living at what is now called Benthall Vicarage but was then John Jnr. 50. All his other person estate and effects were also split between all the children except Warren. His brother Warren and George Potts (a local solicitor) were the executors

In 1851 Warren Taylor was said to be operating Posenhall potteries which may be the Haybrook works, and the 1845 details must be for Warren Taylor and Edwin Bathurst. He was living at Coppice House. He had given this up by 1861 when he is listed as a Receiving Officer, but Bathurst continued to operate the works.

The 1851 census shows Rebecca living with Warren T. at Coppice House. In 1861 Warren Taylor (39) married Sarah C. Haywood a widow of 60 years of age! Shropshire Archives have a document ref: 1681/225/6 which is the marriage settlement of Mrs. Haywood and Warren Jones.

The marriage record lists his father as an Earthenware manufacture. Interestingly John Jones is not listed as deceased which was normally the case, but I think this is an omission from the register not that he was still living and trading.

Rebecca was living with Warren as his housekeeper at the 1861 census and died aged 86 being buried at Benthall on 1st Feb 1871

Warren died in 1888 and I assume the John Jones mentioned is John jnr. There is no record of where he was buried but it was not at Benthall. It may have been in the new cemetery at Broseley which had opened in 1885.

**Both the above Submitted by Steve Dewhirst  
10<sup>th</sup>. August 2021.**

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Help on Ladywood Right of Way:

*'Have you ever walked through Ladywood?'*

*If you have ever walked the path from Broseley Wood through Ladywood, we would really love to hear from you. A small group is applying to have the historic route accepted as a public right of way footpath. We have the historical evidence, but we really need user statements, it's a short form and we are happy to write down your words if that's easier. It doesn't matter when you walked the path, in recent years or long ago, every bit of evidence will be incredibly helpful and very gratefully received.*

*So, if you have ever walked this path and would like to help, please contact one of the people below:*

Steve Dewhirst : [steve@broseley.org.uk](mailto:steve@broseley.org.uk)

Anne Suffolk : [tesramblers@gmail.com](mailto:tesramblers@gmail.com)

## 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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