

Newsletter

Newsletter of the **Broseley Local History Society**

Incorporating the Wilkinson Society



November 2012

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.

PROGRAMME

- 5 Dec Annual Dinner, Lion Hotel
- 2 Jan *Broseley Brick & Tile* by Steve Dewhirst
- 6 Feb *Electrical Engineer Extraordinary* (Thomas Parker) by Janet Doody
- 6 Mar Annual Wilkinson Lecture, *Edward Blakeway, Entrepreneur* by Paul Luter
- 3 Apr *Local Industrial Archaeology* by Shane Kelleher
- 1 May *Leighton Model Farm* by Peter Platt
- 5 Jun Summer Event
- 6 Jul Annual Outing

Further details from Neil Clarke 01952 504135.

NEW MEMBERS

The Society would like to welcome the following new members:

- John Beverly, Broseley
- Revd Sue Beverly, Broseley
- Emma James, Broseley
- Derek Osborn, Broseley
- Jennie Osborn, Broseley
- Florence Smith, Broseley
- A Williams, Warrington
- R Williams, Warrington
- W Jeremy Wilkinson, Stirlingshire

CHRISTMAS DINNER

Wednesday 5 December
The Lion, High Street
7.30 for 7.45 pm
£18.95 per person



The Society's Christmas dinner is always an event to which members look forward and once again will be held at The Lion Hotel in the High Street.

An evening not to be missed, do make sure to book your place by **not later than Friday 30 November** by completing the form on p15 and returning it

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with your payment to Janet Robinson, 26 Coalport Road, Broseley, TF12 5AZ. Cheques should be made payable to the Broseley Local History Society.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society's AGM was held on 3 October when chairman Gillian Pope reminded the meeting that this year was the 40th anniversary of the foundation of the Society. She then gave a resumé of the year's activities which had included various interesting talks, a summer visit to Stanley Hall and a thoroughly enjoyable trip to Liverpool Docks. She also deplored the loss of two long term members of the Society, Ken Jones and David Lake, who had both died during this past year. Both of them had had a huge store of invaluable knowledge of local history and their deaths will be a great loss to the Society.

She thanked the committee, as well as the two retiring presidents, Harold Grice and Nora Lane, for their support over the past year and said that membership was still going from strength to strength, with numbers well over the 200 mark.

The major highlight of the year, however, had been the publication of Frank Dawson's book *John Wilkinson, King of the Ironmasters*. Two successful book launches had been held, one at Castlehead, John Wilkinson's home in Cumbria, and one at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, both of which had been well attended.

The Society now had two display cases of artefacts in the newly refurbished Cemetery Chapel. This had been open to the public on Sundays during the summer and the chairman thanked the many members who had acted as volunteers. More items of interest, including books and papers, will be available for perusal when it re-opens in the spring.

Welcome news from treasurer Jim Cooper was that the Society's finances were in good health and that despite steep rises in, particularly, postage costs membership fees will remain at £6.00 for a single person and £10.00 for a couple for the coming year.

Present committee members all agreed to stand for another year and they were voted back in, while Andy Wellings was also voted in to fill the

vacancy left by the death of David Lake. In addition Vin Callcut and Joan Griffiths were asked to become joint presidents of the Society for the coming two years.

Subscriptions for the year are now due, and those who have not yet paid are asked to send their cheque, made out to Broseley Local History Society, to the membership secretary Janet Robinson, whose address appears on p13.

The AGM was followed by a presentation by Neil Clarke and others on Our First Forty Years, after which members were invited to celebrate with a drink and nibbles, while Neil was asked to 'cut the cake' which had been decorated with the Society's logo by Janet Robinson.

Also on offer were specially produced files for the Newsletters. With a smart black finish, and embossed with the Society's logo, these are a one-off offer celebrating the 40th anniversary. They are available from Jan Lancaster at £3.00 each, tel: 01952 884766 or email: malmxuk@aol.com.



PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Railway Navvies

Members were in for a pleasant surprise in September when Colin Bargery's talk on the Railway Navvies turned out to be very much one with a difference. For not only did he trace the history of both British and Irish navvies in their involvement in the building of canals and railways throughout the country, he enlivened his talk by frequently bursting into song.

Colin began this talk by saying that the early means of transport of goods in Britain had been by river. However, the advent of the industrial revolution, and its demand for a reliable transport system, soon found this method unreliable and inadequate and industrialists sought a better means by which to ship their goods. The construction of

canals was one answer and in the mid 18th century the Duke of Bridgewater literally broke new ground by building a canal capable of transporting his coal to the rapidly expanding city of Manchester. Known as the Bridgewater Canal and funded entirely by the Duke, it opened in 1761 and was the first major British canal. This enterprise eventually led to a whole network of canals, and by 1822 some 4,000 miles of inland navigation had been constructed.

So much major construction work obviously required a considerable supply of skilled labour. This was initially to be found in the banksmen of East Anglia who had long experience of building drainage channels in that area. Along with their skills they brought their songs and it was with some of these that Colin illustrated his talk, the lyrics of which were a poignant reflection of the social conditions of the time.

It was from their employment in the building of navigation canals that these men became known as ‘navvies’. As the age of canals gradually gave way to the age of rail more and more labour needed to be recruited, so that by the 1840s there were some 200,000 navvies employed in the country.

But apart from East Anglia, from whence had they come? The answer was mainly from the mass of the unemployed, a situation which was attributable to several factors. Between 1801 and 1831 the population of the country had increased by over 30%, forcing many more people onto the labour market. Meanwhile, agricultural mechanisation and the combining of small farms had meant less labour was needed and many farm workers had become redundant. Added to that was the effect of the Enclosures Act which had robbed people of the right to graze cattle on common land, reducing many of them to poverty. This Act had also relieved landowners of responsibility for their workmen and allowed them to knock down their tied cottages and put families out into the street with no recriminations.

In addition to construction workers being recruited from this source a large number came from Ireland. Irishmen had traditionally come over as seasonal workers for the harvest, but with the advent of the

The law in action.

A special constable warns a troublemaker, "Now mind, if I kill you it is nothing, but if you kill me it is murder!"

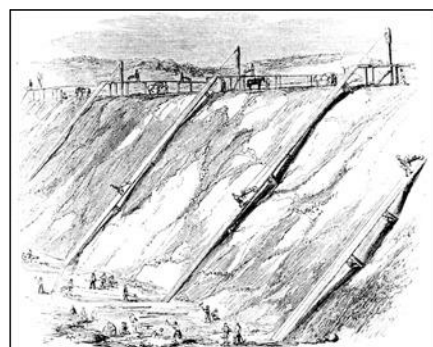


new paddle steamer services to Liverpool many more came over looking for more permanent work, often bringing their families with them.

As is sometimes the case today, many people regarded these ‘incomers’ with suspicion, not least because they were transient and mainly Catholic, and they were frequently the subject of abuse. They would also work for lower wages than the locals, which naturally led to friction, and gang warfare was rife. Reports of navvies in general being drunken and disorderly did not necessarily, however, include the Irish, for while some of them could be accused of that, many of them sent money back to Ireland, while the locals simply drank it.

Irish navvies did have a reputation for being very strong and healthy and were reputed to be able to each move 20 tons of earth a day, throwing it 15 feet from the ground into a railway wagon. They were generally paid piece work and, working in pairs, one pair could fill 10 rail trucks a day.

Barrowloads of soil being hauled up the steep embankment



Irish navvies were said to shift 20 tons of earth a day



Although navvies in general were well paid by other standards, there was no doubt it was dangerous work. There was no shoring up of cuttings and collapses were frequent, with an average of two deaths for every mile constructed. Many of the contractors had very little experience of construction work, resulting in poor supervision and sub standard building. This was illustrated by the collapse of the viaduct being built at Ashton in 1845, resulting in the death of 15 men, and immortalised in the lyrics of the song . . . *A crack in third arch appear'd, which fatal prov'd, alas!/The work gave way, nine arches fell, most awful to relate/When numbers on that fatal day, met their untimely fate/Like thunder's roar, the crash it made, struck terror and dismay/The people ran for to assist, their efforts were in vain/Grim death had claimed them for his own, 'twas awful for to see/So many in one movement, sent into eternity.*

Navvies were paid monthly and, as is so often the case, found it difficult to last out the month. So the contractors ran tommy shops where the workers bought their provisions on credit, with the money owed being docked before the worker received his next wages. This arrangement was of great benefit to the contractors, who could make as much as 3-4% of the profit on their contract from these shops.

Workers were also paid partly in beer. It was also sold to the workers throughout the day and was drunk in large quantities to counter dehydration from physical work. It was considered to be more nourishing than non-alcoholic drinks, which in any case were more expensive, while plain water was considered unsafe to drink.



Photographs courtesy of Colin Bargery

Beer was sold to the navvies during the day to counteract dehydration

Britain in the early 19th century had a real drink problem and the reputation of the navvies as a hard drinking sector of the work force was the perfect target for the anti-drink campaigners. Although in its early days the Temperance movement had only been against the drinking of spirits, believing that beer was actually good for you, it later became totally opposed to the drinking of any form of alcohol. Temperance missionaries composed songs encouraging navvies to take the Pledge and many did, wearing a blue ribbon on their coats as a sign of their commitment. The chorus of one of these songs says *Yes, I am an English navvy; but, oh, not an English sot./I have run my pick through alcohol, in bottle, glass, or pot;/And with the spade of abstinence, and all the power I can,/I am spreading out a better road for every working man./ . . ./but while Britannia holds aloft her flag of old renown,/This cruel drink, with crushing might, keeps British workmen down.*

Of course all these workers had to live somewhere, mainly in lodging houses which were of a very erratic quality. Some were terribly overcrowded – one farm labourer's cottage was reputed to be occupied by a couple and their four children, as well as being home to 19 navvies and their dependants, including four married couples and three children. It was not unknown for navvies to leave their accommodation without paying, a situation known as 'sloping'.

Most young women at this time were forced to leave home to find work, with domestic service being by far the biggest opportunity. However, this was very badly paid with long working hours and little security. An attractive alternative was to marry, or at least co-habit with, a navvy who, in the eyes of one congregational minister, was "the perfection of animal vigour". Although their wages were dependent on the economy, they generally had money to spend and marriage to them was considered a better bet, even if it meant moving around the country.

By about 1860, the railway boom began to slow down and the navvies had to look for new jobs. Some joined the maintenance teams which proved to be a very different experience. Now under the rules and behavioural codes of the company that

employed them, they suddenly found themselves no longer allowed to behave as they liked – no doubt a big shock to some of the more volatile!

One of the consequences of the building of a reliable transport system meant that food and supplies could now be regularly shipped into an area, allowing large cities to grow and be sustained. The civic infrastructure that these cities developed provided new opportunities for employment and gave many navvies the chance to find work in the towns. This enabled them to settle down with their families and lead a more normal life. Perhaps the biggest indication that they were now becoming ‘respectable’ was the fact that many of them now took tea to work instead of beer!

A small booklet, *The Railway Navvies, A Social History in Song*, compiled by Colin Bargery is available from him by email: cpbmf@talktalk.net.

OUR FIRST FORTY YEARS

Our First Forty Years was the theme of the October meeting when Neil Clarke, who has been on the Society’s committee for longer than he cares to remember, shared the history of the Society with today’s members. According to Neil the Society was formed on 21 July 1972, and its birth was announced in the local press; surprisingly this announcement was repeated in the From the Files column in the *Shropshire Star* in July of this year. Known in its early days as the Wilkinson Society, its formation was mainly due to the efforts of Ralph Pee, a member of an old Bridgnorth family who, in 1959 had moved into The Lawns in Church Street, the one time home of John Wilkinson.

Once at The Lawns, and alongside a burgeoning national interest in industrial archaeology, Ralph began researching the achievements of John Wilkinson, building models of some of his innovations such as the boring mill, the first iron boat and a conjectural New Willey furnace site. He then, as Neil said, became a catalyst for a group of like-minded people with an interest in the history of the Broseley area and together they formed a Society to promote the research and preservation of Broseley’s industrial past.

At the inaugural general meeting in August 1972 an elected committee included as president

Sir John Dugdale, soon to be Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire. An annual programme was devised, covering illustrated talks, a social evening and a field trip, with members being kept informed by an occasional Newsletter and an annual Journal. As artefacts were donated to this Society they were added to Ralph Pee’s existing collection of Broseley and Wilkinson relics which he had already set up at The Lawns.

The programme included outside speakers and the first of these to give a talk to the newly formed Society was a young Barrie Trinder, who gave a survey of the life and achievements of John Wilkinson; this was the first of what is still today known as the Annual Wilkinson Lecture. Other now well known speakers included Malcolm Wanklyn from Wolverhampton University, the television personality Henry Sandon, Manchester University economic historian W H Chaloner, Ivor Brown, who spoke on mining history in the Severn Gorge, Neil Cossons, first director of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust and Roger Edmundson, a specialist on Shropshire’s porcelain industry.

During the Society’s first ten years meetings were held at The Lawns, but when Ralph Pee became ill the venue moved across the road to All Saints’ Church Hall. Ralph’s death in 1983 also meant that the Society’s collection of artefacts, books and documents had to find a new home. Initially re-housed in Broseley Hall, in 1986 they were moved back to The Lawns where Michael Berthoud, the new owner, had agreed to set up a

The first Society meetings were held at The Lawns, one time home of John Wilkinson



A young Barrie Trinder was one of the first speakers at the newly formed Wilkinson Society



Broseley Museum in the renovated stable block. Unfortunately this plan fell through and some of the larger items were put into store at the Tile Museum while others were lodged with committee members for safe keeping.

During this time the Society published an annual Journal under the editorship of Neil Clarke. In 1987, however, force of circumstance made him relinquish this post and over the next eight years only two issues were published.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s the Society suffered an identity crisis and it took a relaunch in 1993 to attempt to get it going again. Even that did not give it sufficient renewed impetus and four years later it underwent a complete makeover, the result of which is that today it is a vibrant and dynamic Society.

Several factors led to this renaissance, possibly the most important being its change of name – from the Wilkinson Society to the current Broseley Local History Society – reflecting its interest in Broseley's industrial and social past rather than the life of its most famous resident. Alongside this was the emphasis on its primary aim, the research, preservation and promotion of Broseley's unique heritage.

Another factor was that new faces on the committee brought a new venue, that of Broseley Social Club, and a revitalised programme with eight indoor meetings a year, two summer events – a local outdoor event and a coach trip to a place of interest – and a Christmas dinner.

Also helping to consolidate the rejuvenated Society has been the publication since 1997 of a regular quarterly Newsletter. This gives resumés of talks to the Society, news of upcoming events and activities of both topical and historical interest around the area. It also has a lively Mailbox section with people from all over the world writing in for both social and industrial information about Broseley.

Of more lasting value, however, has been the revival of the annual Journal and Neil said it had given him great pleasure to be able to resume the editorship in 1996, since when it has been

published every year. The Journal gives both members and non-members the opportunity to present the results of their research into the history of the Broseley area as well as related subjects. It also contains the full text of the Annual Wilkinson Lecture.

The Society does still have a collection of artefacts, books and documents and several attempts have been made to find a permanent home for them in Broseley. David Lake, who sadly died earlier this year, was for many years the curator of this collection and Neil recalled going with him on a number of occasions to the Ironbridge Gorge Museums, the County Library and the County Museum Service in an effort to find support for such a home. Unfortunately, no such venue has yet been found, though David was greatly heartened by the fact that some of the items are now displayed in the Cemetery Chapel.

And so, in tracing the history of the Society, Neil was pleased to say that over the last 15 years it has gone from strength to strength and, with an international membership of well over 200, can certainly lay claim to being one of the largest and most successful local history societies in Shropshire.

Neil's talk was followed by some typical Ron Miles' reminiscences, one of which was the time when he acquired an original Wilkinson token. Excited by this acquisition and wanting to make it look nice and shiny he had, on a friend's advice, dipped it into some Daddies Sauce, only later to be told that that was the worst thing he could have done! Ron then showed a picture of the model of Wilkinson's iron boat. This had been built by Ralph Pee entirely from old tin cans and was launched at Willey Pool. No doubt onlookers were just as amazed that it floated as when the original one was first launched at Willey Wharf in 1787.

This model of Wilkinson's iron boat was built by Ralph Pee and launched at Willey Pool





A memorable visit to Apedale Mine



Some members may remember a trip to Bersham in this vintage coach. Despite its looks the journey was without mishap

In John Freeman's absence, Vin Callcut gave his presentation on the Society's past activities. These had included coach trips to such places as Castlehead, the Morecombe Bay residence of John Wilkinson, Thomas Telford's Pontcycyllte Aqueduct, Brunel's SS Great Britain and Isaac Wilkinson's Backbarrow furnaces. Closer to home, Society members had also visited Apedale Mine and the sites of Wilkinson's Bradley and Brymbo ironworks, all fascinating visits arranged by the late David Lake.

Vin then recalled how, even before he and his wife Hilary moved into Broseley in 2001, he had discovered the Society's website. This website, which was set up by Steve Dewhirst, has such a wealth of information on it that Vin became fascinated with the history of the area and decided to join the Society. This fascination was enhanced when some alteration work to the house they bought in Church Street yielded an old Shirlett fireback which was mentioned in Randall's *History of Broseley*. This literally 'weighs a ton' – and more – and Vin is thinking of offering it to the Ironbridge Gorge Museums provided they will come and collect it!

Vin's interest in local history brought him on to the Society's committee and he recalled the various activities in which he had been involved. One of these was the Trafalgar 200 celebrations when he helped stage an exhibition in Broseley Library. It was here that a scale model he had built of the Alexander Brodie stove, which was installed on HMS Victory, was on display. In a less serious

vein, he also baked four numbered ship's biscuits of the type which would have been found on HMS Victory. No 1 of these Broseley Biscuits was put up for auction on eBay, eventually making £200 for the Society's funds.



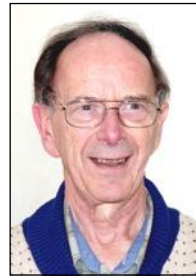
A Broseley Biscuit netted £200 when put up for auction on eBay

During the John Wilkinson bi-centenary celebrations in 2008 he arranged for the striking of replica Wilkinson tokens as well as commemorative Wilkinson plates made by local potter Elspeth Soper. These were available for sale throughout the year and also helped boost the Society's reserves.

Though no longer on the committee, Vin says that he and Hilary very much enjoy the Society's activities and are always willing to help in any way, a sentiment which is much appreciated by members.

NEW PRESIDENTS

At the AGM two new presidents, Vin Callcut and Joan Griffiths, were elected for a two year term.



Vin Callcut and his wife Hilary came to live in Broseley some ten years ago, attracted here by the depiction of the town on the Society's website as well as the area's industrial history. It was also a little closer to members of Hilary's family and her beloved

Wales – she was born in Llandudno. Vin himself, however, was born in the City of London Hospital and claims to be a true Cockney, although he spent most of his childhood in Chingford, interrupted only by two short spells as an evacuee during the war.

He says that it was while collecting interesting pieces of shrapnel during the war that he first became interested in metals and on leaving school he worked at the British Non-ferrous Metals Research Association for 13 years, meanwhile beginning his tertiary education as a day release student. Over the years he studied further, eventually doing a post graduate course in

metallurgy, during which time he published over 100 technical papers – enough to gain him election to Chartered Engineer status with ‘Eur Ing’ prefix recognising his international work.

After a spell with Delta Enfield Rolling Mills, in 1980 he joined the Copper Development Association, becoming director there before finally retiring in 1999, at which point he was presented with the Institute of Metals Award for service to the copper industry.

Having spent a lifetime in this industry, Vin decided in retirement to study domestic brass and copper products, especially those made in Birmingham, with the intention of publishing a book about those manufactured between 1851 and 1951. This ambition has now had to be changed to a web based rather than a printed version which will eventually appear on his websites ‘oldcopper.org’ and ‘oldcopper.org.uk’. In the meantime he has established and posted on this site a Directory of Marks of the makers of domestic copper and brass, obviously a well worthwhile resource as he says he gets around 50,000 hits a month as well as a steady stream of helpdesk enquiries. There is still, however, a long way to go as photographs and details of the vast array of products still need to be collated.

Vin’s interests, however, do not lie solely with copper and its products. Since childhood he has been fascinated by trains and railways and he and Hilary have spent many happy holidays travelling to unusual places on trains in Europe and North America. Apart from his fascination with the actual locomotives, Vin says it is a chance to do something different as well as to meet people of like interests. Society members may have noticed that on several past July trips, he has managed to include a ride on a preserved steam railway in the day’s activities!

Vin and Hilary joined the Society shortly before moving to Broseley and have been active members ever since. Among the many things Vin has done is to transcribe some of the Memory Evenings which were held some years ago, as well as to archive the articles in the Society’s annual Journal. These latter may be found on his website and are a valuable contribution to the Society’s resources.



Joan Griffiths, on the other hand, has lived in Broseley all her life and can trace her paternal line back seven generations to 1550. Educated at the old grammar school in Coalbrookdale, she has spent much of her life since then working for the Broseley community, in particular with regard to providing sporting facilities for the youngsters. This, she says, came about because when her two sons were teenagers her husband Les and others decided to start up a football club, the Broseley Rangers, which quickly gained a reputation as formidable opponents. Rather than being a ‘football widow’ Joan decided to join in, becoming secretary of the Birchmeadow Playing Fields and eventually treasurer, a position she still holds today.

As secretary, she was responsible for overseeing the maintenance of the playing fields and was particularly concerned at the state of the changing rooms, secretly admitting to being delighted when the old tin roof finally blew off in a gale. With help from various sources, including funds raised locally, new changing rooms were eventually built and officially opened in 1990.

Joan did not stop there, however, and continued to work tirelessly for sporting facilities for the community, such that in October of this year she was asked to open the new Multi Use Games Area, known as MUGA, of which the town is justifiably proud. This has been built in the grounds of Broseley Primary School in Dark Lane and at the opening it was said that, but for Joan’s continued help and persistence, this project would never have come about.



Photograph courtesy Dave Wallace

Joan Griffiths kicks the ball to start off the six-a-side matches which marked the opening of the new Multi Use Games Area at Dark Lane School

Another of Joan's passions has been researching her family history, in the course of which she has amassed a mountain of information, documents and illustrations which she is always happy to share. The furthest back she can go is to the Hill family in 1550, who owned Benthall Ironworks which were situated on Bridge Bank. They apparently cast their own iron gravestones, some of which can still be seen in Benthall churchyard.

This interest in her family history led to her eventually publishing her first book, *Broseley, the People and the Past*, featuring anecdotes, memories, facts and photographs of Broseley taken over many years. This was followed by *Poachers in the Gorge*, a record of the lives of some of the river men. Equally interesting is her *Broseley Boys School, 1863-1889*. In this book Joan has taken extracts from the school registers for those years and turned them into a poignant account of the social conditions of the time.

Always looking for other worthwhile things to do, Joan is now putting into digital format the burial grave records from the time of the opening of Broseley Cemetery in 1885 and hopefully these may be viewed in the near future in the Cemetery Chapel. She has also, as a fund raiser for the new Church roof, itemised all the monumental inscriptions for every grave in the churchyard as well as the plaques inside the church itself.

Joan says that even though she now lives on her own, she is seldom bored. Hardly surprising, considering how much time and energy she still devotes to the people of Broseley.

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER

The recent death of David Lake has left a vacancy on the Society's committee and at the AGM Andy Wellings was elected to fill his place.



Andy says that although Shropshire born and bred, he only came to live in Broseley some 12 years ago. Educated at Market Drayton School, he subsequently trained as an engineer, joining Dairy Crest as an apprentice; he still works in the dairy industry.

Having spent some years travelling the world, Andy decided it was time to settle down and went to live in Ironbridge with his partner Joanne who, at the time, was teaching in Barrow School. They moved to Broseley in 2000, buying a house in Cape Street. This to Joanne was, in many ways, like coming home as she had lived in Benthall as a child and was also familiar with Much Wenlock, her grandfather keeping the Fox Inn there.

Andy is a keen walker and says that places and buildings he sees when out walking have often piqued his curiosity as to Broseley's social and industrial past, which is probably why he joined the Society some three years ago. While he admits that his engineering background gives him an insight into Broseley's industrial past, it is actually the social history that fascinates him. Although he enjoys the monthly talks and presentations, and tries not to miss them, he is most interested in meeting the people and hearing them talk about 'the old times'. One of his concerns, however, is that membership is made up of mainly older people and he would like to try to encourage more of Broseley's younger generation to come and see what the Society has to offer.

THE HANGING TREE

There has been a certain amount of correspondence in recent Newsletters regarding a stone plaque in Duke Street, Broseley, which was recently resited onto the front of a garden wall. Little appeared to be known about this stone, which depicted a tree and some rather indecipherable writing.

Now Michael Pope has written in to say this:

This stone had previously been sited on the inside of the wall but earlier this year the owner of this wall agreed to resite it on the street side so it could be seen by passers by. The stone depicts a tree and in the 17th and 18th centuries such trees were often shown on early maps to designate boundaries between properties. These markings were useful if there was a dispute over a certain



This plaque has now been resited so that it can be seen by passers by

boundary or land ownership. These trees became known as ‘hanging trees’, perhaps because gallows were usually set up on parish boundaries. The actual ‘hanging’ tree could have become confused with a tree that marked a boundary.

The wall on which this plaque is sited is known locally at the Dead Walls, perhaps because it is near to the Quaker Burial Ground in what is now the car park for the Pipe Museum.

I am most grateful to Bob Rhodes for providing me with this information and a number of early maps of the area clearly marked with a number of these trees.

A metal plaque reflecting this information, and which has been paid for by the Broseley Partnership, has been made by Roger Fewtrell at Blists Hill and is shortly to be erected alongside the existing stone plaque.

Editor

DAVID LAKE - A CELEBRATION

As members will already know David Lake, who was a long time supporter of the Society and curator of its artefacts, died earlier this year. In September his daughter Rosemary invited members to join her in celebrating his life and achievements and at a function at David’s house in Nordley over 100 friends and associates gathered to remember him. Despite the sadness of the occasion, there was much fun and laughter as people shared their memories of David, reinforcing how much he will be missed.

The Society would like to thank Rosemary for her hospitality and hope that she will remain in touch.

A ROYAL VISIT

Frank Dawson’s book *John Wilkinson, King of the Ironmasters*, recently found an unexpected home when HRH Prince Charles was given a copy on a visit to the Ironbridge Gorge Museum in September. Along with other trustees of the IGMT, Society member and past chairman John Freeman was there to greet him and took the opportunity to present him with a copy.

The Prince of Wales, who has been patron of the IGMT since 1979, was at the Museum to unveil the



The newly refurbished Boy and Swan fountain, above left, which stands in the grounds of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, was recently unveiled by HRH Prince Charles. Above right, Prince Charles chats with some of the trustees of the Museum

Photograph courtesy Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust

newly refurbished Boy and Swan fountain which stands in the grounds of the Museum. Originally cast in Coalbrookdale for the Great Exhibition of 1851, the fountain was moved to a park in Wolverhampton before being brought back to Shropshire in 1959.

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

The Society is planning to publish a series of leaflets on people connected to Broseley’s industrial heritage. While the committee has already discussed several possible subjects, members are also invited to help in this project. Anyone who would like to take part, or who has any ideas as to suitable subjects, is asked to contact the chairman, Gillian Pope, on tel: 01952 883960 or email: steve@broseley.org.uk.

IRONBRIDGE GORGE MUSEUM TRUST

The Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust has appointed an industrial heritage support officer to develop a national strategy to improve the sustainability and conservation standards of industrial sites preserved with public access and identified as needing support by Sir Neil Cossons, President of the Association of Independent Museums.

Ian Bapty, previously Senior Project Archaeologist at Herefordshire Council, joined the IGMT in September and will be supported by a steering group of experts from across the Association for Industrial Archaeology.

The project will be delivered in partnership with several key organisations including the Ironbridge Institute, the University of Birmingham and the European Route of Industrial Heritage.

SEVERN GORGE COUNTRYSIDE TRUST

This year saw the completion of the first Telford Access to Nature project, managed by the Severn Gorge Countryside Trust, with almost 7,000 people experiencing nature at first hand, and 18 local green spaces receiving physical and sensory access improvements. Now a further £113,000 funding from the Big Lottery Fund's Supporting Change and Impact initiative will enable the SGCT to continue to work in partnership with Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Small Woods Association, Shropshire NHS Green Gym and Telford & Wrekin Council to deliver a one year project allowing, among other activities, family bushcraft days and forest school sessions for 8-14 year olds. It will also allow the SGCT to work with local schools, residential homes and family groups in their local green spaces.

In addition an Outdoor Learning Programme will incorporate over 40 different workshops and walks in which everyone can join. The programme will be available in January.

In the meanwhile, book now for these activities in the New Year:

3 January, 10.00 am – 1.00 pm

Family winter walk along the Sabbath Walks with Cadi Price, free.

5 February, 10.00 am – 1.00 pm

Tree ID in Winter in Benthall Woods with Russell Rowley, free.

25 February, 9.30 am – 4.00 pm

Introduction to Rural Archaeology with Imogen Sambrook, cost £10.

For more information on these and other activities contact Cadi Price tel: 01952 433880, email: cadiprice@severngorge.org.uk or visit www.severngorge.org.uk.

WHAT'S ON?

Ironbridge Gorge Museums

Coalport China Museum

Mon 26 November

Your chance to make a Christmas decoration for your tree or table at a ceramic workshop. Book your place now.

Mon 18 – Fri 22 February 2013

Drop-in ceramic workshop

Jackfield Tile Museum

Sat 15 December

Decorate a tile with a Christmas theme. Book your place now.

Mon 18 – Fri 22 February 2013

Decorate a ceramic tile with your own design

Enginuity

Sat 16 – Sun 24 February 2013

Flight workshops

Watch interactive shows and take part in fun drop-in workshops.

Ongoing to 14 April 2013

An exhibition by blacksmith artist Jon Mills of whimsical sculptures showing the many adventures of Mr Watt, Grumpy Man of Metal, who features in a series of illustrated books.

Coalbrookdale Gallery

Next to Enginuity

Ongoing to 30 April 2013

10.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

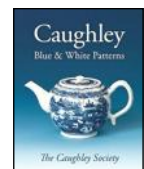
Falcon Hildred exhibition of industrial art

Over 600 original drawings and watercolours of industrial buildings and landscapes by Wales based artist Falcon Hildred. Free entry.

For more information on these and other activities, contact the Ironbridge Gorge information centre, tel: 01952 433424 or visit www.visitironbridge.co.uk.

BOOKSHOP

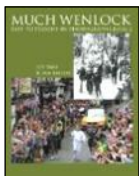
Caughley Blue and White Patterns, published by the Caughley Society, is the first reference book to describe and illustrate all the known blue and white patterns produced by Caughley.



It has been written by members of the Caughley Society with additional inputs from specialists familiar with this area. With high quality professional photographs, it also contains information about the history of Caughley as well as the various marks, borders, monograms and inscriptions found on the porcelain. Cost £72.00 (including £7 p&p), orders via the website caughleysociety.org.uk.

Worktown: the Drawings of Falcon Hildred, by Peter Wakelin, includes some 200 illustrations. Details from the Royal Commission, visit www.rcahmw.gov.uk or tel: 01970 621200.

Much Wenlock Past to Present in Photographs Book II, by Joy Sims & Ina Taylor. A pictorial record of Much Wenlock, following on from their first book published last year. Price £9.99. Available post free from www.ellinghampress.co.uk or Wenlock Books.



Arthur Bowyer worked as chauffeur to Lord Forester and later at Upper House, Madeley

MAILBOX

This presentation, below, was given to my great grandfather, Arthur Bowyer, who was born in 1879 in Barrow. Does anyone know if it was something that was presented to everyone from Broseley who fought in WWI? Can anyone tell me what the letters before his name stand for as well as identify the badge on his cap? He was a chauffeur for Lord Forester and later at Upper House, Madeley, though I am not sure where he was working at the time this picture of him and the car was taken.

Nicola Edwards
nicola.edwards73@virgin.net

I assume the presentation was given to all the servicemen from Broseley although I have not seen one before. The letters in front of his name would refer to his rank. You could check the web site <http://www.wakefieldfhs.org.uk/military%20abbreviations.shtml> which has a list of ranks and abbreviations.
Steve Dewhirst

I do not know what regiment/service Arthur Bowyer served in and have never seen the presentation certificate before but I suggest you contact the curator of the Shropshire Regimental Museum, Mr Peter Duckers, who may be able to help with identifying the regiment and possibly the certificate.



Arthur Bowyer, left, received this presentation, far left, after WWI

Depending when Arthur was working at Upper House, his employer is likely to have been Mr Dyas or Mr Legge. You could check through the Electoral Registers held at Shropshire Archives.

Janet Doody
janet.doody27@googlemail.com

Before my grandmother died she told me a story of her and my grandfather being invited to Birmingham for a special celebration of the life of John Wilkinson the ironmaster. She claimed that my grandfather was told he was a direct descendant of the great man himself. I have recently begun to research my father's history and have established that my grandfather was born in Darlaston and his father had worked in the ironworks at Bilston.

Would anyone know from where this invitation could have come?
Grahame Wilkinson
G.Wilkinson@lse.ac.uk

John Wilkinson had one legitimate daughter, Mary, who married Theophilus Holbrooke. They had one daughter who died at birth, Mary dying a few days later. He also had three illegitimate children by Ann Lewis who was his maid, Mary Ann born in 1792, another girl Johnina in 1805 and a boy John in 1806. They all assumed the name Wilkinson. John Wilkinson himself died in 1808.

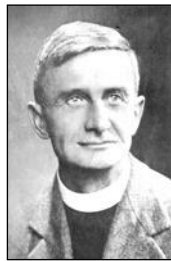
Mary Ann married William Legh, Johnina married William Murray. According to the recently published book John Wilkinson, King of the Ironmasters, by Frank Dawson, John Wilkinson

junior is said to have emigrated to America where he married and had several children, but as far as I am aware no one has managed to trace him after this.
 Steve Dewhirst

Thank you to everyone who helped me with my enquiry regarding my father John Percy Weston who grew up in Broseley in the 1920s (see *August 2012 Newsletter*), you have helped me picture so much more of my father's early life.

I wonder if anyone can help me further with certain other information? My father would have been at school in the early 1920s and wrote in his account of his early childhood that his deputy headmaster was very good and inspired in him a love of poetry. Would anyone remember his name and would there be any photographs of him or the school staff?

I have my father's prayer book which was given to him in 1928 by the Rev'd Charles Jackson. Does anyone have a photograph of him?
 Susan Donaldson
susanpdonaldson@btinternet.com



Photograph courtesy James Hurdley

The Rev'd Charles Jackson was vicar of Broseley in 1928

The Shropshire Family History Society has suggested I contact you regarding my Boden ancestors from the Lloyd Head/Jackfield area. I believe they were non-conformists but have been unable to find any records of their children's baptisms. I have also checked Anglican records with no success.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS	
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<i>Website</i>	www.broseley.org.uk
<i>Email</i>	steve@broseley.org.uk

I know that the Bodens go a long way back in Broseley area history, and there were many Boden families that could easily be confused. Could anyone help?

Anna
bananabodhi@wavecable.com

I do not think the non-conformist baptism registers survive but perhaps one of our members can help you.
 Steve Dewhirst

While at Stratford recently I was startled to hear the following lines in Richard III - "The Earl of Surrey . . . much about cockshutt time, from troop to troop went through the army, cheering up the soldiers." On returning home, I investigated.

A cockshoot is an opening in the forest where the woodcock might shoot across looking for water. They stay out of sight during the day but take flight as night falls, flying low through any glades or openings. So 'cockshoot time' is just as night falls.

If there were no natural openings in the woods, hunters would cut wide, straight roads through the trees, maybe 40 ft across. They would tie nets weighted with stones between two trees and drop them as the birds flew to ensnare them. So 'cockshoot' does not refer to guns but to the motion of the birds shooting out of the woods. Cockshut is a variation spelling which refers to how the birds are trapped in the net, hence the different spellings at the top and bottom of our road in Broseley.

Mike Kaiser
mbkbroseley@yahoo.co.uk

Have you paid your subscription for this coming year? If not, please send your cheque to Janet Robinson, address opposite.

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



Newsletter

*would like to thank all those
who have contributed to this
publication during 2012 and*

*wishes both them and
all its readers a*

Merry Christmas

and a

Happy New Year



CHRISTMAS DINNER, THE LION, HIGH STREET, 5 DECEMBER 2012

Please reserve me _____ place/s for the Society's Christmas Dinner at a cost of £18.95 a head

Name/s: _____

I enclose cheque/payment for

Add: _____

£ _____ payable to

Broseley Local History Society

Please return to Janet Robinson,
26 Coalport Road, Broseley, TF12 5AZ
by **Friday 30 November**

Tel: _____

* * * * *

Please indicate your choice of starter and main course from the menu below, giving one tick for each person

STARTER

MAIN COURSE

Spiced parsnip and honey soup with crusty bread

Roast turkey, stuffing and cranberry sauce

Potted smoked mackerel with lemon and dill

Roast topside of beef with yorkshire pudding and horseradish sauce

Duck and pork pâté with toast and salad garnish

Fillet of salmon with a cranberry, port and orange glaze

Seasonal melon with fruit coulis

Pan fried pork tenderloin in a blue cheese, onion and sherry sauce

Goat's cheese and caramelised red onion tart

Chicken Supreme wrapped in pancetta with a creamy white wine ,mushroom and onion sauce

Parsnip, cranberry and chestnut loaf

Mushroom stroganoff

All served with seasonal vegetables and potatoes

* * * * *

Christmas pudding with brandy sauce

Baked pear and caramel cheesecake

Chocolate, amaretto and cherry trifle

Raspberry syllabub

Chocolate orange truffle torte

* * * * *

Coffee and mints

