


# In Our Age

Living local history

Issue 41  
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Inside: Your hot local history guide – get involved this autumn!

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## ATS Girls

### Boot camp of the 1940s

Remember that photo of Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) member Stella Griffiths, published in IOA 40? Liz Lloyd thinks her mum Mary Millichamp was the girl with the camera.

Liz explains: "The ATS was part of the 1st Herefordshire Regiment and Stella joined in 1938, training with others at Ripley Barracks near Lancaster. The former stately home, which had served as an orphanage, afforded few comforts in what turned out to be a cold, miserable winter. As a cook, however, Stella was able to lay her hands on some extra warm food for her mates.

"Her Hereford friends included Grace Morphew, Marjorie 'Birdie' Bird (Aconbury Avenue, Hereford), Eleanor English (Bishopstone), Betty Reihold (later Southall; she moved to Shaftesbury), Eva Price (later Boucher; she lived at Hardwicke then Green Street) and Stella (later Bradstock; she lived at Little Tarrington)."

Liz adds: "After the war like many young women, Mum worked sampling milk. It was a great opportunity to meet local farmers and she duly met and married Verdi Lloyd, moving to Cothill Farm at Vowchurch."

### Welcome!

Herefordshire Lore is all about your living local history: you tell us your stories and we'll publish them. But many readers love all history – which is why we're publishing a list of local history groups. Why not join in with your local club this autumn?

Chair: Mark Hubbard



Front cover: The Goodrich post lady in 1948. But who was she? The photograph was presented to postman Peter Mayne (see page 7) on his retirement.

Mary Millichamp (above left) on a walking holiday in the Lake District in 1942 and (right) during training. (Photos: Liz Lloyd)



## Munitions romance

### Couple tie the knot after meeting at ROF Rotherwas

Among the thousands employed at the Royal Ordnance Factory, Rotherwas, Hereford in the last war were Joyce Fromings and husband-to-be Eric Lambert, writes John Lambert.

Bromley-born Joyce was evacuated from London because of the Blitz, initially to Kinnersley and later, when she started at ROF Rotherwas, to Redhill Hostel.

Eric, a progress chaser in the munitions laboratory, had worked here in the First World War. His boss and best man was Tony Casatelli, remembered as the man whose unambiguous instructions for loading shells allowed almost anyone to work the 25-pounder line. Vi Chinery (right) worked with Mum at the factory.

### Officers' hotel

Both Pauline Jones' mother-in-law, Mabel Jones (nee Page) and sister, Louvain Conroy (nee Evans) were Rotherwas munitioneers. Pauline from Tupsley writes: "Mabel, married with three children, worked in the cordite department until she was affected with cordite poisoning. The Ministry found her a job at a hotel

for British and foreign officers on top of Aylestone Hill. She would ride to work with her four-year-old (later my husband) on her Ministry bicycle.

"Louvain worked on the bombs and she remembered the air raid." (The factory was struck by a lone German bomber in July 1942.) "She was in a long corridor

with glass windows when a plane started to strafe them. She could see the pilot and was lucky to get out alive."

Did any of your relatives work here? The Munitions Group is collecting names of former workers. Write to us or visit [www.rotherwasmunitionshereford.co.uk](http://www.rotherwasmunitionshereford.co.uk)



Wedding party, 1943: (left to right) Barbara Meadmore, Dorothy Langford, Tony Casatelli, Eric Lambert, young John Lambert, ROF factory workers Joyce Fromings and Vi Chinery, Brian, Raymond, George Fromings. Seated (left to right) Aunt Lil, Mrs Chinery

## Historical Herefordshire – Your essential listing

From the Bronze Age Rotherwas Ribbon and Roman settlements of Ariconium and Magna (Bromsash and Kenchester) to the United Brethren's 1840 baptismal site at Benbow's Pond, Castle Frome, we live in a county brimming with history. (Not listed? Send us details – we'll update the list on our website: [www.herefordshirelore.org.uk](http://www.herefordshirelore.org.uk))

### Bartonsham

With walks, talks and meetings (7.30, first Tuesday, monthly at The Volunteer, Harold Street), the History Group has also published a history of St James' church. Bill Laws – 01432 272337 [www.bartonshamhistory.org.uk](http://www.bartonshamhistory.org.uk)

### Breinton

The History Group has explored the 12th century moated mound at Breinton Springs and identified traces of medieval occupation. Winter programme on the website. Nicky Geeson – 01432 279713 [www.breintonhistorygroup.btck.co.uk](http://www.breintonhistorygroup.btck.co.uk)

### Bromyard

The History Society publish an annual journal, organise events and host the Local and Family History Centre at 5 Sherford Street, HR7 4DL. 01885 488755 [www.bromyardhistorysociety.org.uk](http://www.bromyardhistorysociety.org.uk)

### Colwall

The Society, which has lodged historical documents in Colwall's Millennium Room, host talks and publish a newsletter for their 200 members. John Atkin – 01684 541970; [johna@waitrose.com](mailto:johna@waitrose.com)

There's also a Colwall Orchard Group. Wendy Thompson – [wendythompson179@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:wendythompson179@yahoo.co.uk)

### Dorstone

The History Society (meetings in the village hall, first Wednesday of the month) is involved in excavations on the early Neolithic Halls of the Dead on Dorstone Hill. [www.dorstonehistorysociety.wordpress.com](http://www.dorstonehistorysociety.wordpress.com)

### Dinedor

Thanks to Lottery Funding and an active membership, the Heritage Group has published a book and identified several local walks with information boards and leaflets. Chris Over – 01432 870320 [www.dinedorheritagegroup.wordpress.com](http://www.dinedorheritagegroup.wordpress.com)

### Ewyas Harold

Lots of historical detail on the district at [www.ewyaslacy.org.uk](http://www.ewyaslacy.org.uk)

### Garway

This friendly bunch of enthusiasts recently launched their autumn programme (third Tuesday of the month) with talks ranging from The History of Orchards to Forest of Dean workhouses. Liz Lloyd – 01981 580002 [www.garwayheritagegroup.co.uk](http://www.garwayheritagegroup.co.uk)

### Hereford

Hereford Civic Society hosts regular lectures at Asda's Kindle Centre. John Bothamley – 01981 580002 [www.herefordcivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.herefordcivicsociety.org.uk)



From Steve Herington's *Bob Cole The Runner*

Vowchurch Fair in the late 1940s. Bob Cole (left) about to race against two competitors. The starter William Woodhouse (right) was a miler who himself had run against Cole. (Photo: Ronnie Tong)

### HEREFORDSHIRE

The Family History Society meets on the third Friday of the month at the Kindle Centre. Secretary – 07836 560511 [www.herefordshirefhs.org.uk](http://www.herefordshirefhs.org.uk)

It's worth keeping in touch with Hereford Local History Society which meets at Hereford Archive and Records Centre, Rotherwas and circulates information to over 50 county groups. [margotmiller@live.co.uk](mailto:margotmiller@live.co.uk)

Rotherwas Munitions Group – see page 2

Rotherwas Chapel. A new Friends group works aims to make the most of this spiritual centre. Barbara Ferris – [barbaraferis@uwclub.net](mailto:barbaraferis@uwclub.net)

The Victoria County History (VCH) calls itself the greatest publishing project in English local history. Having published books on Ledbury and Eastnor, Herefordshire VCH, which welcomes volunteers, is currently working on Colwall and Coddington. [www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/herefordshire](http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/herefordshire)



## From My Album: Angus Brymer, Derek Evans and Irene Lloyd



Having shared memories of life on the railways (IOA 40), Angus 'Gus' Brymer loaned this 1984 photo of two steam engines, the City of Truro and Hereford's own King George V at Barrs Court station. Inspector Gus is standing in front of the Truro talking to another inspector.



Butcher Edward Powell was one five brothers who served in the First World War from Little Hill, Orcop. All but brother William returned safely. William had lost a leg; he almost lost his home too. Sams Pool, his smallholding, was put up for auction after the death of land owner James Rankin of Bryngwyn Manor, Wormelow in 1916. But fundraisers, including a miner from Abertillery who gave £1, helped the veteran buy Sams Pool. William went on to be the brewer and landlord of Walford's Spread Eagle while Edward became a butcher. (Photo: Angus Brymer)

A young lad draws an admiring crowd as he leaps into the Wye from the Victoria Bridge in the 1950s. (Derek Evans at the County Records Office)



Irene Lloyd from Tupsley loaned this photograph of an outing in front of the Red Lion at Bredwardine.



A diner looks into Thomas Henry Winterbourn's camera lens during a celebratory feast in Leominster. The photo comes from Grange Court's Leominster Through Time project, designed to inspire residents to photograph contemporary Leominster life for a future exhibition. Hannah Vernon - hannah@grangecourt.org www.leominsterthroughtime.org.uk

### Leintwardine

The History Society archives local history items at Leintwardine museum open on Tuesdays and the first Saturday of the month, 10-12 am. [www.leintwardinehs.wordpress.com](http://www.leintwardinehs.wordpress.com)

### Leominster

The History Study Group publish books on Leominster and North Herefordshire and arrange history talks. [www.leominsterhistory.org.uk](http://www.leominsterhistory.org.uk)

### Longtown

Longtown, currently investigating the history of their two castles, meet on the

first Monday of the month. Martin Cook - 01873 860408; [martin@clodockmill.com](mailto:martin@clodockmill.com) [www.lhsarchive.org.uk](http://www.lhsarchive.org.uk)

### Norton Canon

September marks the start of the History Project's plans to produce a village history. Dave Lovelace - [david@dlovelace.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:david@dlovelace.freeserve.co.uk) [www.nortoncanon.net](http://www.nortoncanon.net)

### Wellington

The friendly Parish History Society meets regularly at the Village Hall and runs talks, walks and visits. Gill Bullock - 01432 839109 [www.wellingtonhistory.org.uk](http://www.wellingtonhistory.org.uk)





## Me, my brother and the family pig

The household pig enjoyed a happy life – until it came time for sticking, writes *Keith James*.

Keeping a pig was a bonus to many country families and our pigsty at Totnor, Brockhampton, was hidden at the top of the garden behind enormous rhubarb leaves. The leaves were so large, being watered with endless piggy juices dribbling from the sty, that small boys could hide under them.

Warm sunny mornings and the old pig liked nothing better than to have her back scratched and she lived in her own little comfortable home bounded by green fields and the kitchen garden. Snout-tickling blossom from the perry pear trees fell like confetti in springtime from the nearby orchard and the day began with the dawn chorus of birds nesting in the hedgerow.

Within the yard, bounded by a wooden fence, there was room for the old pig to bask in summer sunshine or dash for the pantiled sty when darker times threatened.

Great Uncle Bert brought darker times. It was his skill and duty to “ring” the pig through the nose and stop the yard and sty floor being grubbed up. One fearful and powerful pig had defeated the first attempt. Uncle Les had sat astride its bristly back as the pliers approached. Sensing this may lead to tears in her eyes, she had bucked, throwing her rider into a wet and dirty corner before darting into the sty. Now cornered inside the sty Uncle Les once more climbed aboard and gripped tightly with his knees. As Bert stooped and approached, pliers in hand, there was another buck. The rider’s head was thrust through the pantiles into the clear morning air and as the tiles dropped back trapping head in sunshine, an unseeing torso was left dangling and undefended against a frightened and squealing pig below.

But the old sow’s darkest hour was when Bert arrived to stick the pig. My mother would run far across the



Keith James, brother Alec and the family pig (Photo: Keith James).

fields and meadows and let distance and sounds of the meadow silence the squeals of the pig’s last hold on life.

Later the sty would be cold and still and silent but splashed with blood, thin in places, where buckets of water had been doused upon this terrible witness. Killing the pig must have been horror enough for no one ever mentioned the butchery that must have followed. The end of the pig was necessity and the way of things and the reward would be fitches of bacon heaped with coarse salt on the cold larder slab. Turned and covered daily the bacon cured, wrapped in muslin cloth and hung from larder ceiling hooks waiting for sharp Sheffield steel to ease delicious slices of fat meat fresh into the frying pan. A grey and veined football from the inflated bladder was fun for all and perhaps the last indignity for the old sow as it bounced through hazelnut goalposts in the Pump Meadow to the shouts of “Goal!”

A few weeks later there was always another pig.

*Perhaps my father thought this picture of me, Alec and the pig failed as an expression of family elegance and well-being, writes Keith James. So we were well into our fifties before finding the negative that had never been printed, but nevertheless survived, hidden away in a photo-wallet from probably 1950.*

*I’m the little fella in the National Health spectacles, muddy knees, probably a lady’s scarf and little black canvas shoes we called daps. My playing clothes would not only have come from a local jumble sale, but would be hand-me-downs from my older brother and the picture reminded me of some of life’s little irritations at an early age. The coarse woollen socks were itchy on warm summer days and yet when you wanted them in icy weather they always slipped down to your ankle – being stretched by the older former occupant. But the strangest reminder is a glimpse of white knickers below my right trouser leg. The waist elastic was always stretched and surely and regularly the garment would start to slide down either the left or right leg; sometimes reaching the knee, to appear as an embarrassing white flag of surrendering modesty and needing hitching up again. Always a problem for a small boy endlessly running, jumping over or into dirty puddles and climbing trees.*

## Around & About



Peter Mayne with GI bride Jeanne Glover after the presentation of her Land Army medal.

### GI Bride

Nottingham-born **Jeanne Glover** failed to receive her Land Army medal despite her time on Shropshire farms during the last war. The reason? She’d become a GI bride.

Jeanne recalled meeting husband-to-be Tony Picciana one evening after work at the Red Lion in Costock. “Mum was playing the piano for the soldiers when Tony approached her and asked: ‘Who’s the blonde in the corner?’ ‘Keep away! That’s my daughter,’ declared Mum.”

It was to no avail and Tony and Jeanne were married shortly before he left for the D-Day landings. A paratrooper with the 507th, Tony fought on Omaha Beach and helped liberate a Nazi concentration camp. When peace came he returned to New York, Jeanne following aboard the SS Washington.

Jeanne came back to England after Tony’s death, moving to Charles Court in Putson. Herefordshire Lore’s Peter and Jean Mayne helped her apply for that missing medal. “Wonderful,” was Jeanne’s comment when it was finally presented.

### Stalag XIB



A reader returning from holiday in France was surprised to discover this photograph hidden in an old tin, which she bought at a boot sale in the Vendée. Written on the back was the following: “Monsieur François Gergaud No 52.337 Stalag XIB, Deutschland. Tante Gergaud et Marie”. Stalag XIB was a prisoner-of-war camp in Lower Saxony used to hold French soldiers after the fall of France. François Gergaud was listed as a prisoner. Did François survive the war? she wonders.

### Party at Wormelow

Rain showers failed to dampen spirits at a gathering to mark what should have been SOE agent Violette Szabo’s 95th birthday, writes **Rosemary Lillico**. Executed by the Germans at Ravensbruck in 1945, the 23-year-old was remembered at Rosemary Rigby’s Szabo Museum in Wormelow by daughter Tania (above), actor Virginia McKenna who played Violette in *Carve Her Name with Pride*, historian Derry Edge and St Weonards British Legion members Peter Davies, Peter Harkness and Jim Jenkins.



### Redhill Rockers

**Charlie Morris** recalls some of the bands he saw perform at the Flamingo Ballroom, formerly the Redhill Hostel (see page 3), in the late 1960s: “Status Quo, Marmalade, Edison Lighthouse, The Searchers, Lulu, Showaddywaddy, The Who, The Equals, Johnny Johnson and The Bandwagon, Geno Washington, Herman’s Hermits.” Were you there? Who did you see?

### Rude Roll Call

My friends I were in our last day at school when the second world war broke out, writes ... **Dickson**. Having a few days left at school our class was detailed to dig the footings for an aid raid shelter on the playing fields. We thought this better than lessons and shovelled some dirt back in as to make the work last longer. But we were caught, sent to the headmaster and given six strokes of the cane, three on each hand. It still hurts.

“After leaving school I volunteered as a messenger in the Auxiliary Fire Servicer with another lad, Adcock. We took messages on our bikes from HQ to the sub stations if the telephones were down. There were two young lady telephonists, Miss Allcock and Miss Ball there and when the roll call was read - ‘Adcock, Allcock, Ball and Dickson’ – it caused much laughter every time.”

### Tea for two

“Who remembers an olde-worldly upstairs tearoom that used to be halfway down the south side of Commercial Street”, asks **Griff Loydd**? “I remember my mother taking me there for an afternoon treat during the second world war and being served at the table with toasted tea cakes, a small dish of butter and a pot of strawberry jam followed by a tall cake stand displaying a selection of jam tarts, cream cakes and eclairs. There was the large pot of tea, with a jug of extra hot water, milk in a jug and a small silver bowl of sugar cubes with a set of sugar tongs inside. All quite posh and quintessentially English.”





### Where is it?

This county tea shop was once a popular venue on Sunday afternoons. Where was it? And did you visit it? Let us know at IOA. Well done to all those who correctly identified the Herefordshire street scene (IOA 40) as Union Street including **Lynden Haynes** and **Reg South**: "That wonderful shop Hardings, on the right, and their plumbing and electrical departments on the other side of the road and the Anglers Inn nearby; I had my watch repaired several times at Martins watch repairs," recalls Reg. **Peter English** recalls visiting Hardings' plumbing department: "Every country house had its own list of ingredients for clearing drains and they were each written up on the wall."

### Gladys Jones, WAAC

It's a century since Gladys Jones (right at the Hereford Bowling Club) of Wellington Court left the family farm to join the Voluntary Aid Detachment, or VADs, nursing convalescent soldiers wounded in the first world war. By 1916 the German blockade in the Atlantic had tightened and food was running short - Gladys took up cookery teaching, riding out on her motorbike to village schools to help prepare more home grown food.

By 1917 Gladys was on the move again. She joined the Women's Army Auxiliary Corp (WAACs) and was sent to serve in the Boulogne Rest Station assisting soldiers on the front line (far right).



Gladys' and other stories feature in *Herefordshire's Home Front in the First World War* (Logaston Press) which will be launched at Herefordshire Archive and Record Centre (HARC) on Thursday September 15 6.30.

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