

Age to Age

HEREFORDSHIRE LORE LIVING LOCAL HISTORY

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In The Munitions
Women At War In Herefordshire

In The Munitions

"Some people thought we were rubbish. But if we hadn't of worked there it would have been a poor look out."

"We slipped notes in with the bombs so the soldiers knew we were thinking of them."

"My aunt said: 'We're going to work tonight and I'm not coming home tomorrow.' She never came home." "A girder struck my leg I thought: I'll never get out of here. This is my lot. "

"Every body had a purpose and every body was pulling together"

"What a terrible thing, working our lives out to blow other people to pieces."

In The Munitions: Women At War In Herefordshire, Herefordshire Lore's book about the people who worked at Royal Ordnance Factory, Hereford during the last two World Wars, will be launched this autumn. Poet and performer Graham Hartill will be Master of Ceremonies at the launch at 11 00 a.m. Tuesday September 9 in the studio theatre at the Courtyard Arts Centre, Edgar Street, Hereford There will be readings from the book by performers young and old, a live tune or two from the era and light refreshments.

If you would like to come along and meet some of the women and men who contributed to the book, telephone 01432 268806 for an invitation - or simply turn up at 11.00 a m Everyone is welcome.

In The Munitions: Women At War In Herefordshire is published by Herefordshire Lore with Logaston Press. It costs £9.99 (£2.00p post and packaging) from Herefordshire Lore, Pool Farm, Belmont Road, Hereford HR2 7JZ.

(**In The Munitions** is a Local Heritage Initiative project which is a partnership between the Heritage Lottery Fund, Nationwide Building Society and the Countryside Agency)

Important Announcement

Age To Age will no longer be published in its current form. Herefordshire Lore is to look for grants to launch a new version of **Age To Age**. We are hoping to produce a bigger newsletter which will go on sale several times a year

Meanwhile we would like to thank everyone who has supported **Age To Age**, especially those who subscribed. Unfortunately we were unable to attract enough subscribers to guarantee the future of **Age To Age**.

Age To Age was first published 11 years ago, with financial support from Hereford City Council. It was a founding principle of our group (Roy Kennett, Vi Thomas, Vi Woolaway, Alf Evans, Tom Woolaway and Bill Morris) that **Age To Age** should be provided free wherever possible. When the new Herefordshire Council came into being, the Council continued to provide diminishing support, while making it clear the

newsletter would eventually have to be self supporting. **Age To Age** costs between £5000 and £6000 a year to produce. The last grant of £750 awarded to **Age To Age** by the local authority was two years ago. Herefordshire Lore has successfully attracted funds for new projects such as the Hereford munitions project, but funders are reluctant to support existing projects such as the publication of **Age To Age**. We hope, therefore, to be able to launch a new look **Age To Age** in the near future. We need to convince funders that such a publication is needed: don't hesitate to write to us expressing your thoughts on the subject.

Subscribers

If you have taken out a subscription and wish part of it to be returned, please write to us at Herefordshire Lore, Pool Farm, Belmont Road, Hereford HR2 7JZ and we will arrange for its return.

Herefordshire Lore was set up in 1989 to collect, remember and celebrate our past. Herefordshire Lore includes John Turner (Chairman), Margaret Beare, Bobbie Blackwell, Mary Blackwell, Sirlol Collins (Hereford Museum), Norah Foster, Joan Hiles, Ken Hursey Rosemary Lillico, Eileen Klotz, Eve Lichfield, Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe (County Archives), Harvey Payne (Treasurer), Sylvie Smithand Lenora Williams. Editor: Bill Laws, Administrator: Dawn Turner



On the subject of the old gaol, mentioned in our last issue, David Harper from Symonds Street in Hereford sent in this picture of St Peter's Girl School, which stood next door. His mother, Gladys Harper, the dark haired girl on the far right, lived in Bryngwyn Terrace. One of nine children, she is pictured here between 1910 and 1912

Snippets

Land Work

I worked on the land, on top of the threshing machine, recalls **Mary Hammond** from Belmont. "It was hard and dangerous work. I used to cut the bands of the shaves of corn and hand them to a man who fed them into the machine. Then I used to spread muck on the fields with a two pronged fork: it was paid as piece work at a penny a tump. I used to go sprout picking early in the mornings: sometimes the ice would be on them and we used to bat our hands to keep them warm."

Ron Smith from East Street, Hereford was sent from his London school to Bromyard in July 1949 to work on local farms for tuppence an hour. "The red soil was bone dry and cracked with the hot weather as my pal and I hauled potatoes. One day we worked in the wrong field by mistake as we discovered when

the farmer bawled us out! For a change we worked in the harvest fields pitchforking straw bales. It was a memorable time for a sixteen year old"

Rosemary Lillico recalls hop picking as a 12 year old in the 1950s. "At the end of the season everyone would be in high spirits and at the very last bushelling many pickers were 'cribbed' - either tipped into the crib or picked up and bodily dropped in

Many tried to crib the farmer, but it didn't happen very often we were all a little afraid of him as we had yet to be paid up!"



Recording Volunteers

The group looking at the life of **Alfred Watkins** (featured in our last issue) are looking for a man and a woman with 'mature sounding voices' to do some recordings. If you can help call **Christine Watkins** on (01981) 540509

Margaret Baker

My mother worked nights filling shells at the Rotherwas factory from late 1940 up to 1944 when she was 28, writes **Kenn Spindlow** by email (spnEDWARDS@aol.com) She lived at the Ross Road hostel for munitions workers. Her name was **Margaret (Peggy) Baker**, maiden name Smith, and she came from Scotland. She had twin boys who were in a home in Leominster. From 1944 she went to work at the American U.S.O club in Hereford. I would like to hear from anybody remembers her