

# In Our Age

Living local history

Summer 2009  
Issue 13



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## Retreat from Liverpool

### Evacuee Mavis shares more of her memories

In January 1941, after the first major blitz on Liverpool, **Mavis Owen** (now Matthews) was evacuated. Mavis from Kings Acre, Hereford, (see Late Spring IOA) remembers: "When we were taken to the train our Mums weren't allowed on the platform with the children in case they were too upset so the Dads put us on board. Our train took us to Llandrindod Wells and we stayed overnight in an hotel. (I've tried to find it since, but without any luck). Then we were taken to our respective lodgings. I was taken to 16, The Village, Clyro before I went on to stay with Mr and Mrs Evans at Paradise."

In June '41 her mother and two brothers followed and stayed for a year, returning after the second big blitz on Liverpool.

When she left school Mavis was determined to return to Herefordshire, so she joined the Land Army in 1947.



*Off to the Country: evacuees arrive at Hereford Station 70 years ago.*

"I learned to drive at Oxford then came to Hereford and stayed at Redhill Hostel driving the girls to work. I said the sergeant in charge one day: 'Why don't I take a lorry? I could carry more girls.' So he gave me a three ton lorry to drive which we kept parked at the depot of the Ross Road in Hereford, where the ambulance station is now.



*Clyro Kids: Mavis Matthews with her two brothers.*



*Land Army Girl: Mavis learns to drive in Oxford.*

### Do you know where this is?

Here's a teaser, loaned by **Doreen Skinner**. It shows her outside her childhood home somewhere in Hereford city. But can you guess where? (The railings provide a clue). Send your answers to IOA – address on the back page.



**Front cover:** The cheapjack stalls at Hereford Market, photographed by **Joy Davies** (see page 5), were popular in the austerity years of the 1950s. Like her father before her, Joy, the former head of Holmer School, is a keen amateur photographer. She has been a member of the Hereford Photography Society for 60 years – she's currently their president – and over the years has won several photographic competitions. Joy also knew Majorie Wight the professional photographer whose work has been featured in IOA (Summer '08).

## On Parade



*Line Up: Red Cross Cadets prepare for inspection on the Castle Green.*

This year marks 100 years of the Girl Guides. Do you have any photos or memories of your Guiding days?

## Kings, Pears, and the Co-op

IOA talks of Kings of Hereford (IOA 12, Shop Front), but, writes **Ken Hyett**, there were three Kings shops: Kings the London House in High Town, Kings the motorcycle, cycle and radio shop on the corner of Victoria and Eign Streets, and Kings the sweet and ice cream shop on the corner of Widemarsh and Conningsby streets, a favourite of the High School children.

I joined the Herefordshire Constabulary in 1952, but had worked in the offices of Ratcliffer (Hereford) Ltd at 8 Newmarket Street. Consequently I knew a lot of the Co-op staff including Brian Marchant (we'd meet in the cafe and bakery department when I went to purchase the buttered bath buns served up by Mrs. Bailey. Miss Short was the then manager.

My cousin Molly Hyett was the manageress of the Co-op's greengrocery in the late '40s and early '50s and Brian was a clean cut young man studying to be a football referee. We often

chatted with Tommy Best, Paddy Woods and some of the other Hereford team when they called in for coffee.

A.W. Stone, the gents outfitters, sat across the street from the Co-op cafe and, because of my height at the age of 16 years, I had my first "made to measure" suit, for which I paid Mr. Stone a set sum every week.

You also mention Mrs. Rae Phillips ('Our' Street). There was a giant pear tree growing in the front garden of the second house and when the fruit was ripe the boys from Lord Scudamore Boys School (I was there from 1936 to 42), those of us living in Edgar or Commonmoor Street would gleefully pick up the windfalls.

So: who remembers Fred Lewis with his hole in the wall fruit and veg shop; the Red Lion opposite the Vaults, run by Mr. Page; Ogdens the butchers next door to the Lion in Eign Street; Haines' "Nuf-Sed" sweet shop; the Country Motors garage; Thompson the grocers opposite All Saints School; West the paper shop, Webb the cobblers and Deans Grocers?



## Barnett's Baskets

*"I remember Deans Corner so well," writes Christine Turvey from Whitecross, Hereford. "My grandfather, Andrew Barnett the basket maker, always stopped and gave the policeman on duty a Collins and Bowser cream toffee." The basket maker, pictured here, had a workshop at Hunts Lane.*



*Day Trip: Coaches line up near Hereford Market in the post-war years. (Photo: Doreen Skinner)*

# Old Hereford'

Wakefield Knights, Chadds, Wilsons' Seeds, Lakins, Burton Bakery, Marchants, Deans, Kings, Edwards, Hardings, Woolworths. While so many old Hereford city centre shops have closed and In Our Age wants to hear from you, the shop workers, owners and shoppers about how you remember them.

Over Christmas, thanks to the support of Hereford City Council, we plan to display your pictures and memories in some of the empty city shop windows.

In the meantime here are some pictures and recollections to jog your memories.



*March Past: Yardley's Perfume poster looked down on High Town, here the scene of an army parade some time in the 1950's. Photo: John Wilson.*

## The Hardings Apprentice



*Tibbs the cat belonged to our photographer, Doreen Skinner, who lived around the corner from Hardings the ironmongers shop which stood in Commercial Street where McDonalds is now.*

*The late Alf Evans, one of the founders of Herefordshire Lore, was apprenticed to Hardings in 1923. "This was at their premises on 5, Bridge Street. After twelve months you got twelve shillings and sixpence. The shop had been an ironmongers run by a man named Reid who bought it in 1912. Previous to that it was run by a nail-maker called Evans, no relation. Down in the cellars you would come across some of these old hand made nails. There was paraffin out the back that used to be tuppence a pint, very dear. Terrible stuff to put on a cold winters day when your hands were cracked. All the grease would go out of your hands. Shoppers used to come with their pint bottles, for their oil lamps, the poor people around the district.*

*"We used to sell candles as well. Some of the better off would come for a gallon and the errand boy, on a bicycle with a basket on the front, would take some round to the bigger houses.*

*"We wore our own clothes under a black apron. I used to take the money in an ordinary till: it was a very trusting relationship in a family firm. Hardings also had their big shop in Commercial Street and a foundry in Bath Street where they made castings. You look at all these drain covers, stop cocks and such things now: they often have got Hardings (stamped) on them."*

# s Shop Fronts



*Big game photographer: Joy Davies snapped Saucy the elephant as he ambled through High Town – that's Joy's car on the right. Saucy's keeper, who came from Amberley, also looked after Saucy's three elephant companions, Salt, Pepper and Mustard.*



*Joy seen here with her sister Grace, another keen amateur photographer.*

Send us your shop front memories

Call us on 07845 907891

(just leave a message and we'll call you back);

email at [info@herefordshirelore.org.uk](mailto:info@herefordshirelore.org.uk)

or send a letter to

In Our Age, Herefordshire Lore,  
PO Box 9, Hereford HR1 9BX.

## From Ropes to Newspapers

*L.J. Green's in Commercial Road, Hereford photographed around 1953. Mr J. Hyde from Luggwardine writes to say the shop, originally two old cottages, had been turned into a shop by the Gore family who, for fifty years, sold items such as rope and baskets. In 1930 it became a newspaper shop run by a Mr Cook, then L.J. Green from 1938 to 1945, followed by Catton's News, Centre News, Victoria Wines until today when it's run as a family business, Explore, by David Haines.*



*Who's that baby? May Burton pauses in High Town with a baby in pram in May 1932. (Photo: Doreen Skinner)*

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## The Lost VIP

*Our columnist John Thacker, from Upper Sapey, casts his mind back to the last war.*

During the War we all had to play our part. The Boss on our farm, Poswick, was roped in to be a Special Constable. They used to have to go to Bromyard every week for lectures.

One night I was in my bedroom on the farm and I heard this 'plane. I'd heard them in Luton earlier in the War when I was at home, but this one just didn't sound right. Suddenly it crashed into a bank at Cutsnall Farm a couple of miles away.

- Boss! The 'plane's crashed, I shouted.

He came rushing into my bedroom.

- Gracious! he says. You'd better get down there.

- You're the Special Constable, I told him. You got to go.

Anyway we had to go and start the old Austin 12 (it took a bit of starting because it was only used once a week for Bromyard Market) and off he went.

But I don't know how much good he did. I heard later that the pilot had parachuted out and the 'plane, one of ours, had crashed on its own.

There was another 'plane story about ten years ago when my friend Gordon Yardley took myself and Jack Yeomans, a local farmer, on a trip round Wales. We stopped at Penybont to look at a farm belonging to a Mr Middleton. He took us round to see where he'd improved the high pastures up on the hills with hen muck from Sun Valley.

Then he said: "You see that coppice?" It was in a gully about half a mile away.

"In the late '50s they found a 'plane in there that had crashed in the War. They found some numbers on the 'plane and went to the War Office and it turned out the pilot, who was still sitting in the cockpit, was quite high up in the RAF. Seemed he'd been flying down from Scotland to the South for Christmas in 1944. But he never got there.



## Mind the peacock

### More of Freda's memories

We had our butter and a can of milk from Holloways Farm where some of my brothers worked, writes **Freda Morris** from Acton Beauchamp. My brother Charlie churned butter on a Wednesday and Miss Evie made it up into half pound pats. Brother Bert was presented with a long service medal on 15 June, 1976 by HRH Princess Anne for 47 years service to the Holloway family. In 1982 Bert was presented with a medal for 52 years service at the Three Counties Show at Malvern.

We had no flush toilets in those days and our toilet was half way up the garden in a brick shed. We had to take a candle at night to see our way up the garden path, then as we got to the door a gust of wind would come and blow the candle out. Then you were left in the dark.

In the Second World War Miss Chapman who ran Chapman's Circus, had animals evacuated to Acton Beauchamp Rectory. We used to go down the Rectory to see the animals being trained.

My mother died when she was 64. My two sisters were in service. I looked after Father till he died. Then they wanted a postman to deliver letters as the postman, Mr Gardener, was retiring. I put in an application for the post of Auxiliary Post Woman for Acton Beauchamp and was successful. I started my job in May 1966. I had to meet the mail van at 6.35am, which came from Worcester. Then I would sort the letters at the post office then ride my bicycle with a bag of letters, parcels and phone books. My hours of duty were 6.35am until 10am. My wage was £5.19s a week. After I got home I did the housework and washing and cooking for my three brothers who were single and still at home. I biked nine miles every day and walked when it was snowing. I enjoyed every minute of it.

The people on my round were very kind and friendly to me. The dogs were also friendly and I did not once get bitten: my only fear was a peacock at the Church House which took a dislike to me.



*Freda before she became Acton Beauchamp's post woman, pictured with her sister.*



*Farmwork: Freda and family with the farm horse and cart.*

## Publishing family memoirs

Herefordshire Lore may run some winter workshops on how to go about publishing your memoirs, or those of a relative or friend. Interested? Contact us. (Contact details on the back page)

Joy Williams' published account of her Mum, 'Dear Longlegs' cost £500 for 600 copies, not £50 as we wrote (IOA 12, Late Spring).

## Allensmore house hunt

**June Jonigk** wants to find out about E C Woollard, Furnishers and Ironmongers 10 High Town, Hereford. "We found the name on a label to 'Mrs Baker Allensmore' behind a skirting board at the former coaching inn where we live at Allensmore. It used to be the Pelican Inn, although there was also a blacksmith there. We also found an 1817 George III silver shilling and a pewter thimble."



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## Searching for Middlemiss

"In response to Vicky Rayson's quest (IOA 12, Late Spring)," writes **Brian Bedford**, "I used to work in a butcher's shop in Weobley, Preece Bros, between 1960 and 1970. There was a Catholic school next door run by a priest, Father Ward and his teacher, Mrs Middlemiss who lived in Broxwood. She had a daughter called Pam who worked in the grocery shop across the road, Hayes Stores. Pam was the van driver, delivering groceries to the surrounding areas. She married Sam Sheers and they also lived in Broxwood."

## Foxley School

**Pat Davies** recalls her first job as a teacher: at 'little Poland', Foxley school, September 1959. "I was in charge of Class 1, about 25, five to six year olds (below). They were from both British and Polish families awaiting housing at Green Lanes or Newton Farm, Hereford. When I started, numbers were at their peak, gradually becoming fewer as the families were housed. There was great excitement each time someone was offered a key and they went to see their new home. The lease of Foxley was running out and, as the land was due to be returned to the owner, no new families were moving in. Mrs Letitia Kurhan,

the head teacher, had built the school up from the beginning and took pride in doing her best for the School, even as the numbers fell.

"Many children never left the Estate so Mrs Kurhan organised a Christmas trip to Hereford to visit the Cathedral, have tea and see the Christmas lights.

In summer 1959 she organised a trip to the seaside. Parents, children and friends were all invited to join the bus trip to Barry Island.

"When the day came excited children and families tramped up to the school playground and took up their allotted places on one of the four buses, leaving Foxley almost empty of people. Children whose parents could not come were looked after by the school staff and a good time was had by all on the beach at Barry (below)."



# SNAPSHOT



*Bring back the trees! Doreen Skinner on her bike in Chestnut Avenue, Putson, Hereford, in the days when each avenue was planted with its own, named species of tree. The trees were cut down in the early 1950s.*

## What's On

August 24 – 29: Palace ArtFest, Hereford Cathedral 01432 374261.

August 25, September 1, 15, 22, 29: lunchtime organ concerts, Hereford Cathedral.

September 12: Kington Show.

October 10/11: The Big Apple festival. 01531 670544.

October 12/13: Ledbury Hop Fair, 07831 232259.

October 17/18: Cider Making Festival, Hereford Cider Museum. 01432 354207.

October 18: Autumn Plant Fair, Hergest Croft Gardens, Kington. 01544 230160.

## Bedford's Austin

**Brian Bedford** with his 1931 Austin 7 Nippy in Hereford High Town. Brian is a member of the newly formed Austin 7 owners and enthusiasts club. Give Stuart Thomas a call if you want to join: 01432 353100 (Photo: Rosemary Lillico)



*Another poser from Rosemary Lillico. Where is it? And what was it?*

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