

In Our Age

Living local history

Issue 23 Winter 2012



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In Our Age

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Mark joins IOA



A warm welcome to **Mark Hubbard** who steps in as interim chairman of Herefordshire Lore. He follows David Benjamin who died last year.



Mark lives in Castle Cliffe, Hereford, the only part of Hereford Castle still standing. Castle Cliffe has been in his family since 1906. "It was bought by my great-great grandfather, William Parby when he retired as manager of Hereford Gas Works in 1906. "William had four daughters - all staunch suffragettes. One of them, Beatrice received this postcard (left) from Emily Pankhurst."

Another sister, Connie, married one Arthur Hubbard. They ran The Residence Hotel in Broad Street, selling up in 1960 when the site was immediately re-developed. Mark bought Castle Cliffe when his own great aunt, Constance Parsons died in 1999. He has been slowly restoring the medieval building ever since. His partner runs a small holiday let in Castle Cliffe and Mark was elected to Herefordshire Council in 2007, following in his great-great grandfather's footsteps.

Where's my copy?

Herefordshire Lore, run by volunteers, has been publishing Herefordshire memories since 1989. IOA costs £6,000 a year and we rely on grants, donations and sponsors.

Times are tight and we have cut the number of free copies available at Franklin House, Herefordshire Libraries, the Record Office, tourist offices and other venues.

Want to make sure of your copy? **Subscribe now** before the new postal charges are introduced.

One year - still only £10. Fill out the form on the back page or go to www.herefordshirelore.org.uk.

A big thank you for all your kind donations.

Back issues

Did you know you can download IOA for free and see all the previous issues at www.herefordshirelore.org.uk Old copies of the original Age To Age are available at the County Records Office, Harold Street, Hereford.

Day centres, residential homes and clubs ... Did you know you can bulk order IOA for only £25 a year? Or that you can invite our volunteers in for a visit or a talk?

Advertise your service! Do you provide a service for older people in Herefordshire? Advertise in our Spring Special Pull-out.

Call IOA on **07845 907891**

King at St Owens Cross

As celebrations gear up for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, **Marjorie Powell** from Ross remembers the day she went eye to eye with King George VI at St Owens Cross near Ross.



Marjorie, left, with her family, little Jack, Nancy, father Albert, Cecile and her mum, Kate, holding baby Bill.

"My Dad ran the pub and we heard the King was coming by to decorate some general. I'd gone down into the kitchen and was looking through the window, which faced the Abergavenny Road and there he was!" In her teens Marjorie worked in London as nursemaid to the three children of Winston Churchill's neurologist, Lord Brain. She returned when war broke out and signed up for munitions work at the Royal Ordnance Factory in Rotherwas. She twice escaped a terrible fate. "I was working on the 25lb bombs and we were in the canteen on the north side when the Home Guard came in. 'Get on the bloody floor: Jerry's here,' they shouted. Well I didn't want to be stuck inside a bombed out building so I ran outside. Just then one of the bombs exploded and it knocked me right back inside the canteen." Suffering minor cuts Marjorie escaped serious injury, but witnessed some terrible injuries in one woman pulled from the wreckage. The following year a late night film show at the Roxy in Ross led to her missing the work bus by minutes the next day. "I stayed home working in the pub when we heard a loud rumble." Later she learned that one of the 25lb bombs where she normally worked had exploded.

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Narrow escape

Eleven-year-old **Decia Green's** short life flashed before her when she fell into the frozen Wye in 1940.

She was reminded of the event after John Slatford's account in Issue 22 (Disaster on the Wye).

"We'd been playing down by the Bassom in Bartonsham then went up river, which was completely frozen over, to where the Art College was [below the Castle Green]. Apparently a lady had committed suicide just below the school and they had broken the ice to get her out. One of the boys said: 'See how far you can go' and suddenly there was this awful cracking noise and we all just went straight in.

"It was all green and our heavy clothes weighed us down. So many things flashed in my head including my father saying: 'Don't go near the river.' I came up and there was a Chinese girl from our school whose father ran the laundry opposite Ogilvy's where the RAF men used to get their collars done.

"Audrey! Audrey!' I shouted. 'Come and save me!' I went down again, came back up again and Audrey was saying something but I couldn't hear. I don't remember anymore.

"Apparently Miss James, a college student in my class at the Bluecoat School jumped in, but I clung hold of her and was taking her down. Then Mr Collins jumped in and, breaking the ice with his elbows, managed to get me ashore. The next thing I remember was waking up in hospital with this large apparatus over me full of electric light bulbs as they thawed me out."

Four children, three girls and a boy were drowned. Decia and Iris Cotterell were rescued.



"My life flashed before me."
Decia Powell (nee Green)

Talking shop

Another round of high street closures reminds **Carole Fleetwood** from Gloucester about Hereford's old shops.

After moving away to Essex, she writes, I used to come and stay with my grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Carter of Clive Street, every school holiday.

My parents would join us late on Christmas Eve, coming up on the Paddington steam train. We'd be in the waiting room on Platform 3 at Barrs Court Station, a cheery fire ablaze in the grate as the station staff kept us informed of the train's progress.

"Hasn't got to Worcester yet!" we'd be informed so we would venture up Commercial Road and into High Town to look at the Christmas shop windows. What a joy they were: Greenlands with its arcade, beautifully dressed windows of toys, Pritchard's menswear, Wakefield Knights, Augustus Edwards, Kings London House, Fredericks with goods thoughtfully and attractively displayed. Window dressing then was an art so sadly neglected today.

Then it would be back to Barrs Court to greet our relatives when the train eventually arrived. In the late 1950s, when there was snow on Boxing Day and my parents had to return home, we only had one spare pair of wellington boots. My uncle, Bert Munn of Portfield Street, accompanied father wearing the boots to Barrs Court, then brought them home for mother to repeat the journey. When they reached Paddington there was not a snowflake to be seen.



Lennards Shoes. "Apart from a short walk to Goldings or Hardings most shoppers' needs could be satisfied in High Town in the 1950s," writes Carole Fleetood.

Share your shopping memories

Many readers have fond memories of shopping, and working in, county shops and pubs. What do you remember of Greenlands, for example? Did you work there? Do you have any photographs?

We'd love to hear from you on **07845 907891**, **info@herefordshirelore.org.uk** or at **Herefordshire Lore, PO Box 9 Hereford HR1 9BX**

Front cover: Tony Williams, production manager at Barronia Metals produced a wonderful record of Herefordshire life with his Leica camera. See From My Album, pages 4 and 5.

From My Album: Decia Powell and Maureen



College Hill Christmas Party

C. H. 'Tony' Williams used his Leica camera through the 1940s and 1950s and took this evocative picture at Queensway, College Hill Hereford in 1946. Production manager at Barronia Metals, the Widemarsh Street, Hereford factory that turned out vital aircraft components, Tony and his family lived in the lodge at Bryngwyn Manor, Wormelow.



Kingstone School

Decia Powell's late husband, Ivor lived at the Batcho, Madley and went to school in the late 1930s at Kingstone, above. Decia (nee Green) lived in Eign Mill "next to Greenland's timber yard. There used to be a big tip at the end of Folly Street: all the rubbish was piled in to fill up the dingle. Father, Bill, worked for the South Wales electricity sub station in Widemarsh Street after working as a stoker on the railways, 'the mainline' as my mother used to remind us proudly."

County Music

The County Music Festival with the Margaret Allen Preparatory School at the Shire Hall around 1949. Maureen Williams (now Beauchamp) sits, sixth from the left, on the second row.



Check out
www.herefordshirelore.org.uk

Beauchamp open their family albums for IOA



Bryngwyn Manor

The Manor at Wormelow was requisitioned by the army (owners Ernest and Jane Oakley moved out in to a wing of the house). It was home, briefly, to an Indian regiment. Maureen Williams poses beside two of the soldiers. Can you identify the regiment? Are they Rajputs?



Panto time

Having survived her river ordeal (see page 3) Decia went on to become ward clerk at the County Hospital. An amateur dramatics fan, here she is as the Pearly Queen in the County and General hospitals pantomime, Dick Whittington.



Swearing in

Tony Williams snapped Cyril Franklin being sworn in as mayor in the mid-1940s. There is a story to be told about the outsized hat on the gentleman behind.



Mayoral support

Hereford's 630th mayor, Julie Woodward, came to support an IOA fund raising event, So You Think You Know Herefordshire? in December. Julie enjoys a laugh with Herefordshire Lore's Rosemary Lilico.



At Loggerheads

After her glimpse at life in Redhill, Joan Thomas takes us back to a Shropshire childhood in another extract from her memoirs.

I had been at Loggerheads with my family for years. Loggerheads was a delightful backwater of tranquil charm in Staffordshire, close to the Shropshire border. There were four of us, my mother, my father, my twin sister, Joyce, and me. I am five minutes older than Joyce, though reminding her of my seniority never worked.



"My twin sister, Joyce, and me. I am five minutes older, but reminding her of my seniority never worked."

We lived at the Police Station where my father was Sergeant in Charge. Mum was called a Police Matron, a title that meant it fell to her to search any female detainees we might hold in our cell.

Market Drayton was four miles away and we could go there on bus or bicycle, downhill all the way going, but coming back was forty-five minutes of uphill grind.

My father was in the Staffordshire Police Force and moving home was one of the exigencies of the service. Dad was soon to be promoted to the rank of Inspector so yet another move was in prospect.

My mum fed our detainees well. "They must have been **very** unhappy to have done 'that'," she would say. What 'that' was, she never said and we knew better than to ask. The dark cell beyond the

office was forbidding. A fixed wooden bench with a wooden block at one end for a pillow was the only consent to furniture. At the pillow end was a small window. It was much too high to see through and had iron bars to prevent escape (although only a fool would want to leave my mum's custodial care). The heavy, clunky door had a small area of thick glass, at eye level, for the duty officer to spy through.

"They'll want to come here again," my dad would tease, as mum took in tea and biscuits on a tray.

My sister, Joyce, and I were chuffed about living at a police station, but not so mum. She was dismayed at having to carry drinking water from a spring well down the road. Some people came a fair distance for drinking water, but our Police Station was quite near and Dad drew the water when he could, but if he was on duty Joyce and I often did it.

Water for washing clothes, dishes - and us - was from a not-so-pure well in our garden. On Mondays it was wise to fill several buckets early, before Mrs Worthington from the stone cottage opposite, got going with her washing and rendered it even less pure. Mrs Worthington, a widow, took in washing to make ends meet and once she'd started, our well water would be endowed with second-hand suds.

I was lucky the day I landed in a bed of stinging nettles and got stung from head to toe. It was like this. I was drawing water from the garden well when I slipped and plunged into five feet of water. I was shorter than that and couldn't swim.

My cry for help fell on the deaf ears of Jersey cows enjoying the grass in the adjoining field. I grabbed the vegetation on the sides of the well. Then with one almighty heave I was out of the well and into the nettles. A bargain swap. I lay there in glorious agony.

Our bog was a sort of bucket in a tumbledown shed at the bottom of the garden. Dad, armed with a can of Jeyes Fluid and a packet of Woodbines to dilute the smell, dug a hole in our garden each week and buried the effluent.



Joan Thomas: forced as a child to struggle with her vowels.

When we visited the bog after dark, we took a torch and an umbrella. The torch was to shine on the rats and the umbrella was to clout them with if they came too close. When the rat catcher came he would bring special cages to trap four at a time. Then he would dunk the quartet, cage an' all, into the rainwater butt.

Joyce and I went to an assortment of schools, though none with much academic inclination. Each school found fault with the one we had just left. At one school Miss Cartwright told us: "Forget the way you were told to do 'take aways'," implying that we couldn't handle the word 'subtraction' as it had more than one syllable.

"If you can't go," she continued, making it sound as though we were constipated, "add a Ten to the ToP and a one to the BoTTom".

And another time it was: "Now watch me, twins." (Hadr't we got names?) "It's 'boooook', 'toooook', and 'loooook'. We daren't argue and struggled with those long vowels, watching our lips contort in the hand mirrors provided as visual aids. Mum and Dad hooted: "Tell Miss Cartwright to listen to the wireless and Alvar Liddell."

Then came the day when Dad was to become Sergeant in Charge of a whole area: we were going to live at a real police station with a cell and everything. There would be a telephone and a proper office with a typewriter (my dad was really quick at typing). It was going to be such fun!

Next time: Buses, bilberries and blackouts.

Moving memoirs. Have you a story to tell? Then tell our readers. Contact IOA 07845 907891.

Spanish evacuees

Following **James Petrie's** appeal for information about nineteen children evacuated from Spain during the Civil War in July 1937 to Berrington Street, Hereford, we discovered this letter from Monica Williams in Shoreham, written in 1990: "In the 1930s when I was at the St Francis Xavier's Catholic school, we were told, before we went to play, that there would be other children in the yard and not to fuss or crowd around them."

"When we went out there they were: dark eyes, dark hair. Foreign! Some of the bigger girls eventually taught us a skipping game: 'Istaba, laba rerra, frandi, frandango, nebagay, nebagando, frandu, frandango.'"

Dancing girls

Betty Butcher's Dancing School (IOA 22) brought back memories, writes **Doreen Oldman** (nee Spiers) from Moor Farm, Hereford. Doreen recalls how they gave displays at fetes, garden parties and, at Christmas, the Green Dragon and the Imperial. "I used to do tap, ballet and ballroom. My mother, Eva, made a lot of the costumes and dresses when we lived in Widemarsh Street next to Fryer's Garage (now Wickes). The studio was in High Town, next to the Booth Hall passage and damaged by fire last year."

G.I.s

Mention of G.I.s in IOA 22 prompted **Ann Milne** to recall American servicemen stationed in Brockhampton near Ross during the war. "They lived in Brockhampton Court. When Christmas came they gave a wonderful party for local children. I was given a doll by Santa Claus which I still have. She has a china head, complete with a loop to thread a ribbon through and china hands. One of my cousins was staying at my house. She came along to the party, but she didn't get a present!"

George before Tudor

George & Tudor, writes **Derrick Blake** (in response to Doug Emery, IOA 22: Tudor's) were based at Canal Wharf having moved there from Withington where they were situated on the side of the canal. Their name was M.E. George, but on moving to Hereford's canal basin they gained a partner, Mr. Tudor. Some years later, the 1990s I believe, it was sold to Jewsons where it still trades although the Jewson chain has since sold out to a French company. Tudors is still locally owned and operates from Burcott Road where it is thriving. It was founded by Roger Heston, son of the former George and Tudor manager. Roger sold the business to four of his managers and retired to the Cotswolds where he is busy making cider.

That's Dad!

That's my dad, says **Mary Vaughan** when she saw Bernard Haines' photo of Olympic hopefuls (IOA 22).

Mr. Williams of Newnham on Severn corrected our spelling of the former tile works: it was Thynnes. "I knew the owners' son, Dennis, when he lived at the back of the Starting Gate in Holmer and travelled all over the place," says Mr. Williams.

Firewatch

A reader who worked at the County Library, Bath Street, Hereford in the mid 1940s recalled her days firewatching. "We shared our duties with staff from the County Offices and having been taught to operate stirrup pumps, and issued with camp beds and itchy blankets, we slept in the Education Department. One of our crew was the pathologist, a good story-teller. But neither bombs nor eerie tales frightened us as much as the sound of mice scrabbling in waste paper baskets near our ears."

Dressing up

Jim Lawes and former archivist Sue Hubbard went Victorian for this event at the County Records Office a few years back.

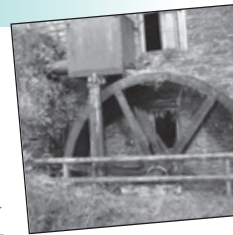


Strange names

From Madley's Penny Plock, Kingstone's Coldstone Cross to Ross' Old Maids Walk, we have strange street names countywide. But, asks **Ben Moule**, is there was a good resource for Hereford's old street names?

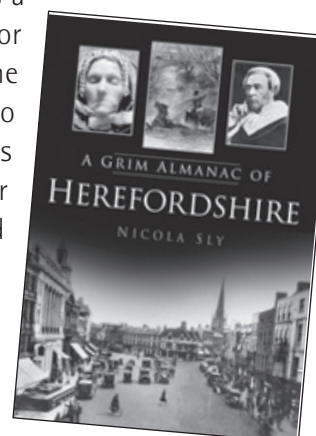
Run of the Mill

Eighteen Herefordshire mill owners will open on National Mills Weekend on May 12/13. Herefordshire boasts a rich range of different mills in attractive surroundings, says organizer Alan Stoyel (01544 230235 www.nationalmillsweekend.co.uk) Rowlestone Mill will be open and serving tea and cakes on May 12.



Grim past

From torment and tragedy to diverse tales of murderers, bodysnatchers, rioters and rebels, *A Grim Almanac of Herefordshire* has a ghastly story for every day of the year thanks to author Nicola Sly's exploration of our county's lurid history. Published by The History Press the book costs £14.99.





Tony Williams meticulously detailed every photo he took on his beloved Leica. This is the Rhymist's Dance Band outside the American Hospital at Foxley, near Mansell Lacy in 1946.

After serving as a military hospital Foxley Camp provided temporary homes for many Polish people forced into exile by the war, and Herefordshire families desperate for somewhere to live.

Puzzler

Herefordshire Lore chairman, **Mark Hubbard**, poses this puzzler for readers: where was it? And what was it called?

As for Doug Emery's Puzzler in the last issue **Mrs. Field** from Tupsley, **Doreen Oldman**, **Pam Cochrane** ("I used to call in there on my way home from work) and **Ken Griffiths** all identified it as 39 Ledbury Road, Hereford (next to the Texaco petrol station). It was run by William Marsh in 1933 and later by Mr. and Mrs. Badman, says Ken.



History Day

Lady Hawkins School, Kington will be the focus for a history day on Saturday May 26. There's talks - the Hay & Kington Tramways (Geoff Mitchell) and Water Power in Kington (Alan Stoyel) - history tours and displays. And it's only £12! Details? Call 01544-231929.



Historic Kington: workers outside the water powered foundry opened in 1820 and pictured here in 1900 shortly before its closure. (Photo: Kington Museum).

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