

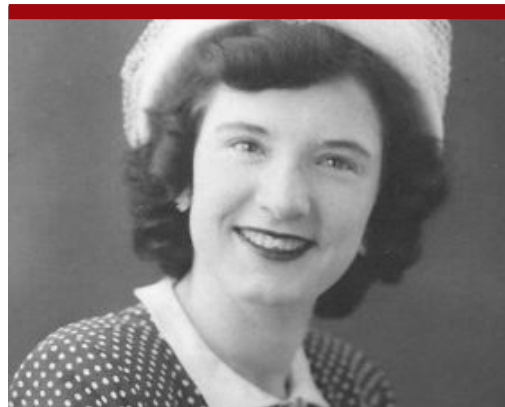
In Our Age

Living local history

Issue 29
Summer 2013



Market Memories
Page 2



The Mystery of June
Stone - Page 3



Black Mountain
Crash - Page 7

Chewing the Cud – Market Memories

"You don't want people asking for market memories in 20 years time – it has to be done now!"

As the skyline changes over Hereford's old livestock market, plans are afoot for an exciting new heritage project. Thanks to a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £72,100, memories of the old market are to be brought to life on film along with a website devoted to the market.

The 18-month 'Chewing the Cud' project will be run by the team who produced the 2011 Cathedral Close in Living Memory project: Rick and Julia Goldsmith from Catcher Media Social, Jo Henshaw, Marsha O'Mahony and IOA.

Catcher Media Social's Julia Goldsmith explained: "Hereford's old livestock market was such a cherished, cultural institution. We're going to use it to draw people together from across the county to learn new skills, share stories and to celebrate our shared agricultural heritage."

The market film, based on people's stories, will be screened across the county while the website will be so user-friendly anyone can use it: "We want everyone to be able to upload their own comments, memories, photos and videos," says Julia.

As one market man put it: "You don't want people in twenty years' time asking for memories of the livestock market. It has to be done now, not just for farmers but for the wider community too."

Herefordshire Lore volunteers will be working on the project. Can you help too? "If you have a story to share or would like to help us with film making, recording stories, research or helping to update the website, please get in touch," says Jo Henshaw. "Guided, hands-on training is available in all these areas as part of the project." You can get in touch with Jo Henshaw either by phone on 07788 643184 or 01432 266611, or by email: joannahenshaw@btinternet.com, or by post at Herefordshire Lore, PO Box 9, Hereford HR1 9BX

'Chewing the Cud' is also supported by Cargill Community Partnership and the NFUM Community Giving Fund.

In 2007 Herefordshire Lore published *A Slap of the Hand – The History of Hereford Market* with help from the National Heritage Lottery.



Market memories: Gerald Skyrme and Dennis Price share their recollections with Marsha O'Mahony. Can you help? Phone 01432 266611



Off to Market. Hereford boasted the second largest cattle market in the UK. (Photo: Anne-Marie Davies)

Living local history

Hello and welcome to the summer issue 2013 IOA. We're delighted that the National Heritage Lottery is to support the Market Memories project – see above. And thank you for being in touch over Veteran Voices (pages 4 and 5). Please spread the word about our campaign to add family names to the ROF Rotherwas memorial.

We hope you all enjoy our History Coffee at the Pavilion and John Harrison's talk on Hereford's shops. The very first Age to Age was 20 years ago and featured stories about George Mason, Chadds, Boots, Bradleys, Haines and Greenlands. You can browse that first issue at www.herefordshirelore.org.uk

Mark Hubbard

Chairman, Herefordshire Lore.

Editor: Bill Laws **Pictures:** Bobbie Blackwell

Design: Pink Sheep Design **Website:** Chris Preece **Print:** ABC Print

Herefordshire Lore: Eileen Klotz, Rosemary Lillico, Sandy Green, Marsha O'Mahony, Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe (County Records), Julie Orton-Davies, Harvey Payne (treasurer), Liz Rouse, Chris and Irene Tomlinson, Betty Webb, Mary Hilary, Derick Barnes and Carol Smith.



Hereford
City Council

Front Page: Scudamore Boys. Angela Turner loaned this photo of swimming champs Peter Russell and Vic Gammage (back, left and right) and Doug and Roy Collins (front, left and right) from 1933 and '34.

My First Job

Second The Merchant Navy

Just after Christmas 1938 16-year-old **Ivan Hall** applied to B & S Shipping in Cardiff to become an apprentice deck officer. (He had been working in an engineering firm in Wednesbury since he was 14). B & S was known by sailors as the Saint Line since all her ships were named Saint and by November 1941 he was on board the SS St Clears with convoy PQ5 bound for Archangel on the north western Russian coast carrying a cargo of tanks, aircraft, shells, ammunition and two-pounder guns.

The Arctic Convoys sailed from North America and the UK taking lend-lease military supplies to the ports of Murmansk and Archangel where Ivan was bound. In all 78 convoys would deliver almost 25% of the total aid during the war. But it was one of the most dangerous routes in the world and 85 merchant vessels would be attacked and sunk along with 16 Royal Naval escort ships.

PQ5 was one of the first of the Arctic Convoys. Dressed against the



Ivan Hall, right, with fellow seaman Rogers in the Brazilian port of Santos. (Christmas in Archangel published by Trafford ISBN 978-1-4251-1970-6)

extreme cold in their duffel coats, thick woollen long johns and fur-lined gloves (Ivan was grateful for his thick, oiled wool jersey, a gift knitted by Canadian volunteers), the sailors dodged icebergs and German U boats to make a safe landing close to Archangel. The cargo was unloaded, but by now winter had set in, the river froze and the Saint Clear was

marooned in ice for the next six months. "We were in a very grim place, but one of the sailors found a shop which sold musical instruments. I learnt to play the Russian mandolin and we made a band."

Eventually, reloaded with a timber and paper pulp cargo, the ship broke free and returned to Britain as part of convoy QP13. In fog they passed the ill-fated PQ17 (24 of the 41 ships were sunk) and Ivan's St Clears reached the safety of Loch Ewe after the convoy separated off the coast of Iceland. The 19 ships in the second part of the convoy hit bad weather, lost their position and ran into a mine field. Five ships went down. "Yet again I had been lucky," Ivan recalled in his book, *Christmas In Archangel*.

That was until, as Third Mate on a ship supporting the North Africa campaign, they were attacked. "We were sunk as simply and as quickly as that. It was sad to see the ship go, but everyone got away safely."

Ivan, who lives in Ludlow, remains a modest hero whose exploits on the Arctic Convoys finally received national recognition with the award of the Arctic Convoy Medal earlier this year.

The mystery of June Stone

In the summer of 1948 June Stone left the house where she worked on Aylestone Hill, Hereford for a holiday with relatives in Norwich. She never arrived. A police investigation revealed nothing. Her family assumed she was dead.

June's daughter in law, Kim Lamer from London, takes up the story. "It turns out that my mum-in-law, June Stone, was born out of wedlock in Norwich 1929. In 1934 her Mum Margaret married and went on to have two more children with her new husband, Cecil. But in 1939, Margaret died and Cecil was not allowed to adopt his 10-year-old stepdaughter. She was sent to live in a children's home in Ascot, Berkshire.

"By 1948 19-year-old June was working for Messrs. T. O. D. Steel on Aylestone Hill possibly as a domestic. After she disappeared her distraught aunts and cousins never saw her again. They presumed she had died. Yet in March 1951, Mum gave birth to a son in London (my husband, Pete) and lived a long, happy life with my late father-in-law.

"What happened between that summer of 1948 in Hereford and Pete's birth in the spring of 1951 is still a mystery. I don't suppose we will ever know what made her run away to London, create a whole new persona for herself and cut herself off from her Norwich family.

"Mum died in 2011. She developed dementia towards the end and only then started talking about her past and revealing names to us. We have now managed to find cousins and aunts we didn't know existed – and that has been a lovely experience."



Disappeared from Hereford: something happened to the smiling 19-year-old, either during her time in Hereford, or shortly after she left. Her story was to have a happy ending.

Veteran Voices



Kitty Hall (nee Verrill) was a World War I Canary Girl and proud to be photographed in her munitioneer's uniform. The photo comes from Kitty's niece, Sue Verrill from Peterchurch who also recalls her uncle George, Kitty's brother. He died while a prisoner of war in October 1918, aged 20. By November the war was over.

Veteran Voices is campaigning for the name Ordnance Factory Rotherwas to be added to the Herefordshire War Memorial. The names put forward so far are:

Annie Adams, Joan Adams, Cissie Alpin, Wilfred John Archer, (nee Wargen), Elsie Clayton, Molly Clifford, Annie May Davies, Dew, Clohilda Dickson, Winifred Fuller, Arthur Gregory, Viol, Marie Hill (nee Wills), Doreen Holbrook, Catherine Jones, Ed, Levett, Elsie Marsden (nee Aspley), Dorothy Morgan, Bill Parker, William and Gladys Richard, Ivy Robson, Beryl Sadler (nee D, Stephens, Gladys Thomas, Kitty Verrill, Anna Walker, James V

We plan to republish *In The Munitions – Women at War in Hereford* from the Rotherwas Memorial. To reserve a copy (price £10) or

Remembering ROF Rotherwas

Royal Ordnance Factory Rotherwas, now the industrial estate south of Hereford city, was the site of an armaments factory in both world wars. One of the oldest, and largest, in the county it employed over 6,000 women and men.



Anne Worrall's father **Arthur Gregory** (pictured above) worked there, as did **Fred Preece** (he drove an ammunition lorry, says son Graham). **Hilda Holley** was in the filling section, her hair turning orange from the explosives, writes daughter Kathryn from Much Dewchurch.

Many workers attended whatever the weather: **Anna Walker**, writes Joan Martin-Austin, cycled to her job as a cashier every day from Grandstand Road, walking if it snowed while **Gladys May Thomas** only failed to go in when she contracted double pneumonia. Daughter Phyllis Dinnie wrote: "We lost our father when I was three. Mother bought me, my brother and sister up alone at Ruckhall, Eaton Bishop." In the winter of 1947 Gladys, marooned in town, walked home through the snow with food for the children. (One night she encountered a ghostly presence on the way home: a German pilot's parachute caught in the trees. "He was later caught and interned.")

Allen Jones recalls visiting his mother, **Catherine Jones**, at the Hostel where both Rita Tabb's parents, **William** and **Gladys Richards** lived. **Joan Adams** worked in the canteen (her mother, **Annie**, was also at Rotherwas) where she met her husband-to-be, **Bill Parker**, a railway shunter who remained with the railways for nearly 40 years, according to their daughter, Mrs. Weaver.

Forewoman **Dora Stephens'** duties included checking women for anything metal that might spark an explosion, says D.R. Stephens whose sister Ruby was another munitioneer. There was **Doreen Holbrook** (later Preece) mother to Valerie Williams of Hampton Park; **Dora Carpenter** (Morris) mother

"Adding their names to the Memorial would be a lovely tribute to the men and women of Rotherwas" Gloria Stewart.

names of relatives who worked at the Royal Ordnance to the Memorial that stands on the estate.

Majorie Ballenger, Vera Butler, Dora Carpenter, Florence Clarke, Bessie Amy Davies (nee Welch), William Thomas Davies, Eva and Lilian Griffiths (nee Williams), William and Norah Griffiths, Edgar Jones, John Jones, Kathleen Lawley (nee Davies), Bertram Carter, Thomas and Dorothy Passmore, Fred Preece, Doris Prosser, (Davies), Phyllis Shipton, Dorothy Smart, Dora Stephens, Ruby Wilkinson, Albert Wills. (Additional research: Faith Ford)

for *Herefordshire* this autumn, adding the workers' names that are absent to add a name to the list above, please call, write or email us.

of Mrs. J. Whilding from Whitecross; Mrs. S. Eckersall's parents **William** and **Norah Griffiths** (Norah lost her teeth from the effects of cordite; canteen supervisor **Eva Evelyn Dew**, mum to D. M. Breakwell from Whitecross; and Gloria Stewart's mother, **Ivy Frances Robson**. Carole Steele's mother **Dorothy Smart** left Rotherwas in the summer of 1942 when she was pregnant. The following day, the woman she worked with was killed when the factory was bombed.

John Richard Jones worked there while his son, Griff Loydd from Ottery St Mary was a chorister at Holy Trinity Church in Whitecross Road, Hereford. "On the evening of Tuesday 30th May 1944 us boys had finished choir practice when there came a devil of a bang and a huge cloud of black smoke. (I ran home to Kings Acre Road relieved to find dear Dad just about to leave.) A shell had exploded setting off another 30 bombs and mines. I remember seeing a long list of the dead posted outside the Town Hall later and the bravery awards: five George Medals, 9 British Empire Medals, 15 King's Commendations, an MBE and an OBE.



William and Gladys Griffiths, centre, lived in Neath until their house was bombed. Their two children were sent to live with grandparents at Knighton while the couple worked at Rotherwas, living in one room at the Hostel. Rita Tabb: "Eventually they moved into one of the houses built for workers at Hunderton Avenue so my brother (8) and I (6) were able to be back with Mum and Dad – we had missed them so much. Mother worked filling shells and her hair turned from chesnut brown to a horrible yellow as did the whites of her eyes.

"It is good if there is something to remember all those workers."

A Toothbrush for Christmas

Evacuated to Herefordshire after being bombed out in the blitz, Peggy Baker went to work at Rotherwas, as her son, **Geoffrey Baker** recalls.

Bombed out of our London home, my twin brother Derek and mother Peggy Baker spent a few days sleeping on the Underground platforms at night. My mother had connections with the actress Cicely Courtneidge who put her in touch with the British author J. B. Priestley. She arranged for us to be housed in one of the Priestley nurseries in Herefordshire. We moved to the Quaker orphanage home on Rylands Hill Road in Leominster. Peggy worked at the munitions factory.



The author
J.B. Priestley.

We had few presents at Christmas, but one Christmas was special. A few months earlier a dozen of us had had walked past the German POW camp and the adult with us stopped to chat with one of the Germans. That Christmas each of us children was given a toothbrush by the Germans. Not much by worldly standards you might say, but the thought and sentiment has stuck with me all these years.

Redhill Hostel

Horace Broad met his wife-to-be, ROF examiner Dorothy Morgan at the Munitions hostel, recalls Eva Morgan from Peterchurch.

Redhill Hostel, during the war, housed, in single rooms with communal dining facilities, about 1000 people at times, many working at Rotherwas Munitions Factory. Amongst them was my uncle Horace Broad. Born in 1901 at Shenmore, Madley, Horace had joined the railways, living in South Wales, where he married (and later divorced) having had two daughters, Beryl and Heather with whom he kept in touch and of whom he was very proud. By 1955 he was a train driver and living at Redhill. The Hostel was built during the war, off the Ross Road and it was here that he met and married my mother's younger sister, Dorothy Morgan, who had been an examiner at ROF Rotherwas. (She was one of the Veteran Voices in IOA 28).



Horace continued to drive trains in the West Midlands and South Wales for 45 years including, on one proud occasion, the train carrying the Queen Mother. Around then there were 200 train drivers working out of Hereford. In retirement Horace was the familiar figure who collected parking fees at the council car park near the County Hospital and while he and Dorothy had continued to live in married quarters at the Hostel, they finally settled at Meadow Close, often spending weekends in their caravan at Ross-on-Wye. Horace, still a tall, handsome man, died in 1992 and Dorothy in 2008. She never met Horace's daughters (her choice), but their addresses were found in her papers after her death and my sister and I were able to pass on to Heather's daughter Horace's retirement presentation gold watch and his many railway photographs.

Country living:

Geoff Nicholls continues his finely observed portrait of life in the 1930s as the waggoner's son at Netherton Farm near the British Camp on the Malvern Hills.

The farm was primarily self-supporting. If there was a surplus it usually went to Ledbury Market on a Tuesday in the car and trailer belonging to the farm tenant, Mr. Foxwell. Chickens, geese and turkeys were regarded as the wife's perks: they were prepared with lots of work and worries before Christmas.

The farm had about four working horses plus a couple of colts, a lighter horse and perhaps an older horse for odd jobs. There were 200 crossbred sheep and around 50 Hereford and Shorthorn cattle. Most animals stayed on the farm: cows were kept for breeding; the rest ran on until fit for the butcher at about three years old.

The cattle included two house cows for the farmhouse. There was a can of milk for the worker's family, the remainder of the milk going into the dairy where it was put through the separator for butter or cheese. The rest was poured through a hole in the wall to the pigs.

Pigs seemed to please themselves. There always seemed to be two or three sows with their litters around the farmyard. The litters would be weaned at about eight weeks into the pig sties. The best would go to market, the rest to be hand fed until their condition improved and they could go to market. We, like most farming families, kept two pigs in a sty at the bottom of the garden. They became pets and lived a life of luxury until the sad day when one had to be killed and the other sold.

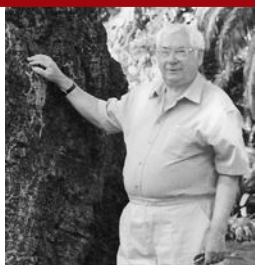


Haymaking at Netherton.

The pig sticker, a farm worker from a neighbouring farm, enjoyed a reputation for being good at his job. The low, strong pig table was recovered from where it was used last and the pig was led out with a lot of squealing and struggling to be laid on its side on the table where the pig man cut a long slit lengthways down the throat to find the artery. Then all went quiet. Every part of the pig was used and it had to be eaten soon so it was usual to share this pig with our neighbor who would return the favour when their pig was killed.

The War Years:

Henry Moss, like Geoff Nicholls, was a waggoner's boy. He continues his recollections of a boyhood at Aconbury Court.

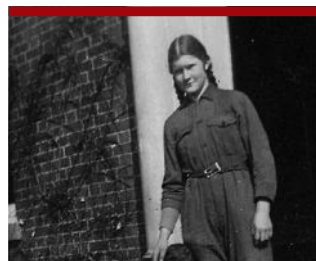


The first two years at Little Dewchurch School were carefree. I started aged 4 in September 1939 and the war seemed far away. We had sports days on Mr. Thomas' fields and Christmas parties that parents attended and lots of presents for us children. By 1941, however, food was becoming short: no red sauce, no butter (only margarine) one egg a week and one treat – a bag of crisps to share with my brother Gilbert on Saturdays. There were no overweight children then.

I used to cycle to a house by Callow Church for the cod liver oil and orange juice, which the Government issued to all children. The main A49 road was easy to cross then: I would sit by the side of the road and watch convoys of lorries and tanks heading south. It was at this time that a searchlight was built on the top of the Callow.

War was getting closer. There was the blackout, thick curtains and no lamps on my cycle so I had to cycle home from school before dark. The farm workers would play darts in the stable block most lunchtimes and evenings: during the winter they would play by the light of two candles, one either side of the dartboard.

More memories from Geoff Nicholls and Henry Moss in the next issue.

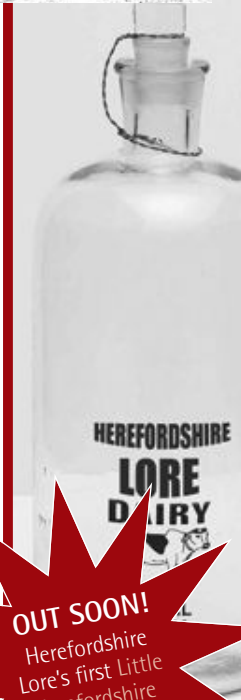


MILK HEREFORD SHIRE

Little Herefordshire Histories 1



OUT SOON!
Herefordshire
Lore's first Little
Herefordshire
History: Milk





Black Mountains crash site

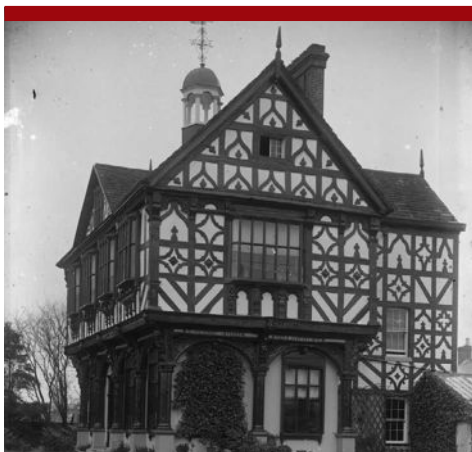
September 16 marks the 70th anniversary of the crash of US Flying Fortress B17 bomber, Ascend Charlie. Flight 42 5903 was returning from Bordeaux to its base, Framlingham in Suffolk when, due to bad weather and the loss of one engine it hit the summit of Pen Gwyllt Meirch, 1,800 feet up on the Black Mountains. All ten crew (above) died. "Every year a few local people climb the hill to pay their respects at the memorial," writes **Rosemary Lillico**. "In 2011, at the age of 73, I joined four local farmers and Derrie Edge, who has carried out much of the research. On the summit it was like another world, so peaceful, beautiful sunshine with a warm breeze, the whole mountain covered in purple heather. It's a memory I will treasure." October 22 marks another crash anniversary, that of the Short Stirling Bomber, EF 352, which came down at Rosemaund Farm, Preston Wynne in 1943, killing all nine crew. There is a memorial plaque in Preston Wynne church.

People of the Parish

Liz Pitman has been researching the cathedral parish of Hereford, exploring the relationships and tensions between Cathedral chapter and parish through the census and other archives. She will tutor a W.E.A day school on People of the Parish at the Shire Hall Saturday October 19 (£20). Book on 01981 540769 or herefordbranch@wea.org.uk

More from 1960s

"I enjoy IOA, but, although I was born in 1936, I don't connect with it much," writes **Joan Martin-Austin** from Weston-Super-Mare. Her childhood in Mortimer Road and at Holmer School was a world away." Dad was a steam train driver and we lived in our own little bubble". Let's have your recollections and photos from more recent times. What were you doing in the 1960s?



Leominster memories

Grange Court is now open from Monday to Saturday after an eight-year redevelopment that transformed the building from council offices into a community, enterprise and heritage hub. Entrance is free and displays inside tell how the Court, once the market house in the centre of Leominster, became a family home, council offices and finally the community hub run by the LARC Development Trust. (Herefordshire Council sold it to the Trust for a symbolic £1.) The Trust would love to hear your memories of the old Court. Drop in, phone 01568 737980 or email info@grangecourt.org

Cotton of Kingstone

Mention of the village doctor, Dr. Cotton of Kingston (IOA 28, page 7), reminded Allensmore's **Eddie Thompson** of their difficult bike ride to fetch grandmother's medicine in the 1940s. "Dr. Cotton would visit Grandmother at Wellbrook Peterchurch and prescribe medicines that had to be picked up from his surgery at Kingstone. My elder brother (12) and I (9) had one bicycle between us to cover the six miles each way. We took it in turns to ride, usually the distance between so many telegraph poles, and then on the descent of Batcho Hill we would both ride, one on the saddle, the other on the crossbar. In those days there was quite a sharp bend at the bottom of the hill, which we often failed to negotiate. **Rosemary Lillico** also recalls Dr. Cotton's flying planes. "I used to walk to Madley airfield to watch and I'm sure this is what started my life-long interest in aviation." Rosemary later completed a parachute course, three solo jumps from a Cessna at 2,000 feet and in 2005 briefly took over the controls of a Piper Accord during a flight over Shobdon. "I thought I had died and gone to heaven! A wonderful experience!"



Bottling line

"I think this may be Mrs. Preece, wife of Vin Preece, a painter at H.P.Bulmer", writes **Keith Morgan** on our Facebook page (In Our Age) who also recalls the Woodpecker News, the Bulmers' magazine edited by personnel manager Arthur Morris whose dog accompanied him to work and used to lie at his feet under the desk.



Who? What? When?

Well done to those who spotted that this photo (right), from **Charles Green** at Bridstow, was a singling sugar beet competition held at Lulham Court (no, Jim, it wasn't a polo competition). In particular **Tom Nellist** who provided a photo of the judges, the Cowell family judging root hoeing at Lulham Court, Madley in 1951. (Above L to R: Raymond, Jack, Archie, Frank, Sidney and Bertram). **Ivor Wadley** from Kington recalled "singling" with his mother. "I'd sit behind Mum and she'd cut the extra plants with her hoe and if there was still two seedlings left it was my job to pull one of them out." Ivor



also recalled the first time he saw his Mum, Elsie, run. "We lived at the farm cottages off Tidnor Lane near Longworth Hall in Bartestree and we'd leave the billycan to be filled with milk over the field at the end of the lane. But there used to be a big white bull that could cross the river when the water was low and one day as we were on our way over the field she suddenly dropped the can and started running for the hedge calling to Ivor to 'run for it!'" We only just made it."

Hereford shops

As Kingstone academic **John Harrison** presents Hereford Shops, the second in our series of History Coffee mornings, IOA looks at a family outfit celebrating 60 years in business, Mastercraft Cycles in Bridge Street. Three members of the (recently revived) Gannet Cycling Club, Eddie Thompson John Wathen and Edgar Thomas, each invested £50 and launched the shop at 42 Ross Road, next to The Craft builder's yard (hence the name) in 1953. They moved to Bridge Street in 1976 where Eddie, now sole

proprietor, brought in his wife Sylvia, daughter Lynnette, a full-time mechanic and a secretary to run the business. Eddie's passion for cycling saw the launch of the 60-mile Mastercraft Road Race (it continued for around 25 years). This was in the days when, the bee's knees in bikes was one with a five-speed derailleur. Eddie handed over to Lynnette and husband Nigel in 2000.

Richy Evans noted on our Facebook site: "My father remembers a wonky bike built by Eddie: you had to peddle backwards and turn the handlebars the opposite way."



Boy on a bike: the best delivery service in town.

Would you like to join Herefordshire Lore

If you're not already a member, you can join now - and receive the next 5 issues.

Individual £15 ☐ Group (10 copies) £37.50 ☐ Cheques should be payable to: HEREFORDSHIRE LORE.

Name: Contact Number:

Address:

Post Code: Email:

Send to: Herefordshire Lore, PO Box 9, Hereford HR1 9BX

Existing members will receive their reminders in the next issue.