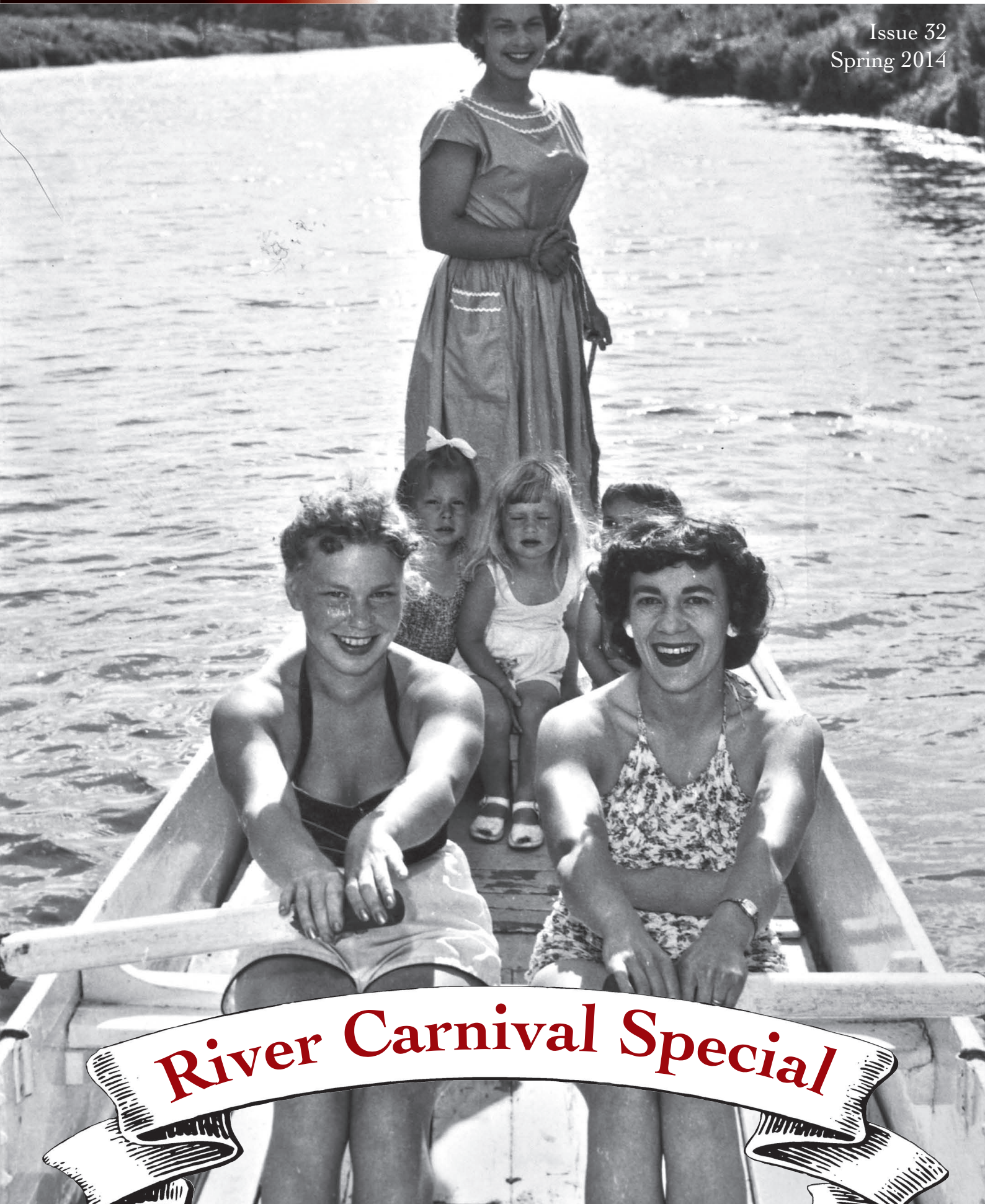


# In Our Age

Living local history

Issue 32  
Spring 2014



**River Carnival Special**





# The Odeon

"My mother Rita Williams wrote film reviews for the Citizen and Bulletin," writes **Maureen Beauchamp**, "so we went regularly to the Odeon. There were black and white poster-sized pictures of stars such as Veronica Lake with her trademark, one-sided fringe over her eye. And you could have tea and cakes on the mezzanine floor:

"Being deaf and a skilled lip reader, my mother was nevertheless provided with a hand-held amplifier that could be plugged into a socket at the end of a row. The Ritz in Commercial Road had the same facility and an organ which rose up as if by magic from under the floor; its coloured lights changing as the organist played. Smoking was allowed so we watched the films through clouds of smoke."

The Odeon, writes **Rosemary Lillico**, stood on the corner of Commercial and Gomond Street by Kings of London and an electric shop, Stones. There was a high-class function room above which became Cherry's (Hereford's first disco?). The Maylord Orchards development saw the cinema demolished in 1984.

"My Dad worked at Enterprise Garage on Gomond Street and received complimentary tickets for looking after Mr. Burder's (the cinema manager) car. (Later it was Mr. Conway's.)

"Saturday mornings my brother and I sat at the front with the College Hill Gang while the manager led us in the Club song with Ambrose Emerson on the piano. After birthdays were read out and more songs sung, the words flashed on the screen, the lights went down. That was the cue for us to go to the toilet and let in friends who couldn't pay. When the usherettes got wind of this we'd create a diversion, starting a fight which brought them running.

"After a cartoon it would be the big picture, Laurel and Hardy, Roy Rogers and Trigger, Hopalong Cassidy or the Lone Ranger and Tonto. If the goodies were chasing the baddies us kids would stamp our feet and bang on the seats which brought the usherettes running and shining their torches to identify the troublemakers. But I was very fond of one usherette, slim and blond-haired Jean. On a school trip to the seaside I bought her a diamanté brooch: years later she still had it.

## Football fans

Sarah 'Sadie' Lloyd was born at Almeley in 1896, the daughter of blacksmith Thomas Lloyd. Like many girls her age she and her sister Honor ended up working at National Filling Factory, Number 14, Rotherwas Hereford through the First World War.

As grandson Tim Smith from Hereford explains the girls formed part of the munitions' football team. Munitioneers across the country did a great job of promoting women's football, which was promptly banned by the Football Association for 50 years. See page 6.

## Milking it

Canary Girls, Spanish Civil War refugees, the old Hereford Odeon cinema and the restored River Carnival – welcome to a packed spring issue of In Our Age.

Milk production has been a central feature of farm life for over a century, Our new booklet, *Milk* celebrates the white stuff with tales of Marlbrook Dairy and the cattle market, dairies such as Bartonsham, White House Farm, The Cottage, Devon Creamery and Pool Farm, and Hereford's milk bar, opened by Jean Perkins in 1937.

To celebrate the arrival of *Milk*, you can receive your own, post-free copy: send a cheque for £4 (made out to Herefordshire Lore) to *Milk*, Herefordshire Lore, The Pavilion Castle Green, Hereford HR1 2NW and we'll mail your copy out post-free.

Mark Hubbard, chairman Herefordshire Lore.



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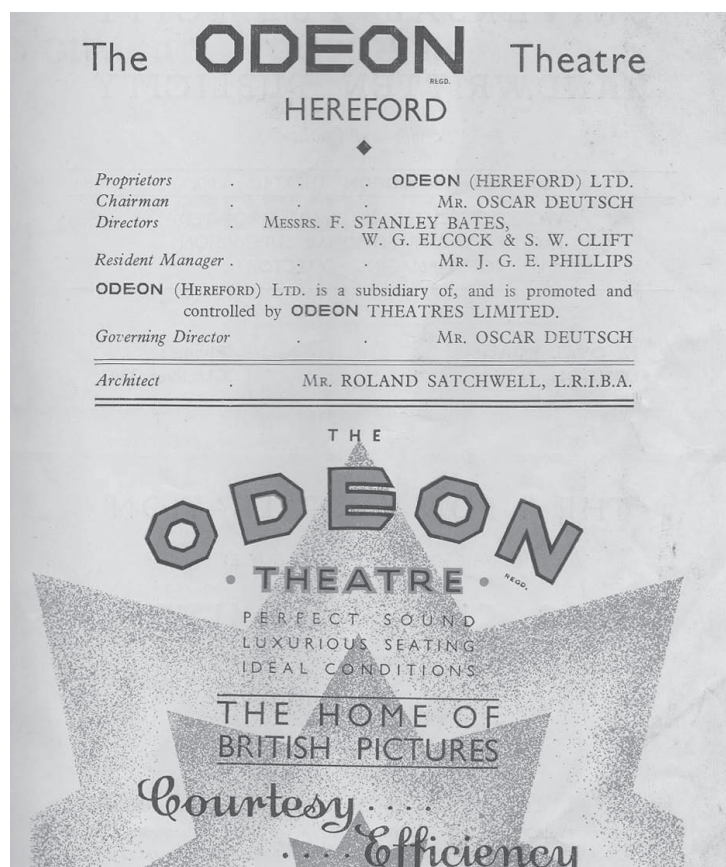
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**Herefordshire Lore:** Eileen Klotz, Rosemary Lillico, Sandy Green, Marsha O'Mahony, Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe (County Records), Julie Orton-Davies, Harvey Payne (treasurer), Liz Rouse, Chris and Irene Tomlinson, Betty Webb, David Clarke, Keith and Krystyna James, Jean O'Donnell. Munitions Group: Barry Mayne (chair).

**Front cover.** Maiden voyage: Sisters Jan and Barbara (front) and Molly Preedy (back) with nieces Christine, Kim and Debbie row to shore in Hunderton. See Hunderton Ferry back page.

The opening of a new Odeon cinema in Hereford on the site of the former cattle market inspired many readers to put pen to paper about their favourite memories of the picture palace.

**Alan Willis** recalled the “ultra modern” Odeon of 1939 - “when I saw the octagonal clock with the letters O.D.E.O.N instead of numbers, my eyes popped.” (The clock, says Rosemary, is on display at Hereford Museum.)



The Spanish evacuees on a day out at the seaside.

Josefina Carmen and a group of the Basque children at their transit camp near Southampton. (Photos: Lita Power)



## Spanish evacuees

In 1937 during the Spanish Civil War Josefina Carmen took a life-changing journey. She fled the Republican stronghold of Bilbao in Northern Spain with a group of children, evacuated following the Nationalist bombing of civilians, and eventually landed in Hereford. There she met the man she would marry, merchant navy man Jack Jones.

Daughter **Lita Power** takes up the story. A Catalan born in 1915, Josefina was a health and fitness instructor. In May 1937 she joined the Habana along with almost 4,000 Republican children on the Expedición a Inglaterra.

Employed as their teacher and guardian, Josefina went to a transit camp near Southampton and then accompanied a small group to Hereford. “The children went to different colonies,” says Lita. “In Hereford it was the Sisters of Charity in Berrington Street.” (**George Rumsey** explains the convent was in Berrington Street on the site of the car park and part of the Job Centre.)

**Monica Williams** remembered the arrival of the Spanish children: “We went out to play at St Francis Xavier’s Catholic school and there they were: dark eyes, dark hair. Some of the bigger girls eventually taught us a skipping game: ‘Istaba, laba rerra, frandi, frandango, nebagay, nebagando, frandu, frandango.’”

When the Civil War ended most of the children returned, although Josefina, having met her future husband, stayed on. The couple eventually settled in Herefordshire with their own children.

## Got any gum, chum?

**Griff Loydd** from Devon recalls gifts of gum from American GIs outside the Odeon in 1943. “The Allies were assembling for the D-Day Invasion and my pal and I seem to mould in with a small group of GIs, one of whom was black. They gave us American coins too. I wonder how many of our friends survived that terrible battle.”

## Pumpkin Pie

American GIs were stationed at Moreton Camp, writes **Madelene Went** from Hereford. Her mother’s culinary skills were well known and she was asked by the GIs to make their favourite pumpkin and lemon meringue pies.

“We were all rationed to the hilt but she would not take any money for doing this although she said a bit of fat would be nice. I remember her horror when a five-gallon tin of fat turned up on our doorstep. ‘They pulled up in a Jeep,’ she said, ‘for everyone to see.’ We couldn’t get it inside quick enough. No-one reported us and the neighbours were kept well supplied with fat, but she never made any more pies.”



# The River Carnival

The revived River Carnival brought back memories for **Keith Morgan**. "The smallest 'float' I remember was someone in a wetsuit snorkeling with only a periscope visible going down the river. The Carnival always finished with a bang and a first-class firework display.

"Despite being a poor swimmer I was fascinated with anything on the water and in 1966 we started a Bulmers crew with me as cox, Bill Walker stroke and Tony Clements, Chris Williams and John Tedstone. Our next entry (right), inspired by North Sea Gas, was South Sea Gas featuring a manned drilling rig and two grass-skirted maidens, Gail Carpenter and Margaret Harris with Alec Cook and yours truly and Chris Ellison rowing.

"Sadly we couldn't make headway against the current and when I pulled the plug on our electrics there were cries of they've sunk! We were eventually landed on the Rowing Club steps.

The next effort, Rub a Dub Dub, Three Men in a Tub, fared little better and prompted Keith's girlfriend (now wife) to veto plans to take a raft across the English Channel and deliver a new-season cask of cider to the French in response to their bringing over Beaujolais Nouveau. "The Carnival was a lovely spectacle and part of the wider selection of events including the Street Carnival, band concerts on the Castle Green and Redcliffe Gardens and various military parades.



Below, Telephone girls: former Hereford telephonist **Betty Beach** from Cle-honger sends in this from 1967. From right to left, Lesley Prosser, Betty (nee Hodges), Sue Webb, Barbara Jackson (nee Hill), Joyce Jackson (nee Mytton) and Margaret Lane.



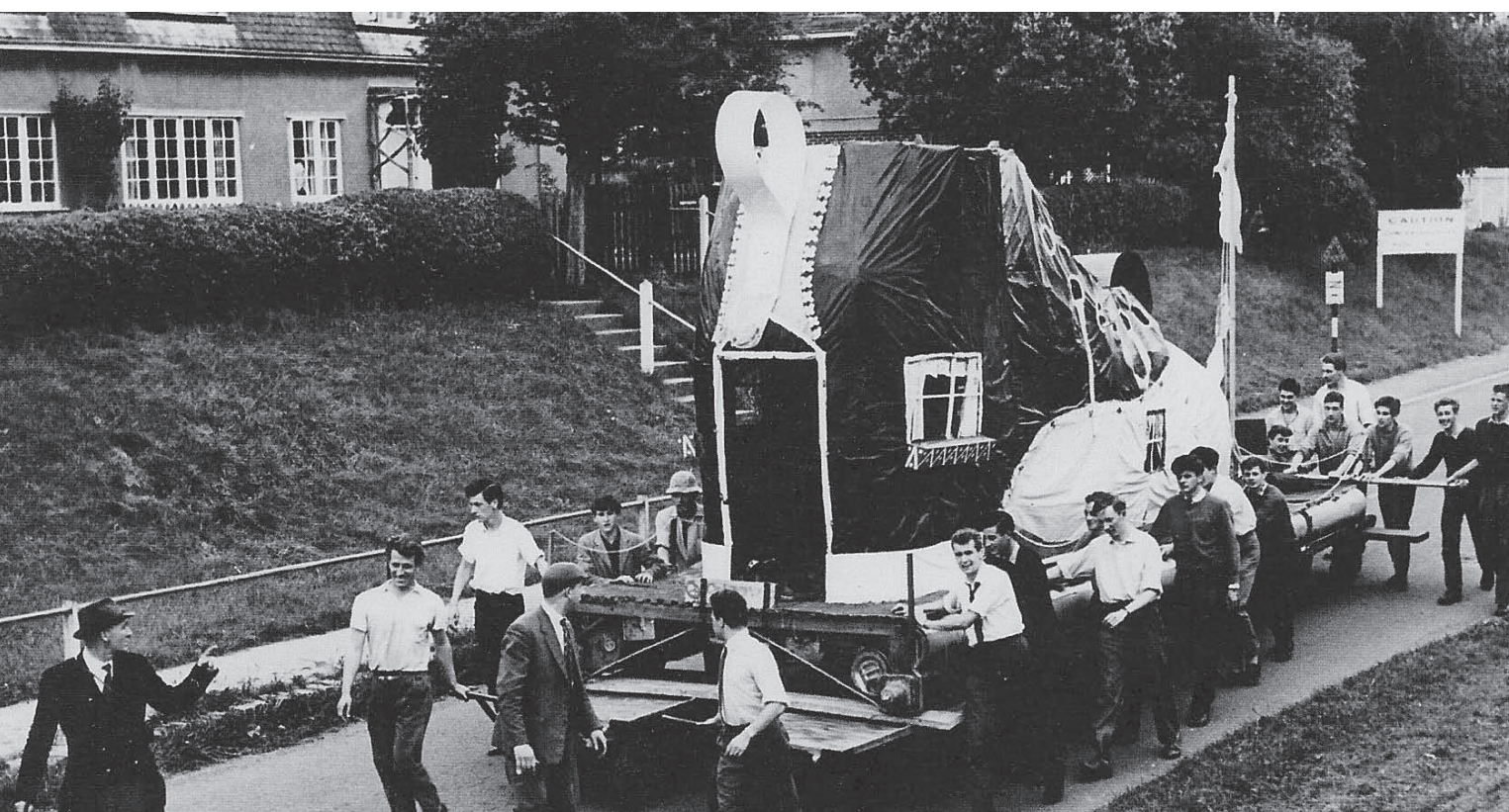




*Joyce Chamberlain from Redhill loaned this nighttime photo taken by her father, Ted Edwards. Anyone know who was on board?*



*The Old Lady who Lived in a Shoe float was prepared by A.E.I Lamp and Lighting in the 1960s, reports **John Davies** who served as a River Carnival judge representing Hereford Trades Council. (Photo: Geoff Hodges)*





# Canary Girls

Around 6,000 women worked at Rotherwas munitions factory through two world wars. Below Eileen Lewis and Lil Summers remember the July 1942 air raid, while we publish the first part of Canary Girl Nellie Lambert's recollections from 1916.

## Under attack



When she was 20 **Eileen Lewis** (left) was conscripted to work at Rotherwas Munitions Factory and for the next four years she worked in the offices, and on the South Side preparing shells for filling with explosives, and as a worktaker. She cycled to work for one of the three shifts (7 to 3, 3 to 10 or 10 to 7) and in 1942 found herself finishing the night

shift when the factory was attacked. She remembers seeing a lone German plane fly over and the explosion as the plane dropped its bombs. Pushed to the ground by a colleague, she escaped injury, but many of those she knew lost their lives.

**Lilian Summers** was also on that night shift. "We were getting ready to go home." Lil, who started at the factory when she was 20 cleaning circular plugs on the 'Dirty Way', later putting cordite bundles in the shells and chain-stitch sewing cotton bags of cordite on the 'Clean Way'. During the attack "the lights went down. Foolishly I ran out and looked up: I could clearly see the German swastika on the side of the plane." She fled inside as the bombs fell.

"It was never dull down at Rotherwas," she recalled. "And everyone was kind to everyone."

Barrie Mayne and the Munitions Group are still collecting names of former workers. Drop us a line at [Herefordshire Lore](#) (details along the bottom of the page) with full details, including maiden names.

"I went to All Saints School in Widemarsh Street in 1902. I remember Sid Wright's sister, Gladys. After that I went to St Peters School in Gaol Street. I was always in trouble for making the others laugh behind the teacher's back and it's a wonder I didn't go deaf the times I had my ears boxed.

"There were only horses on the road in those days and when I got home I'd go out with an old broom and shovel gathering horse manure for the garden. On Saturdays I cleaned all day at a big house at the bottom of Edgar Street, Constables of Widemarsh Street who were butchers, for 6d.

"Our Sunday dinner usually cost a shilling. Early Sunday morning I walked two miles to a farm up Holmer for 1d's worth of skimmed milk. It was the only day we had pudding. The rice for the pudding was about 2d a pound.

"Some mornings a muffin man ringing a bell came round at 5 o'clock with his cobs, 3d for 7. There was also an old man with a barrow full of windmills (you could swop a jam jar for a windmill) and the hurdy gurdy man playing in the streets.

"We loved going to the Garrick Theatre on Saturday afternoons for 1d. They ran children's talent competitions and one night, singing 'Come lasses and lads', I was picked as the winner and won a small handbag. When I was about eight years old I was a fairy in a pantomime at the Kemble Theatre in Broad Street run by Miss Collins.

"My father was on the railway engines coaling by hand. His wages were about 18s a week with no pensions.



Former Canary Girl Nellie Lambert shared her life story with granddaughter Fiona Penwarne. Here we publish the first extract.

"There were only day holidays. You could have passes to travel anywhere but we couldn't afford to go although we did go for a day to Withington to Grandma's. The train turned out to be an express to London. We pulled the emergency cord and got into terrible trouble."

Next time: Nellie starts work as a Canary Girl at Rotherwas Filling Factory Number 14.

## Milk

From Herefordshire dairymen and milkmaids to cows, cream and milk bars, Milk is a 26-page celebration of the White Stuff.

Price: post-free! £4

Herefordshire Lore, c/o Castle Green Pavilion, Castle Green, Hereford HR1 2RD



## Milk deliveries

"My mum Hilda Griffin (nee Angel) worked at Lugwardine's Rock Farm Dairies in the 1940s for Bill Phillips," writes **David Griffin**. Do any readers recall Bill Phillips' delivery van which was shaped like a milk bottle?

Many readers will remember the Milk Bar that stood between Wilsons Chambers and Goldings Store, facing the Union Passage, in Commercial Road, Hereford. Open all hours, it was set up by an enterprising farmer's daughter, Jeanne Perkins, in the late 1930s. Her parents, Mont and Dorothy, ran a dairy farm at Ufton Court, Holme Lacy and had milk to spare. Family friends such as the dairymen Matthews from Bartonsham and Mannings from Didley were also involved. The milk was sold by the glass, made into 4d milk shakes or turned into ice cream, made on the premises, and this together with the stainless steel counters, shiny tiled floor and bouquets of fresh flowers attracted customers from town and country.



Group to investigate other lost paths in Herefordshire. Do you remember using the South Wye path? What other old ways can you recall?

*A leaflet detailing a Canary Girls' Walk up Dinedor Hill will be published shortly by Herefordshire Council and Herefordshire Lore.*

## Chewing the Cud

Congratulations to **Malcolm** and **Jan Barrell**, the first names out of the hat in our competition (IOA 31) for free tickets to the *Chewing the Cud* film. (The Queen's visit was 1952). *Chewing the Cud* was a sell-out at Borderlines Festival. But if you missed it – or want to catch it again – there'll be additional screenings at Moccas, Bromyard, Ledbury, Garway and the Cattle Market. See dates on the back page. (Watch [www.chewingthecud.net](http://www.chewingthecud.net) or call 01432 277424 for more information.



## Lure of the Open Road

**Colin Greenlands** reminds us of the first Hereford city bus which, in 1896, ran from Barrs Court station to Whitecross powered by a pair of horses and with 'Greenlands Furnishers' emblazoned along one side. Meanwhile Philip Baldwin recalls how his father drove for a host of local companies from Midland Red and Wye Valley Motors to Bengrys Primrose

and G. H. Yeomans. And above, the late Jim Thomas's father at Hereford's first Midland Red garage – does anyone know where it was?

## Edgar Street prices

**Lionel Meredith** recalls the British Restaurant (IOA 31) where "if you could afford it you could go for a decent lunch". They served better meals than at his school where "the house master was sacked for creaming off some of the money meant for our up keep. Still, he did have to pay for his seat at Edgar Street football ground."

## Westland Healey

The Healey (pictured IOA 31) was owned by enthusiast Peter Mockler of Almely and went to a new home in Belgium after his death in 2006, writes **Rosemary Lilico**. Donald Healey designed and built 64 of the Westland Healeys at the Westland Motor Company in Commercial Street, Hereford (now the site of Morrisons) between 1946 and 1950. With a basic cost of £1,566 the cars were hand assembled and the fastest cars of the 1940s, capable of 104 mph. They were said to be 17 still on the road at the last count.

## Whitbourne Court

**Margaret Beale** is trying to find out more about her ancestor Laura Jones, a cook at Whitbourne Court, according to the 1911 census. Meanwhile **Lynn Bennett** and daughter **Sylvia Small** have been musing on Augustus Edwards' store, which stood in High Town, Hereford. "I wonder if there are any photos," she asks.

## Normandy Landings

**Trish** from Colwall has been in touch about her father, Tom Marsh, who was parachuted into France on D Day 70 years ago. Let us know your D Day stories.



Luard Walk (photo: Jan Preedy) remains open, but what about our lost ways?

## Lost paths

**Marie Hill** and **Margery Ballinger** from St James, Hereford recall walking to work at the pay office of Rotherwas munitions factory during the war along the river path. Sections of the old path have been lost prompting Peter McKay and Duncan Green from Dinedor Heritage





**Hunderton Ferry**

Hereford's Victoria Bridge, opened in the late 1800s, displaced the old ferryboat, Mr. Desmond's Princess Mary. He moved it to Hunderton where boot makers Tom Preedy (above) and his son Walter took over. Three of Walter's five daughters are pictured on the front page. Jan took over when Walter died in 1961 becoming, as far as we know, Hereford's first ferry woman.

Our next issue will focus on tales from the riverbank – let us have yours!



## Old Mr Gore

Research of In Our Age archives by Herefordshire museum staff revealed a reference to the Gore family selling rope at 10, Commercial Road, Hereford. A later search of trade directories shows that Henry Gore ran a shop and stall at Hereford Market between 1890 and 1900. In the background stands W.J. Yeomans and Co and what is probably the spire of All Saints church.

The extraordinary photograph, taken by

the famous Alfred Watkins around 1904 has been inspiring local children, thanks to Hereford Museum's Take One which is part of the Chewing the Cud project).

The children's efforts go on display at St Peter's Church, Hereford (Saturday June 21 to Saturday July 5 – closed Sundays. Details 01432 260692). Pop along and see how they interpreted Watkins' fascinating photo of the old Hereford livestock market.



## Diary dates

### Chewing The Cud. Film screenings:

Moccas Village Hall, Saturday May 10th, 7.30 p.m.; New Livestock Market, Sheep Sale Ring, Friday 6th or Saturday 7th June, 7.30 p.m.; Wellington School, Saturday 28th June, 7.30 p.m.; Conquest Theatre Bromyard, Wednesday, 23rd July 7.30 p.m.; Market Theatre Ledbury Friday 3rd October 8 p.m.; Garway Village Hall, Tuesday 16th December 7 p.m.

Bring your market photos and stories to share on the night.

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*Thank you for many  
interesting memories.  
Reader Alan Willis*