

AGE TO AGE

Hereford Lore Reminiscence Newsletter

Issue 3 November 1993

Hereford Lore, P.O. Box 87, Hereford, HR4 9XS

Where were you in '47?



Smiling faces at a post-war party This was the cheery line up at the Christmas Party given by Painter Brothers (Hereford) for the children of their employees. Mr R.A.Painter is on the back row centre. One employee recalls that the parties took place every year the children each receiving a gift and being entertained by a film and magic show. With the recession, the parties were discontinued in 1985. The picture was lent by Colin Quinsey. But where are these children now? Do you recognise anyone? Let us know by writing to Hereford Lore, P.O.Box 87 Hereford HR4 9XS.

With the festive season on the way again, we introduce our Christmas edition of Age To Age. More memories of the past this time, mainly topics for the ladies. We cover "Woman's World", recapturing the differences of the past to the present day. Memories are something we all share and perhaps our newsletter will recapture some of these. The photograph of Painters' Bros children's Christmas Party, for example: can you recognise anyone? Perhaps you are there?

We are still receiving letters of interest in our project via PO Box 87, Hereford HR4 9XS. Keep those reminiscences coming in for our 1994 editions.

For those who have difficulty reading, our newsletter is now available on tape, thanks to the Rural Media Company at St Peter's Square, Hereford.

So, once again as we get ready to celebrate A Very Happy Christmas to all our readers.

Vi Woolaway

EUROPEAN LINK

Several readers have written in asking for a penfriend from Hereford's twin town Dillenberg. The Twin Town Association have already received one letter back from Dillenberg and are expecting more as word gets around. If you would like us to find you a German penfriend, drop us a line. The Twin Town Association are now establishing links with a town in France. Parlez-vous Francais?

Even if you don't, maybe we can find an English speaking French penfriend. Let us know.

Our next issue of Age to Age will be out in January. Copies are available from the City and Belmont Libraries, Hereford Tourist Information Centre, The City Environment Department at Garrick House and Age Concern, Berrows House, Bath Street.

Hereford Lore Editorial Group are Alf Evans, Edith Gammage, Roy Kennett, Jim Thomas, Vi Thomas, Vi Woolaway and Tom Woolaway.

We are grateful for the support of:



*Hereford City Council
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Women Remember

Our intrepid reporter Vi Thomas visited Drybridge House in St Martin's Street to talk with women living there about Christmas past.

Sylvia Bartlett used to work at George Masons, the High Town grocers. There was a prize for the member of staff who sold the most pork pies over the Christmas period and, she recalled, all the big orders were delivered free.

"We had lovely Christmases. Chicken was a real treat; and the pudding with sixpences hidden in it. We could play out in the snow in the evenings without our parents worrying about us being molested. **Doris Curzon**, didn't have presents, but "we always found a new penny in our stocking and an apple and an orange." **Mary Mackie**, worked for Greenlands which boasted the best Christmas decorations in the county "We had a wonderful display in our arcade windows, Father Christmas in attendance and extra staff were taken on to cope with the extra turnover. At home we had a proper tree and real candles. We always had a happy Christmas"



Saffron Cakes

Hilda Bennett, now 95, started work as an apprentice tailor working a ten and a half hour day with an hour off for lunch, received one shilling and six pence a week.

"We had lovely Christmases with school plays, carol services, listening to a wind-up gramophone and singing round the piano. Of course it was one of the few times when we had a fire in the front room. We used to exchange small saffron cakes with our friends. We made one large one for ourselves and little ones to give away. It took four pounds of flour, three pounds of fruit and best lard and yeast and we used to leave it overnight near the stove and then knead it in the morning"

Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve was a busy time for **Kathleen Laurence** who worked for Workmans in Gomond Street at a Singer Sewing machine. "At Christmas we worked up to 11 o'clock at night with no extra pay. And we had to leave work when we married." **Connie Williams** worked at the General Hospital for 20 years. "My mother died when was four but my older sisters always gave me a lovely Christmas. My father worked for Bowers the Builders and the family always sent me a Christmas present from Greenlands. I remember being invited there to tea once - I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw their toilet was tiled from floor to ceiling! "Sue Lofts was a secretary at the

Sanitary Laundry during the last war responsible for the military accounts because the U.S.A. uniforms and bedding were all done there and the accounts paid through lease-lend. "I lived with my parents in an old house in St Martin's Street and we had wonderful Christmases. The highlight for me was my Playbox Annual every Christmas. I remember the Hunt Hounds assembling on Boxing Day in King Street which was followed by a hunt ball after Christmas. The following night it would be the hospital ball and then another night, the police ball. "Others recalled the tradition of keeping a pudding by for the following Christmas and buying pot herbs by the two pennyworth. They particularly remembered the domestic arrangements - cooking on the indoor oven heated by the coal fire, taking a bath in front of the fire and having to use outdoor toilets where those little squares of newspaper used to hang."

PUDDING FOR ONE

Edith Gammage has come up with this recipe for a Christmas pudding for one, suitable, adds Edith, for vegetarians.

3 ounces (ozs) stoneless raisins;
2 ozs currants; 3 ozs sultanas;
1 oz mixed peel (chopped);
4 ozs apricots and prunes, stoned and chopped;
1 small desert apple grated;
4 ozs of butter
6 ozs of dark brown sugar
1 tablespoon of treacle;
half teaspoon of mixed spice, cinnamon and pinch of ground ginger
2 eggs; 4 ozs fresh white breadcrumbs;
2 ozs hazel nuts (Chopped)
2 ozs self raising flour
Juice and zest of two lemons.

*Soak the dried fruit in a mixing bowl with a mixture of rum, ale or stout and lemon juice and leave overnight. Whisk the eggs and gradually fold in the dry ingredients to the fruit mixture.
Boil for about 6 hours.*

Childbirth

Vi Thomas also talked with the women about their experiences of childbirth.

Like too many Herefordshire women, **Vera Tedstone's** mother died in childbirth.

And although Vera had her own two children at the County Hospital most births were at home.

Francis Minching, now in her 80s had her three children all born at home with a nurse in attendance and no pain relief as did **Kathleen Laurence**. **Mary Mackie** also had her baby delivered at home. "The midwife was a horror but Dr Wells was wonderful"

Sylvia Bartlett had her baby in hospital but, as a punishment for being so troublesome, the staff refused to tell her whether she had had a boy or a girl. She had to wait for her husband's evening visit to find out!

'My mother died when I was four but my older sisters always gave me a lovely Christmas'

Vera Pullinger at the age of 19 during her courting days learning how to ride a motorbike from her future husband. The first lesson was not a success, Vera could not stop and ended up in a hedge. Vera is now living in Hereford.'

Beauty and the beasts

How many women remember the Womens' League of Health and Beauty, led by London-based Prunella Stack?

In 1937 Doris Mathews, now 90 years young, joined and received a Promise Card by post. On receipt of the card, you were to spend 15 minutes a day, one and a half hours a week on practical health and body

building, such as walking, running or other sports, in the open air. Alternatively you exercised indoors, but with the windows open if possible. Like a latter day Jane Fonda workout, the exercises were accompanied by gramophone music. Public demonstrations of the health and beauty group would take place at various events. One event which Doris particularly remembered was when they were invited to perform at the Three Counties Show site. The occasion proved to be embarrassing: their display had to follow the parade of cattle which had left the going very heavy and it was difficult to find a suitable spot where they could lie down to perform.

Doris, incidentally, worked in the family business, the Tudor bakery where she started at six in the morning on weekdays and five on Saturdays. And she kept this up until she was 81

Christmas Quiz



Derek Foxton

Our eyesight may not improve with age, but our memories usually do. Who can recognise this Hereford street? The building on the left was pulled down. But what was it used for?

Answers, please, on a post card to Hereford Lore, PO Box 87 Hereford HR4 9XS together with your recollection of any other old Hereford buildings, long since gone.

Written Records

Putting the past down on paper

The thrust of Hereford Lore's work has been to record people's stories as they tell them. But many of you have begun to write your own memoirs. **Daisy Whittingham** (whom we called Dorothy in the last issue sorry!) found that writing them down stimulated all kinds of memories.

"Now that I have put my mind to it, I have started to make notes as I remember other things about Hereford before and during the Great War maybe if you find this account of interest, I will write another installment for you "

Daisy remembers other "high days and holidays" apart from Christmas: "I remember when the weathercock was taken down from All Saint's Church (1906?), Dad said he had sat upon it and it was 'as big as a donkey

can remember the first cars appearing. We had many family outings on cycles; Dad would hire a cycle with a basket-work trailer in which mother would ride and the rest of the family got bikes from somewhere and off we would go. There was the occasional spill but I don't recall anyone being seriously hurt. Everyone seemed to have bicycles, owned, borrowed or hired. One day Dad said he had just seen three fools riding through High Town on one bicycle married one of them! "

Brought to book

The late **Colette Tipper** wrote her autobiography Little Letty Lewis which her daughter Maggie Redding, is publishing.

In the following extract, Letty remembers Christmas 1914 when her father is away in the war "There were a lot more boarders in the school now. Many girls had lost their fathers so some had to stay at school while their widowed mothers worked. Girls would suddenly come to school dressed in black and become a boarder. This was a fear all children had whose father was away fighting. We were all afraid this would happen to us. My dreams at night were still bad as this worry did not give me any peace.

We made our Christmas cards and I wrote a letter to Dad. was not a very good morale booster. I told him we would not have Christmas pudding this year because of all the food shortages. We had no potatoes. We were told at school to tell our Mothers to get butter beans instead. It was about this time that swedes came into use as a vegetable. Before that they were used only as cattle fodder. Farmers' Oranges, we called them.

On Christmas Day Mum did the cooking on the gas stove. The upstairs rooms were smaller and we had our Christmas dinner up there. Mum said it was cosier. Really she found she felt safer upstairs at night when everything downstairs was locked up, with Dad being in the Army.

On Christmas Day while Mum was downstairs cooking the Christmas dinner a spark set light to some baby clothes that were airing round the fireguard. Fortunately the fire burned itself out by the time we got upstairs. Thank goodness the baby in the cradle was alright. The room was full of smoke. All the baby clothes which had hung on the guard were black. Mum was upset by the fire and thankful that the baby was not harmed. Jack, my brother and I played with our toys. He had a set of wooden skittles which we both found great fun. When they were knocked down, they made a lovely noise. We must have made too much noise as we were sent to bed early after tea.

"I'll never forget Christmas 1914," Mum said, " after all that has happened this year"

Little Letty Lewis by Colette Tripper costs £1.75 and is available from Maggie Redding, 6, Merryhill Terrace, Belmont, HR2 9RT

If any readers have written memories they would like to share, contact Hereford Lore at P.O. Box 87, Hereford HR4 9XS

Noticeboard

Jazz Workshop and Performance

Learn new skills by working with professional musicians Simon Purcell and Michael Hathaway to explore jazz playing. Workshop: Sunday 14 November 9.30 - 5.00pm £5/£3.50 Performance: Saturday 13 November 8pm £4/£3. Contact: Hereford Jazz Workshop (0432) 272388

ON TAPE

Age to Age is now on tape for people with sight difficulties. If you or anyone you know would like a tape please contact Age to Age at our P.O. Box address on the front cover

Don't forget your copy of Amazing How Times Change

available, price £3.00 from Hereford Tourist Information Centre, St Owen Street, Hereford Bookshop, 24 Church Street or The Environment Department, Garrick House, Widemarsh Street, Hereford.

"In the Bleak Midwinter"

Drama, music and comedy from Hijinx Theatre Company
Thursday 9 December 7pm
£4.50/£2.50
Folly Arts Theatre
Box Office 0432-273359

TREE WEEK

29 November - 5 December

"Trees for all Ages" is the theme of this years nationwide festival of trees, which aims to encourage older people to join in the tree planting celebrations. For further details contact 0432 268121 extension 350

Forbidden Tale

Do you remember the account of Chadds in our first issue? Enid Parker, who now lives in Cheltenham, tells us this revealing story

"One day after the first world war ended and when there was much depression, a young teenage boy walking from Devon looking for work called at Wakefield Knight's house. Evidently he impressed Mr Knight by his eagerness to work and was given a job in the shop. I expect the girl assistants were glad to have a strong male to pick up heavy rolls of bedding or rolls of cloth. The shop closed from one to two for the midday meal and they all ate together Friday was boiled liver which they hated. Mr Knight had a rule of no talking at the table and when he had finished and stood up, everyone left the table.

After the young man, whose name was William Chadd, had been with the business about six years a new, young lady started at the shop. She was pretty and lively and had not been subjected to strict discipline. Chadd liked talking to her. One day he kept her talking after the others had left the dining room. Whether Mr Knight missed him or someone told him they were still talking, he went back and caught them still in conversation. He dismissed the girl for breaking the rule. Chadd said it was his fault and if he insisted on her leaving then he would go too. But the obstinate old man would not change his mind, so they both left.

William Chadd bought a small hand cart which he was able to take in a Great Western Railways van. Loaded with goods, he went round the markets and built up a regular trade. And of course he married the young lady he had been talking to and they bought the shop in High Town which was to prosper "

FRIENDS OF AGE TO AGE

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Hereford HR1 2PR
Telephone (0432) 357352

Denco

Denco Ltd, PO Box 11
Holmer Road, Hereford HR4 9SJ
Telephone (0432) 277277



Paul Warner

Visited the Hereford Art College the other day, writes **Tom Woolaway**, to see the Photographic Exhibition of pictures taken by senior citizens of senior citizens.

I was really impressed by the professionalism and subject content. The exhibition showed the different aspects of later life. The photographs illustrated for me perfection, contentment - and despair. We all hope that despair never arrives in our lives.

For me the highlight of the exhibition was the photograph of the walking sticks and the hands, which told the story of an interesting and hard life.

I think we all must find a full interest in our retirement years to keep us alert and active. The exhibition shows us just what can be achieved.

We can also take up a sport or a hobby such as golf, rambling or swimming to keep us fit.