

Age to Age

HEREFORDSHIRE LORE LIVING LOCAL HISTORY

Herefordshire Lore
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Girl Power: Clockwise from top left, Margaret Duddington, Audrey Finney, Jean McGaw & Irene Hewitt, Herefordshire Land Army Girls photographed by fellow wartime worker **Eve Lichfield**.

Our Tenth Anniversary

Welcome. I would like to welcome readers to this, the tenth anniversary issue of Age To Age. As the 621st Mayor of Hereford, I can well see the importance of our county's history and Age To Age has provided some fascinating insights into living memories which stretch back a century. I am an avid reader of Age To Age and it's been interesting to read about Herefordshire families such as the Greenlands, Barnsleys, Chaves and Ravenhills, who have been past mayors.

Myself, I remember when the city had a single set of traffic lights — outside Steels of Westgate and two way traffic in Eign Gate. I recall being told how the Straight Mile at Rotherwas got its name: it was a measured mile for time trials. As an ex motorcycle racer, I'd like to hear more. So keep sending in your ideas and pictures. And good luck for the next ten years!

Cllr Alan Williams, Hereford's 621st Mayor



The Way We Were:
Age To Age in 1992

Reminiscence Workshops

Do you work with older people and want to know more about reminiscence work? Do you want to add a bit of zest to your Day Centre? How about launching an oral history project in your community? We are running Reminiscence Workshops to mark ten years of Age To Age - and they are free! Call (or leave a message for) Age To Age editor Bill Laws on 01432 2687806 for more details.

Thriller Writer In Court

Eighty years ago, a Hay-on-Wye solicitor was attending the Assizes at the Shire Hall, Hereford. But this solicitor was there neither for the defence nor the prosecution - he was in the dock. Herbert Armstrong, a respectable Hay-on-Wye solicitor and clerk to the local magistrates, was accused of murdering his wife with arsenic. An unseasonal snow settled on St Peters Square as "the cream of the nation's forensic talent crossed over to the Shire Hall. Covering the trial, was the great London reporter and novelist, Edgar Wallace," writes our contributor, **Douglas Hughes**, born 'in rooms in Chandos Street' the day before the trial began on April 3.

"EW stayed at the Mitre Hotel. When he later wrote the filmscript for 'The Squeaker' he brought the hotel into the narrative. One crime reporter says to the other: 'Didn't I meet you at the Mitre in Hereford? They had a good cellar of port!'

"Another sideline to the story is that in 'The Squeaker', released in 1937 actor Robert Newton played a suave cracksman. During the Mitre's, and Newton's, last days in the 1950s, the actor, who had a smallholding near Hereford, was occasionally to be found in the bar at the Mitre more often than not 'in his cups' and usually with a blonde lady companion." The question of Armstrong's guilt was always at issue. One Age To Age correspondent knew a family servant and was convinced that Mrs Armstrong had committed suicide in order to incriminate her husband. Edgar Wallace, who died ten years later in Hollywood, himself expressed some doubts on his guilt, but, after a nine day trial, the case against Armstrong was found proved and he was hanged at Gloucester prison that May.



Herefordshire Lore was set up in 1989 to collect, remember and celebrate our past. Age To Age is our bi-monthly newsletter. We want as many people as possible to receive Age To Age so we send free copies to the county libraries and Tourist Information Centres and Museums, Age Concern (Hereford), Hereford Town Hall and Herefordshire College of Technology. But we rely on your subscriptions, grants and donations to keep going. Take out a subscription if you can - details on the back page. Herefordshire Lore is Margaret Beare, Bobbie Blackwell, Mary Blackwell, Siriol Collins, Eileen Klotz, Bill Laws, Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe (County Archives), Harvey Payne, Sylvie Smith and John Turner. The next Age To Age will be out in February 2003.

School's Out

As St Peter's School in Gaol Street, Hereford makes way for new probation offices, **Pam Cochrane** sends in this photograph of her class at St Peter's in 1950. That's her in the second row from the back, fifth from the left; her friend Noreen Jones is in the second row from the front, second on the left. "It seems a shame so many of these smaller schools have closed as they mainly did a good job and a lot of boys and girls went on to do well," writes Pam from Tupsley, Hereford



Rural Rides: Taking a breather on their ride around Herefordshire. This picture of the Hereford and District Cycling Club was sent in by **Tim Beach**.

Pedantic Policeman

When the one way system was introduced to Hereford in 1957, **Rosemary Lillico** faced a dilemma. "I was 19 and lived at Fayre Oaks Caravan Park in Kings Acre Road and cycled daily to and from work at Thynnes Tile Works in Holmer. Before the changes I could ride home along Edgar Street then turn right at the then cross roads and on past Victoria Eye Hospital and along Whitecross Road."

The new layout forced her to dismount just before Newmarket Street and walk on the right hand side of the pavement around the corner to the Victoria Hospital. "I was doing it one day when the policeman on point duty spotted me. He stopped all the traffic and beckoned me to the centre of the road much to my humiliation. He then made me ride back through the new one way system and when I passed him about eight minutes later he stopped me again and said 'Now don't forget and don't do that again 'I didn't either!'"

From our Files

We delve into the Age To Age files for some archive photographs.

Fearsome Footballers: A team calculated to terrorise the opposition, but a source of fascination for any hat historian. The picture, loaned by **Colin Quinsey**, shows Harold Quinsey, middle row, fourth from the left. But we were never able to identify any of the other players. Can you help? Drop us a line at Herefordshire Lore, PO Box 2 Hereford HR2 8YE or email us: ata@herefordshire.wyenet.co.uk



Snippets

Keeping Fit

The Young Women's Christian Association in St Owens Street, Hereford was run by Miss Slade in the very early 1930s, recalls **Betty Reinold** (nee Southall) from Shaftesbury. "I attended gymnastic classes there taken by Mr Birch who was also a boxing instructor" Miss Slade was rather intimidating, says Betty. "Much to the disgust of my family, my mother sold to her our beautiful Broadwood piano for £5 during the war"

Leading to Ledbury

Benjamin Isaac Pardoe correctly identified the stretch of road photographed in August 2002's Age To Age. "It's Pool End Farm outside Ledbury," he writes from

Bartestree, adding that most of the farm outbuildings were destroyed by fire in the early 1990s and the remainder converted into new homes.

Victoria Eye Hospital

In the 1940s when **Heather Knight** needed eye surgery, she was taken to Birmingham by her father, Tom Bigglestone, a stone mason at T.A. King and Co. "He had to take a day off work which he could ill afford as I came from a family of ten, but the RAOB came to the rescue and paid our expenses. After my check up my father would take me to Lewis' for afternoon tea in front of the Palm Court Orchestra. But I remember that everyone at the Victoria Eye Hospital, from the receptionist through to the consultant, were so very helpful and kind to me when I was back with them."

Firm Favourites

If you have an old works photograph, why not send it to us at Age To Age, PO Box 2, Hereford HR2 8YE?



Hand-over: Is that a Chrysler Avenger at Opella Plumbing? Former worker **Paul Hill**, who later joined Davies Brooks, sent in the picture and, between him and Mrs Mears identified Rose Rice, Agnus McMillan, Betty Thomas, Mary Hall, Edna Grange, Gladys Matthey, Ann Williams, Mike Beadman, Cath Leech, John Miles and Shirley Morris in the picture.

Awaiting The Queen:

A group of Hereford City Surveyor staff await the Queen's visit to the new cattle market in April 1957 **Ron Chatburn** from Dover worked in the Department at the age of 16 in 1948. In the picture are (bottom row) Stuart and Joan (nee Davies) Anderson, (middle) John Forward, his wife and Mrs Keely who lived in the Kings Acre area, (top) 'Bunny' Mason and his wife from Birmingham with Geoff Stroud, his wife and their daughter.



Business Opportunity

Local businesses are being invited to advertise in our book about life at ROF Hereford, the old munitions factory at Rotherwas. More than thirty former workers have called us and we hope to interview them all. Meanwhile, **Ken Hursey, Norah Foster, Lenora Williams, Joan Hiles** and **Eve Lichfield** have formed an Advisory Group to help us publish the recollections of these war-time munitions workers.



The project, called Eye Witness, is funded by the Countryside Agency's Local Heritage Initiative and Nationwide. Any funds raised by local businesses will go towards the £5000 annual cost of publishing Age To Age. Can you help?

Call Bill Laws, Eye Witness co-ordinator, on 01432 268806 (bill@herefordshire.wyenet.co.uk) Pool Farm, Belmont Road, Hereford HR2 7JZ



Bulmers: I enclose a photograph of our order office when we were working at Bulmers in Ryelands Street, writes **Dorothy Metherall**. The picture was taken at a farm, possibly Hartlands who ran a butcher's shop in Eign Street, Hereford Dorothy who lives in Plymouth left Holmer School at 14 and started work as a clerk in the Hereford Sanitary Laundry.

Herefordshire Lore - Living Local History

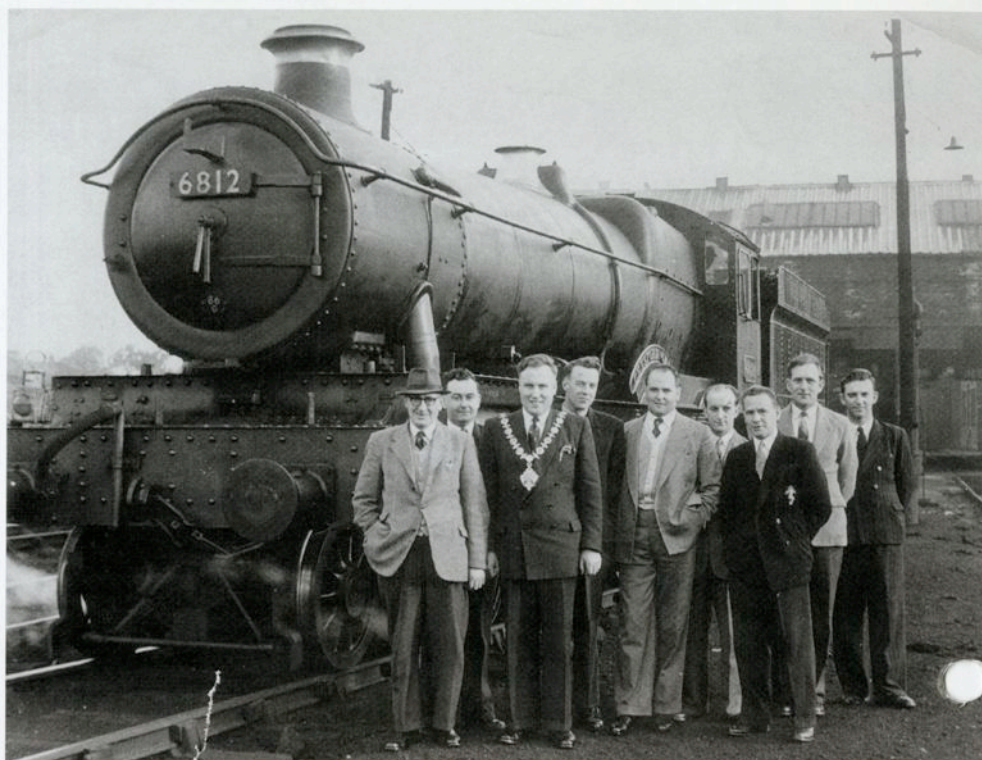
Keeping It Clean

I was interested to read of the experiences of women drafted in to do men's jobs during the second World War, writes **Gladys Sweeney** (nee Jarvis) from Sutton in Surrey. I wonder whether any of your readers share my memories of cleaning railway carriages? When asked to report to the station master at Hereford, I had hoped to help in the canteen or punch tickets. No such luck - along with a dozen other young women I was armed with duster, rubbish box, hand brush and broom. One week cleaning the insides of carriages, brushing the seats and washing the floors, bent double with a floor cloth, and the next, dipping the long broom in a bucket of water to clean the outside.

Everything left in the carriages by passengers we handed in - well, nearly everything. If we found a nice warm pair of gloves which fitted, we kept those for the winter weeks when we were cleaning outside.

I remember one morning at 3.00 a.m. being woken by a rapping on my door and told to come and help clean an unscheduled troop train that was parked between platforms and littered with all sorts of American soldiers' discards - half-filled packets of Camel cigarettes and whole packs of playing cards. The train was cleaned and gone before the normal trains began running.

The foreman always insisted that the Hereford to Paddington train had to be immaculate - the local trains were less important. I always admired Betty Gardner, a woman who did an even tougher job as a porter, heaving and trundling passengers' luggage. I also remember my work-mates: Doll Morris, Lil Davis, Vi Prosser, Mable Lamputt, Minnie Davis, Marjorie Turner, Lil Ely, Beattie Whitcomb, Rose Bethal, Flo Perkins and Winnie Jones. It was Marjorie who, one day called us all to: "Down tools - War's over!"



Down The Line: John Davies loaned us this picture of steam train 6812 outside Barton Yard - now Sainsbury's supermarket. But who did all the cleaning?

We swarmed into the lounge of a nearby hotel where I was quickly seated at the piano to accompany a sing-song. I asked for a small Guinness and by the end of the evening the piano top was lined with half-pint tankards of Guinness. I wonder - are they there still?

How did you celebrate that day in 1945 when war came to an end?

Craft Appeal

Andrew Barnett, the Hereford basket maker; Piggot's the hebalist; Mr Drew the bonesetter; the village blacksmith; the town saddler. Herefordshire is renowned for its contemporary crafts — but what about our older crafts people? The butcher, the baker, the candle and soap maker — tell us about the craftspeople you know.

Friends of Age To Age

Thanks to St. John's Club for their kind donation of £50, and all those organisations that have made a donation or taken out a group subscription to Age To Age. A Group subscription will bring your residential home, day centre, nursing home, group or club 12 copies each issue for only £25 a year.

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