

Age to Age

HEREFORDSHIRE LORE LIVING LOCAL HISTORY

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Crash Landing

More memories of the Percival Proctor training plane that crashed in Harold Street during World War Two have come to light, thanks to **John Lloyd** from Lugwardine. **Les Causer** of Westfaling Street remembered the crash (Age To Age August 2002) while his brother recalled the plane striking a walnut tree before it came down with fatal consequence.

But, writes John Lloyd, the 'plane actually struck a pear tree in the back garden of 111 Eign Road which turned it past the two black and white houses (109 and 110) into the garden of 108. John was living at 109 and his grandfather, W.E. Hyde senior, at 111. "My father, W.E. Hyde jnr and the next door neighbour helped to get the two occupants of the 'plane out."

John believes that one of the pilots died later. The other, Wally, came from Preston. Some years later Wally returned to thank Mr Hyde for saving his life and took John, his mother and sister on holiday to Preston to thank them (Mr Hyde was too ill). "I remember the train journey. The war was still on and the train was halted several times because of air raids. At the end of the street where he lived was a factory and in the evening the local children would collect beneath the factory windows and the workers would drop bags of broken biscuits to them. "We were taken to Blackpool, but the famous sands were covered with barbed wire and other obstacles."

Les Causer is also trying to identify the German 'plane which bombed Hereford on July 27, 1942. Records at RAF Hendon read: "In the early hours of the morning, serious incidents occurred at Derby, Witham, Hereford and Manchester." Les believes the 'plane was a Junkers 88 with a crew of between four and six. Rumours that the 'plane was brought down after the attack seem ill-founded. "There's a record of one German plane being brought down near Lundy Island on July 26 and another between July 27 and 28, but nothing to suggest this was 'our' plane," says Les.



The picnic party, above, was photographed, possibly in 1917. Sent in by **Jean Duborg** from Chester who heard about Eye Witness, Herefordshire Lore's project on munitions factory workers at Rotherwas. Jean's mother (right and back row, 4th from the left), Kezia Clifford (nee Hitchings) worked there in the First World War. But, writes Jean, we know little more about the picnic group than what is written on the reverse of the card: 'Melters, overlookers, chief forman, milling foreman, N.F.F. 14 Hereford, aug. 1917. 1305 L. Cpl. E.A.C---, 1/1st Herefordshire Regt. D. Company. Egyptian Expt Force, Egypt.'



Happy New Year

Happy New Year and welcome to this edition of Age to Age. This is the second issue supported by the Local Heritage Initiative through the Countryside Agency and Nationwide. Page two is devoted to some of the stories coming out of Eye Witness accounts - a project of recollections of the women, and men, who worked at the Munitions factory at Rotherwas.

Two exciting things to look out for in the near future - our new website www.herefordshirelore.org.uk and our book on the Munitions Factory, which will be published and launched in the spring.

At Age to Age we rely on readers' recollections, and are particularly looking ahead for memories of craftswomen and craftsmen who were the back bone of our county's work force in yesteryear. See our back page where we are appealing for more memories and pictures of craftworkers.

Keep in touch and happy reading!

Eileen Klotz
Committee Member



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 April 2003.

Eye Witness, a project which aims to reveal what life was like for the women, and men, who made munitions at ROF Hereford during the last war, is funded by the National Lottery through the Countryside Agency and Nationwide. The grant will help us to:

- Publish a 128 page book this spring;
- Launch a website www.herefordshirelore.org.uk
- Set up a touring exhibition



Hereford mayor, Councillor Alan Williams met Eye Witness Advisory group members early in the new year (although not all for the first time: his mother, Lenora Williams is on the team). (Left to right) former munitions workers Lenora Williams and Norah Foster with Joan Hiles and Eve Lichfield. "This work is a remarkable achievement," he told the group.



ROF Hereford:
Munitions worker Hilda Tippings' badge.

Steam Train Driven in Pond

One of the most extraordinary tales to come out of Eye Witness is that of the missing train. **Ken Hyett**, writing from the Canary Islands, takes up the story: "An inventory was received from the Ministry of Defence, stating details of large plant held at the factory, with an impending inspection to be carried out, a short time later. The inventory stated one railway steam engine when, alas!, the factory had two!

"In order to comply with the inventory, railway lines were laid to the edge of a nearby disused gravel pit, already filled with water, the excess engine was fired up and driven into the pit where it sank out of sight to the bottom."

Both Ken's father, Fred Hyett who worked in the Maintenance Section at Rotherwas in 1942-43 and former worker Arthur Smith confirmed the story to Ken in later years. Meanwhile **Marjorie Austin** writes from Kent about their eighty-four hours working week at ROF Hereford. "We did very long hours to begin with as the country was very short of armaments. We worked 12 hour days, Saturday and Sunday included, and 12 hour nights the same - a fortnight of each. Adding on two more hours for travel each day and night (Marjorie lived in Orcop). This we did for almost two years. That's being young!"

Marjorie remembered her munitions worker friends: Ivy, Nancy, Mavis and Brenda Wooles, Mary Holt, Vera Loder and Dolly Powell.

The year is 1939, the eve of war. Fourteen year old Eileen Skyrme and friends Linda Tong and Kathleen Clarke pose for their picture on St Nicholas Church Sunday school's outing to Weston-super-Mare. Eight years later Eileen (who sent us the picture) married, became Mrs Heald and moved to Merseyside where she still lives. "I was the youngest of six in the Skyrme family having five brothers, Frank, Fred, Albert, Charlie and Sam," she writes.

Beside the Seaside



overseas. I was shocked and told my doctor, who advised me to pull myself together and go with him. When my boy was missing at Singapore, everyone rallied round to cheer us up. I do hope you will tell your reader, who is breaking up her home because her husband has a drink sometimes to go to the pub herself, and just see how innocent and friendly it all is."

"Willingly, my dear, and thank you for your very generous and broad-minded letter. Alcohol, like fire, is a good servant, but a bad master, and a man whose wife rows him is more likely to make it his master than his servant."

If you want to be kept in touch with **Eye Witness** drop a line to:-

Bill Laws,
Herefordshire Lore,
Pool Farm,
Belmont Road,
Hereford HR2 7JZ.

E-mail: mail@herefordshirelore.org.uk
Website: www.herefordshirelore.org.uk



War Time Letters

War-time letters, published in women's magazines reveal the tension of the times: "I have been married twenty years and was very narrow-minded about drink, as all my family were. My husband started to go to the local pub, after our boy went

Snippets

Cash & Co.

Cash and Co (Age To Age October 2002) was popular with **Daphne Tillam**. "When my children were small we always went to Cash and Co for their shoes and mine." One day the young lady in the shop was looking for a bed and breakfast for their driver. Daphne who ran the Royal George in Widemarsh Street obliged - and they remained friends ever after.

Christmas Surprise

Norman Asler of Ross-on-Wye was surprised to see a copy of last November's Age To Age over Christmas. "I saw myself, aged seven, in the group photograph of Scudamore School in 1937." Norman, who cannot recall the photograph being taken, is in the second row from the top, fifth from the left.

And in our picture, **Fearsome Footballers** (December 2002), Mrs M. Powell of Queensway, Hereford identified her late husband, William (Bill) Powell and his grandfather, George Lewis, (middle row, left hand side).

News Hound

Violet Dunsmore (nee Taylor) was interested in our story **Thriller Writer in Court** (Age To Age December 2002) about Hay murderer Herbert Armstrong and London reporter, Edgar

Wallace. "My late father, Frank Taylor, was also a reporter on the Hereford Times from 1916 to 1933. Murder Revisited by John Rowlands and a TV film, *Dead Not Buried*, make interesting viewing and reading," writes Violet.

Marion Lister (nee Pikes) from Worcester adds that the late Dr William Ainslie of St Owen Street, then a very young, newly qualified doctor, gave evidence at the trial.

Where's My Age To Age?

This issue is funded by the Countryside Agency and the Local Heritage Initiative, but we rely on grants, subscriptions and donations to publish Age To Age. It costs £5000 a year to produce Age To Age and subscriptions will need to rise in April to help meet costs. In future, all subscriptions will fall due on April 1. Three of our 500 subscribers missed their copies last month as we transferred our subscription list to a new computer. If you think you are missing a copy, please let us know. Mrs Taylor from Putson collects donations for Age To Age. "If you made a charge you would find people would pay," she says. However our founding group was determined that Age To Age should be free for people on limited means and we will continue to distribute free copies to libraries, tourist centres and Hereford Town Hall. But, if you can afford a subscription, help us keep afloat! And, if you are part of a group of organisations, take out a group subscription - still only £25 a year.

What's He Wearing?

This photograph of Mr **Cutler** was taken at the Hereford studios of **Williams and Williams** of 56 Eign Street. It was found by Mr or Mrs Argyle from Droitwich Spa in his/her mother's belongings. The family name was Cooke. But who was he? And what's that sash he's wearing? Any answers please to **Age To Age** at our address on page 1. or E-mail to mail@herefordshirelore.org.uk



Artful Entertainment

Fancy a song? Or a bit of creative writing? The Courtyard Club at the Courtyard Arts Centre in Edgar Street, run by The Music Pool. Hereford promises plenty of fun and entertainment for older people. Held every third Wednesday of the month there's plenty to participate in. Look out for:-
Singing for Seniors on February 19th and Creative Writing & Poetry on March 19th.

Advance booking essential call The Courtyard booking office on **01432 359252**.

Firm Favourites

Burton's Bakery in West Street, Hereford celebrates the arrival of their new electric delivery vans with a photograph. Bill Lewis, Walter Genum and Mr Styles were identified in the picture when it was first published.

Do you have a Firm's Favourite?
Send your company picture to:-
Age To Age at Herefordshire Lore,
Pool Farm, Belmont Road, Hereford HR2 7JZ



St. James School

It's 1947 and the band and choir of St. James C. of E. Primary School gather on the steps of the Shire Hall after taking part in a schools' competition. "The headmistress, **Miss Davies** is on the right," writes Pam Cochrane from Tupsley, Hereford.

Pam is second from the right on the back row.

Herefordshire Lore - Living Local History

Craft Appeal

Hereford is celebrated as 'the City Of Crafts', but Age To Age would like to hear from you about your craft memories. In the not-so-distant days when plastics were unknown, baskets were made of wicker, buckets of tin and boots of leather.

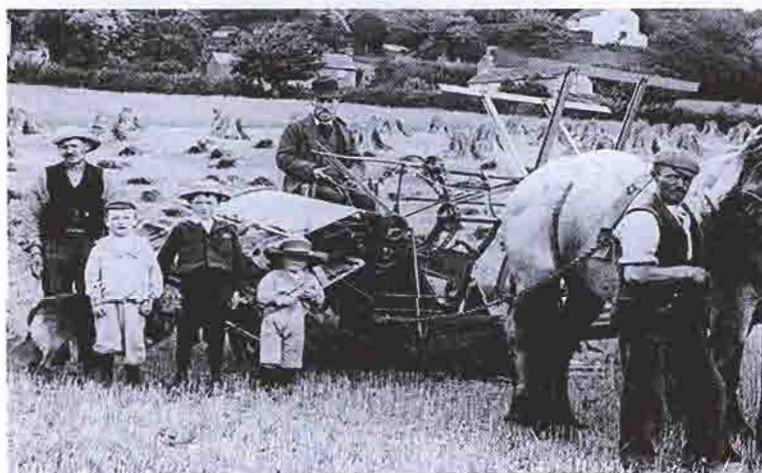
Andrew Barnett (right) made his baskets in a workshop in Hunts Lane, Hereford using withies gathered in Pontrilas, Mordiford and the sewage works at Eign. A local preacher, Andrew and his wife had seven children, one of whom, like **Allan Mailes** (below right) became a butcher.

Butchering is another fast-disappearing craft. Here Allan inspects fine cuts of meat at his butcher's shop in Eign Street in 1932 (picture from **Mavis Mailes**).

Country families like these, pictured on Vowchurch Common around the turn of the last century, were proficient at dealing with everything from the buttons on the boy's jacket and the leatherwork of the horse's harness to the handle on the reaper's bill hook. (Picture from C.H.Davies of Marden).

From gardening to cooking, from furniture making to sewing, let us have your memories or pictures of crafts and customs at

**Herefordshire Lore, Pool Farm, Belmont Road,
Hereford HR2 7JZ (01432) 268806.**



Friends of Age To Age

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