

Age to Age

HEREFORDSHIRE LORE LIVING LOCAL HISTORY

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The final flight for young Thomas Pitts, right, was as wireless operator and rear gunner in a Halifax bomber which crashed in Nottingham after a bombing raid over Germany. Seen here with his crew, (from left) Reg the pilot, Alan the bomb aimer and Brian the navigator, Thomas trained at RAF Madley and was engaged to Joan Hiles from Hereford. Her story is one of those told in Herefordshire Lore's book, *In the Munitions - Women at War In Herefordshire*. See inside.

School Trips and Summer Holidays

It is with great sadness that we hear about the death of Roy Kennett, one of the founders of Age to Age. Roy was instrumental in the early success of Hereford(shire) Lore going on to become its Chairman. He led the group to produce a number of books, saw the numbers of Age to Age increase and gave many informative talks to local older peoples' groups in and around Hereford. Our best wishes go to his wife Phyllis and their family.

You may like to visit our recently launched website at www.herefordshirelore.org.uk and let us know what you think. A lot of time and effort have gone in to producing this website which we hope will grow and grow and introduce many people around the world to the delights of historic Herefordshire and its people.

With summer just around the corner we look forward to lazy days in the sun and, hopefully, not too much rain. If you have any photographs and stories of school trips or summer holidays (particularly during the 1950's and 60's) please let us know.

John Turner (Chairman)

Visit Our Website

www.herefordshirelore.org.uk
(It's still new so you won't find it through a search engine yet. Just type in the address - and let us know what you think.)

Subscriptions

"I was a little confused at the rate of the new subscriptions," writes subscriber **Sir John Cotterell**. Sorry for the confusion. We must raise subscriptions to keep Age To Age going. Subscriptions are now £10 a year: you can fill out the form on the back page.

All new subscriptions will be due in Spring next year so you don't need to remember when to renew - we'll let you know.

The rise will be welcomed by some. "I am pleased that you have increased the subscription for it surely has been needed for some time and I am sure you will gain more support from now on," writes **Griff Lloyd** from Ealing. Age To Age needs more income.

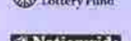
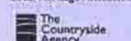
It costs £5,000 a year to produce and we no longer receive a grant from Herefordshire Council. We will carry on providing 2,000 free copies through the Council offices, Tourist Information Centres, libraries and museums because we want as many people as possible to read Age To Age.

But we need 500 subscribers to keep the newsletter going - so subscribe if you can or we may not be able to carry on!

Those Computers

Some readers failed to receive their Age To Age when we computerised the subscription list.

Please do write, telephone or email (mail@herefordshirelore.org.uk) if you are still experiencing difficulties.



Herefordshire Lore was set up in 1989 to collect, remember and celebrate our past. Age To Age comes out six times a year and some copies are available free at the county libraries, tourist centres and museums, Age Concern (Hereford), Hereford Town Hall and Herefordshire College of Technology. But if you can afford a subscription, please support us. Details on the back page. Herefordshire Lore is John Turner (Chairman), Margaret Beare, Bobbie Blackwell, Mary Blackwell, Siriol Collins (Hereford Museum), Rosemary Lillico, Eileen Klotz, Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe (County Archives), Harvey Payne (Treasurer) and Sylvie Smith. Editor: Bill Laws, Administrator: Dawn Turner.

The next Age To Age is due out in August 2003.

Did you work on the land?

Did you work on the land after the last war? Were you out fruit or potato picking? Were you working in the forestry or on the hops like these women? In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s farming and gardening, the mainstays of the local economy, changed beyond recognition.

Age To Age would like to hear about your experiences. Send your memories and pictures to Herefordshire Lore, Pool Farm, Belmont Road, Hereford HR2 7JZ (01432 268806)



Hello Hereford. Thanks to Stuart Webb from Bodenham Moor for this picture which shows munitions workers from ROF Rotherwas taking part in a show at the Kemble Theatre in April 1918.

We hope to publish *In The Munitions - Women At War* in Herefordshire this autumn. Watch out for full details in the next Age To Age.

Most of Hereford would have blown up

Myra Taylor now lives in Stretton Grandison near Ledbury, but Mary Lowe, from Nottingham, recalls life as a munitions girl. My name was Mary Gamble. In 1940 I was 18 and went to work at Rotherwas. My father and mother also worked there. We had to change our clothes and wear asbestos, including shoes. We couldn't wear silk, hair grips or anything that could cause a spark. My job was to weigh cordite on little brass scales. We had to weigh it carefully: if we didn't it could backfire on our own troops. Other girls tied it into charges to fire the TNT shells.

There were sixty girls in the shop and we did eleven-hour shifts, six days a week. We used to walk home with boys from Bradbury Lines, the army base, which was close to where we lived. My younger sister, Pauline who still lives in Hereford, and I went to the cinema each week - we liked the Ritz because of the organ. We learnt all the new songs.

I then went to work on the TNT. I was there one morning around 5.30 when a bomb fell on 'Empty Shell'. If it had dropped on '3 Fill' instead I imagine most of Hereford would have gone up too! I next went to work in a factory in Worcester and lived in a hostel. I shared a room with a girl



from Littlehampton called Joan. We were on small arms.

It was quite a walk to the factory and we even hitched a lift on a coal lorry. Americans would send buses for us to go to the camp for dancing. Every now and then they would bring food over for us, even bananas which wouldn't normally be seen.

I mostly went home at weekends to Hereford. One weekend I met my husband-to-be. He was stationed at Madley in the Air Force in 1944. Later that year he was shot down over Italy. He became a prisoner-of-war. He came home in 1945 and we got married in June. I came to live in Nottingham in 1947 when he was demobbed and I have lived here ever since.

In The Munitions - Women At War In Herefordshire is a Local Heritage Initiative project which is a partnership between the Heritage Lottery Fund, Nationwide Building Society and the Countryside Agency.



Locked in the Lavatory

This photograph of the Children's Christmas Party of 1942 comes from Janet Porter (now Lloyd) from Tupsley, Hereford. Janet, then six, and her friend Pauline Lewis were pupils at Margaret Roper School in Bodenham Road and are on the far right of the picture. "The Pantomime Fairy for the Kemble Theatre is the third on the right in the back row.

"We were given a cloak room ticket which enabled us to obtain a portion of ice cream. Injured service men in their royal blue suits, white shorts and red ties were also guests and they gave us children their tickets. I recall getting locked in the lavatory - I still have problems now! I remember shouting until someone came over the top to open the door. I wonder how many recognise themselves now?"

Snippets

Comic Recollections

When I was a lad of 13 living at 28 King's Acre Road, Hereford in 1946 I loved comics, writes **Griff Lloyd** from Ealing.

"On Thursdays my Knockout Comic was delivered and I would sit in bed relishing the cartoons and the brilliantly-drawn series on action films such as Sinbad the Sailor and The Exile. "Funny that now, at 70, I still shoot off to my bedroom and relish Age To Age, the old photos, the Snippets and the write-ups readers send in."

That's my Mum

I was pleased to see my mother in the picture of First World War munitions workers in Volume 12, issue 5 writes **Mary Harrison** from Belmont, Hereford. (But what's her name and which one is she?)

Lights in the Town

Mr J.H.Boar, who has lived in Franchistone since 1936 wonders about a small plane which landed on the Rotherwas Factory around

1937. "There was a beam of light and it landed between the two large chimneys that were later knocked down about 1950."

Tillams Butchers

The butcher's shop, pictured in our last issue, stood opposite the Lamb Hotel in St Owens Street, writes **Frank Cound** from Wimborne, Dorset. "The shop next door was Syd Sellick and the next shop along was a small general store. Then there were three or four cottages:

Mr and Mrs Vickery (he was a gents tailor) lived in one and Mr and Mrs Wooles lived in another. I went to school with their son Graham."

Ann Morgan from Ferrers Street, Hereford remembers it too, "opposite the Barrels Pub which used to be the Lamb Hotel. It's the studio photographer now."

Alfred Watkins

A group looking at the life of Alfred Watkins wants to know who shot film footage, sent to the

British Film Institute archive in 1949 by Wyeval Film Services. And where's the 1985 TV film 'Mornin' Mr Watkins'? The group's secretary is Kate Robertson (01981 240016) or you can email christine.watkins@virgin.net

Hereford's old Gaol

Did you ever come courting here? **Benjamin Pardoe** asked for information on the old court in Gaol Street, Hereford. **Colin Manning** suggests two useful books: Herefordshire Constabulary 1857 - 1967 compiled by Vera Hadley, Ted Hadley and Gordon Forest and Policing Hereford and Leominster by Gordon Forest and Ted Hadley.

There's also the Changing Face of the Herefordshire Magistrates Court by Val Watts, Tony Wilce and Colin himself.

There's an excellent account of the court in Hereford Civic Trust's Newsletter 66, 2002. And **Rebecca Roseff** has emailed to say there is a short record of the old courthouse (smr 26982) at the on-line Sites and Monuments Register smr.herefordshire.gov.uk

Frank Dredge

I loved the picture, writes historian **David Whitehead** who adds some interesting background information. Frank Dredge was a cabinet maker and woodcarver whose workshop was in Eign Street (Gate). In Jakeman and Carver's Directory (1902) he has a half page advertisement where he rather quaintly announces: Be it known unto ye, that in ye Eign Street No 11, nigh unto ye Church of All Saints, Hereford, is ye Shoppe, where earlie in the morn till ye even, are handie Craftsmen skilled in ye labour; carvers and makers offe all manner of Anciente Goodes, in ye Oak and all ye other sorts of Woodes, and in ye Anciente Styles.'

Among the work carried out by the firm were the choir stools for Holy Trinity, Whitecross Road in 1906. This is noted in William Collins' All Round The City 3 (1906) in the City Library. Clearly they were in the forefront of the Arts and Crafts movement in Herefordshire. Do you know any more about Frank Dredge and his Craftsmen? Have you any pictures of other old Herefordshire craftspeople? Let us know at Age To Age, Pool Farm, Belmont Road, Hereford HR2 7JZ. mail@herefordshirelore.org.uk





Bandimonium

Michael Young from Rugby came across this picture of Hereford Bandsmen.

Billed as the King Street Adult School Band, Hereford, they have clearly gone out into the country for the photograph.

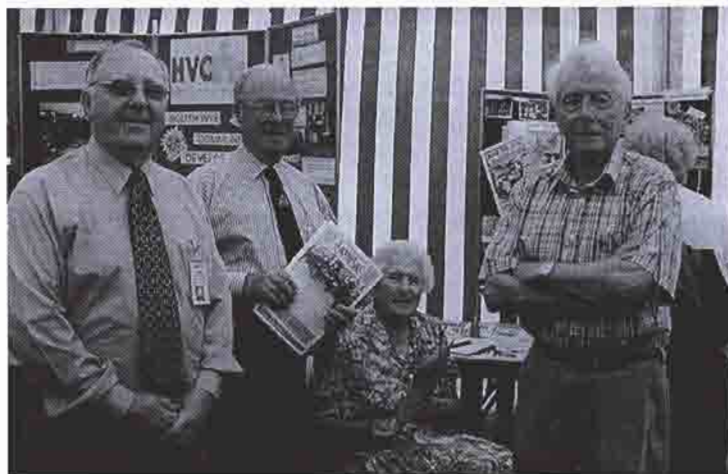
Roy Kennett

It's with great sadness that we report the death of Roy Kennett, our chairman for ten years. Roy, 77, died on May 1. Our sympathies go out to his wife Phyllis, their son and daughter Paul and Rose and their three grandchildren, Diane, Jack and Tom. During a packed funeral service at Much Birch Church, where Roy sang in the choir for 30 years, his fine tenor voice - and his passion for football - were recalled by Rev. Preb. Kay Garlick.

Born in Hereford, Roy worked for Bradleys the clothes shop for 49 years. His passion for Age To Age was remarkable. He will also be remembered for his entertaining talks. (A standing joke of his was the frequent request: "Can I try those trousers on in the window?" And his response: "No sir, you'll have to use the changing rooms just like anyone else.")

Gypsy Suits

Roy recalls the busiest period at Bradleys when the hop pickers were paid. "Senior members of the Gypsy families would have suits made to measure, usually of Derby Tweed, a medium to dark grey herringbone. Each would ask for some special feature like flap pockets, jacket cuffs, sometimes loose, sometimes stitched down. Stitching was of great importance -



Roy, centre with the Age To Age team Tom Woolaway (left), Vi Thomas (seated) and Bill Morris at the South Wye Fun Day in 2000.

for instance the turn up on the trousers would be two to three inches deep with six rows of stitching. And the trousers were 'fallfronts' not the conventional fly. The buyers were always keen to know what design a particular member of another family chose."

Roy's father Jack worked at George Mason. "Few goods were pre-packed; sugar and sultanas all had to be weighed and packed in blue paper bags. Two hundred weight bags of sugar were delivered by the railway dray. Danish butter came in 90lb tubs and was prepared at a customer's request using wooden pats with salt added to taste and decorated with a leaf or cow design."

Friends of Age To Age

Thanks to 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 £25.00 a year

- TUPSLEY TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD
- ST JOHN'S METHODIST CHURCH LUNCHEON CLUB
- HEREFORD BAPTIST CHURCH WEDNESDAY CLUB
- RAIL REUNION ASSOCIATION
- STONEBOW UNIT
- BELMONT & HUNDERTON DERBY & JOAN CLUB
- THE BAY HORSE INN
- HEREFORDSHIRE NHS

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