

Age to Age

Available on Tape

Hereford Lore Reminiscence Newsletter

Vol. 4 Issue 6 November 1996

Hereford Lore, 26 Quarry Road, Hereford HR1 1SS



This team would have struck fear in the heart of any opposition. Harold Quinsey, founder of Quinsey's shop on the Belmont roundabout, is seated fourth from the left. Does anyone have any information about the photograph, loaned by Colin Quinsey?

Present Problems

With the festive season drawing near, I remember with a smile Christmas 1929. My father was recovering from an operation so Christmas had to be extra special

My sister and I had 6d each to buy presents. I bought Mum a baking tin (2d) a spectacle case for my Grandmother (3d) and a comb for my Dad (1d) All practical presents. My sister, who was only six, bought Mum a whipped cream walnut (2d), for Dad a twopenny packet of Woodbines and for Grandmother (who was bed ridden) a box of Phul-Nana face powder (2d).

Christmas morning my sister had eaten the nut from the chocolate bent all the cigarettes and spilled the face powder

The presents were received with much joy and laughter I guess my sister and I didn't have enough money to buy each other presents. Never mind I'll buy her something nice this year

Vi Thomas

Thanks For Your Support

Thanks to all of you who supported Hereford Lore and the Age To Age team's coffee morning and book launch at the Town Hall in October

Apart from selling over 200 books (see The Shopkeepers' Tale, page 3) the event raised over £700 a sum which will go towards funding our Age to Age.

Our next issue of Age To Age will be out in February. Copies are available from City and Belmont Libraries, Hereford Tourist Information Centre, Garrick House Reception, Age Concern Offices, Berrows House, Bath Street and Hereford Town Hall.

Hereford Lore Editorial Group are Margaret Ellis, Edith Gammage, Roy Kennett, Jim Thomas, Vi Thomas, Tom Woolaway, Bill Morris and Bill Laws. Thanks to The Rural Media Company and Natalia Silver.

We are grateful for the support of:



Charity Projects UK



The Great Canny Brook Exp

Snippets

The Missing Man

Is anyone still searching our photograph of the Villa Street chapel congregation for a glimpse of Abbotsfield funeral director Colin Quinsey, published in our last issue? Despite our promise, the picture did not show Colin. But Mrs J. Barnett spotted herself in the photo and Mrs Edmunds of Hinton has told us her father helped to build the little chapel.

Have A Heart

Infant mortality is not yet a thing of the past. There are over 4,000 infant deaths a year in this country and this year's Mayor's Charity hopes to buy medical equipment to tackle these tragedies.

Hereford Mayor Les Andrews launched the appeal following the death of a grandchild eight years ago. His daughter Wendy remembers: "I arrived in hospital with my parents and was examined by my doctor and given a scan. It was then that it dawned on me that something was wrong. The faces of my parents and the medical team filled me with fear. Sheila (the midwife) came and broke the news that Jade had died and would be born, stillborn. Jade was delivered naturally and it was a long and emotional experience. She was born at 7.27 p.m., full term." Contact Les Andrews and his Have A Heart appeal at the Town Hall.

Forty Years On

It was fascinating to see Henry Sandon's picture on the front page of your last issue, writes **Duncan Wilkins** from Hafod Road.

Henry was a bass lay clerk on Decani at Worcester. His last Three Choirs Festival was at Gloucester in 1977, following which he retired from active singing.

As the Decani bass from Hereford, I stood next to Henry during the hour evensongs sung by the choirs from the three cathedrals that week. I hope it wasn't me who drove him to give it all up! Your photo was fascinating. Forty years on most of us wear tee shirts and shorts apart from concert clothes whereas your picture is awash with collars, ties and suits.

The sluggish tree-lined stream that ran west-east behind Baggally meadows was filled with old tin cans, broken prams and cider bottles. But to the young of Holy Trinity parish in 1944 it might have been the Nile or the Niger. At our Saturday morning meetings in the vicarage loft, the choristers debated the need to investigate this mysterious waterway. There were a great many hazards and dangers. Apart from the colossal, ill-tempered Hereford bull that roamed the fields flanking the brook, enormous adders were known to inhabit the long grass (Mrs Tomkins's cat had died in awful agony after a tussle with one of the serpents), and the impenetrable brambles were thickly sown with giant stinging nettles and rusty barbed wire. Now that the likelihood of the Hun invading Hereford had receded, we needed to face a new challenge and resolved to launch an expedition to explore the Canny Brook. Clearly a boat would be needed and provisions, plus weapons for defence against hostile gangs of scrumpers known to inhabit the lower reaches.

So it was in September of that year that some ten intrepid boys and girls of the church choir lugged a home-made punt across the fields. Old Mrs White had given us a pot of strawberry jam and we took half a loaf of bread, some margarine and two bottles of Mr Meredith's special ginger pop.

To this my mother added a bag of sweet pears and an hard boiled egg.

The boys made new bows from the churchyard yew, and our catapults used some rubber found beneath the counter of the corner shop. Several female members of the team had generously offered to cut the elastic from their knickers, but fortunately this did not prove necessary. A great spear was fashioned from a clothes line prop and held in reserve in case we were attacked by the crocodile that Colin was certain he had seen lurking in the bushes.

At last all was ready and the expedition moved off. Stores and equipment, plus the smaller members, went in the punt, now flying the church's flag of St George. The rest, the warriors, marched along on the banks singing 'Onward Christian Soldiers'. When Farmer Raymond's ferocious bull appeared he was driven off by my mother's spaniel, aptly named Crackers, which hurled itself with great courage at the snorting monster. The problem was that Crackers was almost blind and, having savaged a couple of fence posts, fell into the stream whence he was rescued by the punt crew.

So our voyage of discovery continued gathering important scientific data on the fauna and flora, the state of the blackberry crop and the location of the best eating apples.

Derek caught a huge minnow which was kept alive in a jar of water and would be cooked later, back at base camp. Ray almost captured a newt but its tail came off in his hand. "Never mind, I don't like newts anyway," muttered his friend.



Danger! A crowd gathers to watch the flood waters at Belmont Road in our picture, loaned by Colin Quinsey. Do you have any experiences of being being flooded out? Write to Age To Age, 26 Quarry Road, Hereford HR1 1SS.

pedition

International explorer Colonel John Blashford-Snell reveals one of his earliest exploits - a foray into the upper reaches of Hereford's Canny Brook.

The Shopkeepers' Tale

Old Hereford is disappearing and sometimes I feel sad about it," wrote the late Vi Woolaway in *The Shopkeepers' Tale*, the latest book from Hereford Lore.

Hereford Lore is a group of people working since 1989 to collect and remember our recent past. Since our first book "Amazing How Times Change", we have worked with writer Bill Laws to produce *Age To Age* (this is our 21st issue!) and shared your memories in our talks to groups across the county.

The current team, Edith Gammage, Roy Kennett, Bill Morris, Vi Thomas, Jim Thomas and Tom Woolaway is always on the look out for people who would like to help. (Drop us a line at 26 Quarry Road, Hereford if you are interested).

Hereford Lore relies on your subscriptions, sales of the booklets and grants and donations to carry on the work. Lend us your support by buying a book or taking out a subscription (only £3 a year) for *Age To Age*.

The Shopkeepers' Tale (£2.50) is on sale at the Tourist Information Centre, *Age Concern's* charity shop in Widemarsh Street and the Hereford Bookseller in Church Street.



DANIEL'S 1976 THE KIOSK, CASTLE GREEN, HEREFORD.

Many will remember the kiosk in the Castle Green, writes Roy Kennett. Renowned for its superb ice-cream, the kiosk was the focal point of the Castle Green. Believed to have been built by Ernest Gwilliam soon after the First World War, the kiosk was run by Ernie, as he was better known, and his wife, Flo, until the mid 1930's. In the 1930's, the Green was in great demand. The bandstand stood next to the bowling green and was regularly used for concerts. The Bon Optimists concert party often performed to an audience seated on chairs around the bandstand while coloured lights twinkled in the trees above.

admirer, pimplly Pam. The scrumpers were lying in ambush in the marsh north of Kings Acre, but the cowardly lot made a poor showing when our volley of arrows and the fire hardened conkers from our catapults fell amongst them. With a cry of "Remember Breinton!" (a previous engagement when we had thrashed a rival) or our warriors charged into the enemy, fists flying, scattering them over the allotments. One luckless oik was seized and dragged screaming back to be debagged and keel-hauled beneath the punt by the girls. After one dipping, he sang like Miss Gibson's canary, telling us the exact whereabouts of a patch of edible horse mushrooms the size of dinner plates.

Some wanted to take him back to Holy Trinity as a slave, but he refused to walk and, being dripping wet, was not welcome in the boat, so we released the wretch with a stern warning inscribed on his forehead in indelible pencil "Canny Brook is Holy Trinity land. Trespassers beware" Alas at this point our faithful craft became waterlogged and had to be abandoned, but it was a happy band of choristers that trudged back to the vicarage with a load of looted apples, a wet dog, a minnow and a posy of wild flowers for my grandmother

"We went all the way to the White Cross to get these for you, Granny," I lied.

"What sweet thoughtful children," the old lady smiled.

Colonel John Blashford-Snell grew up at Holy Trinity vicarage where his father was vicar His autobiography "*Something Lost Behind The Ranges*" is published by Harper Collins and is available in paperback.



Sam Blake and his eldest son Arthur struggling to hold the pony and the milk pail at the same time, are pictured outside Sam's grocery shop in St Martin's Street. The picture comes from *The Shopkeepers' Tale*.

Noticeboard

Hereford Contemporary Crafts Fair

23, 24 and 25 November
Hereford Town Hall
10 00am - 5.00pm

HEREFORD CHORAL SOCIETY
presents

"Orchestra da Camera"

Work by Bach, Elgar and Britten

23 November 7.30pm

Hereford Cathedral

Tickets £11, £9.50 & Unreserved £5

Piano Concert

with Jack Gibbons

28 November 7.30pm

Shirehall, Hereford

Tickets £8 50

Secret and Lies

Directed by Mike Leigh

Winner of the '96 Cannes Film Festival

14 November 8.00pm

Hereford Education

Centre, Blackfriars Street

£2.90/£1 90 concessions

Made in the Middle

Crafts exhibition of work from around
the West Midlands

30 November to 4 January

Hereford City Art Gallery,

Broad Street

Wartime Fire Fighters

John Hancock of Tupsley writes about our picture of fire fighters in the last issue.

The recent photograph of firemen outside Painter Brothers, taken about 1942, was not Painter Brothers fire brigade, but the firemen of the Hereford City Auxiliary Fire Service, North Division, later to become part of the national fire service.

With the exception of two full time firemen whose sole responsibility was to keep the fire pumps and vehicles in good order, the rest of the firemen were part time volunteers. The company was divided into four crews, 7,8,9,10 and each crew took it in turns to be duty fire crew every fourth night from 10.00 to 6.00. This continued throughout the war until disbandment. Oh happy memories! Some of the people in the picture are still with us, but not many. In addition to Les Powell, there is Mr R.A.Painter, Mr Hill (Hereford Brewery), Mr Bond (Evans Cider Works), Mr Horace Sullivan (fruiterer), Mr Bert Barton (the well known fairground boxing booth proprietor) and the two Woolaway brothers, Jack and Reg (father of Tom Woolaway of Age To Age).

One of the biggest fires that number 8 crew ever attended was Greenlands Factory fire in Foley Street. What a night that was!

Another large fire was the St George's garage fire in Bewell Street.

All these men were expected to turn up the following day at their respective places of employment, regardless of whether they had any sleep or not the night before.

Best wishes to Age To Age. Keep up the good work.

The Alf Evans Column 1907 - 1996



With Christmas and and election looming, we look back at Alf Evans' notes of his days as a young lad at the Wye inn, Bullingham.

The Wye Inn served a large area. Bullingham was cut off by the river and there was no pub at Dinedor nor Holme Lacy the land owning Chesterfields did not believe in drink for the working classes. There was no church school nor village hall at Bullingham either Meetings, including inquests, were arranged in the unlicensed rooms while the stable was used as a mortuary for people who committed suicide, mostly drowning themselves up river.

My father mother sister and I arrived at the Wye in 1912 to take over from my grandfather Henry Gaines. It was a strange place, people coming and going, customers trying to get you to drink or smoke. I had access to clay pipe tobacco, cigarette (Woodbines were 2d for 5), biscuits, but after having the strap that phase soon passed.

Next door to the Wye was Brook House, the priest's residence.

One Father, a six foot, twenty stone Irishman, used to come through the opening between our orchard and Brook House for his ration of Irish whisky. If my parents were not at home he would walk in and help himself. He used to sit in our parlour and tell about his experience sparring with Jack Johnson, heavyweight champion of the world. The village postman only drank once a year, at Christmas, always gin and then kept walking backwards. The blacksmith again got tight once a year and was always taken home in a wheelbarrow.

At election time the polling station was in the schoolroom of the Lower Bullingham Catholic school. The Wye was full of debates before and after voting. Liberals would tie their yellow ribbons on the Tories' traps and horses. The Tories meanwhile would sneak into the pig sties of the Liberals and "blue bag" their pigs.

I have seen the locals ply the Liberal with drink and watch him go and get into his horse and dray. Unable to move, he would get out and examine the problem only to find the horse had been taken out of the trap and the shafts of the trap put through the yard gates and horse reharnessed.

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