

Age to Age

Hereford Lore Reminiscence Newsletter

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Also available on Tape

Hereford Lore, 26 Quarry Road, Hereford HR1 1SS



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Yes, its autumn again and time to remember those hop-picking days. These young women are picking into the crib at the Hawkins Farm, Withington in the 1940s when 5 bushels earned them a shilling. We don't know the lady on the far left, but the others, from left to right, are Rosemary Armishaw, Elsie Heath, Mary Morris and Joyce Harper.

Looking Forward . . .

This edition of Age To Age coincides with the launch of our third book, *The Schoolchildren's Tale*, at a Coffee Morning in the Town Hall, Hereford on October 1st.

We at Hereford Lore have been in operation since 1989 and have enjoyed every minute of collecting your stories and memories of the past. We are going forward in our work and hope to produce lots more interesting newsletters in the future. We made many new friends

when we did one of our talks at the Green Dragon and ran an exhibition stand in High Town as part of the Three Choirs Fringe Festival. We also sold yet more copies of our last book, *The Shopkeepers' Tale*. We still have a few left at £2.50 if you would like one.

I hope you enjoy your visit to the Coffee Morning. Keep your memories and stories coming in and I give you my best wishes for the future.

Tom Woolaway

Dennis Cooper, pictured on his tricycle many years ago, was never very keen on school. "The teachers used to pull the boys by their ears," he says in *The Schoolchildren's Tale*. Published this month at £2.50, *The Schoolchildren's Tale* is available from Hereford Tourist Information Centre in King Street, the Age Concern shop in Widemarsh Street or from Hereford Lore, 26 Quarry Road, Hereford HR1 1SS.



Age To Age is published bi-monthly by Hereford Lore, a group of people working to collect and remember our past. Our editorial team, Edith Gammage, Roy Kennett, Bill Morris, Vi Thomas, Jim Thomas, Tom Woolaway and Bill Laws, depend on grants, donations and book sales to keep going.

Age to Age is available free from the Town Hall, City Library, Belmont Library, Tourist Information Centre, Age Concern and Garrick House reception. But you can ensure your copy by taking out a £3 a year subscription from Hereford Lore, 26 Quarry Road, Hereford HR1 1SS. Next issue will be published in December.

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Looking Back



Fifty years ago staff and friends of Burton's Bakery prepare for a day trip. Can you imagine 30 people posing for their picture in West Street with today's traffic? The photograph comes from Esther Florence of The Shires.

Fire Fighters

John Hancock of Tupsley has written to say the photograph of firemen outside Painter Brothers (published in last September's Age To Age) was not Painter's fire service, but 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 all the rest were part time volunteers," writes John

"The company was divided into four crews and each took it in turns to be on duty all night throughout the war and they were expected to turn up at their employment the following day regardless of whether they had any sleep the night before."

Included in the picture were Les Powel Mr R A Painter Mr Hil (Hereford brewery) Mr Bond (Evans' Cider Works) Mr Horace Sullivan (fruiterer), Bert Barton (the fairground boxing booth proprietor) Charlie Skyrme (greengrocer) and the two Woolaway brothers, Jack and Reg Reg being the father of Tom Woolaway of Hereford Lore.

"One of the biggest fires that my crew Number 8 ever attended was Greenlands factory fire off Eign Road. Another large fire was the St George's Garage fire in Bewel Street."

Messenger

Allen Thomas of Haverfordwest was in the Auxiliary Fire Service during the last war

"Living south of the river B South was our fire station housed in Langford's old cider works in Wye Street. The watchroom had a door onto the Riverside Walk next to the Saracens Head (now The Lancaster). Our full time section leader was Nobby Clarke a resolute character with humour and well suited to the job. He was ably assisted by Bert Jones, an ex-bus driver. We had five pumps, mostly Dennis or Berisford Stork, towed by any available vehicle, often large private cars.

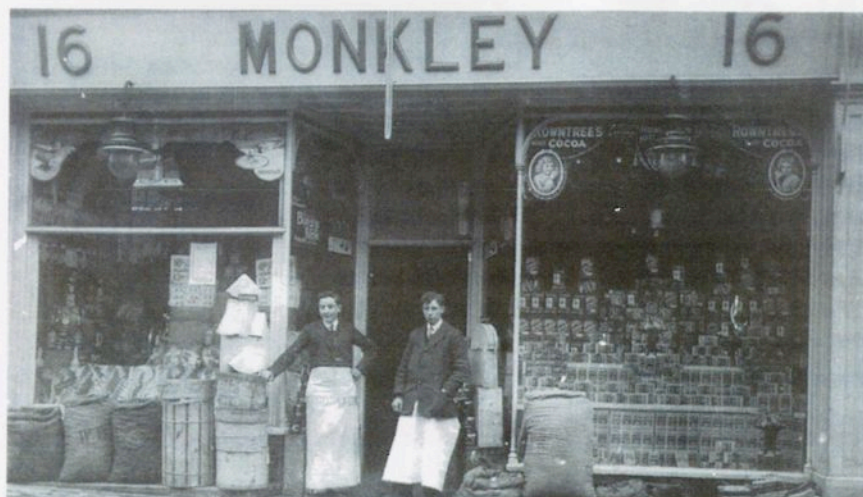
"My job was to run messages between pumps or for officers in the fire area. I remember two Auxiliary Fire Officers, Senior Company Officer Len Playford who was manager of Hereford Produce and Company Officer Prior who worked in the architects department at the County offices

Sometimes would accompany officers to outlying villages. Mr Playford had a Jaguar SS 16 with a long bonnet and I remember him touching 88 mph down Belmont Road on an urgent return to Hereford

"Every few days we had to sleep one night on the station and if there was an air raid alert we would stand outside the watchroom on the riverside. We could sometimes see the rough outline of the planes in the moonlight, droning overhead

"Our crew included Fred Causon manager of Frederick Wrights, the Eign Street tobacconists Bernard Follett, a mill wright at the Bath Street flour mills and Phil Eaton a Midlands Red bus driver. At the Central station there were probably Eric Floyd Fred Smale Tarzan Morris George Williams, George Harper Thomson known as Long Tom Jack Kinsey and others. Eventually I left to become a full time National Fire Service despatch rider at the age of 17 before joining the Royal Navy Submarine Branch"

(Our apologies to Allen for having to reduce his interesting article for reasons of space).



Mrs Jones of Clehonger loaned this old photograph of Monkley's which used to stand by the old Wye Bridge. Sid Jones is on the left; let us know if you recognise the young fellow on the right.

Those Bishop's Meadow Concert Parties

Bert Lever's Concert Parties on the Bishop's Meadow recalled in our last issue by Donald Austins, reminded **Stella Williams** (formerly Fewings) of her days on his chorus line. She and her sister Hazel joined the troop in the 1930s, singing favourites like Jessie Mathews' *Over My Shoulder*

Like Stella, **Reg Rumsey** who was a resident of Church Street, where Bert Lever lived recalled Bert's sons, Basil and Paul. According to Stella, one of them had the most wonderful eyelashes and all the girls in the troop fell for him. **Beryl Reece** (formerly Claytor) now lives in Cheltenham and she tells us that her parents worked in the shoe repair shop owned by W. & E.

Turner at 14, Church Street next door to the Levers. Another reader remembered Bert, whose stage name was Padezzi as a small sad man in baggy trousers who always dressed in black. Perhaps he never got over the tragic death of his son Basil killed we believe, when his cycle hit a cow on the steep pitch down to Mordiford

Jack Hill tells us that The Peerless Concert Party also performed at the same venue. One of the performers was someone called Yarwood whose parents kept the Lamb Inn, St Owen's Street. The pianist may have been Rosa Yarwood organist at Kentchurch and silent film pianist at the Kinema also known as the Pavilion, now the launderette.



Eyes Right. Joan Turner, now Joan Hill, marches in the front row, left, as a member of the Girls Training Corp, Hereford 810 Co. on Thanksgiving Sunday, May 13 1945.

ME

I may be getting on in years, your voice may fall upon deaf ears.
Your eyesight may be pretty poor, and you may think I'm an old bore.
But if you could stop and just listen a while, I'll share my memories and make you smile,
and then you might just be able to see, that there is really more to me!

Pat Jones' poem sent in by Tom Beddow, a member of St Francis Diners

Snippets

The Hay-on-Wye Poisoner

The story of the Hay solicitor Major Armstrong, executed in 1921 for the murder of his wife, seem to have been resurrected recently. Edith Gammage remembers her eldest brother, Jim Cole who was in the Herefordshire Police, having to bring the three Armstrong children to Hereford. They were taken to the private school, Wyese, near Hereford Rowing Club to wait for their relations to come and take them away. Jim went on to become Assistant Commissioner of the colonial police in Malaya, but was captured by the Japanese and interred in Changi gaol until the war was over

Black Herefordians?

Black people of African and Asian descent were rare in Herefordshire until the second world war when many readers remember meeting black American G.I.s stationed over here. But an organisation studying the cultural history of African Caribbeans and Asians in this country are trying to discover more about a black Herefordshire family, the Soobroy or Subroy family. James Soobroy was probably a butler at The New Weir Kenchester in the 1820s before he moved to Hereford. Does anyone remember the family?

The Visitor

Grandmother Joan Bevis, her daughter Sally Haynes and grand daughter Emma Greenald prove there's something for everyone in Hereford's community play, The Visitor. Joan, Sally and Emma are among those taking part in this play based on a local event in the forties. But what was the event? Well you won't find out if you don't get involved: call Arts In Action on (01432) 278118 to find out where the Wednesday rehearsals are taking place. Jan Doran, meanwhile, is raising funds for the play with a Forties Flashback evening, In The Mood, on Saturday November 8. Hereford Lore will be there along with forties hairstyles, cocktails, memorabilia and music: call Jan (01531 670729) for details.

Empire Day

Donald Austins wonders who remembers the old Empire Day, traditionally celebrated on May 24, Queen Victoria's birthday. After the last world war, thinks Donald, Empire Day became Commonwealth Day. "All the schools with the exception, I think, of the Cathedral and High Schools paraded in the Castle Green where we sang our hearts out. Land of Hope and Glory and the National Anthem were a must, but I believe other patriotic songs were sung and I suspect the band must have been the Salvation Army. It could have been a military band." And, asks Donald, why was it always sunny? "There were times when it did rain, but my memories are always of sunshine."

Pub Crawl

For those observant readers of A Public Affair in our last issue, Millie Weeks' postcard listed 39 Herefordshire pubs.

Noticeboard

Clem Tudge,
Hereford City
Mayor is hosting a
coffee morning at
the Town Hall on
Wednesday
October 8 from
10.00 - 12.00 in aid
of the Mayor's
charity, Launch
Pad For Life

*Old Hereford will feature
in Basil Butcher's
slideshow at the Friends
Meeting House,
King Street on Friday
October 17 at 7.30. £3 entry
in aid of
Hereford Friends of
Samaritans.*

Hereford Amateur
Operatic Society
Present
Pickwick at the
Operatic Theatre
Whitecross Road
from September 24 - 29
Call Pat Smith
(265094) for details.

Hereford Gilbert
& Sullivan
Society's
Golden Jubilee
Dinner
Friday October 10
at the Three
Counties Hotel,
Belmont Road,
Hereford.
Tickets from Mrs
Ann Dawe
(01432 351158)



Members of Hereford's Gilbert and Sullivan Operatic Society pose for an out-of-costume portrait after their production of *Patience* in 1968. First formed fifty years ago, the Society staged their first production at the Garrison Theatre, Bradbury Lines in April 1948. Since then they have performed the well known G. & S. operettas and some of the lesser known light operas at old city theatres including the Kemble, Regal, Belmont Abbey School and Nell Gwynne. Percy Arrowsmith who at 97 must rank as one of its oldest members recalls the old Holy Trinity Operatic and Dramatic Society and their first production in 1937, *Merrie England*.

The outbreak of war finished the Society and it was the G. & S. Society which took over when hostilities ceased. The Society which recently returned from performing *Trial By Jury* and *H.M.S. Pinafore* at Hereford's twin town, Dillenburg (earning themselves a standing ovation) is celebrating their fiftieth anniversary with a Golden Jubilee dinner and making plans for a production of *Utopia Ltd* when Hereford's new Courtyard Theatre opens.

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