

# Age To Age

Hereford Lore Reminiscence Newsletter

Also available on tape

Vol 6 Issue 4

Hereford Lore, 26 Quarry Road, Hereford HR1 1SS

August 1998



Photo: Hereford Library and Derek Foxton

## Coffee Anyone?

In June we had a stall in High Town to publicise Age To Age.

The day was cold and wet, but the reception we had from people was warm and enthusiastic. Many promised to come to our coffee morning on Wednesday October 7 from 10.00 to 12.30 at the Town Hall and we feel sure that they will be there. Remember there is a lift if the stairs are a problem, and speak to Reception if you need access for a wheelchair. Book that date for a happy, carefree, friendly morning. Admission is free.

Vi Thomas

## Remember The Lamp Man

Who remembers James Young, Hereford's last gas lamplighter? writes Mrs Wheatstone of The Queens Arms, daughter of Mr Young. He was a familiar face around Hinton and Putson where he lived. He rode his bike all year round and carried his ladder with him. On many occasions he would be called out to repair lamps and mantles broken by youngsters using the lamps for target practice.



## A Century Ago

On September 29 1898 the heavens opened and the rain poured down. It rather dampened enthusiasm for the Gent's 200 yards needle-threading and lighted candle races, the cycling procession, the Ladies parasol race and the illuminated parade of boats, all planned as part of the celebrations for the grand opening of the Victoria Bridge. (See Bridge Over The River Wye, inside)

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For only £3 a year you could have Age To Age delivered to your door. Age To Age is the bi-monthly newsletter from Hereford Lore, a group of people working to collect and remember our past. Our editorial team, Edith Gammage, Roy Kennett, Bill Morris, Vi Thomas, Tom Woolaway and Jim Thomas depend on grants, donations, book sales and your subscriptions.

Age To Age is available free at the Town Hall, City and Belmont Libraries, Tourist Information Centre, Age Concern and Garrick House and many residential homes and day centres. If you want to secure your own copy, send for a subscription to Hereford Lore, 26 Quarry Road, Hereford HR1 1SS. Next issue - October 1998.

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# Bridge Over The River Wye

**H**appy birthday to the Victoria Bridge, now spanning a century as well as the River Wye. Graham Roberts, formerly Hereford City's Surveyor, has sent us his researches into Victoria Bridge.

The Romans called the Wye the Vaga, appropriately enough, given its unpredictable vagaries - as it meanders through the county, the Wye creates shallows in the dry seasons and yet can rise anything from 15 to 20 feet above its summer levels.

The Romans' wooden bridge across the Wye at Kenchester did not last after their departure and people instead had to rely on Hereford's two fords, one by the Bishop's Palace, the Palace ford, and the second, the Castle ford, on a continuation of Mill Street (known as Bruton Street until 1855). The Old Bridge was built in 1490 and apart from this, the only way to cross the river for many centuries was by ferry. There were two in Hereford, the Princess Mary which operated for a short while from July 1893 near the old Castle ford and later at Hunderton between Belmont and Broomy Hill.

The Victoria bridge, like the Victoria Eye

and Ear hospital and the Victoria children's ward at the Infirmary, were planned to mark Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887. Unlike the latter two projects, the footbridge plan was shelved until the Queen's Diamond Jubilee year when it was resurrected mainly by Mr Augustus C Edwards, (Silk Mercer, Draper, Milliner, Costumier of Hereford). Funded by public subscription and costing no more than £1200, the Bridge was finally built at the close of the last century.

With a central span of 110 feet, two side spans of 37ft 6ins each, and four rows of steel link chains for the suspension chains, the bridge was opened by Lady Emily Foley in September 1898. Sixty years later, time had taken its toll on this, graceful and elegant structure, which needed extensive repairs. The £12,000 bill was ten times its original cost.

'Artistic in design, elegant in form, light in construction and beautiful in effect' the Victoria Bridge has become a vital link for many hundreds of people. There may be some of these with special recollections of the old bridge? Write in and tell us about them.



## Letters To America

**W**hen June Williams (formerly Pettitt) from Carmarthen was a young girl in Hereford, her friend Sandra's father was the caretaker of the Key Hostel, next to the Odeon in High Town.

"I wonder if that was where your American who was at Foxley (Healing Herefordshire, February 98 issue) went dancing.

Sandra's father used to spread French chalk on the floor to make it slippery for dancing and we were allowed to slide around to work it in. Her sister married a

Polish soldier and went to live at Foxley Camp and we used to visit there. While exploring the woods, we discovered a tower and on the walls were hundreds of addresses of Americans who had spent their time at Foxley. We wrote letters to them and were so pleased when we got replies." June was a telephonist at the Hereford Exchange in 1952. "I would love to hear of others who worked there at the time," she writes.

Above is a picture of a get-together by wartime telephonists in 1978. (Photo: Hereford Times).

## SNIP

### The Bad Tempered Goose

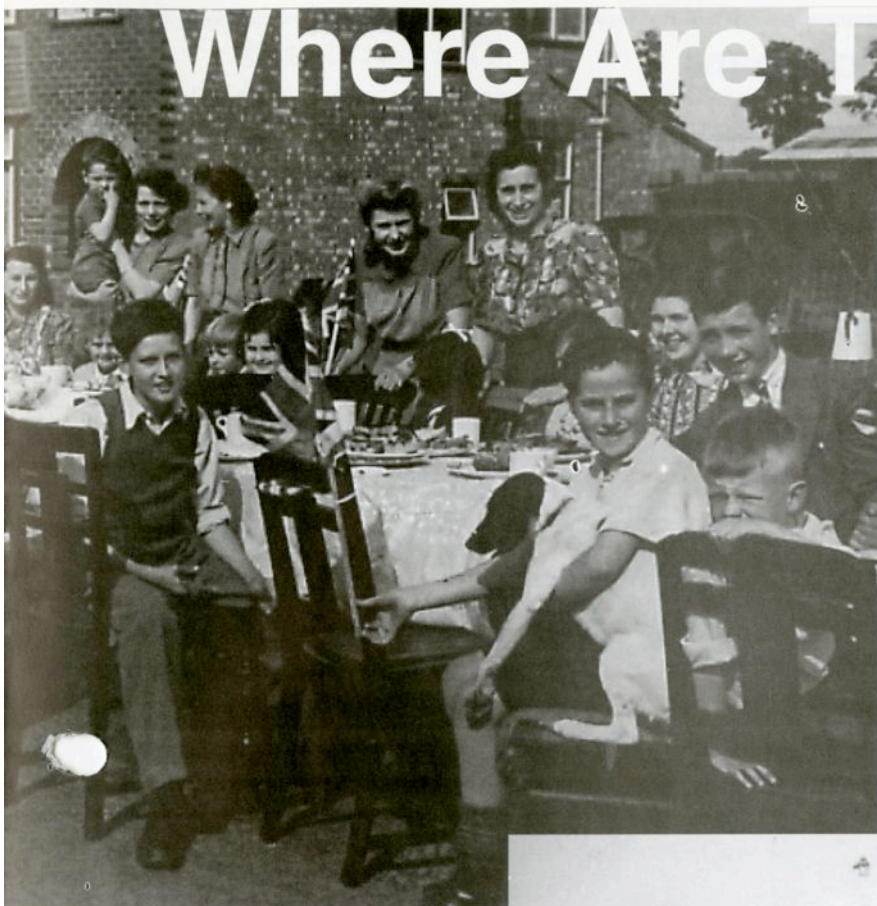
**M**adeleine Went of Hunderton wanted to know which regiment with a goose as a mascot was stationed at the Cattle Market in the Second World War. John Williams has told Roy Kennett the goose was a stray, not a mascot, adopted by the Royal Army Supply Corp, stationed at the market. The goose was not always friendly and would attack and give chase if took a dislike to you.

### More On The May Fair

**A**.R. Willis of Three Elms Road recalls a curious structure that stood in High Town during the last war when the traditional May Fair was banned from the city in the interests of national security. There is a clause in the Showman Guild's ancient charter which states that if they fail to stage a Fair in any one year, they forfeit the right for ever after. Each year a brightly coloured stall was erected in the town outside Bell's the tobacconists (now the Monsoon Clothing store) for the period the Fair would have been in the streets. This token structure fulfilled the conditions of the charter. I always wanted to photograph it but there were always civil and military police on duty and it was dangerous to take photographs in public as one could be arrested on suspicion of being a spy.



# Where Are They Now?



"Where are they now?" asks Monica Beavan of Whitecross. Monica, who is involved with Hereford's Family History Society, was loaned these two pictures by June Joiner, whose mother, Mrs Olive Wathen of Wathen's Sweet Shop in King Street, is pictured fourth from the left beside the seaside (below) This is thought to have been an outing for customers of the Spread Eagle public house in King Street during the early 1950s.

The street party (left) may be a VE or VJ day celebration taken in Redhill. The late John Harris in jacket and tie sits on the right. Do you have any more details? Let us know at Age To Age

## PETS

### Kingstone Sunshine Club

We had a pleasant afternoon at Kingstone Sunshine Club in June," writes Age To Age's Vi Thomas. Gladys Chandler told us that her uncle, Albert Morgan, started an ice cream business about 1920. Joyce Howells said her uncle, Albert Badman, was manager of Slatters about 1920 and his wife Margaret had a grocery shop with a petrol pump station outside on the Ledbury road, also about 1920.

### Postscript

Do words fascinate you?" asks Barbara Ramsey of Postscript. Is getting out and about a problem? Then Postscript Newsletter may interest you. Its aim is to give people who are housebound, for whatever reason, an opportunity to stimulate and practise their writing skills and find out about opportunities for writers. The newsletter is a mixture of encouragement and practical advice. Age is no bar to writing - Mary Wesley became eligible for her senior citizen's bus pass long before her first novel was published. If you would like to find out more, send a stamped addressed envelope to Barbara at The Laurels, Farrington, Hereford HR1 4HY



## Mystery Picture

"Yes, remember the demolished building pictured in your last issue," writes Mark Black of Tupsley. "I was its last owner"

Pulled down to make way for the relief road, it was two years older than the Old House in High Town, but down it had to come. Very sad. Betty Barnett, Dennis Edmunds, Billy Williams, E.J Broad and Norman Owen, of Stanhope Street also remember the building, 128 Widemarsh Street. It stood opposite Garrick House and next door to the Old Harp and was pulled down to widen Blue School Street. In 1934 it was a fried fish shop belonging to James Trigg, whose daughter Eileen Tudge was the last Mayoress and kindly supplied the photograph, but in the mid 50s it was Aladdin's Cave, owned by Mr and Mrs Holt. I saw a copper kettle in the window and wanted it to distil my home made wine. Mr Holt was horrified, explaining that it was illegal to distil one's own spirits. But he allowed me to purchase it, providing I promised not to do anything against the law.'



Hereford Amateur Operatic  
Society

present

## Me and My Girl

at The Courtyard, Edgar Street  
from Friday October 30 to Saturday  
November 7 1998.

Call George Powell (355441)  
for bookings.

## Noticeboard

Hereford Lore (Age To Age)

Will be holding a

### Coffee Morning

on Wednesday 7th October  
1998

In Hereford Town Hall  
at 10.00 -12.30

**Admission Free All welcome**

## The Courtyard

HEREFORD'S NEW CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

18 Sept 26 Sept 98' **Cabaret**

Tickets £7, £5.50 Concessions

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For all shows, call

The Courtyard Box Office on 01432 359252

Copies of the brochure for the first season can be obtained by  
calling the Box Office or writing to

The Courtyard, FREEPOST SWC2122, Hereford HR4 9ZZ



Elizabeth Edgar (formerly Cadmore) of Whitecross Road thinks her picture of a class at the Catholic School was taken about sixty years ago in the 1930s. If there is anyone you recognise here, drop us a line at Age To Age, 26 Quarry Road, Hereford HR1 1SS.

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Wishing you continued success in the future.

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Even publicans take the occasional night out. Here Peggy Ford (far right) who ran the Booth Hall and Mrs Jones (right), licensee at the Imperial joined Harold Beaver (centre) and Mr and Mrs Reg Stallard for a Licenced Victualler Dinner.