

Age to Age

Hereford Lore Reminiscence Newsletter

Also available
on tape

Vol 6 Issue 6

Hereford Lore, 26 Quarry Road, Hereford HR1 1SS

December 1998



With Santa in his Fairy Grotto, the toy department of Greenland's Store in High Town was mecca for Hereford children. Read all about it inside. (Picture: Colin Greenland)

Inside

- * The Missed Train
- * Greenland's Grotto
- * A Christmas Cat
- * The Canon's Bun

*Have A Healthy
Happy
Christmas*

The Christmas season is with us again. 1998 has appeared to be busier than ever. May I say on behalf of Hereford Lore a very big thank you to all who, in one way or another, made a contribution to the success of our recent Coffee Morning? So many people volunteered help and the friendly attitude was tremendous. We are now in the sixth year of publishing Age To Age. We are pleased to record so many people have come forward with donations to ensure we go from strength to strength. May we wish all our readers a very healthy, happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year

Roy Kennett, chairman



Fire broke out at Greenlands one Thursday lunchtime in 1936. The store was gutted and had to be rebuilt. (Photo Percy Pritchard)

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, 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 - February 1999.

We are grateful for the support of:



Charity Projects UK

**COMIC
RELIEF**



HEREFORDSHIRE
COUNCIL

Christmas Memories

More Pain Than Pleasure

Glyn Williams' Christmas on a dairy farm meant plenty of hard work. "We kept poultry. Dad would go into the coppice and cut hazel sticks - they had to be shaven and pointed and dried in the oven to get rid of the sap - for skewers to put through the chicken wings. We'd work night and day, feathering the birds, collecting the feathers and putting the goose down into separate bags for filling pillows and eiderdowns. The goose wings were kept for dusting.



Simon and Sarah Thomas Grandchildren of Vi Thomas prepare the traditional Christmas Eve treat - a glass of sherry, a mince pie and a piece of home-baked pastry for Father Christmas.

We would start for Hereford Market Hall at 5.30 a.m. by pony and trap. If trade was bad we were still there, late on Christmas Day. We couldn't put the birds in cold storage in those days. Christmas Day we were up early for the milking and the milk round. Christmas tea was about 8.00 p.m. and little time for presents. In any case we were totally exhausted."

Almost All Aboard

When Sid Coles, a railway inspector at Hereford, arrived home on an early one Christmas morning, his daughter Gwen woke to the sound of a baby crying downstairs. There in the kitchen was a strange lady and her baby. She had stepped from the train with her baby to fill her baby's bottle. But the train - and her husband - were without her, bound for Scotland. The family was eventually reunited. Sid received an appreciative letter thanking his family for their unexpected Christmas hospitality.

A Curious Present

Mrs G. Hood from the Golden Oldies Club would tell her grandchildren how his mother used to call him and his brother to "come and get your half egg for tea." Once safe inside, she would admit, "I'm only impressing the neighbours. Now eat your bread and jam." One Christmas his grandchildren gave him, yes, you guessed it, an apple, an orange and a half egg, boiled. "My heart surged with happiness," said Mr Hood.

Silent Night

The Salvation Army's Owen Gulliford recalls playing carols with the army band on a dark night in Clevedon. "A young lad came down and asked if we could play Silent Night. I immediately replied, 'Yes, if you will stand in the band and sing.' Over the still, dark night came the boy soprano voice with the band playing pianissimo. Can you wonder it is still my favourite carol?"

The Kitchen Singers

Beryl Reece from Cheltenham sent many Christmas memories. "My mother cried when, during the first World War, she could no longer give us shin of beef for Christmas dinner." Beryl's father was an organist and choir master at St Mary's Church and he taught his children their carols. "My brother Frank and I used to go out into the garden at dark night, singing our carols along Grandstand Road. "Around 1923, we learned Silent Night, a German carol discovered during the first World War. We always called on one middle-aged couple who made us stand in the kitchen to sing while they sat in the sitting room. In another house, a very old lady used to have all the family home and call us to sing in front of everyone. They would collect for us and we used to get home with about 24 pennies, sweets and oranges. One year, Frank and my dad made a doll's house for me."

working in secret on cold evenings in the wash house. I do remember the surprise of it, but my brother told me in later years that he and Dad were upset that I showed very little pleasure in it. When I was young, I never had a teddy bear, but now, at 83, I have four! And they are lovely!"

The Hospital Run

Megan Morris, a Girl Guide in the 1930s, remembers touring town with the Scouts on Christmas morning on a lorry (supplied, she thinks, by Bulmers) collecting gifts for the General Hospital. They would ring a hand bell and people would shout, "Here they come!" and throw fruit, sweets and toys up to the Scouts and Guides who delivered them to the Hospital. There would be a party for disadvantaged children in Berrington Street and later the Scouts gave the Guides a thank-you party.

Greenland's Grotto

Jessica Spalding remembers taking her young son to Greenland's toy department. "It was an Aladdin's Cave and the highlight was riding in the rocket and watching the stars and planets go racing past the portholes."

It was Betty Reinold's treat too. Betty, formerly Betty Southall, wasn't keen on the Father Christmas. "I was more interested in the mechanised singing bird in a cage." She remembers the jar of sweets in George Mason's where a sweet was given to all well-behaved children, and making yards of paper chains, "sitting at the kitchen table with the coloured paper, scissors and a bowl of flour paste. We had a large coloured paper ball which folded flat and was brought out every Christmas." Betty still blushes at the memory of "one absolute bloomer. A dear soul, Mrs Turner, gave me a present saying, 'I'm afraid it's only a small tablet of soap.' 'Oh thank you,' I replied. 'All I ever get is that ghastly Palmolive' to which she replied, 'Well, I'm very sorry Betty, but this is Palmolive!'"

A Stranger Calls

The postman used to deliver on Christmas Day, recalls Lou Boughton of Chandos Street. "One Christmas he had come in for a mince pie and was surrounded by all the wonderful smells and scents of Christmas - roast turkey, tangerines, Wills Whiffs, tangy pines from the Christmas tree and the warm, woody aroma of apple logs on the open fire. Then there was an unexpected knock at the door. A young man, sorry to come and interrupt us, was invited in. He explained his dilemma. He was visiting his grandmother who lived with me except for her cat which unfortunately had died of old age."

Now we had a delightful long-haired tabby, Trudy, who was expert at producing equally attractive kittens and was famous for miles around. Our daughter had kept her special favourite kitten, the last of Trudy's litter. We asked our daughter if she would give her kitten to a good home. At that age it wasn't easy. The young man waited. Lots of cuddles for puss and then the kitten was very gently handed over. After all it was Christmas, we were a happy family and we had everything. "

Eign Brook Club

Roy Kennett, Vi Thomas, Bill Morris and Tom Woolaway, leading lights in Hereford Lore, regularly talk about Age To Age at local clubs. When Roy and Vi visited the Eign Brook Thursday Club there were Christmas memories galore.

Grace Chamberlain remembered in 1925, when she was twelve years, going carol singing with the Eign Brook church choir with their lanterns hanging from long poles. They were given cocoa and mince pies by Mr and Mrs Sid Wright, who owned the jam factory, and Mr and Mrs George Hiles, the builders.

As a seven year old, Nancy Rose used to gaze longingly at the dolls in Tilley's shop in Ledbury. That Christmas, thanks to her aunt who worked at Tilley's, her Christmas wish came true, "and she had a doll for Christmas." Thirty years ago, Dora Wilkinson's Christmas was an unsettling time - she kept worrying that the Christmas candles would set fire to the thatched roof of the gamekeeper's cottage, where she was staying



Each Christmas, writes ex chorister David Apperley, the Dean and Chapter arranged the annual choristers' treat, a visit to the Odeon cinema followed by tea. We would have reserved balcony seats at the Odeon and after the film show, would troop into the cinema restaurant where tea was set out. On one occasion the Precentor, Canon Warner, the Residentary Canon Jordan and one of the Minor Canons, 'Sam' Jones joined us together with their wives. Canon Warner sat opposite me and when the plates of buns and cakes were passed along the table, he pounced on a Chelsea bun and proceeded to unroll it, informing me with a wink, that 'they tasted much better like that.'

The photograph may be faded, but the memories are strong. Far side of the table: (left to right) Mrs Jordan, Canon Moreton, Geof Bartlett, Rex Denby, David Jones, David Apperley, Michael Jones, Ronnie Morgan, Ron Parry, Michael Hughes, Paul Hill, Edward Jones, David Downes. Near side of the table: Clarence Attfield, Roy Sayce, John Downes, not known, Michael Illman, Canon H.J. Jordan and Canon Warner.

Snippets

Polished Performance

Does anyone recall the Holmer School trip to the Garrison Theatre, Bradbury Lines in 1946? As part of the Mayor's Treat, classes one and two were taken to the theatre by bus for a performance of Polish Pot Pourri given by Polish troops stationed then at Foxely. The remaining classes were entertained back at school by local conjurer, Mr Stubbs.

Memories For The Millenium

BBC Hereford and Worcester is making a series of programmes for the Millenium on our changing life and times. Marriage and relationships, farming and the countryside, fashions and factories - if you have a view, give Julia Letts a call on 01905 337244.

Home Inspections

Our Nursing and Residential Homes are regularly inspected to make sure they come up to scratch. But did you know that you can see the inspection reports? Copies of nursing home reports are kept at the Herefordshire Health Authority at Victoria House in Eign Street (01432 272012). Residential Home reports are kept by the County Inspectorate at Portfield House, Daws Road (01432 270318).

Noticeboard

Hereford Gilbert and Sullivan
Society present

Mikado

at the Courtyard,
Edgar Street, Hereford
March 8th - 13th 1999
£7.50 Saturday matinee £5

A magical family pantomime CINDERELLA

at The Courtyard
Edgar Street, Hereford
18 December - 9 January

Matinee and evening
performances available

Book your tickets now
on 01432 359252

Don't miss the magic of
Christmas at The Courtyard!

The Curse of the Mummy's Boy

performed by
North Country Theatre
An Egyptian spoof murder story
based on the writing of
Conan Doyle.

Thursday 3rd December
Wigmore Village Hall

The Old Rope String Band

Witty comedy combined with
masterful musicianship

Thursday 18th February
Stoke Prior Village Hall
Tickets: 01568 760380

Jewellery Exhibition

The work of Alloy Jewellers on
show and for sale at the Courtyard
Centre for the Arts, Hereford
throughout December

Find out more about Christmas
events in Hereford by contacting
the Tourist Information Centre on
01432 268430

Vi Thomas' Christmas Diary

Christmas Eve 1921 One of my wishes came true - I slept with my grandmother in her big feather bed, coal fire burning brightly, a lot of stories told me and many hugs and cuddles. Next morning my parents came in to see what Father Christmas had brought me. My



Christmas 1922 - Vi Thomas in a home-made bridesmaid's dress. "I was responsible for bringing my aunt Alice and her husband George together Aunt Alice had taken me for a walk when I ran into a doorway which turned out to be the gent's toilet. Aunt Alice stood there, very distressed, but help was at hand. George Johnson, seeing the situation, went into the gent's and brought me out. He handed me over to Alice and this was the beginning of their romance."



Christmas Eve 1928 - Beryl, Joyce and Vi prepare for Christmas.

father said that Father Christmas had taken his box of matches and we would have to leave a note for him the following year, asking for them back.

Christmas 1922. I was brides maid at my aunty's wedding. And the matches were returned with an apology from Father Christmas. My beloved grandmother, by now bedridden and living with us, told me which presents I was having long before Christmas.

Christmas 1940. We were newly married and had a flat near my husband's barracks. On Christmas Day the army organised a big party for the troops and their ladies. We both missed our families and wished we had a baby to buy presents for

Christmas 1944. A sad one. Our little girl died, while my husband was overseas. I stayed with my parents and we played cards all evening.

Christmas 1945. A happy one. SSAFA were successful in having my husband repatriated after our child's death, he came back to England in January, and our son, a healthy ten pounder arrived at Christmas. What a gift!

Friends of Age To Age

FREESTYLE Fields Yard, Plough Lane, Hereford HR4 OEL Tel: 01432 343188 Fax: 01432 358513

ABBOTSFIELD FUNERAL DIRECTORS Monkmoor Street, Hereford HR1 2DX

COPYING & RESTORING OLD PHOTOGRAPHS, PHOTO GLAZING

Juergen and Janet Koenigsbeck, Telephone 341608 Work 851560 Home

HEREFORD AMATEUR OPERATIC SOCIETY

ROCKFIELD DIY Station Approach, Hereford 01432 274146 Your Local Independent DIY Store

IMPERIAL RESTAURANT AND BARS Widemarsh Street, Hereford 01432 273646

All our residents enjoy reading Age To Age. Wishing you continued success in the future.

Field Farm House Residential Home, Hampton Bishop, Hereford HR1 4JP (01432 273064)

Bay Horse Inn, Kings Acre Road, Hereford Tel 01432 273351