

THE LEDBURY LETTER

Number 106 Autumn 2018



The Butcher Row House Museum.

Ledbury & District Civic Society

“Looking After Ledbury...”



Butcher Row House
Folk Museum

LEDBURY & DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY
Burgage Hall
Church Lane
Ledbury
HEREFORDSHIRE HR8 1DW

Objectives of the Society...

To stimulate public interest; promote high standards of planning and architecture; and secure the preservation, protection and improvement of features of historic, natural and public interest in Ledbury and the surrounding district.

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Notice is hereby given that membership records of the Ledbury & District Trust are held on a database system. Those requiring access to the data held concerning themselves should contact the Membership Secretary. These are for administration purposes only, and an individual's details can be removed on receipt of a written request.

Copy deadline for the next Ledbury Letter: Friday, 8th February 2018.

Chairman's Report...

Chris Johnson

Once again a lot of the Civic Society Trustees' time in the last six months has been spent considering the various planning applications for large areas of housing around Ledbury. I am truly grateful for the immense amount of time, effort and expertise contributed by the Planning Committee. Their report later covers this in more detail. Following the AGM we held a special meeting of the Society dedicated to these housing issues and I thank those who attended and expressed their views.

The Town Plan was adopted in 2016 following wide consultation and made a number of suggestions for further action. Herefordshire Council commissioned Balfour Beatty to take this forward by making an assessment of the public realm and transportation in Ledbury. Their Appraisal has recently been sent to the Civic Society for comment. It makes a number of suggestions for changes to the Town, some excellent and others, such as changes to the area round the Market House, which are more controversial. A full public consultation is promised in due course. A particularly depressing part of the appraisal is the recognition that there is little or no money available for routine maintenance.

On a much more encouraging note, it has to be said that developers are only interested in building new houses in and around Ledbury because it is, as we know, a very attractive place to live and work. We must always remember how lucky we are to live here and to do all we can to embrace the experience, be positive and cheerful and all do what we can to keep the Town as the place we love.

We will be holding the anniversary lunch again this year in December. Hopefully it will not be snowed off again. There is also a 'Serenata' concert in October to raise funds for the Civic Society and the church bells, details of both events are later in the newsletter. Do come along and support what will be two very enjoyable events. You will also find enclosed the usual card with next season's lecture programme. Once again a fascinating range of topics. Many thanks to Mary Winfield for organising these once again.

Thank you all for returning the letter on Data Protection enclosed

with the last newsletter. After a number of chasing letters there were only a very few members who did not eventually fill in the form.

May I once again thank all my fellow Trustees, both past and present, and the very many other volunteers who help run the Civic Society, the Burgage Hall and the Butcher Row House Museum. Without your time, enthusiasm and commitment nothing we do would be possible.

Butcher Row House Museum...

Ken Chapman & Prue Yorke

Autumn seems to be upon us again, more quickly than ever, or is that an age thing!

Four of the seven volunteering months are behind us now and we would again like to thank everyone for their time and dedication. We'd appreciate your suggestions and ideas to further improve the museum, so do write these in the "Comments" section at the beginning of the diary and they will be discussed at our committee meetings.

Takings from sales and donations are up by about £200 and coincidentally, visitor numbers are up by about 200 compared with this time last year. Perhaps this is an effect of the new sign on our railings, for which we must thank Prue's daughter, Kay, for the artwork.

This year a major exercise has been carried out to photograph every item in our collection, both displayed and in storage. These photos and the accessions register will form the basis of a new digital archive. We sincerely thank Mary and Graham Every for several days of their time on this exercise. See picture overleaf.

The proposed 5pm closing in October will be reviewed nearer the time and for the last sitters of the day, if it's quiet after 4pm, then do close at, say, 4:30pm.

Lastly, if you're unable to volunteer next year please let Prue know in good time.



Left to right: Ken Chapman, Mary Every, Prue Yorke & Graham Every.
Our Museum...

How many of you reading this article have actually been into Butcher Row House Museum? I volunteer there and was deeply shocked when a couple came into the museum, saying that they had lived in Ledbury for a number of years, but had never visited the museums. How can we promote our town when we don't know what it holds? Come on, everyone, you may learn something about the history of this town you call home. The museum earns the Society a lot of money each year, from donations and sales and we really want more people to know about it.

Report from Planning Committee...

Anthony Peake

There are five major topics to report on at present, all affecting Ledbury very seriously:

1. Balfour Beatty's "Public Realm & Transportation Appraisal"

Balfour Beatty, which has a long-term contract with Herefordshire Council to maintain roads and carry out building works and repairs, were commissioned to look into ways of improving what's termed as 'The Public Realm' of Ledbury. They recently produced a hefty document that proposes a large number of potential schemes, from detailed improvements to roads, pathways and cycle routes, with which we have no problem, but also two suggestions that we do not believe are sensible:

- a. Narrowing Bye Street and making it one way (going west), with a cycleway going contraflow to cars
- b. Altering the High Street by making the pavement fill the triangle parking area, reducing the car parking and moving the bus stop away from the Market House.

We are convinced that these are two ideas which would make the Town Centre much less accessible and convenient, and we will oppose them. There are some good things in the rest of the report and we will be responding to the whole (60 page) document shortly.

2. Slow progress of The Viaduct Housing Site by Bloor Homes

Bloor Homes has made a policy decision that it does not want to provide access to this 625 home site from the roundabout on Hereford Road via the railway viaduct. This is despite a letter it has written to the planners explaining that this would be the cheapest option to construct. Railtrack does not object and it is technically feasible. Bloor just does not want to do it because they fear reputational risk in the remote chance of damage to the viaduct during construction. We think that access under the viaduct for cars, cycles and pedestrians is vital to allow this huge new group of homes properly to connect to the rest of Town, and that a single access point on the Bromyard Road will cause chaos at the Station T-junction, as well as a tremendous amount of rat-running traffic through Wellington Heath.

We seek, with many others, to persuade Bloor Homes to find a way to provide full access to their site from the Hereford Road Roundabout and under the viaduct and to persuade the planners to refuse permission for the development unless this access is provided.

3. Gladman 2: another 435 houses on Dymock Road.

Having succeeded at the Planning Appeal for their site for 321 houses on Leadon Way and selling the site to builders, Barratt, who are now building them, Gladman Developments is slowly working on an application for a further 435 houses, extending the first site down the Dymock Road. They have made a Planning Application for this site, been told more information is required by Herefordshire Council, and have now gone quiet. They may be waiting and watching to see what happens with Bovis (see below) and the NDP. Gladman has put in a comprehensive objection to the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

4. Bovis: 185 houses on Leadon Way

Bovis have had an option over a very large area of land between Leadon Way and the Gloucester Road for a number of years and members may recall a public consultation exercise a few years ago for a very large number of houses. A Planning Application was made for a first stage of 185 houses between Leadon Way and Gloucester Road, which they were discussing with the Herefordshire Council Planning Officers. They then decided to make an appeal against the Council for failing to determine their application within the statutory 8 weeks, just before the Neighbourhood Development Plan was approved by the Town Council. This appears to have been part of an effort by these developers to establish that the Neighbourhood Development (NDP) Plan Settlement Boundary appeared only after they had made their Application and should not apply to them. They have now withdrawn this appeal, on legal advice, and are likely to submit a new planning application at some point.

This is important to Bovis because of their option to purchase the large area of farmland adjacent to their application site, to create a precedent for a possible further 300 houses down the line. They have submitted a very long consultant's report and a legal opinion from a planning barrister, objecting to the NDP and claiming it is fundamentally flawed. They clearly wish to try and get the NDP rejected, so that it no longer has to be taken into account in any planning application for housing. This has the effect of requiring ANY housing application to be approved, unless there are overwhelming reasons for

refusal. It is vital that the NDP is supported to prevent a developers 'free for all'.

5 The Neighbourhood Development Plan

Lastly, the Neighbourhood Development Plan, which so many worked on for so long and with such sincerity: this has now reached "Regulation 16" in the arcane journey to becoming a legal entity. The whole NDP is currently being 'inspected' by a special planning assessor to make sure it gets 'ticks' for everything in it, such as compliance with the County strategic plan, government legislation etc.. With the legal challenges from Bovis and Gladman it is impossible to know what happens next. It may well be referred back to the Town Council for compliance alterations, if the Inspector is concerned about legal challenges to any decision he may make.

The importance of the NDP proceeding and becoming a force to control development in and around our Town is this:- without a defined "Settlement Boundary", a line round the town area defining the limit of the built environment, developers can come along and propose houses on every field. With an NDP in place, the Planners can say 'NO'.

Burgage Hall...

Chris Johnson

I mentioned in my last newsletter the wonderful facility the Hall provides at very low cost for so many voluntary groups, small enterprises and community groups in Ledbury. I thought members might like to know just who they are and the variety of interests using the Hall.

We have very long-term regular users such as Probus, Ledbury Naturalists and the Quakers and more recent regulars including Country Market on Friday, Dragon Fitness, Belly Dancing, Ballroom Dancing, Country Dancing, Maritime Cadets and a drama group. There is also a vast range of current and past users of all types, sometimes just occasionally and sometimes more regularly. These include Christians Together, the Jewish community, the Methodists, the Masons, the Buddhists and the Parish church. Apart from religious groups, we have

hosted the Dymock Poets, the Friends of the Master's House, the Poetry Festival every year and for 'one off' events, Community Day every year, Santa's Grotto in some years, charity fundraising events for St Michael's Hospice, Marie Curie, Eastnor School, Knitting for Refugees and many other charities. Meetings have been held by U3A, there have been WEA courses and LADS rehearsals. Slimming World used the Hall until the classes got too big and there were Kung Fu classes until the leader went to Canada (he might return!) A yoga class may be starting shortly. We are the mid-point refreshment station for the Long Distance Walkers every year. We host many joyful family events from baby blessings through bouncy castle birthday parties to 90th birthday teas. We also, sadly, host a number of wakes, but I like to think of these more as a celebration of past lives. We host educational visits from various local schools and home education groups and fun quiz nights organised by Community Action and others, book launches, Community Choir teas, political party meetings, Pilates training days, local residents' meetings, first aid courses and many other events I can't remember. Last, but not least, there are the Civic Society's own talks, meetings, concerts and lunches.

I am constantly amazed by the stunning variety of activities that take place in the Burgage Hall (and of course there are many other activities taking place elsewhere in Ledbury – we can't host a swimming gala or a football match!!) and I think the Civic Society is justly proud of this wonderful facility we provide for the Town, entirely run by volunteers apart from our wonderful cleaner.

As you can imagine, running the Burgage Hall takes a lot of work behind the scenes by many volunteers, sometimes for the regular, less glamorous tasks of opening up and showing people round and sometimes for one-off jobs. Without a great team, we would not be able to provide this service to Ledbury. Very many thanks to everyone who has helped in so many ways over the last year.

Anniversary Lunch – Thursday, 13th December 2018 – 1.00 pm

The anniversary buffet lunch we started five years ago to celebrate forty years since the Civic Society was formed, had to be cancelled last year, unfortunately, due to the heavy snow (does anyone remember that after such a hot summer?) We are sure it will still be much appreciated and we have decided to repeat it this year on **Thursday, 13th December 2018 at 1.00 pm.**

We will keep the cost the same as last year at a modest £5 per person just to cover the food and soft drinks. If you want to drink wine please feel free to bring your own. The charge only just covers the cost of food and drink, so if anyone does not turn up for any reason we lose money. In view of this we are asking everyone to pay in advance again this year.

We expect this to be a popular event and, as seating numbers for a meal in the Burgage Hall have to be limited, this will be an event for members of the Society only (if your friend or partner is not a member why not get them to join? – it's only £10 a year) and will be on a first reply, first on the list basis.

If you would like to come to this lunch please write a note saying you want to come with your name(s), address and contact telephone number to Chris Johnson, Ledbury & District Civic Society, Burgage Hall, Church Lane, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1DW and enclose a cheque made out to Ledbury & District Civic Society for £5 per person.

Hedgehog Report...

Mary Every

Following on from my article in last autumn's Ledbury Letter, I am pleased to report that the hedgehogs are still visiting our garden. However, this year, they are desperate for food. All the worms and slugs are deep in the ground and the hogs can't get to them. So they are eating vast amounts of the special hedgehog food that I buy from Pioneer. We have also noticed that they are drinking a lot of the water we put out for them. We've only seen two this year, but hope for more next year

It Happened in the Homend...

Celia G Kellett

On 22 May 1896 Edward John Webb, the banker, died aged 77 years, at his home, Bank House in the Homend, Ledbury. Today Bank House is the black and white property where Ledbury Hardware now trades. Edward J. Webb had originally trained as a solicitor, beginning his five years of articulated clerkship with Joseph Allen Higgins of Ledbury in May 1835, completing it in 1840, with the 1841 census listing him as a solicitor. Edward John Webb never married and from his youth was connected to Webb's Bank, begun by his father and, since its transfer, to the Capital and Counties Bank (the premises now occupied by Lloyd's Bank in the High Street. He was its resident director, his legal training being a particularly useful asset. His father, Colonel Thomas Webb, died in 1837 aged 61, but his mother Ann, neé Thackwell, lived to the grand age of 102 years, dying in 1881.

Edward John Webb became a J.P. and Deputy Lieutenant of the County like his father. Well known in the local hunting field, he made news in October 1863 when his horse slipped at a 'blind ditch', throwing and then falling on Mr Webb, whose leg was broken in two places near the ankle. Fortunately, with some assistance, he was able to remount and ride home, where Mr Griffin, surgeon, was able to attend to him, his usual doctor, Miles Astman Wood, being away from home at the time. He was a staunch supporter of the Church and the Conservative Party and took a great interest in all matters involving the town.

On 26 May his funeral took place, the Homend being crowded with people anxious to see the funeral procession. The cortège was very long, including many of the leading gentry and town's tradesmen. Just as it was moving down the Homend there were cries of 'Get out of the way!' To everyone's consternation they saw a traction engine, belonging to Mr J. C. Davies of the Fair Tree, Ledbury, attached to which were two trucks, laden with coal, which was dashing down the street at great speed. Those in the procession quickly stepped onto the pavement, thinking they would be safe. As the vehicle sped past the Victoria Temperance Hotel, ('Well Worth It' now occupies this site), people rushed into the shops and alleyways to get out of the way. The four bearers, who had been carrying the corpse in his coffin, realised that the vehicle was zig-

zagging and tried to move out of the way. Unfortunately, the coffin slipped from the bearers shoulders, falling to the ground. Meantime the engine and its trucks rushed along the edge of the pavement smashing the blinds of Messrs Walker and Drinkwater's butcher's shop and then smashed a trap standing at the bottom of the Homend. Fortunately the trap was empty and had no horse between its shafts. The large left wheel of the traction engine then flew off and the vehicle came, at last, to a standstill.

The accident's cause was found to be that the key which passes through the pin supporting the wheel, had come out, leaving the driver, Harry Sanders, with no control over the vehicle. The driver's assistant was told to jump off, and escaped injury with only a few bruises. Once the vehicle had come to rest the funeral procession re-formed and the coffin was borne to the grave without further mishap. On 08 July 1896 probate was granted on the Last Will and Testament of Edward John Webb, to the executors, the brother surgeons John Henry Wood, of Tarrington and Miles Astman Wood, of Ledbury, in the sum of £39,218 18s 3d, which today would be worth about £4.8 million.

The riding accident was reported in Gloucester Citizen, 24 October 1863, p. 3, col. 6.

The funeral was reported in the Worcester Chronicle, 30 May 1896, p. 6, col. 7.

Watch and Clock makers in Ledbury...

Mary Every

Although there had been timepieces for centuries, standardized time in UK was not introduced until the 1840s. This was so that train timetables could be uniform. Previously, each part of the UK kept its own time. However, before the 1840s most communities did have watch and clock makers.

Ledbury was no exception and there are 23 people listed in the book, Herefordshire Watch and Clockmakers, the first recorded one being in 1637. He is identified by only his initials, B.T., and he made the clock in St. Katherine's Chapel. Although the clock is no longer working, all the

parts are still in place, but it does need a major overhaul. In March 1691 John Hankins was paid £3 10s for “repairing the Chimes”, presumably on the parish church. Then Thomas Baker is listed on the church records as having been paid 8s ‘for putting ye chimes in order’. Similarly Thomas Hagon(?) was paid £1.7s for Clock work in 1784. There are several similar payments to various people over the years, so it must be assumed that the church had a clock well before 1691, and it was probably not particularly reliable!

In 1802 John Brown became apprenticed to Joseph Brown, for 7 years, at a fee of £5. It is uncertain if they were father and son, uncle and nephew or no relation at all. Joseph Brown worked in Butcher Row and advertised his business in the Hereford Journal in 1813 as “selling and repairing all sorts of watches and clocks”. He also bought “old gold and silver for most money”.

There are two men particularly well known in Ledbury. The first was Henry Crewe, who is variously described as a watchmaker, clockmaker, silversmith, jeweller and dealer in musical instruments. He had premises in High Street, where Millers Opticians is today. He appears to have been the son of a watchmaker and his son became a watchmaker’s assistant. Henry died in 1881.

The second man was Thomas Green. There is one of his clocks in Butcher Row House Museum. It has a second hand and a date wheel and the eight-day movement is in good working order. The beautifully painted dial features full blown roses. According to the inscription, the clock was in the possession of the Green family until it was given to the Museum by Arthur Charles Green.



The book, Herefordshire Clockmakers and Watchmakers makes several mentions of businesses in the Homend. I recently visited J.B. Gaynan to ask how long that shop has been a watchmakers business. The business was started in 1856 when Lucas Berkley started The Watch Shop. He had been born at Bandon in Germany, moved to Ross-on-Wye and finally to Ledbury. Not only was he a jeweller and silversmith, but also an optician, and he was an agent for the European Fire and Life Assurance Society. When he died his widow, Sophia, carried on the business, aided, no doubt, by their two sons, James and Charles. The present business started in 1947 and is still run by the Judge family.

A walk around Ledbury...

Yvonne Hern

It's a beautiful summer evening and whilst sitting in the garden I thought I would take you on a stroll around the "Ledbury of our era" - namely the mid 1940s through to the early 1950s.

You will be aware the style of living in those years was based around a weekly routine : e.g. washing on Mondays ~ shopping on Fridays!!



On Friday mornings we, as children, would be aroused from our slumbers to wash, dress, partake of breakfast, and then, attired in our 'best clothes' we would be on our way, usually before 9 o'clock, with our Aunts - Edith and Alice (known in the family as Ethel) - to walk the mile or so down to the town...

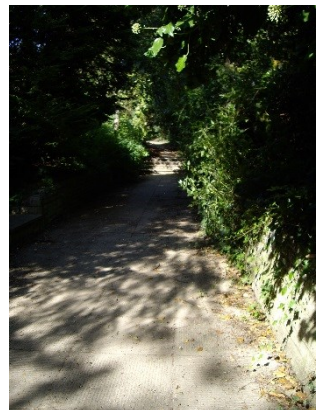
PHOTO : Our Aunts ~ Edith Emily Bishop and Alice Bishop

PHOTO : Yew Bay Tree Cottages ~ home of our Grandparents : Daniel & Alice Bishop

PHOTO : Yvonne & Pamela together with Heidi (c1949)



Our route would be past Bradlow Farm, Turnpike Cottage (situated at the junction of Cut Throat Lane - cottage demolished long ago) where Mrs. Cole and her son lived, along Green Lane and then down Dog Hill, so entering the town near the Market House.



Occasionally Mr. and Mrs Fred Poulter (grandparents of Heidi) may be leaving the Bradlow Farm in their car and would kindly offer a lift - for me as a six-year old that just seemed to be magic because the tinted windows of the car gave a whole different perception of the “outside world”



PHOTO (left): Eric Poulter (c1946) - Bradlow Farm

PHOTO (right) : Fred & Susan Poulter with grand-daughter Heidi (1948)
at The Stables Cottage, Westhill following their retirement from Bradlow Farm.

So we are now taking you on a stroll around some of the shops we would visit ~ many of the shopkeepers would chat to us knowing we were in Ledbury on our school holidays again.

An early start to the 'shopping expedition' was necessary so that any additions and/or different vegetables or fruit may be purchased from the stalls in the Women's Institute which was held in the Barrett-Browning building. *Ed: This market, now called Country Market, still runs every Friday in Burgage Hall.* I believe the Library was housed on the upper floors. In general fruit and vegetables were never in short supply because our Grandfather and our Uncle maintained a very large garden, well planted with seasonal vegetables, together with a wide variety of fruit bushes and trees.

PHOTO : Our Uncle : SIDNEY BISHOP (c1950s)



To be continued...

Serenata anniversary concert: Sunday October 21st, 4.00 pm, Burgage Hall

Enthusiastically reviewed, semi-professional, local a capella vocal group “Serenata” will present a light-hearted afternoon concert in the Burgage Hall to celebrate its 10th anniversary. You are invited to join us to help raise money for the Church bell restoration appeal and the Civic Society. The lively and light-hearted programme will range from favourite sacred music, through traditional folk, nostalgic gems, contemporary curiosities and the Beatles.

Be sure to buy your tickets, when they go on sale in mid-September, from Ledbury Books and Maps or Bella Johnson 01531 635432. We anticipate a sell-out!

£10 (£3 for children) to include interval refreshments.



Photo: Dan Barker www.danbarkerstudios.com

Education Link...

Mary Winfield

All eight schools in the Catchment Area took part again this year and were very grateful for our contribution to school funds. Bosbury Primary School has an enterprising garden project, where they are constructing raised beds and a greenhouse and will use the money towards seeds and plants. Ashperton will be buying seeds and plants that will encourage butterflies and bees. Good work all round!

Lavender...

Mary Every

Many thanks to the people who have allowed me to raid their lavender bushes again this year. The lavender is dried, rubbed then sieved before going to a lady to make into lavender bags to sell in the museum. We have sold over 40 bags this year already. I'm sure I'll be knocking on your doors to ask to pick more next year!

Programme 2018-19 ...

Mary Winfield

A copy of the programme of speakers for next season's series of monthly talks is enclosed with your newsletter. I hope there will be something of interest for all our members and shall look forward to meeting you in the Burgage Hall in September. If anyone has a particular subject that would be of interest to members, or has contact details for a speaker to recommend, please let me know. Meanwhile, I shall look forward to seeing you in September.

On very rare occasions, through no fault of our own, it is necessary to substitute speakers. We email those we have email addresses for, and advertise the change on the noticeboards by St. Katherine's Hall and in Ledbury News. If you have an email address that you have not shared with us then please send it to the Membership Secretary so that you can be advised by email.

SPEAKERS' PROGRAMME 2017/18

Meetings at The Burgage Hall, Church Lane on Fridays at 7.30pm

28th September	Hereford Records Office Rhys Griffith
26th October	The Commandery, Worcester Dennis Chamberlain
30th November	Herefordshire Wildlife Trust Rose Farrington
25th January	Railways in Art Gareth Davies
22rd February	Hatton's Horses Robin Thorndyke
29th March	Herefordshire's Mills Alan Stoyel
26th April	7pm A.G.M. followed at 7.45 Two men in Russia Chris Johnson and Gerald Brooke
31th May	Historic Harewood Heather Hurley
21nd June	The Canary Girls of Rotherwas Angela Williams

If you have enjoyed reading this newsletter please pass one on to friends and family and encourage them to join.

Additional copies of this newsletter can be obtained from Graham Every.