

THE LEDBURY LETTER

Number 109 Spring 2020



Butcher Row House

Ledbury & District Civic Society

“Looking After Ledbury...”



*Butcher Row House
Folk Museum*

THE 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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Editors...

Mary Winfield and Mary Every

Technical Editor...

Graham Every

The Ledbury and District Society Trust Ltd
www.ledburycivicsociety.org

Company No: 1340233

Registered Charity No: 507391

DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY 2019 / 20

President	Joe Hillaby	
Vice President	Vestlemøy Lunt	
Chairman	Andy Tector	
Vice Chairman & CPRE	Nicola Forde	07531 542 236
Treasurer & Membership Secretary	Graham Every	631 174
Planning & Conservation	Anthony Peake	636 312
Speakers & Education Link	Mary Winfield	632 247
Booking Secretary Burgage Hall	Chris Johnson	07977 781 826
Butcher Row Volunteer Rota	Prue Yorke	633 655
Town Council Liaison	Nick Morris	631 388

CO-OPTED DIRECTORS

Secretary	Christine Tustin	634 934
Liason	Nina Shields	

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, 14th August 2020.

Spring 2019

Chairman's Report...

Andy Tector

The last six months have been really busy for the Board of the Civic Society. We have been somewhat preoccupied with planning issues. In October the Civic Society made representations at the Planning Appeal over the "Gladman" application on the Dymock Road. We were delighted that the Planning Inspector agreed with our view (and that of many others) and dismissed the Appeal. However, the pressure on local authorities to grant permission to build more housing seems to be increasing. The recent news that Herefordshire Council has effectively withdrawn its objections to the Viaduct site at the forthcoming Planning Appeal reflects this pressure. It is a huge shame that the well-reasoned views of the local members and the Society have been ignored. Of equal concern for the future, is the question of where extra housing will go, if the allocation of housing around Hereford to support the new "by-pass" is lost, if the "by-pass" plans are abandoned.

As the Society's AGM approaches, we are always keen to recruit new members to the Board and this year is no exception. We would welcome approaches from any members who feel they can help in the running of the Society. It isn't a huge commitment, with a monthly Board meeting, which rarely lasts more than 2 hours. If anyone is interested, please contact me and I will be happy to talk through the "ins and outs" of being a Board Member.

Finally, at the AGM on the 24th April Chris Johnson will be stepping down as a Board Member. Chris, as a former Chairman has been a very positive force for the Society and his fellow Board Members will greatly miss his advice and support, although I am delighted to tell you he is continuing his involvement with the Society, helping manage the Burgage Hall and supporting the Butcher Row Museum.

Butcher Row House Museum ...

Prue Yorke

2020 sounds an auspicious date, so a warm welcome to you all and let's hope we have a great year. We hope our

wonderful volunteers are ready to enjoy another successful year, receiving visitors from all over the world.

This year the Burgage Hall is being used more than ever, which means that the volunteers' coffee morning will be a TEA PARTY! on

Thursday 19th March at 3.00pm.

I hope you will be able to join the committee members in the Burgage Hall for a cuppa and a piece of cake – do please make every effort to come.

We thank all the volunteers for their input and the time they give to the Museum and Ledbury. The opening date for the Museum this year is Wednesday 1st April and, as last year, the hours are 10am – 4pm.

Planning Report...

Anthony Peake & Nicola Forde

More news about the big developments around Ledbury

The so-called Hawk Rise development off Leadon Way has been progressing after the long stationary period of nothing happening while the problem of established ventilation noise from the Cheese Factory versus new homes being too close to the racket was being resolved. It appears that the houses are selling quite slowly, with a 4-bedroom freehold detached house being discounted to under £400,000, but the market is generally not brisk.

Bloor Homes, the Viaduct site, 625 homes - P171532/O. Herefordshire Council turned this application down chiefly because the proposed single access off the Bromyard Road was unsuitable. A very large number of objections had expressed opposition to the proposed site access and a local referendum was held on the issue of site access and won. Bloor Homes appealed against this decision which was due to be heard on 28 April, 10.00 am at Ledbury Rugby Club. We have just heard, however, that HCC Planning Committee have decided to withdraw the Three Grounds for their Refusal of Planning Consent –

presumably as a result of legal advice that continued Refusal could land HCC with a vast bill if Bloor were to win their Appeal. It appears that the Appeal in front of a Planning Inspector at the Rugby Club, Ledbury on 18 April will still go ahead, and possibly the Ledbury Town Council will make representations to try to persuade Bloor that the key to a successful development IS TO HAVE THE PRIMARY ACCESS FOR THIS SITE AT THE HEREFORD ROAD ROUNDABOUT. A huge majority of Ledbury residents consider that having only one access off Bromyard Road to this huge residential and industrial site is highly unsatisfactory and that a second access off the Hereford roundabout is essential for connection to the ring road as well as to the town centre.

We absolutely need Bloor to build this 625 house scheme because Ledbury is already deficient in the number of housing sites required for development. BUT Bloor apparently doesn't care at all about connecting the site properly, nor about the awful traffic problems that will be generated next to the station, nor about all the additional cars that will clog The Homend and High Street, nor the well being and ease of access for their new residents.

This is a very frustrating illustration of the power of incoming developers acting against the expressed wishes of Local Authorities and established communities. Bloor refuses to take on British Rail to secure access under the magnificent Railway Viaduct – what a superb gateway to a new housing site that would make - because it will obviously cost more than doing nothing.

Gladman application for 420 homes off the Dymock Road was turned down at appeal in October 2019 because the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and the site is not in an accessible location. Ledbury Civic Society and the Town Council made representations at the Appeal. 602 representations from local people, public bodies and statutory consultants were received.

Gladman application for 210 homes off the Little Marcle Road is no longer 'live'. Gladman did not respond to Herefordshire Council's requests for further information within the statutory time. 197 representations were received on this application. Whilst any success we have may quickly be overtaken by a new, slightly tweaked application, we should take the opportunity to recognise our achievements.

Two sites are still 'live' and you can comment on them until their determination date (email cbrace@herefordshire.gov.uk or write to Carl Brace at Herefordshire Council).

Bovis site off Leadon Way, 140 homes. P192482/0. The target determination date was 27 February. 97 comments have been logged on the website. Objections include the Herefordshire Landscape Officer noting that the development does not relate well to the town and that mature trees of 30 years+ on Leadon Way will be lost in creating access to the site. Other comments cover the proposal for another new roundabout on the Leadon Way and worries that new residents will be cut off from the town by the busy Leadon Way.

The Full Pitcher/Old Cricket Pitch, 93 affordable homes. P194182/F . Target determination date is 11 March. The developer is Connexus a local Housing Association. There will be a mix of tenures on site: some homes will be for rent at 80% of market rent; some 'rent to buy' (80% market rent with option to buy after 5 years); some 'shared ownership' (part buy, part rent). Most homes will be 2/3 bed with a few 1 beds and a couple of accessible bungalows. There are no 4 or 5 bed homes. 16 representations on the website to date.

The more of us who comment the more the planners will take notice.

We monitor all planning applications for Ledbury and the surrounding district, and comment both favourably and critically if we consider that our comments are called for. There are many applications from people wanting to convert outhouses or barns into homes, generally not affecting anything adversely, but there is an underlying increase in the number of households which should be taken into account by HCC and central government. This growth is truly organic and a far healthier way

to expand Ledbury than the ham-fisted and brutal actions of the “housebuilders” who never build communities – they just leach onto good ones!

Burgage Hall...

Chris Johnson

I hope many of you have been into the Burgage Hall to admire the new paintwork on the walls and ceiling. Our decorator, João Rodrigues, and his team worked incredibly hard over the Christmas and New Year holiday to get the first phase completed with minimal disruption to our many regular users of the Hall. The light in the Hall is quite wonderful now. The second phase will be to replace broken windows and do all the external painting and will take place over the summer when we hope the weather will be better. We are also planning to buy some new, less heavy, chairs as the existing ones are starting to fail after many years of sterling service and hard use. The final phase will be to paint the woodwork, doors and railings internally and we are also hoping to get some grant funding to upgrade the toilet facilities.

We continue to attract new regular bookings and the hall is quite full now, especially in the weekday evenings but we always try and squeeze in new classes. There are still some daytime slots available for regular bookings. If you want to book the hall for a one-off event such as a children’s party or retirement tea please give me as much notice as possible so I can give you a choice of days. Saturday all day or Sunday afternoon is often available. If you visit the hall you can see the bookings for the next two months on the notice board in the lobby but always contact me to book as the bookings sheet may have had slots filled since it went on the notice board.

This year for Community Day we are planning to use the Civic Society display stand to showcase all the organisations who use the Burgage Hall. I think many people will be quite surprised at the number and diversity of users.

We are justly proud of the wonderful facility the Hall provides at very low cost for so many voluntary groups, small enterprises and community organisations in Ledbury. Do come along to Community Day on 6th June to see some of the many groups using the Hall at their own stands as well as on our display. Our own monthly talks in the Hall continue to attract a wide range of interesting speakers and good audiences so do come along if you are not a regular. As always, many thanks to Mary Winfield for organising these each year.

As you can imagine, running the Burgage Hall takes a lot of work behind the scenes by many volunteers, plus our wonderful paid cleaner, sometimes for the regular less glamorous tasks of opening up and showing people around 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.

Education Link...

Mary Winfield

All eight schools in the catchment area took part in the scheme this year, receiving their grant for use on local history, wildlife, gardening or other projects that fit the scheme. See Eastnor Primary School's undertaking on the next page.

Chris Johnson arranged two visits from Much Marcle Primary School. Pupils from Years 3 and 4 spent a day of activities based in the Butcher Row Museum, the Heritage Centre, the Parish Church and the Master's House. There were hands-on activities arranged for the children in the Heritage Centre and the Master's House. The children also took a guided walk round the town-centre, where buildings of historical importance were pointed out to them. The Burgage Hall was made available for the children to eat their lunch and to relax from their efforts. Chris had arranged a similar programme 2 days later to suit the curriculum requirements of pupils from Years 5 and 6. Volunteers from the venues included in the project were on hand to provide information and support on both days.

Eastnor Primary School...

Mary Winfield

At the end of January, our Treasurer, Graham Every and I visited Eastnor Primary School to hear about the school's innovative project for 2020. In company with the Head Teacher, we were introduced to the key members of the team who have planned an entry in this year's RHS Malvern Spring Garden Festival. Based on the theme "Space", the design features imaginative colour-schemes, using plants with a wide variety of colours, heights, flowers and foliage, interspersed with models of space-vehicles and equipment. A donation from the Society to help with the funding of this project was gratefully received and fulfils our commitment to support such projects through our Education Link. The pupils are from years 3 to 6 (ages 7 to 11).



REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

The trustees, who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2018. The trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' issued in March 2005.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number 01340233 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number 507391

Registered office Burgage Hall, Church Lane, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1DW

Directors

G Every

N Forde

C Johnson

N Morris

A Peake

G Prins resigned 31st January 2019

N. Shields Appointed 4th November 2019

A Tector

M Winfield

P Yorke

Company Secretary

C Tustin

Independent Examiner

L Keegan, Chartered Management Accountant

1A The Homend, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1BN

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its Memorandum and Articles of Association and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006. The liability of each member is limited to £1.

Recruitment and appointment of new directors

Directors are elected at the Annual General Meeting for a period of three years. One third of the directors retire each year and are eligible for re-election. The directors may appoint any member of the Trust to fill a casual vacancy. Any director so appointed shall serve until the next Annual General Meeting and shall be eligible for re-election.

Risk management

The directors have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES—Objectives and aims

The Trust must confirm that it has complied with the requirement that its activities further its charitable purposes for the public benefit. This is achieved by the Trust continuing to pursue its objects which remain as set out in the Memorandum of Association:

To stimulate public interest in the area of benefit.

To promote high standards of planning and architecture in the area of benefit.

To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic, natural or public interest in the area of benefit.

Volunteers

The directors acknowledge that the Trust's activities are sustained by the voluntary efforts of many members.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE—Charitable activities

The main activities in the year continued to be the operation of the Burgage Hall and the Butcher Row House Museum and expressing their views on planning and other local issues. The Trust makes grants to local community groups in support of the Trust's charitable activities.

FINANCIAL REVIEW—Reserves policy

During the year there was a deficit of income against expenditure of £2,778 (2018: surplus of £5,123). The balance of net current assets at the end of the year was £77,814 (2018: £80,426), of which £5,650 (2018: £5,650) was held in a restricted fund. The Trustees consider the reserves to be satisfactory. Of the unrestricted funds, £30,000 of net current assets are notionally reserved for long term maintenance of the Trust's Heritage Assets and the remaining funds available for future projects.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:

C Tustin - Secretary

2nd March 2020

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(INCORPORATING AN INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019**

		Unrestricted fund	Restricted funds	2019 Total funds	2018 Total funds
	Notes	£	£	£	£
INCOME					
Income from generated funds					
Donations and legacies	2	5,127	-	5,127	4,445
Other trading activities	3	20,166	-	20,166	19,533
Income from Investments	4	674	-	674	395
Income from charitable activities					
Grant Income		-	-	-	-
Total incoming resources		25,967	-	25,967	24,372
Expenditure					
Expenditure on Raising funds					
Fundraising trading: cost of goods sold and other costs	5	24,593	-	24,593	13,789
Charitable activities					
Membership activities	6	3,582	-	3,582	4,920
Ledbury Places		-	-	-	-
Upper Hall Research		-	-	-	-
Other costs	9	570	-	570	540
Total expenditure		28,745	-	28,745	19,249
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(2,778)	-	(2,778)	5,123
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		134,868	5,650	140,518	135,393
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>132,090</u>	<u>5,650</u>	<u>137,740</u>	<u>140,518</u>
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	14	1,493	-	1,493	1,659
Heritage assets	15	58,432	-	58,432	58,432
		59,925	-	59,925	60,091
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stocks		2,711	-	2,711	2,623
Debtors	16	3,014	-	3,014	2,953
Cash at bank		67,010	5,650	72,660	75,391
		72,734	5,650	78,384	80,966

CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	17	(570)	-	(570)	(540)
		<u>72,164</u>	<u>5,650</u>	<u>77,814</u>	<u>80,426</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS					
		132,090	5,650	137,740	140,518
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
		<u>132,090</u>	<u>5,650</u>	<u>137,740</u>	<u>140,518</u>
NET ASSETS					
		<u>132,090</u>	<u>5,650</u>	<u>137,740</u>	<u>140,518</u>
FUNDS	18				
Unrestricted funds				132,090	134,868
Restricted funds				<u>5,650</u>	<u>5,650</u>
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS				<u>137,740</u>	<u>140,518</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 December 2019.

The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 396 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small charitable companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard FRS102.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 2 March 2020 and were signed on its behalf by:

A Tector - Director

G Every - Director

The Directors retiring this year are: Chris Johnson & Tony Peake.

The Dymock Poets Book Collection at Ledbury Library... Linda Hart

In 2018 Linda Hart donated her collection of 250 books by and about the Dymock Poets to Herefordshire Libraries. Here she tells about her involvement with the Dymock Poets and why she donated them to Herefordshire Libraries.

I realised in 2017 that it was time for me to downsize. My main concern was the future of my collection of books on the Dymock Poets. They were all in one large bookcase: volumes of poetry, biography, letters and literary criticism on Edward Thomas, Rupert Brooke, Wilfrid Gibson, John Drinkwater, Lascelles Abercrombie and Robert Frost. These six poets were all living in or visiting Dymock between the years 1911 and 1915.

This article provides some background information about the books, why and how they were collected, and why they are at Ledbury Library.

There are 37 books by or about Rupert Brooke, 42 books by or about Edward Thomas, and 75 books by or about Robert Frost. This comes to 160 books, which is about 60 percent of the total. The other 40 percent is about the Dymock Poets as a group, the Georgian Poets and other writers of the period, the Gloucestershire countryside, and books that don't fall into any category such as a 1960s history about Dymock by its then vicar, Canon J.E. Gethyn-Jones MBE.

The 75 books by and about Robert Frost probably make this the biggest and best publicly available collection on him in the UK; many of them were published in the US and even with the internet are hard to obtain today.

The biographies in the collection are mainly about Frost, Thomas, and Brooke – some of them unusual or rare. For example: the Brooke biographies include a 1948 one published in Indianapolis, a 1974 one published in Amsterdam, and a 1978 one published in Toronto that focuses on his visit to Canada. There are many volumes of letters by Frost, Thomas and Brooke. The books of literary criticism are also mainly about Frost, Thomas and Brooke – some written by one literary critic, while some are books of essays by several writers.

Some of the Dymock Poets also wrote prose and plays and some edited anthologies. All of these are in the collection. There is even some fiction – a novel based on the life of Robert Frost and two novels based on the life of Rupert Brooke.

There are pristine copies of the four issues of *New Numbers*, a 1914 poetry magazine edited at Abercrombie's cottage, printed in Gloucester and posted to subscribers from Dymock's post office. This venture in self-publishing by Abercrombie, Gibson, Brooke and Drinkwater meant they could publish their own work without submitting it for approval to book and magazine editors. One of the most famous sonnets in the English language, Rupert Brooke's 'The Soldier' ("If I should die, think only this of me,...."), was written specifically for the final issue of *New Numbers* and appeared only two months before his death.

How did I come to have all these books? Some of the Frost books in the collection have belonged to me since my high school days, when I was growing up in New York City. They came to England when I moved here permanently in 1975. Some of the Rupert Brooke and Edward Thomas books were purchased between 1975 and 1993, when I was living in Oxfordshire and London.

But the majority of books in the collection were purchased after 1993, when I became chairman of the newly formed Friends of the Dymock Poets. I soon realised that there wasn't a book which contained all the poems that the six poets had written while they were in Dymock, including, of course, poems that were about Dymock, its countryside, and their friendships with one another. I decided to find all these "Dymock poems" and publish them in an anthology, with notes about each poem. This required lots of research and that meant lots of books. The result was *Once I Lived in Gloucestershire: A Dymock Poets Anthology*, published in 1995.

Where did I buy the books? At first, mainly from Keith Smith Books in Ledbury. As soon as the Friends of the Dymock Poets was formed, I asked Keith to obtain books on the Dymock Poets and related subjects, which he could sell at our conferences. I also went to second-hand book shops and charity shops whenever I was away from home and almost always came back with something.

In later years, I did more buying online. Twice a year I was in New York City to visit my father – a great opportunity to hunt down books, especially Frost ones, at The Strand Bookstore (its logo says “18 miles of books”).

Some books were gifts from friends, from my father, from acquaintances, and occasionally strangers. After hearing my lecture on the Dymock Poets, a woman in the audience told me about her 1936 edition of Brooke’s *Collected Poems*; it was her school prize, and had been beautifully bound. She had treasured it for 60 years and that evening she gave it to me for safe keeping.

Some of the pages in some of the books have been written in – by me. Yes, I know, sacrilege. But I am a writer, researcher and lecturer. Books are the tools of my trade. Tools are there to be used. I occasionally underline sentences, put ticks beside important paragraphs, highlight words, make comments in the margins and write notes on blank pages at the back. And I correct typos. This is embarrassing, now that the public can look inside all the books. I thought of erasing my various marks, but I haven’t erased anything. The librarians are hoping that readers will not do what I have done.

Before deciding where to donate the books, I thought about some criteria. I wanted the books to be housed as near to Dymock as possible; easily accessible to the general public; stored safely and securely, with conservation work carried out when necessary. I wanted the collection catalogued and available online. Finally, I hoped that the collection would be publicized and promoted. Herefordshire Library Services met all of those conditions, and the enthusiasm of senior librarian Jan Nesaratnam has been a bonus.

The books have now been catalogued and are permanently housed in a specially designed bookcase at Ledbury Library. The collection is located in the old Pantry, next to the reception area, and the books can be read in this room, or anywhere else on the premises. All the titles in the collection are listed on the Herefordshire Libraries online catalogue. In the search box type the phrase “Dymock Poets” to see the full list.

For the current opening times of Ledbury Library, visit the

Herefordshire Libraries website: www.herefordshire.gov.uk/libraries, where you can also find more information about the Dymock Poets Collection under “Special Collections” or “The Master’s House”.

For information about the Dymock Poets and the Friends of the Dymock Poets, the website is at www.dymockpoets.org.uk

Linda Hart joined the Ledbury Civic Society as a life member as soon as she moved to Ledbury in May 1993. She was a founder and the first chairman of the Friends of the Dymock Poets. For many years she lectured on the Dymock Poets at venues throughout the three counties, including to members of the Ledbury Civic Society in the Burgage Hall.

The Daffodil Line...

Mary Every

As spring approaches again and we start to see the wonderful new growth on the trees and the flowers, we shall be looking out for the wild daffodils that abound in the meadows around Dymock and Kempley and remember how important they were to the local economy.

The canal, which had linked Hereford to Gloucester, was never an economic success and by the late 1800s the area was leased to the Great Western Railway. In 1891 construction of a railway, linking Ledbury to Gloucester, often over the site of the canal, commenced. It was built by two companies, the Newent Railway and the Ross and Ledbury Railway. It opened for business July 1895. Originally, there were 5 stations or halts, Ledbury Town Halt, the remains of which can still be seen to the left as you go down Bye Street into Bridge Street, Dymock, where the edge of the platform can be seen, Newent, Malswick Halt and Barber’s Bridge before the line joined the main line at Over.



Platform edge at Dymock

In 1937 Greenway Halt and Four oaks Halt were added.

So why was it nicknamed the Daffodil Line? The wild daffodils that we see now, were much more prolific in the 1800s and they were amongst the first of the spring flowers to bloom, unlike today where flowers are forced to flower earlier and earlier, as well as being flown in from abroad. The women and children would go into the fields to pick the daffodils, take them home and bunch them up, then take them to the station to be transported to the London flower markets where they were very popular. They were also sent to the Children's Hospital in Birmingham. Changes in agricultural methods and mechanization meant that a lot of the bulbs were destroyed and by the 1950s fewer and fewer wild daffodils were available for picking, so the tradition of sending them to London died out.



Even before the reshaping of Britain's railway in the 1960s, use of the passenger service from Ledbury to Gloucester was in decline. It was eventually stopped in 1959, although freight movement continued until 1964. Now the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust is endeavoring to reopen the canal for recreational use. In the meantime, sections of the old canal/railway line are open as public footpaths, as in Ledbury with the Town Trail.

I hope that this year you will be able to go to see these pretty little daffodils, either by driving yourselves, going with friends or, if you are a member of Community Action Ledbury, on one of their organized trips.

Ledbury's Peruke Makers...

Celia G Kellett, M.A.

The Ledbury section of The Universal British Directory (1793-98) listed no less than four peruke makers, including two, Richard Pearce and John Milton, who lived in the Butcher Row, a prime trading site in town. Why would a small market town, such as Ledbury, have need of so many wig makers? Wigs had been used since ancient times, the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and many others had worn them but they came back into use in Britain in Tudor times. Queen Elizabeth I wore wigs and they were worn as fashion and beauty items for ladies. Then, as a consequence of the introduction of syphilis, men wore them too, as one of its symptoms was baldness, thus losing your hair became shameful.

In 1655 the King of France, Louis XIV, began losing his hair when he was only 17. He immediately hired many wig-makers, who in France were called peruke makers, to save his image and a few years later his cousin Charles II, King of England followed suit when his hair began turning grey, preferring the long curly variety known as the periwig. The courtiers of both kings followed this new fashion, which then spread through the ranks of the upper and later the middle classes, worn as a status symbol, anglicising the name to peruke. Even after both Kings had died wigs remained popular as they had proved to be practical for the wearers.

In those days vermin including head lice, were everywhere and nit-picking was painful as well as very time-consuming. Whilst wearing a wig involved shaving the head, so that it would fit properly, this meant that the head lice no longer had people's own hair to infest, choosing to live on the wig instead. Delousing the wig was much easier, you simply sent it to your peruke maker, who would boil it to both clean it and remove any lice or their nits, - for a small fee, of course. So, did Ledbury have so many peruke wearers that it needed four peruke makers to keep their wigs in clean and tidy order?

Needless to say, once something becomes popular it gets taxed. Hair powder was used to freshen up wigs, usually made from finely ground starch, sometimes scented with lavender, jasmine, rose or orange flower and it already carried a tax from earlier legislation. At

the end of the 18th century William Pitt the Younger, looking for extra revenue to fund the Napoleonic War, introduced a series of new taxes including an additional tax on those who wore wigs. From 5th May 1795 users were required to purchase a hair powder certificate, at a cost of one guinea every year, a list of those holding such a licence being lodged at the local quarter sessions court and a copy attached to each parish church door by the parish constable. Those who did not pay were fined, although there were exceptions to paying this tax for poor clerics (income less than £100 p.a) and those paying for the licences for two unmarried daughters exempted the rest of the household. Gentlemen (for their be-wigged servants: butler, footman, coachman) only paid once for each post each year, even if some left and new ones were engaged.

Usage of hair powder quickly fell, with natural hairstyles becoming fashionable, although in 1812 some 46,684 still paid each year, but the Acts of Parliament (35 Geo. III, c. 49 and 112) were finally repealed when numbers dropped to under 1000 in 1869. The London and Counties Directory of 1811 no longer listed any peruke makers, although there were now two hairdressers in town, namely P. Baylis and John Pearce, son of Richard. One former peruke maker, John Milton, later listed as a Gardener and Seedsman and another, John Hatton, was no longer listed, having retired. Today wigs are only worn by lawyers or for ceremonial reasons, other than those needing a wig for medical reasons.

Articles for the Newsletter...

Mary Winfield

We're always looking for articles for the Newsletter. If you know anything interesting about the area, that you would like to share with the members, please put pen to paper or preferable fingers to keyboard and send it to newsletter@ledburycivicsociety.org or put it in the Burgage Hall letterbox.

The Friends of Ledbury Parish Church...
01531 579021.

Tim Keyes (Chairman)

The Friends put on a programme of events each year, which is aimed at helping the people of Ledbury and the area, to have a better understanding and appreciation of this remarkable building that is full of historic and cultural interest. Events include talks about some special features of the building and its history and social events. We have had a Quiz Night, a Burns Night Supper and two exploration visits of the church already this year. We will be having an Open Gardens day on May 23rd and a 'Ledbury's Got Talent' show on September 23rd.

We want to invite one or two people who love the church buildings (as the person in charge of bells, I include the tower!), but are not necessarily members of the congregation, to join our committee. We would really welcome that wider perspective. We have four meetings each year and collectively organise and run the programme of events. If you are both creative and prepared to roll up your sleeves, we would love to hear from you.

Programme of monthly meetings...

Mary Winfield

I hope members have enjoyed the talks arranged for this year. It has been pleasing to have a good attendance for them at the Burgage Hall, in spite of the - sometimes - inclement weather. If any member has a speaker to recommend, please, let me know: I'm always on the look-out for topics that will fit our remit and interest our members.

Annual Subscriptions...

Graham Every

Just a reminder that the subscriptions fell due on the 1st January. So, those who pay by cash or cheque and have not yet paid please do so as soon as possible.

Officers of the Society

President	Joe Hillaby
Chairman	Andy Tector chairman@ledburycivicsociety.org
Secretary	Christine Tustin Burgage Hall Church Lane Ledbury, HR8 1DW (01531 633 853) secretary@ledburycivicsociety.org
Treasurer & Membership Secretary	Graham Every Burgage Hall Church Lane Ledbury, HR8 1DW (01531 631 174) treasurer@ledburycivicsociety.org membership@ledburycivicsociety.org
Burgage Hall Bookings	Chris Johnson (07977 781 826) bookings@ledburycivicsociety.org
Webmaster	web@ledburycivicsociety.org
Web Design	Pippin Copywriting Ltd.

34th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

At the 34th AGM at 7.00pm on Friday 24th April 2020 at the Burgage Hall, Church Lane, Ledbury, an election is to be held to fill three of the nine places for Elected Directors.

Any paid-up member of the Society may seek nomination, by two other members, to stand in the election.

Nominations should be sent to the Secretary at the Registered address by Friday 10th April 2020.

Note: The constitution of the Society allows for nine Elected Directors. Each Director is elected for a period of three years; and, normally, three are elected each year,

Retiring Directors may, if they choose, seek nomination to stand again for election, on equal terms with any other candidates.

(Additionally, up to six co-opted Directors may be invited to serve on the committee to help in particular capacities.)

To: Secretary, Ledbury & District Civic Society,
Burgage Hall, Church Lane, LEDBURY HR8 1DW

NOMINATION OF AN ELECTED DIRECTOR FOR ELECTION AT 34th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE LEDBURY & DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY ON 24th APRIL 2020

I wish to nominate: _____

Signed: _____(Proposed.)

I wish to second the above nomination

Signed: _____(Seconded.)

I am prepared to serve as a trustee if elected

Signed: _____(Nominee.)

There is a Society letter box by the main entrance to the Burgage Hall
for your convenience.