



The Bromsgrove Society
NEWSLETTER

Volume 20 No. 2

June 2000

75p



*What a
Lot of Rubbish!*

The Bromsgrove Society

Reg. Charity No. 510542

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Subscriptions

Individual Membership	£4.25
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Pensioners & Students	£3.25
Pensioners Family Membership	£4.50
Corporate Members	£15 Minimum

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The Newsletter appears three times a year in March, June and September
The Editor welcomes letters and short articles on topics related to the
Society's aims and interests. Please submit copy (typed if possible) by the
last day in January, April and July for each respective issue.

*The Bromsgrove Society is pleased to have Lloyds TSB Bank PLC
as its bankers.*

www.bsoc.co.uk

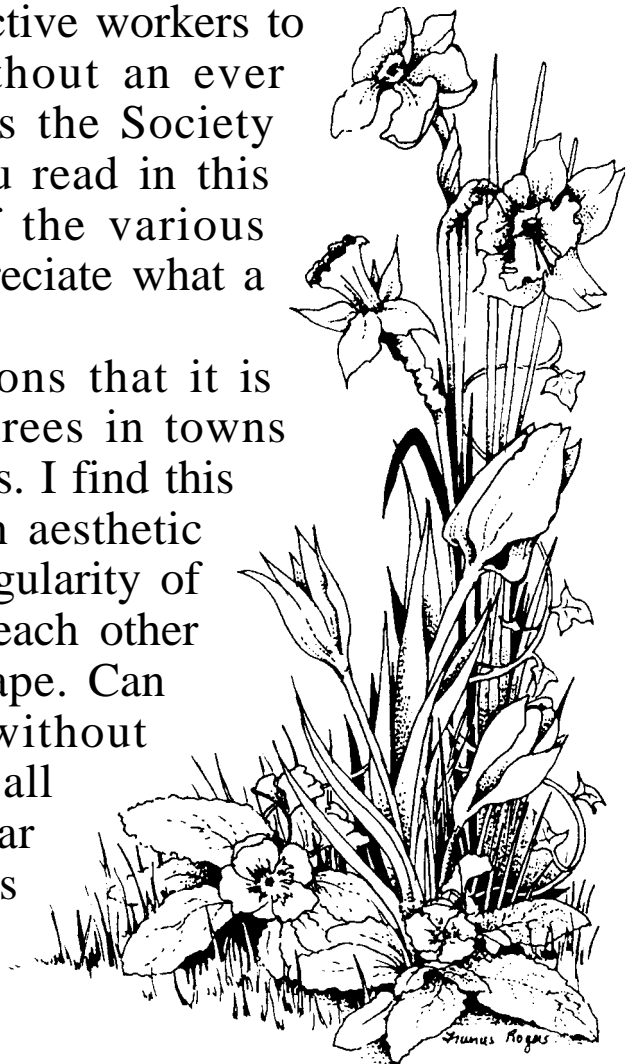
From the Editor

The amount of post I receive informing me of the activities taking place in Bromsgrove underlines how lucky we are to live in a town where people are prepared to take the trouble to organise activities for the enjoyment of others. During the winter John and I attended some wonderful concerts at the Spadesbourne Suite and at the time of writing this we are about to enjoy a variety of superb events organised by the Music Festival, as well as attend the opening of the excellent art exhibition at All Saints Church. However, Bill Kings' article on refuse disposal, while not being a very romantic subject, reminds us of the huge amount of spade work which has to be done to keep the wheels of organisation in the town turning, and the unsung heroes who go about their seemingly monotonous jobs daily in order that we may live in comfort as well as enjoy a few of life's finer moments.

The Society is no different from the town in that it needs a reliable band of active workers to keep its wheels turning. Without an ever regenerated group of volunteers the Society would cease to exist. When you read in this edition about the activities of the various committees you must surely appreciate what a sad thing this would be.

Robin Shaw's report mentions that it is increasingly difficult to plant trees in towns because of interference to services. I find this particularly worrying as from an aesthetic point of view trees soften the angularity of buildings and they complement each other wonderfully in an urban landscape. Can you imagine the High Street without trees? At the moment they are all bursting into leaf with spectacular spring colour. Enjoy them this summer.

Fran Rogers.



From The Membership Secretary

Welcome to the following new members who have joined the Society during the last quarter: Miss Bache, Mr and Mrs Boyles, Miss Chance, Mr and Mrs Dowler and Mr and Mrs Hipwell.

I would like to remind members that their subscriptions are due on 1 July, cheques payable to the Bromsgrove Society please.

The Society thanks our corporate members for their continuing support.

They are as follows:

All Saints Garage Ltd
Baylis and Co. (Bromsgrove) Ltd.
Bromsgrove Golf Centre
Clarks Motor Services
Designed Systems Interiors
Thomas Horton and Sons
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Weaver PLC
XLD Displays.

The Newsletter can also be read online at:

www.bsoc.co.uk

The site also includes an archive of past newsletter articles and links to other Bromsgrove websites



I am getting a website together dedicated to Catshill, the village and its villagers

www.catshill-village.co.uk

If anyone has any archive photographs or stories to contribute please e-mail me

davewebb@catshill-village.co.uk

or phone 01527 832989

From The Chairman

I am pleased to report that, as a result of my pleas for volunteers made in the last two Newsletters, two gentlemen have offered their services. Mr. A.C. Brodrick has joined the Landscape Committee and Mr. Cyril Baker has joined the Buildings and Environment Committee. I am sure there are others who would like to take a more active part in the activities of the Society and I look forward to hearing from them - just ring me on 01527 877814.

On Tuesday the 28th. March, I joined the Bailiff (Mr. Tim Harris, one of our Vice Chairmen) and Reeve (Mr. Adrian Powell) of the Court Leet at Crown Close to witness the planting of a Glastonbury Thorn Tree (more popularly known as a *Crataegus monogyna* "Biflora" !) by the Bailiff. This tree replaces one that died and is the Court Leet's contribution to "Plant a tree year". Despite the inclement weather we were most fortunate in that the sun shone during the whole of the ceremony, although it was bitterly cold.

The Bromsgrove Lecture held at Routh Hall, Bromsgrove School, on Thursday 6th April, was well attended and, according to reports I have received from many people, a great success. The Speaker, Christopher Jones, entitled his Lecture "The Royal Palace of Westminster" and he demonstrated a most detailed knowledge of his subject. He spoke for just over three quarters of an hour without notes and answered numerous questions afterwards. I was pleased to present Mr. Jones with a copy of the Society's new book on the Bromsgrove Guild. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Mr. Tony Turpin (a member of our Executive Committee) for co-ordinating the sound and lighting for the Lecture in co-operation with Centech Audio Visual.

By the time you receive this Newsletter you will have received an invitation to the Wine and Canapés Reception to be held at Guesten Hall, Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings, in celebration of the Society's 20th Anniversary on the 8th. June. I look forward to meeting many of you there.

Enclosed with this Newsletter is a notice of our Annual General Meeting to be held at Guesten Hall on Thursday, 6th. July at 7.30 p.m. I hope that many of our members will find time to attend this meeting when an opportunity will be given to ask questions about the activities of the Society and to put forward any criticisms they may have.

A glass of wine will be served at the conclusion

Jean F. James. April, 2000.

**A Verse at the entrance
to the old Manor House,
Grafton,
Near Bromsgrove.**

*Plenti and grase
Bi in this place.
While every man is pleased in his degree,
There is both pease ans uniti.
Soloman saith there is none accord,
When every man would be a lord.*

Keeping An Eye On Your Town

I will be presenting a full report of the committee's activities at the AGM in July, but I think members might be interested to hear about some of the cases that have come to our attention recently, indeed they may be able to have a positive input in some way. In the High Street, we were pleased to hear that Lloyd's TSB proposed to improve facilities for the disabled, but were rather dismayed that the intention was to put a wheelchair access ramp on the front elevation to the building. It is our impression that this would be of limited benefit to the disabled, inconvenient to pedestrians, and at the expense of the aesthetic appearance of a listed building . We believe that the allocation of disabled parking spaces in the rear car park would be much more convenient for disabled people who could then gain easy access to the existing ramp at the rear of the building.

Also in the High Street, we were dismayed that a barrier has been placed across the right of way leading to Crawford Yard which many of you will know as a very ancient right of way in the middle of the town. We have written to the Director of Environmental Services on Worcestershire County Council asking him to investigate this and to have the access unblocked .

Further along in Worcester Road we were interested in plans for the demolition of Manor Works and the erection of retail units plus associated works. The committee felt that it should be used for smaller industrial starter units, and discussed it with the Director of Planning Services who was of the same opinion, but might want some residential use as well.

Out of town, we are not happy about the density of housing intended on Bittell Road, where in one instance two houses are to be demolished to build four, and in another two houses are to be replaced with five. Even more worrying, three houses in Fiery Hill Road are to be demolished and replaced with eighteen new residences; a density very inappropriate for the area. At the Farthings in Holy Cross Lane , Belbroughton, a proposal to erect six detached houses does not technically constitute infilling within the green belt.

Lastly, those of you familiar with Hewell Grange will know that Repton Park and Garden are Grade 2* listed on the English Heritage Register. A proposal to erect a new kitchen block appears to breach the existing curtilage of the park and places it in a most sensitive part of the landscaping, close to the shore of the lake, which could be disastrous the aesthetics of the building. We are still hoping that a full time Building Conservation Officer might be appointed for Bromsgrove and have attended a meeting and with the District Council and English Heritage to this end. As you can see, the committee continues to be very actively looking after your interests in and around Bromsgrove.

Jim Griffiths, Chairman of the Buildings and Environment Committee

Recent Activities of the Landscape Committee

In recent months the Landscape Committee has been pursuing a number of projects and has had meetings with relevant councillors as well as District Council Officers.

One project that has been around for quite a long time in one form or another is a proposal to make improvements to Crown Close. The current suggestions are quite modest; they include a new path and seating to the side of St. James House (offices) which would encourage greater use of the area, some improved parking space for Amphlett Hall and general tidying up.

The Whitford Ward councillors, who cover this part of town were happy to support the proposals in principle and we are now waiting to see whether they can be included in the Council's Environmental Improvement Scheme, with the society making a contribution to the costs.

We have also suggested that the steps up to St. John's church from St. John's Road could do with some careful restoration. In the past repairs have been carried out with unsuitable materials and there is some need for additional repairs on the grounds of safety. Obviously the sandstone character must be preserved so a very sympathetic touch is required. We think that the steps are a very important part of the town's heritage and are a high priority for conservation. Again the councillors were very receptive to our views and this could also be a project within the Environmental Enhancement Scheme.

We have been looking at the possibility of encouraging wild flowers to grow along the A38 by-pass and have been working with the Worcester Wildlife Trust. Our thinking was that this is a facet of Bromsgrove that many people see and after the daffodils, which were largely planted by the Bromsgrove Society, have bloomed there is little of visual interest for the rest of the year. Wildflowers, however, are not as easy a proposition as many people might think. They are easily crowded out by vigorously growing grasses and they flourish best on poor soil. What we have been looking at is the possibility of carrying out some pilot schemes, but even these may be expensive to set up because the ground would need some preparation. So discussions continue with the Trust and, of course, any proposition will need the cooperation of the local Authority's Highways Partnership.

Finally, two years ago we developed a proposition for tree planting at various places along Kidderminster Road to improve the approach to the town from this direction. Unfortunately many of the sites we thought possible were ruled out by the Highways Partnership on the grounds that they were near underground services - gas, electricity, water and now, particularly a problem, television cables. It seems that in future the opportunities for trees in and near towns may be much more restricted, but we have not given up completely on this. There is certainly a willingness on behalf of the Council to help where services are not a problem but it is more difficult and takes longer than we had hoped.

Robin Shaw, Chairman, Landscape Committee

What A Lot Of Rubbish

by **Bill Kings.**

The enclosed report was originally presented to the Sanitary Committee of the then Bromsgrove District Council in 1928. The subject was the proposed mechanical removal of the district's refuse. Until that time, the Sanitary Department removed our refuse by horse and cart and manual labour. The stables were in Crabtree Lane where Asda car park now is, and it was a wonderful place to visit if you were a child.

Today we are rather more fortunate to be able to drop our household rubbish into supermarket bags, which we then put into large dustbin sized black plastic bags, which in turn we leave in a convenient place for the refuse collectors and their huge modern mechanical juggernauts.

This operation is done weekly without fail and our Council gives us all suitable printed rotas informing us of collection days. All very easy, especially as our refuse collectors do a wonderful job in spite of interference from a growing fox population.

From the report you will gather that the Surveyor recommended the use of petrol driven vehicles which ranged in price from £250 to £1000. He recommended that the Council purchase the Guy Chassis which had a specially designed body at a total cost of £578. I have no idea of the comparison of refuse costs between 1928 and the present day, but this would be difficult to work out as the amount of refuse generated per household has increased out of all proportion. However, believe it or not, those daffodil coloured vehicles which visit us weekly currently cost £115,000. This single figure makes me determined not to complain when I pay my Council Tax, and next time I will try to do so with a smile!

Editor's note..

Since the report is not signed there is no indication as to who prepared it . Perhaps an interested reader may be able to let us know.

North Bromsgrove Urban District Council.

5th June 1928.

To the chairman & members of the sanitary committee.
Gentlemen,

Surveyor's Report on the proposed Refuse Removal within this district.

I accordance with your instructions, I beg to submit a detailed report on the installation of a small refuse removal scheme for parts of your district. I would like to explain at the outset that I find considerable difficulty in

framing a report on which a proposed scheme may be based well knowing that in initiating such scheme, however small the beginnings, may increase so rapidly that the sum mooted would not normally cover the working costs during the current year.

I also find it impossible to work out my details in such a way to show the committee what should be attempted in a District of this character, when I know that a sum of only £500 is earmarked for such a scheme.

If a scheme of Refuse Removal is put in vogue for parts of the District, I think it only naturally follows that other parts of the District will want to share in it, and in my opinion quite rightly.

In discussing the ways and means of initiating such scheme there are several matters requiring a great deal of consideration, viz:- (1). Will it be cheaper to commence with horses & carts, (2) A combination of horses & carts and mechanical transport. (3) Mechanical transport only. (4) To hire the whole of the work out at so much per day of work, or at per ton of refuse removed.

Would it be cheaper in the long run for the Council to purchase say three horses and covered van for refuse removal covering a radius of two miles from any tip to be chosen.

My personal views on this matter are that in the first instance the Council should be recommended to purchase a petrol driven specially designed refuse haulage machine to be used in clearing up the various dumps of refuse in the District, and later when this work was completed to be used in alternate weeks between Catshill, Bournheath and Rubery.

With regard to Tips, I think at the present moment that the Gravel Pit would suffice for tipping from Catshill and Bourneheath, and it is possible to get a tip near the brickyard at Rubery, or if the refuse was properly spread and covered there would be no objection to tipping in the Rubery Recreation Ground, which would ultimately be levelled up and grass sown.

In discussing alternative methods of refuse removal, the writer has been in the position of having to put a new system of refuse disposal and collection in vogue for a Town and in another case he was instructed to improve on the then existing method of collections by horse drawn vehicles in a scattered district.

I now propound my views on mechanical vehicles as against horses and carts.

In considering the question, again many points are open for consideration, such as, the area of the district, the distances to be travelled to the tips, the character of the refuse, the means of disposal, and where tipping on land, the access thereto.

I give below my reasons for advancing preferences of Mechanical Vehicles for this class of work over Horse Transport:-

(1) Horse Haulage is both costly and slow, and apart from working within a mile radius from the tip, cannot be compared with mechanical haulage,

(2) One mechanical vehicle will do the work of two horses and carts, and where properly organised and worked on a sound system, will displace three horses and carts.

(3) Mechanical vehicles, can when necessary, be used all day and also at night, Horses cannot be worked day and night, or at higher pressure than normal. This

is a very important point when one has to cope with rushes of work without previous notice.

(4) With mechanical vehicles one can cut out Sunday work, but with horses, there is stabling and feeding duties each Sunday to attend to.

(5) At midday the mechanical vehicle can be run into any yard whilst the men are having their meals, whereas it is usual for the horses to be taken back to the stables for a rest and feed.

(6) With mechanical vehicles properly looked after, there is little chance of same being out of action many days, apart from accidents, but with horses there is always a possibility of their being ill for weeks, and also suddenly dying.

(7) Mechanical vehicles cost less for garaging, and no question of different treatment winter or summer. With horses they require keeping in part of the winter months and turning out the remaining part, also of different food according to the time of year.

(8) In winter time when roads are slippery it is sometimes impossible to get on the roads, but not so with mechanical vehicles; the only thing to stop them at this period is an exceptionally heavy fall of snow.

(9) With a mechanical vehicle there is no loss of time starting up in the morning, or upon completion of work at the end of the day, whereas with horses an hour or so can be allowed before the stables are left in the morning, and the men return to stables probably an hour earlier in the evening to attend to the horses ready for the night.

With regard to the better form of mechanical vehicles for refuse collection. This again depends upon the District, the gradients to be transversed, the nature of the roads, the distance to be travelled, where the refuse is taken to tips the means of getting to same, and whether the buildings are in a close area or widely separated. The vehicles used must be the right one for the work, in power, speed, hardiness, and fuel. There are three alternatives to horse haulage viz:-

1. Petrol.
2. Electric.
3. Steam.

Each has its own particular sphere of work.

1. Petrol.

For short quick journeys with moderate loads, and not many stops, the petrol driven vehicle is the better form of traction.

There is no loss of time in starting up in the morning, no waste of time garaging at night. Comparing with a steam lorry repairs can be more easily carried out, and one is not dependable upon one man for driving same, as is the case with a steam wagon.

There is also less expense in running, one man - the driver - being sufficient with the petrol wagon, whereas it is customary for two men to be placed with a steam wagon.

2. Electric.

These are especially economical for the purpose of house to house collection on account of the continual stopping and starting, and there is no loss of power whilst the vehicle is standing, but it's possibility of service is confined

practically to refuse collection, whereas with petrol and steam these can when necessary be used for other classes of work. On account of the charging of the batteries motor generators are required, and is not always possible in many Districts.

3. Steam.

For refuse collection where many and frequent stops are required, this class of traction comes next to electric.

This vehicle can haul a three to a five ton load and in addition carry a three to five ton load itself.

There is the question of special sheds for covering the steam wagon, the time lost in getting up steam in the morning, waste of time at finish of day drawing fires etc. and where short distances have to be travelled this is against the use of a steam wagon.

There is also greater difficulty in maneuvering a steam wagon than a petrol or electric vehicle.

Also there is more vibration and noise than with a petrol or electric vehicle, and consequently more wear and tear on the working parts, and also on the roads, and the costs for removals and repairs are greater than with petrol or electric vehicles, and not so easily carried out.

From my previous remarks you will see that it now comes to a comparison between petrol and electric vehicles against horse haulage, In towns where they have the means of charging the batteries in connection with electric vehicles, the stops are many and frequent, and the distances travelled not too far, the electric vehicle would probably be the most economical. In towns and cities where a large number of vehicles are required and where workshops could be kept for repair and spares, this would be a better form of traction.

Where no means of charging batteries are available and also in the case of small towns and urban districts I am strongly of the opinion that the petrol drive vehicle is the most suitable for the work of refuse collection and disposal, being the most convenient, handy to manage, speedy, on the road, the least expensive in running costs and upkeep, and if properly managed will do the work of three horses and carts.

Probably the Committee will concur that I have made out a case for the petrol driven vehicle, and I now propose to mention one or two machines well known on the market, and which are giving satisfactory service in other districts.

There is the Vulcan chassis which to same can be mounted a special end tipping refuse collector body. The Dennis, The Thornycroft, The Morris, The Guy and also The Ford.

In all probability it will be found that the first three machines will be too expensive, they running into the neighbourhood of £1,000.

The Morris specially fitted for the work would come out at about £400, and the Ford say £250.

From my own observations I consider that the most economical vehicle would be the 26 H.P. "Guy" chassis, fitted with a 2¾ ton specially designed body for refuse collection.

Assuming the Committee decided to purchase one of these vehicles, I give

below the running costs per day and based upon the assumption that the vehicle would travel 20 miles per day for six days per week.

Taking the initial figures, Guy 2 ton chassis (gross carrying capacity $2\frac{3}{4}$ tons including body) 26 H.P. engine, four speed gear box with right hand change, double reduction rear axle 12' $4\frac{1}{2}$ " wheelbase, solid types, single fronts and twin rears, cost £445.

Supplying and fitting hand operated end tipping body having low loading doors with sliding steel dust covers, length 9 feet, width 6" with 1'9" sides, 140 cubic feet capacity, cost £133.

The figures for running costs per day will read:-

Chassis with tyres	£445
Refuse Collecting Body & End Tipping Gear	133
	£578

Running costs at 20 miles per day.

Interest on capital @6%	1.11
Depreciation @20%	6.4
Insurance	1.3
Licence @ £27	1.6
Tyres @ 1d per mile	1.8
Drivers wages	8.4
Oil @ 4/9 per gallon	2
Petrol at 10 m.p.g.	2.8
Repairs	1.6
	25.4

Cost per vehicle mile. 15.2 pence

To arrive at the final figure over the year, it will be necessary to add, say £100 for repayment of loan and interest, and to this must be added on additional man to assist in the collection of refuse, and one man for levelling and covering up the refuse at the dump.

The final figures would then read.

Running costs all inclusive.	364.16.
Loan repayment & Interest say.	100
Additional man with vehicle @ 50/- per week	120
Man engaged on levelling refuse	120
Total cost per year. Say.	£705

I remain gentlemen,
Yours obediently
Engineer &. Surveyor.

Bromsgrove Society Publications

Some publications may be obtained from local bookshops but all are available from: John Weston, 20, Sunningdale Road, Bromsgrove B61 7NN. Tel: 01527 873483. Cheques Payable to The Bromsgrove Society.

The Bromsgrove Guild - an Illustrated History

Edited by Quintin Watt.

This is the latest publication of The Bromsgrove Society following 5 years of research by our Local History Group. It has 160 pages and contains over 100 illustrations, 25 of which are in colour. It tells the fascinating story of a business which brought Bromsgrove to world wide prominence.

£11.95 (or £13.50 including postage and packing)

Bygone Bromsgrove

Edited by John Foster

This book was first printed in 1981 and has been our all time best seller. Despite 2 reprints it has long been unavailable but has now been produced in a revised and updated edition. Among those contributing a chapter are Dr. Alan Richards, Rev. W. Awdry, Bill Kings, John Burman and Robert Pancheri. 140 pages with many illustrations and an index.

£8.50 (or £10 including postage and packing)

The Extraordinary Adventures of Benjamin Sanders Buttonmaker of Bromsgrove

Editor Dr. Alan Richards

£4.25 (or £5 including postage and packing)

Prospect of Bromsgrove 1850

This map is the original decorative and detailed aerial view of the centre of Bromsgrove produced for the Bromsgrove Society by Dr. Alan Richards and Norman Neasom. Its strong print and artwork makes it clearly readable and by using long lasting lustre paper we have ensured that its superb quality will endure for many years. It is an ideal size measuring 23" x 13" plus border and makes an excellent present.

£20 (or £22 including postage and packing)

The Bromsgrove Rousler

This excellent local history magazine comes free each December to our members. New members however may like to know that back numbers for some recent years are available at £1.50 each.

We also have postcards of old Bromsgrove available.



Seasonal Signs for Gardeners

from Fran Rogers

Browsing through an old book on
Worcestershire published in 1932 by the
Women's Institute, I came across the
following proverbs. Does anyone have any
from Bromsgrove?

*A Swarm of Bees in May
Is worth a load of hay;
A swarm of bees in June
is worth a silver spoon;
A swarm of bees in July
Isn't worth a butterfly*

*Where the Lavender flourishes
the woman rules.*

*If Madonna lilies are plentiful
wheat will be cheap.*

The Bromsgrove Society

Officers and Members of the Executive Committee 1999-00

Officers:

Chairman:	Mrs Jean James, 19, Hawthorn Road, Norton, Bromsgrove B61 0EN	01527 877814
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Ex-Officio Committee Member:	The Bailiff of the Court Leet	

The Bromsgrove Society Local History Group

Events List 2000/2001

2000

Tuesday, 19th September

“The Birmingham Jewellery Quarter”

Kenneth Hughes

Tuesday, 17th October

“Old Stoke Prior”

Jack Moss

Tuesday, 21st November

“Bentley Manor and the Family of Squire Cheape”

Maurice Clarke

Tuesday, 5th December

“The lost world of Hanbury, the model for Ambridge”

Dr Alan Richards

2001

Tuesday, 20th February

“The Fairground Calendar”

Graham Downie

Tuesday, 20th March

“Parish Churches of the Bromsgrove Area”

Tim Bridges

**All meetings are held at the Methodist Centre, Stratford
Road, Bromsgrove and commence at 7.45.p.m.**

Members £1. Non-Members £2.