



The Bromsgrove Society
NEWSLETTER

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September 2003

75p



*The New
Town Sign*

*First of
Many?*

The Bromsgrove Society

Reg. Charity No. 510542

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Graham Reddie MBE

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Subscriptions are due on June 1st of each year and should be sent to:

Membership Secretary:

Mrs Jill Palmer, 37, Fordhouse Road, Bromsgrove B60 2LU
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Individual Membership	£7
Family Membership	£10
Pensioners & Students	£5
Pensioners Family Membership	£7
Corporate Members	£25 Minimum

Newsletter Editor:

Anne Maguire, 6 Broad Street, Bromsgrove B61 8LW
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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. Suitable Photographs to illustrate articles are a great help, and will be carefully returned to the owner after use.

This newsletter and past editions can also be read on the Internet at:

www.bsoc.co.uk

From The Editor

Another year, another Annual General Meeting. You can read the reports of the various Chairmen of sub-committees to see what has transpired during the year.

We now have a new Chairman, Des Clarke, who has replaced Tim Harris after his resignation on health grounds. We wish him well.

An interesting innovation was an outside speaker, Hal Miller, who gave an informative and interesting account of his duties as deputy-lieutenant of the County.

You have, no doubt, seen the town sign at the top of the Stratford Road. The intention is to have more. As a way of raising funds a concert is to be held in November - see the Newsletter for details. I hope you will be able to support this venture.

Anne Maguire

Letters To The Editor

Dear Madam

Looking at the Letters to the Editor I read the item concerning "Cow Keepers" of olden days. In 1919 we went to live in the lodge at the end of the drive at the Grange. (Avoncroft) Our milk, we bought from a young man who kept a few cows opposite "The Ewe and Lamb" on the lane going down to the "Needle Mill". He was Cecil Keight, whose father was a town butcher. He didn't have a round and as far as I know we fetched it.

The Grange was owned by Mr. Morton of Moor Street Warehouse, Birmingham. He travelled there by train and if he was not there the train waited.

I walked across the park footpath on the way from school one evening and was attacked by a cow with a calf. I was rescued by a Mr. Jefferies who drove deliveries for 'Inces' in the town. He broke a branch from a tree and drove the cow away.

Yours sincerely G.G. Brodrick

Dear Editor

I have been trying to obtain copy photographs relating to the "Gas Square" area of the town, unfortunately with little success. My reason for this is that my mother as a young girl lived there and so did relatives of my paternal grand father. Having enquired within both families no photographs are available.

I would appreciate any assistance you or your colleagues within the society may be able to offer.

Craig Perkins

Dear Anne Maguire

I regret to say that there are two errors in the article you published in the last newsletter. The first is entirely my own mistake. The captions for the two plans of Rosedene reading 'Before' and 'After' are transposed! I apologise for this and would ask that a correction is published in the next Letter.

The other is a mis-reading of my wife's handwriting - the name of the contact at Stafford University is Owen (not Owell) Ashton. Whilst a correction will be too late for action, it might be a courtesy to Professor Ashton to publish the amendment.

Gordon Long

(via e-mail from the Bahamas) Dear Editor

As a teenager, I spent five years at boarding school in Suffolk in an age when trans-Atlantic travel was not something one undertook on the spur of the moment and, so, I could not flit back and forth to the Bahamas as many students do today. As a result, most of my school holidays were spent with various Good Samaritans in, and getting to know, different parts of England - including Bromsgrove.

There were two of us boys from the Bahamas at Woodbridge School and my friend, John, was the son of the Bishop of Antigua. John's father would arrange with colleagues to look after us when we needed somewhere to stay. This is how we met Fr. Morris, his wife and son, Antony, who invited us to Bromsgrove, when he became Vicar of St. John's in the early 1950's.

So many years have passed since I stayed in what seemed to be an awfully cold Vicarage there, but they were wonderful weeks, particularly at Christmas. Carolling with the church youth, led by Mrs. Morris, is one of my favourite memories, followed by racing Bath chairs down the driveway of the Vicarage, but there were a number of generous parishioners who were very kind to the both of us. Sadly, I remember only one family name - Hartle - but even unnamed I would like to say a belated thank you to those people of Bromsgrove.

My real reason for writing, however, is to ask whether there is any record or recollection of a relative of mine who, I have just found out, was buried in Bromsgrove. Her name is **Rachel Mary Wright** and she died on 17 May 1919, aged about 88.

It is only in recent weeks that I discovered this distant cousin and I would welcome information about her and/or her descendants, if any, that this enquiry may produce.

Sincerely,

Paul Aranha, Lyford Cay, Bahamas.

captaina@coralwave.com

If anyone can help Captain Aranha, please write or e-mail him on the above.

From the Membership Secretary

Welcome to the following new members who have recently joined the society:-

Mrs. C. Bradley, Mr. & Mrs. A. Caleb, Mrs. B. Franklin, Mr. & Mrs. D. Hancox, Mr. & Mrs. D. Harrison, Mr. G. Nall, Mr. T Pinchin and Mr. J Ruck.

There are a few subscriptions still to be paid. It would be helpful if you could let me have them as soon as possible to enable me to finalise the total membership of the society. Thank you.

Jill Palmer, Membership Secretary.

The Bromsgrove Society Lecture 2004

The subject of the Lecture in 2004 will be "The reconstruction of the Bullring in Birmingham". The date is 25th March 2004 and the venue is Bromsgrove School. Tickets will be available from all Executive Committee members. The subject which will of interest to all who have known and visited Birmingham will be given by the General Manager of The Bullring, Tim Walley.

A Message from the Local History Group

“Reach for your diary now!”

The Local History Group has chosen a programme of talks that have a strong ‘Bromsgrove flavour’ for our 2003-4 season! I believe the speakers and subjects that have been chosen promise a series as interesting as we have ever had in the past.

All the talks are on Tuesdays and commence at the usual time of 7.45pm. Beginning on 16th September, The Rev. Alan White will take us through the history of the Worcester Birmingham canal. The Tardebigge “stairway” of locks, in particular, is very well known to walkers from the Bromsgrove locality and I am sure we shall find this talk particularly interesting. On 21st October Jennie McGregor-Smith takes us on a journey of discovery through the life of Bromsgrove’s John Cotton, Victorian architect, local historian, painter and poet.

So, with acclaimed local authors undertaking the first two talks, it seemed an excellent idea to follow suit with the choice of the third speaker. As a result, Talks Co-ordinator Roy Albutt found himself in an arm-lock organised by his LHG colleagues who ‘demanded’ that he should deliver the 18th November talk! So, on that date we shall be sure to enjoy seeing Roy’s superb slides of Bromsgrove’s stained glass windows and learn about the windows and their makers.

On 2nd December Pat Tansell will be telling us about the artist Elijah Walton. The geography alone promises intrigue as Pat will be taking us from Birmingham to Bromsgrove via the Alps and Egypt!

Chadwich Manor is surely one of the secrets of modern Bromsgrove but we shall have a rare opportunity to learn all about its history from George Gascoyne on 17th February. Our final evening on 16th March will have a more county based theme with a talk by Malcolm Atkin on Worcestershire’s experiences in the Civil War.

May I urge all Society members to reach for their diaries now and jot down these not-to-be-missed dates!

Neville Billington, Chairman. Local History Group

Concert - Roll Out The Barrel

9th November 2003

Tickets for this Concert are now available - cost £ 10 per head - from any member of the Executive Committee or from Terry Bradford, 21 Alvechurch Highway, Lydiate Ash, Bromsgrove B60 1NZ - 0121 453 3327.

The venue is the Spadesbourne Suite at the Bromsgrove Council House.

Roll out the Barrel is performed by the Famous Music Company Ltd.

The proceeds of this concert will fund a further town sign.

“Roll Out The Barrel” is a nostalgic musical trip down memory lane. 2 hours of non-stop golden oldies. Roll back the years and bring back the memories.

The Executive Committee would be very pleased to have full support from the membership!

Minutes Of The Annual General Meeting Of The Bromsgrove Society Held At The. Guesten Hall, Avoncroft Museum, On 10th July 2003.

There was an attendance of approximately 50 members and invited guests at the 23rd Annual General Meeting of the Society.

1. The Acting Chairman, Mr.D.Clarke, welcomed members and asked the Acting Secretary, Mrs.I. Jarrett, to report the apologies: Mr. P.Giles, Rev. & Mrs. I. Johnston, Dr. & Mrs. G. Ward, Mrs. P. Fellows, Mrs. Raby, Mr. G. Simmons, Mr. & Mrs. D. Turner, Mr. & Mrs. P. Lancaster Mr. & Mrs. Keeling, Mrs.W.Bird, Mr. & Mrs.R.Head, Kate Thompson, Mr. A. Brodrick, Mr. & Mrs. T. Harris, Mrs. M. White, Mr. R. Shaw and Mr. J. Meredith.

2. Minutes Of The AGM Held On 4th July 2002

Amendment of 'North Road' to 'West Road'.

The Chairman moved that the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting be adopted, and this was unanimously agreed.

3. Chairman's Review of The Year 2002/2003

(corresponding with the financial year)

The Society has continued to carry out its activities within the terms of its Constitution.

In April 2002 The Bromsgrove Lecture was on the subject of Hewell Grange given by Mrs.Hazel Fryer who serves on the Hewell Grange Conservation Trust. The Society has representation on this committee.

At the beginning of the year the Society promoted the Bromsgrove Architectural Awards 2002. This event had not been held since 1998 and extra interest seemed to have been generated as 13 entries were received, all of a very high standard. The Judges were David Turner, Derek Davies, Richard Guest and Graham Reddie. The awards were announced at the 2002 AGM and were fully illustrated in the Newsletter.

The Local History Group had continued to flourish with very good attendances at all six illustrated talks. A detailed report is anticipated for this group and also the other Committees.

The Landscape Committee under new Chairmanship has met on a bi-monthly basis and is still lobbying various bodies on your behalf to try and ensure improvements to the town centre and elsewhere.

The Building & Environmental Committee has grown in size and has concentrated its activities on such matters as the County Structure Plan, the Bromsgrove District Plan, local planning applications.

These Committees have all done excellent work on behalf of the Society and have made every effort

to promote the Society's good name. The Society's thanks are extended to all members of these committees.

All Committee Chairmen and officers report to the Executive Committee on a regular basis. The Executive has been expanded by co-opting two members who will now be seeking election. The Executive has been chaired by the chairman and both vice chairmen to suit the availability of the person concerned.

In March our Chairman, Tim Harris, advised that he would be unable to continue in office due to ill health. Our President, Graham Reddie, took soundings from senior

member of the executive and advised that the Vice Chairman, Desmond Clarke, would be Acting Chairman until the AGM.

The value of having a President, who was elected in 2002 for a period of four years, is therefore clearly illustrated. Graham has been very active in work for the Society and the committee are appreciative of with the support that he has given to the Society.

The members of the Executive Committee met the Leader and senior officers of the Bromsgrove District Council. A full agenda of items was discussed and it is intended by both parties that these meetings will continue to be held on a regular basis.

Our Jubilee Project has been completed within budget. Bromsgrove District Council co-operated with us fully. The provision of town signs is a major project of which the Queen's Jubilee Project was part. The Society's work was carried out by a small steering group.

A dinner was held at the end of November 2002 for committee and general members.

Many thanks are extended to all the members who have helped during the year not least our Newsletter editor Anne Maguire, Rousler editor Jenny Townshend and Membership Secretary Jill Palmer.

4. Committee Reviews

(a) Buildings & Environment - Mr. J. Griffith (Chairman)

Since April 2002 this Committee has met on five occasions for the year 2002/2003, and once for the year 2003/2004**. Various members of the Committee have also attended other meetings during the year:-

- Director of Planning at Barnt Green. (9/8/02). Petition to remove the planned ADR.
- Council's Best Value Team. (9/12/02). Briefing on responsibility.
- Council Meetings. (11&12/02). Progress on finalisation of Bromsgrove District Plan).
- Advantage West Midlands. 15/1/03). Birmingham-Worcestershire Technology Corridor.
- New Conservation Officer. (29/1/03). Discussion on best ways to improve/preserve Bromsgrove's built environment.
- Conservation Officer. (10/2/03). Discuss the possibility of Local Listing of properties.
- Worcestershire County Council. (20/3/03). Waste Management Planning. Public Consultation and Stakeholder Meeting.

At the first meeting on 25th April 2002 a brief resume of The Planning green Paper published on 12th December 2001 setting out the Government's proposals for reforming the planning system was presented for the committee's consideration, and a brief discussion also took place. Other matters discussed during the year were The Marlbrook Tip, The Resignation of Mr James Rogers, The District Council's Conservation Planner, Parking at the Railway Station (Scheme now completed but road side parking still persists), problems of design for Asda multi-storey car park, the ongoing problems of Graffiti and Chewing Gum in the High Street, progress on The Arts Centre, Gravestone maintenance, Waste Management and Town Centre Survey.

Several Planning objections were lodged and particular attention was paid to the following:-

- Asda. Layout of Multi-storey car park.
- Breme Park. Outline application for residential development on part of Garrington's site.
- Oil Terminal. Site between station car park and proposed Breme Park.
- 38 Bittell Road. Proposed demolition of house once owned by Sir Granville Bantock

- Upper Cottage Farm. Application for use as DIY outlet.
- The Glen, Blackwell. Proposed development of part of Conservation Site/SSI.
- 6 Fininstall Road. Proposed demolition and redevelopment of 18/19th Century Stabling.
- Holy Trinity Church, Blackwell. Proposed change of use to stained glass studio.
- “The Paddock”, Kendal Drive, Barnt Green. Application to erect an Earth Shelter.

During this period we were pleased to welcome two new members onto our Committee - David Slater and Mrs Audrey Chapman

At our May meeting I reported that we had now received The Bromsgrove District Local Plan Proposed modifications and our reply to the proposed modifications had been sent to the council. We had also received (and replied to) a Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance-Managing Housing Supply suggesting a Moratorium on new Housing until 2006 owing to an oversupply of available brownfield sites. I was also able to say that our report on the condition and occupancy of the Historic and other buildings in the High Street had now been forwarded to the Conservation Architect for his attention.

Finally , I would like to express my sincerest thanks to all the Committee for all their hard work and support during the last year.

(b) Landscape - Mr. R. Skidmore (Chairman)

1. Jubilee Project

The Town Sign was unveiled by Julie Kirkbride MP on 15th November last year on the corner of Stratford Road and West Road on land allocated by Bromsgrove District Council. A couple of faults have subsequently been corrected.

It will be the intention of the society over the coming years to erect more signs; appropriate sites are currently being investigated. A social evening is planned for November to raise funds for a second sign

2. Approaches To Bromsgrove

Sites have been identified for tree planting on approaches to Bromsgrove; initially, the Council have said it can provide six trees for Kidderminster Road.

3. Repairs To St. John’s Church Steps

Meetings and discussions have taken place with Bromsgrove DCs Conservation Architect to progress repairs to the church steps at St. John’s which are in a poor state and considered hazardous, particularly to people with walking difficulties. The Council instigated a scheme last year and obtained quotes for carrying out the work; a more detailed drawing and specification has been prepared and it is hoped to obtain more accurate quotes in the next month or so.

4. Tree Circle

The Society has been in discussions with the Council concerning the tree circle at St. John’s church, which requires some new trees and work to the crowns of the surviving trees.

5. Horse Trough

A quote for £7,000 was received for the relocation of the horse trough in Sanders Park to a position in The Strand; it was decided at Executive Committee that the Societies funds could be better spent elsewhere

6. Enhancement Of The Strand

The Council have produced a scheme to enhance the area of the Strand outside Cupitts, the Fish Shop and the old sweet shop; the projected cost of £40,000 was thought by the Executive Committee to be too high for the Society to make a contribution.

7. Sanders Park Plaque

It is proposed to install a plaque at Sanders Park in appreciation of Mary & Lucy Sanders, who bequeathed a substantial part of the land to Bromsgrove UDC to make the park possible.

8. Biodiversity Study

This was completed and handed to the Council.

9. Hewell Grange

Several phases are planned for works at Hewell Grange; the lake being the first phase; it is hoped to obtain lottery funding for carrying out the work. This is being done in conjunction with a newly constituted Hewell Grange Conservation Group, of which the Society is a member.

(c) Local History Group - N. Billington (Chairman)

During the course of the last twelve months LHG members have been busy with various projects; these will evolve into talks and articles for the Society Newsletter and Rousler magazine.

LHG member Pat Tansell has been busy researching Elijah Walton, the artist with strong Bromsgrove connections and her talk at the Methodist Centre on 2nd December is something to be looked forward to. Likewise on the 18th November group member Roy Albutt will be giving his talk on Bromsgrove's stained glass windows and their makers, illustrated by superb photographs.

Thelma Lammas has been looking into the heyday of a prominent Bromsgrove slaughterhouse while Marlene Goodwin has been researching a cycle shop that traded in the High Street between the wars. In the meantime, Jenny Townshend has continued to look after Rousler magazine and Bill Kings has helped the group to answer enquiries on various local history enquiries from members of the wider public.

William Creuze, who is buried in Finstall, is a man we knew very little about beyond the briefest details of what appeared to have been a chequered career when the railway arrived in Bromsgrove. All that has certainly now changed since a descendant, Warwick Sheffield, an Australian and now a member of the Society is working with the LHG in research which is giving us most interesting archive information and which has identified a number of fresh leads.

The Group's talks programme has been published in the Newsletter and it may well have been noted that there is a strong 'Bromsgrove' flavour to the subjects listed. A new strategy we are trying for the 2003/4 season will be to get handbills displayed to specialist groups months in advance. It remains to be seen how successful this will be but the aim is to increase our audience numbers. This approach has already commenced with publicity relating to our first talk on 16th September (by the Rev. Alan White on the local canal) aimed at canal folk and local towpath walkers.

Marlene Goodwin has now resigned from the LHG after many years of much valued service. Marlene is well known for her contribution to the Guild book and many other projects and her work looking after admission takings - with detailed record keeping - at our talks is part of a valued contribution that I am sure everyone in the Society is grateful to her for.

In the Autumn Society member Edward Bookfield will be joining the LHG and Bob Richardson will also be joining us (on an availability-as-and-when basis given his frequent evening commitments in the television industry). Society member Betty Wright, whilst unable to join the LHG due to geographical reasons has generously made her skills relating to the County Record Office archives available to us.

Meanwhile we are looking for someone to take over as Chairman of the LHG; this post almost guarantees the holder much interesting involvement but in addition requires availability for half a dozen LHG meetings a year and a similar number of Executive Committee meetings.

Following questions, the Chairman thanked the Panel Chairman for their hard work during the year. Reports were adopted.

Treasurer's Report

The Financial Statement has already been circulated. The year had finished with a surplus of £1,220 and reserves of £44,860. Gift Aid refunds were being obtained. We had received a Grant of £2,000 from Worcester County Council towards the Society's Jubilee Project. We had an adequate Reserves Policy in hand. The Society's finances were strong. Mr. Rowlands thank Mr. S. Priddey for his assistance during the year.

Thanks were expressed to Mr. Rowlands for the management of the Society's finances. The Financial Statement was adopted unanimously.

6. Re-Appointment Of Hon.Auditor

It was proposed by Mr. D. Clarke and seconded by Mr. J. Griffith that Mr. S. Priddey be elected Hon.Auditor for the coming year. Carried unanimously.

7. Election of Officers and Committee:

The President, Mr. G. Reddie, regretted that Mr. T. Harris was unable to attend due to ill-health, but thanked him on behalf of the Society for his Chairmanship.

Mr. D. Clarke was elected as Chairman Mr. J. Griffith as Vice-Chairman, Mr. J. Rowlands as Treasurer, Mrs. M. Lancaster as Secretary and Mrs. J. Palmer as Membership Secretary.

The following were approved as Executive Committee Members: Mr. C. Baker, Mr. R. Brazier, Mrs. A. Chapman, Mr. R. Guest, Mr. T. Harris, Mrs. I. Jarrett, Miss J. Longmuir, Mr. R. Meredith, Miss A. Maguire, Mr. J. Sketchley, Mr. R. Skidmore, Mr. D. Slater, Mr. T. Turpin and Mr. J. Weston.

8. Any Other Business

There was none

9. Speaker - Sir Hal Miller DI

The President introduced Sir Hal to members. Sir Hal gave an informative and amusing talk about 'The Lieutenancy of the County' The original purpose was to have the power to raise a militia as there was no standing army in Henry VIII's time. Over the years the official powers have been reduced and is now mainly ceremonial. The Lieutenant is the Queen's Representative. If he leaves the County he has to appoint a Deputy to act in his absence.

The Chairman thanked Sir Hal for an interesting talk and presented him with a book.

Lecture 2005 - Advance Notice

In our Jubilee Year we will be pleased to welcome HRH The Duke of Gloucester as our speaker. The Duke delivered the Society's first lecture and on this occasion the subject will be 18th Century Architecture.

Holy Trinity Church, Lickey, Cemetery Gate Project

A lychgate is a covered open structure, often found at a church gate way. It normally consists of four or six oak posts embedded in the ground in a rectangular pattern. On top of them are a number of beams to hold a steeply sloping straight pitched roof, covered in wooden or clay peg tiles.

The name is derived from the saxon “lych” meaning “corpse”, and gate meaning entrance. Hence corpse entrance.

Lychgates were built from about the mid 15th century. It was the custom at the time for priests to conduct the first part of the funeral service under its shelter.

During medieval times, the rich were the only people buried in coffins. The poor were carried to the lychgate, and placed on a stone or wooden table, covered in a shroud before burial.

Lickey cemetery extension was opened in 1912, with two entrances, one from Twatling road, with a lych gate, and one from the old Birmingham road. The cemetery now has approximately 3,500 internments.

By 2001, the gates had fallen into a poor state of repair, and a group of retired members of the community, led by Jjohn Barnett and Jam Oakley, volunteered to renovate them.



During the restoration of the cemetery lych gates in 2001, passing parishioners advised the team that there had also been gates at the old Birmingham road entrance. These had last been seen rotting in an adjacent hedge in the 1970's. One gate post remains were in the entrance. Older residents were able to state they were of similar design to the lych gates, but no one was able to produce a photograph! However, a chance meeting in Bromsgrove, produced a sketch from an elderly former resident.

As the restored lych gates had been given much favourable comment, and the old Birmingham road entrance was just a gap in the boundary fence, as shown in the photograph, we felt a new pair of gates at this entrance was a worthwhile project, which would enhance the local environment, and increase local community pride in the area. It could also be a good millennium or queen's golden jubilee project.

We put together a proposal with costs, and the sketch, by a local artist, Pat Bracken, and submitted it to the holy trinity church parochial council, for approval, which they gave, together with a grant, towards the cost. Additional grants were obtained from Lickey and Blackwell parish council, and Worcester County council, which together covered the total estimated cost.

Work commenced in April 2002, the first problem encountered, being to locate a suitable quality oak for the gates. Eventually a source of American oak was found, and by early July, the gates were made and assembled by Jim Oakley. They were then subjected to extensive preservation treatment. Each gate weighed 86 lbs, without metal work. Taking into account the wear found on the lych gate hinge pins, when the team restored the lych gates in 2001, it was considered the propriety hinge pins available

would be inadequate. A local resident offered to get the hinge pin assemblies made in stainless steel, if the team could supply drawings. This was done, and the assemblies made.

Drawings were also made for the hinge straps and drop over catch, and these then were made by the Hanbury blacksmith, Harry Brown.

In september, two 7" x 7" oak posts were obtained, but during collection, went through the floor of John Barnett's trailer, which had to be rebuilt! The posts were then preservative-treated ready for installation.



Jim Oakley dismantling the Lych Gates for restoration. April 2001.

The installation of the posts turned out to be a major challenge. The remains of the remaining original gatepost were easily removed. When digging out for the second post, the remains of the stump of the other post was encountered, some 21 below ground level! It was rock hard, and buckled 4" nails, which were attempted to be drive into it, for lifting purposes! Eventually, after digging down some 3'6" all round it, a rope cradle secured it, but three of us could not lift it! By using ropes and crowbars, a vertical and horizontal lift was arranged, and it

was secured to the tow hitch of John Barnett's vehicle and towed up and out of its hole. Even then three of us could not lift it, and it had to be dragged to one side.

The gateposts were then installed, the gates assembled with hinge straps, and hung.

In conclusion, the team believe that they achieved their objective of enhancing the local village area, within budget (just!), and that the community would take pride in the result.

The cemetery path is regularly used as a walkway by many members of the community, both to enter the Lickey woods from the main road, and to reach the local post office, garage, bus stops and village hall, from Twatling road and the adjacent roads.

The gates have now been installed some four months, and have been much admired. The parochial church and parish councils are now considering further work both in the cemetery area, and replacing the adjacent bus shelter, which is now considered too old and shabby!



The restored Lych gates, November 2001.

The team members were Jim Oakley, John Dawson, Pat Bracken, David Shakespeare, Harry Brown, Richard Mayhew, Sheila Barnett and John Barnett.

John Barnett



The Story Of Bob Richardson's Discovery Of A "Crock Of Gold"

During the Autumn of 1974, Society Member Bob Richardson, an Electrical Contractor, attended Mr., Jack Scott, the High Street jeweler, on a business matter, and during the inspection of the premises he noticed in a back room some glass photographic negatives. He saw that they could be of interest, and was able to acquire them - no mean feat, for in the event they numbered over 2,000, and weighed about two hundred weight. He did not realise at that moment what a tremendous treasure he had stumbled upon, for he had found the negatives of a professional Bromsgrove Photographer who was operating widely in our Town not far short of 100 years ago - one Joseph Hughes.

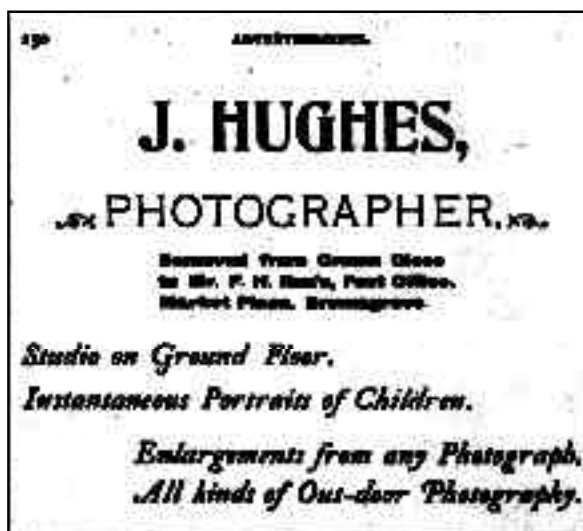
Sadly, nothing is known of Hughes himself, but a search by Bob into the "Bromsgrove Directories and Almanacs" revealed that he was operating from an unknown Studio in Crown Close from 1897 to 1905, and from 1906 to 1908 from a ground floor Studio at 76 High Street (two doors to the South of Clegg's Entry), at that time a sub-Post Office in the hands of Mr. Rea. These premises were occupied by Mr. Jack Scott's Father from 1914.

The fact that this priceless treasure is now in safe hands must, principally, lie at the feet of Hitler, and probably Kaiser Bill. In the '39 - '45 War, raw materials were in short supply, and when a clock front was needed, Mr. Scott would clean off a negative and cut one from it. It can be assumed that his father made the same limited use of them. That they were undisturbed from 1945 to 1973 is undoubtedly because they were "not in the way", and probably forgotten.



The negatives are of quarter, half and whole plate size, and almost without exception are of perfect clarity, and leave no doubt as to the skill of the Photographer. Bob has prints from many of them. Some are portraits, the majority still in their original envelopes, mostly bearing the sitter's name - including Bob Richardson's own maternal Grandfather, and another relation of the same generation.

Cyclists of both sexes are included, and sitters being in their "Sunday Best", the collection will also be of interest to the student of costume. The remainder cover a wide variety of the life of the Town. Several individual shops which some Members will remember are Appleby, Ironmonger, decorated for the Coronation of Edward VIII with the young Tom and sister Nancy on the Balcony; Townsend, the Antique Dealer; Fred Gray,





Tobacconist; The International Stores with its nine immaculately apron-clad assistants to the fore. Another is Austin Chamberlain addressing the crowd from the balcony of the Golden Cross during the General Election of 1906. Strategically placed among the crowd can be seen the helmets of several policemen - trouble was always expected, and usually came on these occasions from the Liberals of Sidemoor. Agricultural items include a ploughing match alongside New Road, which was certainly part of the Two Counties Agricultural Show - staged here in 1906. Several High Street processions include the Baptist Sunday School, under the control of the Rev. Ford. The Town Band appears. Some 30 prints show the Workshops of Daniel Giles, the Coachbuilder, and the vehicles he produced at the premises later occupied by Neale's Garage in Station Street. A particularly delightful print depicts the Horse Fair in a very crowded High Street that would have been a seething mass of movement, yet "blown-up" from part of the plate reveals no trace whatsoever of "blurry".

A few of these photo's will be published in each newsletter (provided there is space). If you recognise any of these people the editor would be delighted to hear from you.

Date For Your Diary

The Chairman has pleasure in inviting members and friends to a seasonal supper

Date Friday, 28th November 2003

Time 7.30 p.m. for 8.00 p.m.

Venue The Ladybird Inn, Aston Fields, Bromsgrove

Cost £15 per head

MENU

Prawn & Melon Cocktail

Roast Beef with all the Trimmings

Vegetarian Lasagne (on request)

Dessert/Cheese & Biscuits

Coffee & Mints

Please send cheques payable to The Bromsgrove Society to Mrs.I.M.Jarrett, 28 Alvechurch Highway, Lydiate Ash, Bromsgrove B60 1PA (Tel : 0121-453-2100) by FRIDAY, 21st November 2003.

The Bromsgrove Society

Officers and Members of the Executive Committee 2003-2004

Officers:

President:	Graham Reddie, MBE, 41, East Road, Bromsgrove. B60 2NW	01527 872055
Chairman:	Des Clarke, 19 Alvechurch Highway, Lydiate Ash, Bromsgrove B60 1NZ	0121 453 3034
Vice-Chairman:	Jim Griffith, (Chairman - Buildings & Environment) 24 Ragley Crescent, Broom Park, Bromsgrove. B60 2BD	01527 833252
Treasurer:	John Rowlands, 34 Pine Grove, Lickey, Birmingham. B45 8HE	0121 445 3017
Newletter Editor:	Anne Maguire, 6 Broad Street, Bromsgrove B61 8LW	01527 871354
Secretary:	Mrs Marion Lancaster, 5, Carnforth Road Harwood Park, Bromsgrove B60 2HS	01527 871874

Committee:

Cyril Baker	551, Birmingham Road, Marlbrook Bromsgrove. B61 0HY	0121 445 3633
Roger Brazier	36 Harvington Road, Bromsgrove B60 2BA	01527 878889
Mrs Audrey Chapman	58 East Road, Bromsgrove, B60 2NJ	01527 873410
Richard Guest	36 Church Road, Bromsgrove. B61 8QH	01527 831580
Tim Harris	Church Green Cottage, 44 Church Road, Bromsgrove B61 8QH	01527 872451
Mrs Isobel Jarrett	28 Alvechurch Highway, Lydiate Ash, Bromsgrove. B60 1PA	0121 453 2100
Miss June Longmuir	Hill Farm, Woodcote, Bromsgrove, B61 9DY	01527 832288
Ray Meredith,	“Hillborough”, Stoke Pound, Bromsgrove. B60 3AX	01527 831083
Mrs Jill Palmer	(Membership Secretary) 37 Fordhouse Road, Bromsgrove. B60 2LU	01527 871340
John Sketchley	16, Brueton Avenue, Bromsgrove B60 2AW	01527 876626
Ron Skidmore	(Chairman - Landscape Committee), 12, College Road, Bromsgrove. B60 2NE	01527 880196
David Slater	Pepperwood House, Dordale Road, Bournheath Bromsgrove. B61 9JX	01527 871559
Tony Turpin	89 Stourbridge Road, Bromsgrove. B61 0AL	01527 876659
John Weston	Breakback House, 20 Sunningdale Road, Bromsgrove. B61 7NN	01527 873483
Ex-Officio Committee Member:	The Bailiff of the Court Leet	

The Bromsgrove Society Local History Group

Speakers 2003/2004

2003

Tuesday 16 September

The Worcester-Birmingham Canal

Rev. Alan White

Tuesday 21 October

Discovering the Life of John Cotton:

Bromsgrove's Victorian Architect, Local Historian, Painter and Poet

Jennie Mcgregor-Smith

Tuesday 18 November

Light and Colour: Bromsgrove's Stained Glass Windows and their Makers

Roy Albutt

Tuesday 2 December

Elijah Walton Artist: Birmingham to Bromsgrove via the Alps and Egypt

Pat Tansell

2004

Tuesday 17 February

In Bromsgrove's Secret Hills: The History of Chadwich Manor

George Gascoyne

Tuesday 16 March

Oppression and Revolt: Worcestershire's Experiences in the Civil War

Malcolm Atkin

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

Admission: Members £1.50 Non-Members £2. All are welcome to attend