Redditch Local History Society
www.redditchhistory.org.uk

Redditch Heritage Matters

Heritage Matters is the Newsletter of the Redditch Local History Society Volume 3-04

Topics Covered in this edition……

Monthly Meeting Report
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Society Objectives

The Redditch Local History Society was formed at the end of 2009 to meet a perceived need in the Redditch community.

Redditch's history is steeped in industry but it's seen a dramatic increase in newcomers since being designated as a new town. And with an ageing population who have first hand experience of the old town we believe there is a need to promote Redditch heritage.

So simply put, our aim is to investigate, document and promote Redditch heritage.

A Window on the World

Back in 2010, just after we started the Redditch Local History Society, we published our first Newsletter. It was a simple email report of the events & discussions at the previous meeting.

The Newsletter still contains that monthly meeting report but its format has expanded to what you see today and we try to include interesting articles and news from the town and surrounding area.

I like to think of it as a window onto the world of History and Heritage in Redditch and the surrounding area. However I'm conscious that this window is from my house, my view of the town and only events and stories I know about. This is not what it should be but I need input from other sources to provide that wide view.

I'm lucky being active in the Worcestershire local history forum I do pick up some news from across the county but I'm always ready to publish information provided by others. So please send me your contributions, even if its only a few lines long.

Derek Coombes

Please note the next RLHS meeting will be on

Monday 6th August 2012 at 2:00 pm

The meeting will include another presentation on the work done by society members in meeting the research, document and publish aims of the society.

Do you have a contribution to include in **Redditch Heritage Matters?** If so please send it to Derek Coombes.

The Redditch Local History Society recognises the support given to it by the National Needle Museum Forge Mill & Bordesley Abbey Visitors Centre and its staff.

www.forgemill.org.uk

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Society Report

The Society held its latest meeting at Forge Mill Needle Museum on the 2nd July 2012

Redditch Local History Society's meeting on the 2nd July discussed and updated the main Society events for 2012. The competitions and prizes for our stand at the Council sponsored Redditch Festival (18th/19th August) were organised and a suitable display was being developed. For our 'Heritage Open Day' at Forge Mill on September 8th, which includes free museum entry and guided tours, as last year, we have invited the Redditch Mayor as our official guest. Work is in progress on the first of our three Redditch History exhibitions at Forge Mill in November, leading to the Redditch New Town 50 yrs in 2014.

With respect to other activities involving Society members, the Jubilee Exhibition at Redditch Library (Tony Green), is now finished and the Library was very pleased with the response from the public and cataloguing the Local Collection in the Redditch Library basement (Angela Webster) is now about halfway through. The Lost Redditch/Evesham Street project (Derek Coombes) continues to progress and Derek plans to give presentation of the current data in a future.

The Society sent letters of support to two organisations submitting grant application for Heritage activities in the town.

Firstly, The Town Centre Partnership has an application for a 2nd round Portas Pilot Town funding (£100k) which is "community-focused" and includes a Heritage Centre in Church Green and Heritage Trail.

Secondly, The Jestaminute Community Theatre has bid for a Heritage Lottery Grant on the oral history of the town with the focus on the industrial heritage of Redditch 1939-1964, leading into the new town.

Members were reminded that the society is a member of the Worcestershire local History Forum and they have a Day School on Saturday 29th September at Willen Church. An array of prominent speakers have been lined up on the theme of WORSHIP IN WINDOWS AND THE WILLIS ORGAN. . Members of the WLHF will also be putting on displays of their activities.

The second half of the meeting was a viewing of the Portas Bid promotion video and a film of the history of the area.

The next meeting will be on Monday 6th August 2012 at 2pm at Forge Mill Needle Museum, where we will have a further presentation related to Redditch History. For further details please ring Tony Green at 01527 61434 or visit our newly redesigned website ***www.redditchhistorysociety.org.uk***.

Anthony Green

Dorothy Manson

It is with some sadness that we have to report the death of Dorothy Manson.

Dorothy was a volunteers and supporter of Forge Mill for many years as well as a leading member of the Bordesley Society until falling numbers caused its closure in 2009.

This picture shows her receiving an award from the WLHF in 2010.

Derek

Subscriptions

If you have not paid your 2012-13 subscriptions please contact Graham Smith, the Society Treasurer, to pay yours without delay. Thank you.

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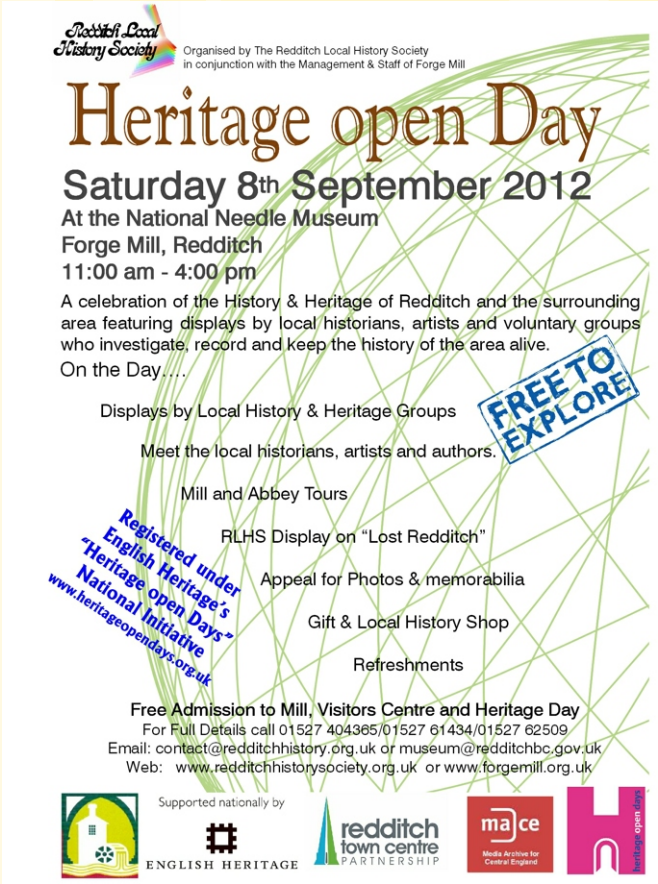
Heritage Open day

The HoD this year is on Saturday 8th September at Forge Mill.

Publicity is what we now need for the Heritage open Day.

Please help by displaying a poster at your place of work or where you socialise. Please give handouts to your friends and family and encourage them to come along.

Please contact Derek for publicity material.



So far confirmed attendees are:

- Alan Foxall
- Ian Hayes
- Emma Hancox - Worcestershire Archaeology Group
- Moons Moat Conservation Group
- RLHS
- Redditch Music Society

Awaiting confirmation:

- Chris Jackson
- Anne Bradford
- MACE
- Jestaminute Theatre Group
- Worcestershire Film Festival Group

Tony is organising Mill & Abbey Tours and help is required publicising the event

What can you do to help on the day?

If you or your group want to join us, please get in contact with Derek Coombes

Redditch Festival - Morton Stanley Park Aug. 18th and 19th

Graham Smith is again co-ordinating our presence at this event. It provides an opportunity to promote our activities and encourage others to join us.

Even if you have not volunteered to man the display, please come along for a hour to offer moral support for those who have.

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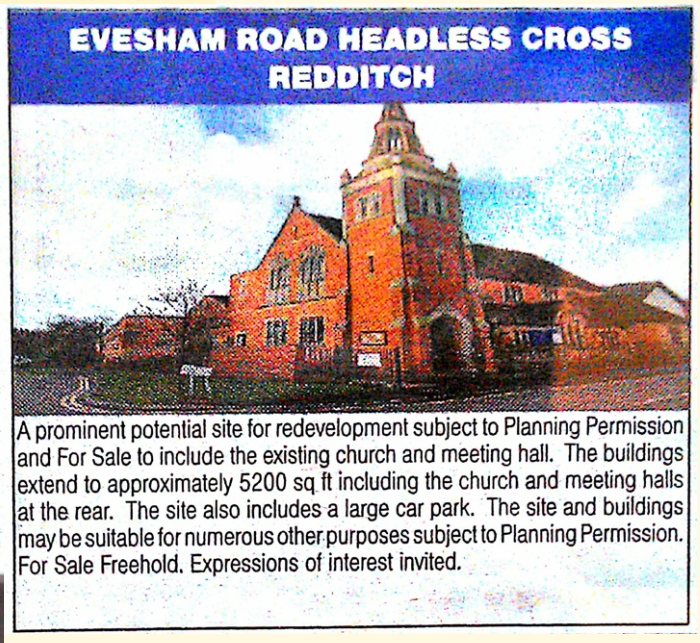
What Price History?

A personal view by Derek Coombes on conservation verses progress and the financing of history.

Reading today's Advertiser has raised the perennial question about preserving our history what we are willing to pay to preserve it.

I was sorry to read a letter on the correspondence page berating the Redditch Development Corporation for "Ripping the heart out of the town" and criticising moves to improve the town today. Now I'm not picking on this individual in any way and I'm not defending every decision of the RDC but as the lost Redditch project is proving, many of the town centre buildings would not have lasted another 50 years, but two other pieces from the paper prompted a thought of what questions may be asked in 50 years from today.

Firstly there's a small advert in the property section (which explains the quality of the images) asking for enquiries for the purchase of Headless Cross Methodist Church for redevelopment. Bearing in mind that St. Georges is also looking for a new purpose in life, where in today's climate is the money coming from to preserve these two pieces of Redditch history and who will take on the responsibility?



Secondly there is another property which was saved for the future and one of the saviours was our friends the RDC. Holmwood House. After a very grand start to its life in 1893 paid for by the wealthy Cannon Newton, Holmwood had a chequered past until becoming home to the RDC. Once the new town was completed it took on a new life as up-market apartments. You can now have a slice of that life for £195k.

Two sides of preserving our heritage.

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Diary of Events

Welcome to our Diary of Events Page. Here you will find a constant reminder of the major activities that the Society is planning. Details of these events will appear elsewhere.

Date 2012	Event	Contact/Lead
1st Monday of the Month	**Monthly Meeting of the RLHS** 2:00 pm at the The National Needle Museum, Forge Mill, Redditch. *(Check dates, some meetings are moved to miss Bank holidays)*	Anthony Green
7th July	***Heritage Film Show*** at the Palace Theatre - See elsewhere in this edition for details	Derek Coombes
August 18th and 19th	**Redditch Festival** Morton Stanley Park - Information display and society promotion.	Graham Smith
Sept. 8th	**Heritage Open Day** Building upon the success of 2011, Forge Mill will be the venue again.	Derek Coombes
Sept. 29th	**WLHF Day School -** WORSHIP IN WINDOWS AND THE WILLIS ORGAN. The cost is ¢ 10 and church members will provide an excellent cold buffet for lunch for an additional ¢ 5. More details: Sharon Toy, Glentress, Waresley Road, Hartlebury, Worcs, DY11 7XT email: robtoy112@hotmail.com	Derek Coombes
26th October to 25th November	**Redditch New Town @ 50 Celebrations** The first of our planned events to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the designation of Redditch as a new town. **The History of Redditch - Conquest to the end of WW1**. The National Needle Museum, Forge Mill, Redditch	Anthony Green
2013		
tba	Provisional plans are being made to show some of the The History of Redditch - Conquest to the end of WW1 data at Redditch Library early in the new year.	Anthony Green

HELP - HELP - HELP - HELP - HELP - HELP - HELP - HELP - HELP - HELP - HELP - HELP - HELP

Work is just starting on preparing data for the "**The History of Redditch - Conquest to the end of WW1"** exhibition starting in October. If you have some time to spare and would like to be involved in putting this exhibition together your help would be most appreciated. Give Tony Green a call on 01527 61434

Fly-tying is one of those skills that abounded in the area at one time but is now the preserve of just a few. But what about Fly Proprietor?

We have at least one Fly Proprietor, recorded on census records. So what does a Fly Proprietor do?

Well the fly in question is a light, two wheeled carriage so these guys were the car hire firms of their day procuring and hiring them out.

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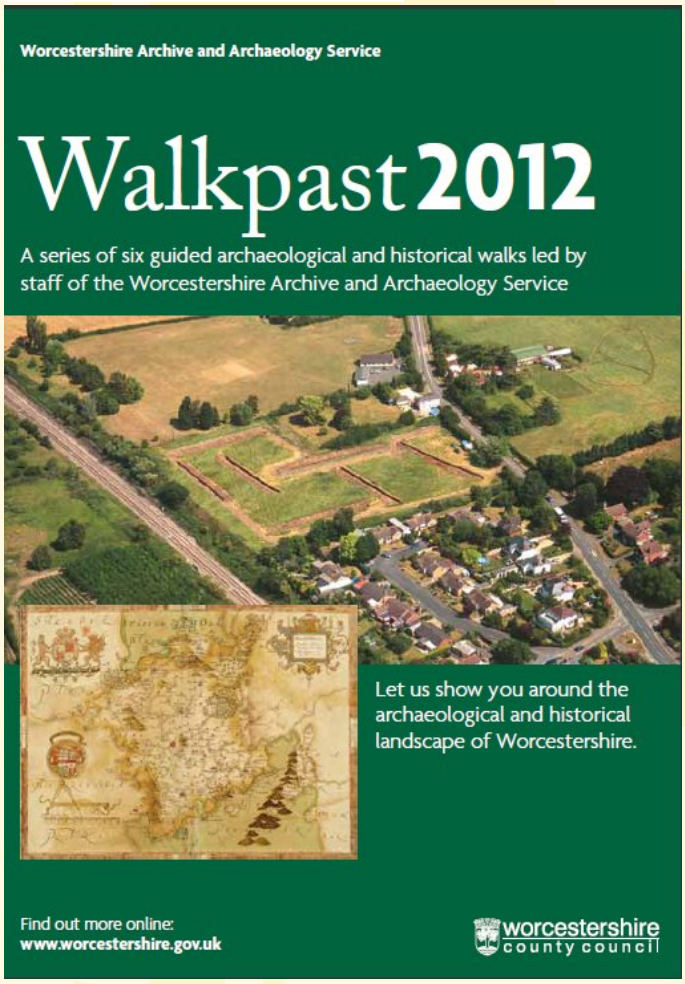

WHEAS Walkpasts 2012

The Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service are holding a series of guided archaeological and historical walks within the County of Worcestershire led by staff during 2012

These Walks are designed for adults with a general interest in the archaeology and history of Worcestershire.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact: Deborah Overton

On 01905 765905

or by email:doverton@worcestershire.gov.uk

or by post at the address below.

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service,

The Hive, Sawmill Walk,

The Butts, Worcester, WR1 3PB

Connections

As part of the Lost Redditch project we contacted someone on the Internet for permission to use a photograph of a shop in Evesham Street In turn we were asked to contact Simon Partridge from whom the photograph originated.

Simon agreed to the use of the photo which was included in a short book which was based upon the Anne Bradford/Mike Johnson

"Memories of Redditch" series of books

Mike Johnson had also previously published a video interview with Ted Partridge and Michael's father, Albert Johnson, bought the Spencer Music shop in the 1930's from Simon's grandmother, Edith Spencer (nee Oakley). Albert Johnson traded under the Spencer name until the 1970's before moving the business to Alcester street prior to the demise of Evesham Street to make way for the Kingfisher Centre.

When this story was relayed to the last RLHS meeting it transpired that some members already knew of these connections.

So there are lots and lots of snippets of information floating around in peoples memories. The challenge is to tease them out and get them documented.

Derek Coombes

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Behind the Scenes

Some updates of the work of society members who beaver away to produce the input for public display.

Angela Webster

Angela is continuing the support of Redditch Library and is working on the un-catalogued material in the basement.

Angela reported back to the July meeting that she is making progress and some interesting material was being identified. She also noted that the work was taking longer than expected, mainly due to the need to ensure content as well as title was being identified. This would ensure any subsequent searches would be more beneficial.

Some of the items noted include:

- 'Outline History of Redditch', by Philip Davis, 1969
- An 1878 wedding card for Samuel Allcock signed by 232 Allcock Employees at Standard Works
- An 1891 Booklet: "Useful information for new employees of S. Allcock and Co. Ltd., Standard Works, Clive Road, Redditch"
- Bound photographs of Redditch, published by E. A. Hodges
- 'Portrait of Redditch' produced by Redditch Public Library 1957. videos and film master copy.
- Petition against provision of new sewerage system, 1877. (nothing changes - ed)
- "A concept of building for a New Town: Redditch Central Library" by K. Fallon
- Redditch New Town pamphlets pre-l994
- Photographs of Redditch (202) by Michael Dowty, taken on Tuesday 18 April 1972
- Bound copies of Enfield Cycle Co. press cuttings 1913-1964
- W.J, Solloway's "The Townsend Story' 1966

Some possibly interesting items.

Derek & Jill Coombes

The Lost Redditch project continues with continued investigation of Census and other Internet sources. New material is being added all the time to these sources requiring re-review for additional information.

Permission to use photographs and other material found on the Internet is constantly sought and its pleasing that most people are only too willing to give that permission.

After the last meeting Vince Green donated a copy of his photographs to the project and these have been added to the Photo Gallery and descriptive data is being researched and added to each.

Much of the original POD at the Palace material has now been added to the project although considerable work is still required to reformat this and fill in the blanks.

The task of structuring the proposed web pages is going well with some technical issues being identified along the way.

A presentation of the first fruits of these efforts is proposed for the September meeting.

Tony Green

Fresh from completing the Jubilee Exhibition Tony has now turned his at attentions to the October/November event. The first activity will be to research and document the Timelines as this gives a framework to the requirements in the detailed displays.

The wide time span of the first exhibition in our "New Town Trilogy" does present some challenges as sandwiched between the Bordesley Abbey and Needle Industries phases is what Ralph Richardson has call the "The Dark Years" when little documentation of daily life in the area exists.

If you have work to report or would like to help on any of these activities please contact us.

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And finally……

We should constantly remember that we are just one small organisation promoting local history and heritage here in Worcestershire and, in fact, nationally. Much can be learned from looking at what others are doing.

Just some of the events across the country taken from the WLHF What's On in Worcestershire calendar.

See www.wlhf.org.uk for more details

11 Jul LLHS The History of Dudley Zoo David Beeston

13 Jul MCS The Malvern Hills Geopark Moira Jenkins

14-15 Jul AM Merchant's House living history weekend

15 Jul FMM National Archaeology Day

15 Jul AM Golden Jubilee: Avoncroft Reunion – anyone involved in Avoncroft from the past to the present - join us for a special free afternoon tea in the Guesten Hall to celebrate our Golden Jubilee

17 Jul BMSGH/s Ernest and Mary Stevens - Holloware and Parks Roy Peacock

19 Jul 3CAHS Enheduanna: princess, priestess, poetess Alasdair Livingston

21 Jul HH Afternoon: Dancing with Darcy! Regency dancing in the Garden – 7pm: Outdoor play: Pride & Prejudice Bring a picnic - £12.50 booking essential

22 Jul HH Afternoon: Dancing with Darcy! Regency dancing in the Garden – 3pm: Outdoor play: Pride & Prejudice ` Bring a picnic - £12.50 booking essential

21-22 Jul AM Merchant's House living history weekend

24 Jul WIA&LHS Coach to Boughton Estate

25-26 Jul AM Gladiator training

28-29 Jul AM Romans versus Celts

28-29 Jul FMM MDCC Theatre Company – The Tempest

29 Jul FMM Drop-In Origami

31 Jul WAS Evening excursion: Wychbold and Elmbridge Churches Tim Bridges

Comments, feedback and contributions…

If you have any feedback or comments on the topics reported on this newsletter, or wish to contribute material, please contact us:

RLHS Contacts

www.redditchhistory.org.uk contact@redditchhistory.org.uk

Anthony Green - 01527 61434 Derek Coombes - 01527 404365.

Redditch Local History Society Related Web sites

www.redditchhistory.org.uk	The Redditch Local History Society's principle web site.
www.redditchhistory.com	This site is to give a brief introduction to the various aspects of the town's history but essentially to be a portal to the the various sites which encompass the history of Redditch
www.redditchwalks.org.uk	The aim of the site is to develop walks related to Redditch history and existing historical artefacts and buildings
www.redditchforum.org.uk	The Redditch Local History Forum is our on-line site dedicated to the discussion of Redditch History & Heritage.
www.forgemill.org.uk	Forge Mill National Needle Museum and Bordesley Abbey Visitors Centre
www.redditchheritage.org.uk/sites/RHP-Heritage-Sites.htm	Redditch Local History Society's project to investigate, document and publish details of the historic sites that remain in Redditch today.

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