
COLWALL VILLAGE SOCIETY

Newsletter

August 1999

Next meeting - Monday 20 September

We are very lucky to have Mrs Valerie Goodbury as the guest speaker at our next general meeting. Mrs Goodbury is a professional research historian and the author of 'A History of West Malvern'. Amongst other research she is currently working with the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments on an archaeological survey of the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Mrs Goodbury will be talking about her special interests in the history of our neighbourhood, and about some of the unusual sources of information she found when researching her book.

There will also be an update on society projects, refreshments and an opportunity to renew your membership. So mark the date on your calendar now: **Monday 20 September at 7.30 pm in Colwall Village Hall.**

Village Design Statement *Nicky Carless*

At last the Village Design Statement has reached the draft stage. Copies are available in the Library, the Village Hall, and in the Church of the Good Shepherd. Please do read one of these copies, and write down any comments or suggestions you may have on the slips provided. I have also passed a copy to village organisations for their members' comments. This process forms part of the consultation stage, in which we have to prove to the Herefordshire Council that this document has the support of the village. Your comments are important - please do make them.

Hedgerow Survey Group

Over the summer period we have been on two walks and taken a closer look at some of Colwall's hedges. Our record so far is 8 species within a 30 metre stretch. If Hooper's Law is to be believed this would make the hedge 800 years old, but unfortunately I do not know how well the rule holds in Colwall.

Our next walk is on **Wednesday 25 August, starting at 7.30pm** from 'Wimbledon', Redland Drive. Anyone is welcome to join us. Apologies if you read this after the event, as I know the newsletter is being delivered that week.

Liz Taylour [REDACTED]

Colwall Park Racecourse

Four of us are working on the history of the racecourse - Nicholas Neve, Pat Turner, Ruth Tipping and Sheila Evans. We have been collecting material for a possible display and information from which we could produce either a leaflet or a chapter in a book. We have been given, or allowed to copy, some photographs, a number of auctioneer's particulars relating to sales of the underlying land over the years, a member's badge, a bookmaker's badge and a race card.

Information gathering has been by searching published literature and contemporary newspapers with a good measure of success. Weatherbys, who have a library, gave us a reference to what proved to be a mine of information in Chris Pitt's book "*A Long Time Gone*", which has a chapter on racing at Colwall Park. We have subsequently contacted the author. Another source of information is by interviewing people who have memories of racing in Colwall. Since the last race held here was over 60 years ago, in 1939, there are not a large number of people left who went racing or were involved in some way. We have had some useful anecdotal information from Col. Mike Singleton and we are trying to arrange meetings with Maj. Gen. Scott-Bowden, Mrs Mercy Rimell and Mr Joe Jackson, a jockey. We hope that the Colwall Park Hotel may be able to turn up some more photographs.

Mrs E Lloyd and Mr R Fleetwood have been of considerable help so far but we would ask anyone who has any further memorabilia, artifacts, memories, anecdotes or papers to contact us. We would also welcome suggestions regarding people who might be able to help us. We hope to have a draft available by the advent of the year 2000.

Nicholas Neve [REDACTED]

The h..h..haunting of Barton Holloway

The facts (and they come with dates) of this truly 'gothic' tale, I owe to a paper on Colwall and its Neighbourhood read to the Woolhope Club in Hereford by A.H.Bright in June 1923. Irene Southall.

Throughout most of the eighteenth century the Hope End estate belonged to a family called Pritchard who had an unfortunate habit of fathering daughters rather than sons. In the days before the Married Women's Property Act such heiresses were a great temptation to rogues, and in 1791 the old house at Hope End (somewhere below the lake) was inhabited by such an heiress - Sarah Pritchard Lambert, an apparently romantic young lady, 24 years old and motherless. It seems that in those days there were fairs on Colwall Green and at such a fair Miss Sarah met a fortune-telling Gypsy who foretold that she would meet her future husband in Colwall churchyard on a certain day, later in the month. Obviously the silly girl duly went to the churchyard alone at the appointed time and there met a handsome dark baronet no longer in 'drag'. How many times they met in this way is not recorded but he had soon persuaded her to elope with him on the night when her father was giving a Christmas or New Year ball at Hope End. A carriage was to meet her at the bottom of Chance's Pitch. She kept the appointment but had a wait of three hours in pouring rain because the postilion had made a mistake and was waiting at Blackmore Pitch on the other side of the Hills. Eventually she was found sheltering in the Barton Holloway with only one slipper, the other was found in the drive at Hope End next morning. The postilion did take her up and she was duly married to Sir Henry Tempest of Tong in Yorkshire on the 24th January 1791, in Marylebone of all places.

At this point I stop and wonder if Elizabeth Barratt knew of this less happy elopement ... and also wonder how postilions ever did find the right rendezvous on winter nights in the days when their only light came from lamps burning colza oil.

Sir Henry turned his father-in-law out of Hope End in right of his wife, who had inherited it from her mother. Henry Lambert then purchased (or leased?) Barton Court from the Bishop of Hereford and turned the old farmhouse into a gentleman's residence, adding all the present front of the house. Meanwhile Sir Henry quarrelled with Sarah and turned her out too, her father refused to see her and she went to live with an older relation. Her father remarried but there were still no more children and after his death his will was disputed and the estate was in Chancery for thirty years.

Small wonder if after her death poor, foolish Sarah was said to haunt Barton Holloway so persistently that various later residents are said to have kept a shotgun handy for frightening her away until twelve clergymen with twelve candles eventually succeeded in 'laying' her, in a pond at Barton Court.

Colwall 2000 Domesday

is the title for the project to make a photographic record of residents of the Parish alongside their houses, and capture life in Colwall at the turn of the millennium. The project programme aims to produce by next April several sets of colour photograph albums both in 'hard copy' and in CD-ROM format. A team comprising Nick Abbotts, Don Taylour, Jim Savage, Fred Dubber and Graham Cowan has already begun work as many will have seen by the exhibition at the Horticultural Society's Show in July where we even gave a Radio interview for the BBC.

In April the Project Group applied to the Millennium Commission through 'Help the Aged' for a grant to buy the necessary equipment, and we have just heard that we were successful - the full awards programme will be announced publicly very soon. In the meantime we have been able to start work thanks to the support of DERA who have loaned a computer and scanner. We have received a number of photographs after our article in the July/August Clock (see page 32) and many more which are 'still in the camera' are promised - have you taken yours yet?

There is a lot of work to be done and we have barely scratched the surface so we will be seeking volunteers to help. Tasks include - - Planning, As a team member going round taking pictures, Scanning photographs into the computer, Selecting the best of a bunch for the records, Cataloguing and indexing, Printing and binding copies, Organising an exhibition ... and so on. HELP If you would like to be involved (training / instruction will be given where necessary) please give your name to either Nick, Don, Jim, Fred or Graham.