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# COLWALL VILLAGE SOCIETY

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Newsletter

June 2002

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## **Did you win the 'Crock of Gold'?**

Many members will have visited the Society's display tents at the recent Jubilee Fun Day and had an opportunity to pre-view the Souvenir Parish Pictorial Map which is to be given to every household in the parish.

Because it would be a pity to spoil the Map by folding it or attempting to post it through tight letterboxes, the issue arrangements, soon to be notified to every household, are likely to be similar to those for the 'Colwall through the Millennia' booklet, namely, through collection from well-placed outlets around the village. Society members who live outside Colwall will have a copy posted to them.

Your map will be A2-sized and very suitable for framing if that's what you decide. Arrangements are in hand for Richard Bennett, our local picture framer, to offer a framing service at a discount price to Colwall residents. Extra copies of the Map will be available for sale from the Society in case, as with the booklet, you would like some for relatives and friends. Full details through your letterbox soon.

## **Reprint?**

We are investigating a possible reprint of 'Colwall through the Millennia'. Cost as yet unknown and would be dependent on a minimum number of orders. If you would be interested, please contact David Ward [REDACTED].

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At one time Evendine Lane was a gated road. The gate stood at the top of the lane just east of Wisteria Cottage where the Hills land begins. Mr Roy Rowlands, late of Brand Lodge, told how the gate was knocked down, never to be replaced, by a group of drinkers returning to the village one dark night.

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*'From Bredon Hill you see those curious bubblings up, the Malvern Hills'*

William Cobbett 'Rural Rides' Vol. 2. Published 1821

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## **Preserving Memories**

*An invaluable archive of reminiscence by long-time residents of Colwall is being compiled by Mrs Mary Ritchie in the form of tape recorded interviews. It might well be possible eventually to publish selections of these, accompanied by some photographs of the village in days gone by. Here is a selection of quotes from people who have kindly co-operated with the project.*

From a well-known local resident: "My dad told me that his mother used to drive a horse and cart to Bromyard market from Colwall to sell dressed poultry, butter and eggs. He used to get out of the cart and run alongside on Bromyard Downs because it was so cold. I asked how his mother had put up with it. He said 'she was stuffed with whisky'."

Many people remember Daisy Cottages which were built on the steeply sloping hillside at the Wyche. This lady lived in one of them. "If you were in the living room, at road level, you had to go down 13 steps to the kitchen, and to get to the toilet there were another six steps down and a small path."

The Armstrongs shop features in many recollections. "Armstrongs was a wonderful general store run by three sisters, Gertie, Ethel and Gladys. It sold clothing from baby to male and female, from underwear to top coats. My son once wanted a pair of stilts, and we searched miles for them. In the end, where did we find them – Armstrongs!"

And one more picture of pre-war days from a ninety-year-old. "At hop-picking, people came in their hordes to Colwall station; the old women with their boxes from the Black Country, and they were taken to the farms by teams of wagons. They lived in the barns. They would start by picking gooseberries and work right through as happy as larks, always wanting to sing, and they never caused any trouble. The men would come at week-ends."

Mary Ritchie [REDACTED] would be glad to hear from anyone who could spare a little time to relate memories of the village in general or of some aspect of its life.

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### *From the Archives*

#### **Convalescents in Colwall**

Mr J.W.Wilson lived at Perrycroft at the turn of the last century. He was a partner in the firm of Albright and Wilson of Oldbury, Birmingham.

The Oldbury works employed many men and women. After the Great War their employees who were in poor health were provided with a Convalescent Home. This was at 'Carnbrea', Beacon Road. A trained nurse, with assistance from local girls, would attend to the needs of these folk. Miss Coaling was matron for some years and later Miss Dykes was in charge. About eight men would come here for a fortnight. They would arrive on a Tuesday, having been brought from Malvern Station by Mr Tom Whittle, the Wyche butcher, whose shop was at the top of the Old Wyche Road. He used a horse and landau for this. On the Wednesday, those who were able to walk would come to Grundy's bakery to be weighed on the platform scales. Each man would have his weight written down, and this would be compared with their weights on the following two weeks. You can guess that they all were in better shape after this wonderful 'holiday'.

*G W Grundy*

*'Carnbrea' is understood to have been built at the personal expense of J.W.Wilson.*

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#### **Bird survey results**

Since starting monthly garden surveys in March 2000 the bird survey group are learning quite a lot about the diversity of the bird life around us. Sixty-three species have been recorded, with 15 species seen in over 75% of gardens, and only two, the blackbird and the great tit being seen in every garden. The more exciting visits are made in just one or two gardens and feature brambling, chiffchaff, cuckoo, stock dove, fieldfare, goshawk, heron, kestrel, lark, linnet, mallard, house martin, moorhen, barn owl, partridge, reed bunting, tree sparrow, swift, marsh/willow tit, willow warbler and garden warbler.

More than 20 gardens had nests of 17 species and 2 gardens had nests of 6 different species. Many species feed their young in our gardens but particular note has been made of blue tits, great tits, blackbirds, greater spotted woodpeckers,

green woodpeckers, crows, robins, starlings, bullfinches, house martins, swallows and spotted flycatchers.

Crows and jackdaws have been seen chasing buzzards with the former raiding magpie and jackdaws' nests. A young sparrowhawk was seen bathing in a pond and the adults swoop at small birds at feeding tables. House sparrows destroy mahonia flowers! Blackbirds have been seen mobbing a tawny owl and jays harassing young sparrowhawks. Green woodpeckers bathe in birdbaths. Blackbirds take emerging dragonflies and a baby blue tit perched on a finger to eat from a peanut feeder.

Some species seem to take a special liking to certain plants such as bullfinches eat lilac seeds, honeysuckle berries are a favourite of bullfinches, great tits and marsh tits, blackbirds and starlings feed on mountain ash. Other feeding habits include green woodpeckers eating ants on the lawn, starlings eating leather jackets and all the tits eating aphids on roses and clematis.

#### **Other wildlife**

The following are seen in our gardens at various times of the year – wood mice, badgers, long tailed field mice, common shrew, foxes, grass snakes, frogs, toads, newts and every lawn keeper's nightmare – the Mighty Mole!

And there have been reports of muntjac deer seen on the hills in the early morning, moving towards Swinepits Coppice, and most recently in April by a visitor who saw some crossing Evendine Lane.

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#### **Colwall Village Society Committee 2002/2003**

**Chairman:** Susan Bond  
**Vice-Chairman:** Derek Lewis  
**Secretary:** Lis Kirkness  
**Treasurer:** Derek Turner  
**Membership Secretary:** Joyce Ingledeu

**Committee Members:**  
Michael Burke  
Graham Cowan  
David Ward

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