

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2009

Colwall Village Society
Revealing Our Heritage

Next Open Meeting: Monday 27th April 2009.

The next open meeting of the Society is on Monday 27th April in the Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. The talk will be given by Freda Ballard on "The Ballard Family." This will start with the first Stephen, who settled in Colwall in the 1850s, when he designed and had built the 'Winnings', shortly after his marriage at the age of 55. He subsequently had 8 children, some of whom became closely involved in areas of Colwall life (e.g. Stephens two and three, Ernest and Fred.)

All are welcome to the public meeting; there will be an entrance fee of £2.00 for non-members. Tea and Coffee will be served after the meeting.

The Open Meeting will be preceded by the Society's Annual General Meeting.

The Agenda for the AGM will be:
Minutes of the 11th AGM on 21st April 2008.
Matters Arising.
Chairman's Report.
Treasurer's Report and Questions on the Accounts.
Election of Officers & Committee.
Any Other Business.
Any member wishing to place an item on the AGM Agenda or to nominate someone for one of the Officers' positions or for the Committee should let the Secretary know at least 14 days before the AGM (i.e. by Monday 13th April.) The Secretary is
John Atkin: [REDACTED]

Memories Of 'The Stores' By Barbara Eagles



Photo Of 'The Stores' By Kind Permission Of Graham Cowan

Until the recent closure, there had been a shop next to the Butchers (opposite Chevenhan) for 100 years, perhaps even longer. I remember former shopkeepers, Mr. and Mrs. Potter and then Mr. and Mrs. Wilkes. Mr. Wilkes was an elderly little man who used to deliver groceries on a large trade bicycle. He always wore a bow tie. Mrs. Wilkes used to sit outside the shop on a deckchair and go in when a customer arrived. There was also a Drapery on one side; in the 1926 Colwall Directory it is listed as Mrs. Brown's Drapery. My great uncle, Tom Pedlingham, owned the property. When he died in 1938 it was sold with the two shops and the house adjoining it for £950.

I worked in The Stores from 1947 to 1957 with Jack and Gladys Bishop. Rationing was still with us and they were difficult times. The weekly cheese ration was two ounces but if you worked on the land, it was 12 ounces. Ballard's fruit pickers used to have this. One elderly lady came in regularly for her rations and would complain about this unfairness. To keep her quiet, we used to give her any bits that had fallen off when the cheese was cut. Cheese came, covered in a greasy cloth, in 60 pound rounds and had to be skinned. This was a long and difficult job but you couldn't use a cheese wire if the round wasn't skinned completely.

One day Randolph Churchill came in for cigarettes. I had quite a shock because he was so like his father. He was staying at Old Colwall House with the Holland Martins.

The Stores was a depot for the Ross Laundry. It was very well used as not many people had washing machines. We always wore white overalls; heavy cotton as there was no nylon in those days. We used pencils. I remember how wonderful it was to have the first Biro pens.

Many travelling reps. called at The Stores for orders of biscuits, soap, tea, etc. They were always smartly dressed; the Huntley & Palmer rep. always wore a bowler hat. We sold mostly Typhoo tea as it was said to suit Malvern water. A soap rep. called and asked for a bucket of water. He then sprinkled in some Tide and said: "Oceans of lather". This was the first detergent we had seen. I used to dress both windows and once won an area First Prize for a display of Ryvita. We used to sell a lot of Ballard's tinned fruit and chutney; the favourite was always cherry plums.

Bill and Gerry Elliot were at The Stores in the early 1980s. People will remember them, as they were so kind and helpful to everyone. Gerry used to bake honey roast hams and make celebration cakes and decorate them so well. I helped them for a year and missed them very much when they left. I will miss The Stores too.

Happy Memories!

Transcript From Unidentified Newspaper Cutting, Dated February 15th 1944

The Pedlinghams are ordinary folk – but SO exclusive!

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

You won't find the name Pedlingham in Debrett or Who's Who. It's not listed among the ancient names of Britain.

But the forty or fifty men and women who bear this name, which can be traced back hundreds of years, claim to be the world's most exclusive name.

They do not own vast estates or town houses. They are ordinary folk of Britain – grocers, butchers and traders in other lines.

Their claim to exclusiveness was made in a B.B.C. broadcast, a descriptive panorama of their native Herefordshire, called "Red Soil, White Faces".

The commentator told of the Pedlinghams – how they had all been born within five miles of the village of Colwall (pop. 1990; 13th century church; once the home of Jenny Lind, the famous singer).

He told of their claim that there was no other branch of the family.

Five Hundred Years

In the old gabled pub at Colwall, The Yew Tree, the two oldest Pedlinghams meet to smoke their pipes and sip the cider which once they used to make. And they talk over the 500 years of Pedlingham family history which they have been able to trace.

"Yes," says 76-year-old John Pedlingham, "we go back to 1456. That is the earliest record I can trace."

“We probably go back much further than 1240. I haven’t looked, but I should think we were mentioned in the Domesday Book.”

Of the forty or fifty members of this exclusive family, one is in Sydney, Australia. Another two are in Canada.

Old John tells how two of his father’s uncles went to Canada and staked their claim on the site of what was to become Toronto. But the adventurers returned to England.

Oldest of the Pedlinghams is Albert, who retired ten years ago when he was seventy from his trade of cider making.

Colwall’s Nature Reserves *By James Ferguson*

The Charlie Ballard Nature Reserve land was kindly given to the village by his daughters in 1992 and it is now a small accessible multi-habitat amenity much appreciated by members of the parish and those who regularly visit from further afield.

The area at the bottom of Station field below the brook was always too small to be viable agriculturally. I think that the ground was levelled, heavily fertilised and laid out as a bowling green and tennis court(s) around the late 1890s, just before the construction of the golf course and race course.

The First World War reduced the demand for athletic pursuits and the golf, tennis and bowls were abandoned. The land was then leased; the north end became a fish pond, the centre a commercial watercress bed and the south end small allotments; the western boundary was planted (by the Lock family ?) with Pershore yellow plums and damsons, which were then common throughout the parish.

The Second World War saw the demise of water cress and the waterlogged area being taken over by alders, which remain a distinctive feature to this day. The plums remain, the fish pond has been deepened and shaped and another pond (not stream fed) constructed. Let me know if I have got this wrong. I would particularly appreciate seeing photographs to support or refute my theories.

The Fish Pond (Stream-Fed)



The Newt Pond



There was an earlier reserve at Hope End. In the summer of 1964, Malvern College leased 26 acres of land including woods plus a lake and two rooms in an outbuilding. It was maintained as a nature reserve for the benefit of their Natural History Society (founded 1873). Initially it was run by an enthusiastic biologist, Patrick Burke, and around 200 boys would cycle out to help on a Sunday. I believe Patrick was also helped by people from Colwall (does anyone know who these were ?). There were a number of bird hides, a bird ringing programme and special interest was taken in Redwings; work was undertaken on butterfly and moth monitoring; the local badger population was regularly observed. In 1969, the operation was switched from Sunday to a mid-week afternoon and fewer boys were involved, partly because fewer had bicycles. In 1975, Hope End became a restaurant and the reserve ceased to function.

There are anecdotal stories of the College Natural History Society maintaining other reserves in Colwall at earlier dates (somewhere in the Brockhill area in the nineteenth century and again in Hope End in the 1920s) but I have no proof that they ever existed. The College's Ledbury Run passes through Hope End and close to Brockhill, so they would be familiar with both areas.

Please don't hesitate to expand on these comments or put me right !

Colwall Gets Its New Bridge At Last!

On consecutive weekends of 1st and 8th March 2009 Network Rail and Carillon plc, its civil engineering contractors, successfully removed the old bridge and its parapets, and put in position the new pre-stressed concrete replacement. Only two 24 hour closures of the railway line were necessary, and congratulations are due for the military precision with which the work was carried out.

The Old Bridge



All Neatly Chopped Up



Leaving A Big Gap



In Goes The Southern Base



Concrete Girders For Road Bed



Main Structure In Place

What the village wants now, of course, is to be able to drive across the new bridge - but this will have to wait until sometime in late June 2009.

Future Talks

15th June 2009: Carl Attwood, Reminisces of Colwall.

21st September 2009: Paul Remfrey, British Camp, The Herefordshire Beacon.

19th January 2010: Keith Duddy, Park Farm II.

26th April 2010: Graham Cowan, Colwall Past and Present.

If you have any suggestions for future talks and/or speakers, please contact a member of our committee, and we will investigate.

Your Contribution Here?

My thanks to the contributors. Next issue there will be more ideas for local research and, of course, your article...?

If you are prepared to receive your newsletters by electronic means, please register with the email address below.

Corrections and additions to the information in newsletters are always welcome, as are CONTRIBUTIONS!

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