



# Newsletter

## May 2022

Notice is hereby given that the **25<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting** of the Society will be held in Colwall Village Hall on **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 7.30.p.m.** Any member wishing to place an item on the agenda should inform the Chairman no later than 30<sup>th</sup> May 2022. The Officers and Committee Members retire at the AGM and are eligible for re-election. The following have indicated their willingness to stand for the year 2022/23, as indicated.

**Chairman:** Liz Hill

**Committee Member:** Margaret Matthews

**Treasurer:** John Atkin

**Archive Co-ordinator :** Susan Bond

**Newsletter Editor:** Andy Ball

**Secretary:** Vacant

**Membership Secretary:** Vacant

Any member wishing to nominate a member either for the committee or one of the officer positions should let the Chairman know by 30<sup>th</sup> May, along with the name of a seconder and the agreement of the person being proposed. The chairman may

### **Talk: Making Meadows with the Herefordshire Meadows Group**



The AGM will be followed by a talk by Rory Johnson who is a Meadows Advisor at the Herefordshire Meadows Group. The talk will give a brief overview of how Herefordshire Meadows evolved from a small farmer discussion group to a registered charity that has managed to restore over 150 ha of grassland across the county. It will detail the ways it seeks to support landowners and meadow enthusiasts across the county through a broad range of training events and other activities. Finally, details will be given of how everyone can help contribute to creating, restoring and protecting grasslands in Herefordshire and beyond.

### **Help us keep The Society going**

We are badly in need of some volunteers to join our committee, as can be seen by the vacant positions listed above. It does not matter whether you are new to the village or have been a member for years. No experience of being on a committee is required. We only have 3 or 4 committee meetings a year and you would be very welcome to attend our next one on the 30<sup>th</sup> May so as to get a feel for what happens. Please contact Liz Hill if you can help keep the society going. A strong committee means that we can offer more to our members.

### **Acquisitions**

The society have been fortunate to receive two marvellous acquisitions this year. We are indebted to our member Graham Cowan who has recently provided a fantastic collection of archive material to Colwall Village Society in the form of electronic maps, articles, images and photographs. We have also been sent two beautiful scrapbooks by Diana Taine of Cambridgeshire of photographs and work by the students of Evendine Court covering the period 1927 to 1934.

### **Lost Archive Document**

An audit of the archive shows that we are missing a folder containing biographical material about W H Auden at the Downs School, including copies of the school magazine 'The Badger' for 1960 and 1974. The folder was last seen in autumn 2015 before a CVS meeting about Auden and Britten. On the reverse of each item is a CVS reference number in pencil starting with 'E13'. If you have any information about the folder or its contents please contact Susan Bond at [cvsarchive@colwall.info](mailto:cvsarchive@colwall.info)

## The Vinegar Works Tram Line by Andy Ball



Scrolling through Graham's collection I happened across a wonderful image entitled "Making Tram Line To Pigs' Cots'.

This is a striking photograph, partly because of its dynamic content, but it also shows a fascinating glimpse of the origins of a feature which can still be discerned in the landscape today.

The Vinegar Brewery was built by Stephen Ballard 1<sup>st</sup> in Stone Drive close to where the modern day G.P. surgery is now sited.

Construction began around 1882/83 and by 1885 brewing of vinegar was underway. The Vinegar Brewery was initially a success, and the products were award-winning at international expositions. Production was prolific and Stephen Ballard 3<sup>rd</sup> in his book "Colwall Collection" records that 2000 gallons of vinegar were made a day using 40 vats, the largest of which had a capacity of 37,000 gallons. The waste material from this process – the dross - needed to go somewhere. This was where the tram line came into play. Running West from the front of the vinegar works the tram line crossed Stone Drive, through some allotments at Redhill for half a mile or so to a model piggery site on Grovesend Farm. The model piggery received the waste a ton at a time in wagons from the tram line. A 'cott' is the Herefordshire name for a pigsty hence the labelling on the photograph. The model

piggery was a considerable enterprise with 500 pigs a year being fattened there. Our photograph would appear to be at the top end of the tram way with the form of the Vinegar Works building looming high in the background haze. The photograph is likely to date from around 1890.

M. Christensen in his on-line article on "Narrow Gauge Railways in the Malvern Hills" describes that the motive power for the tram line is unclear but due to the slight incline leading up to the vinegar works it's possible that a capstan was used to haul back the empty wagons. The gauge of the railway was two feet. The tram line also served the piggery by helping with the removal of muck and the track was extended past the piggery further west to a tip near where the Ballard Iceworks were situated.

Whilst the Vinegar Works were demolished in 1973, the model piggery is long-abandoned and much of the length of the tramway immediately around Stone Drive is now the site of housing, there are still a few clues left in the landscape of this part of Colwall's industrial past.



The house in Stone Drive – 'Cotts View' (itself a prefabricated Ballard industrial building) celebrates the days when there was a clear view from there to the model piggery. Some of the model piggery complex remains and a walk along the public footpath close to the former Ice Works building provides glimpses of some small sections of the end of the old tram line with the old, rusting rails still visible.

## Evendine Court Scrapbooks



The two scrapbooks were donated by Diana Taine whose father was the great-nephew of Miss Peacey who was Principal of Evendine Court from 1926 to 1935.



The scrapbooks contain photographs, entertainment programmes and pieces of artwork.

In addition, each student wrote their name and address in the books. So we know that in the summer term of 1929, there were students from Leominster, Ayrshire and Egypt.



## EVENDINE COURT

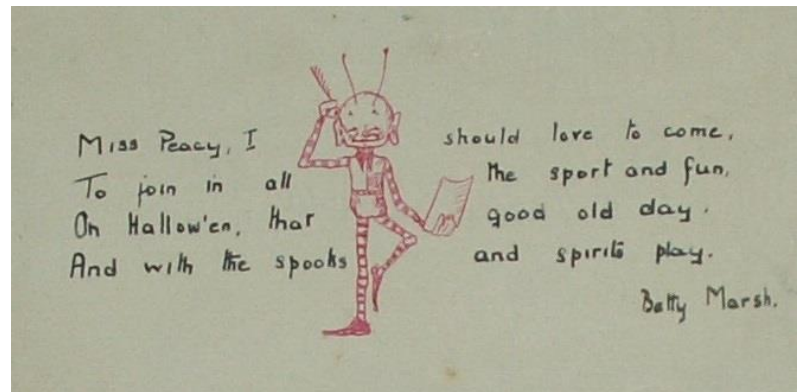
At Evendine Court is where we're taught  
 Domestic Art in every craft  
 The way one must learn to dust  
 And clean a grate, or scrape a plate.  
 And be able to wait at table  
 These only are a trifles few which we learn how to do  
 At breakfast time the bell rings loud,  
 And down we rush in a seething crowd  
 For at that due appointed hour  
 We have to leave our stately bower  
 And if by chance we oversleep  
 And crawl downstairs subdued and meek  
 Miss Peacey's face is cross and grim  
 Which makes us quake in every limb  
 And when the meal is o'er we run  
 And you should see the awful scum.  
 We grab a pail, a swab, a mop,  
 And off to our little rooms we hop.  
 We make our bed, roll up our mat  
 And grovel around like a hungry cat  
 It really is an awful fag  
 When Miss Foster comes with her rag  
 As she goes each morning on her round  
 Then back we're called if dust is found  
 She makes us come and have a look  
 And down we go in her little blue book

The school was initially founded to give practical instruction on Housekeeping including Cookery, Housework, Elementary Hygiene, Laundry, Dressmaking, and care of Household Linen. It was particularly aimed at girls who found it difficult to learn housekeeping in their own homes where the work was carried out by servants.

The students were divided into 'workers' and 'ladies' who switched roles every week or 10 days. The 'workers' got up early to clean kitchens, prepare breakfast and clean rooms. The 'ladies' got up only in time for breakfast and performed lighter tasks. Both groups then attended the same classes.

Reports from former students indicate that Miss Peacey was very strict and that they were seldom allowed out on expeditions to Malvern. They were, however, allowed to go to The Kettle Sings at the weekends, to the Elms swimming bath in the summer and to Colwall Racecourse.

Miss Peacey may not have allowed the students much licence to jaunt to Malvern, but there appears to have been quite a lot of entertainment organised on the premises. Senior students put on entertainments for First Termers when they were feeling very new, and staff put on parties for everyone.



When Miss Peachy took over as principal most students attended for two terms. In 1933 the course was extended to 3 terms and the first 6 students were entered for the National Housecraft Certificate.

Part of the new course required students to practise keeping house. Up to 1926 the Malt House in Evendine Lane had been used for this purpose, but in 1933 a house called Broadfield near the Wyche Cutting was used as is shown in this photograph.

(Information from "Ninety Years On.. A History of Evendine Court" by Jean Butchart)

Newsletter Editor: Andy Ball



Colwall Village Society website address: [colwallvillagesociety.org.uk](http://colwallvillagesociety.org.uk)