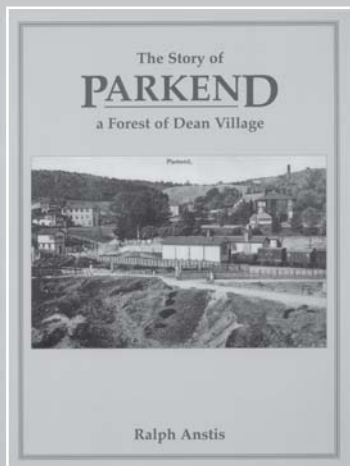


BOOK REVIEW



The Story of Parkend a Forest of Dean Village

by Ralph Anstis Revised Second edition
2009 Lightmoor Press

This latest edition of the history of Parkend by the Society's own Ralph Anstis contains even more new material, and includes colour photos on both sides of the cover. For anyone who has not read earlier versions, Ralph skilfully interweaves the general history of the Forest

with the development of the village itself. As the late Dr Cyril Hart wrote in the original Foreword, the book displays both 'a depth of research and an erudite presentation of the results'.

Parkend, like several other villages in the Forest, was merely a hamlet in the 17th century, when one of the King's four ironworks was set up there. However, with the arrival of industrialisation in the 19th century, all that changed. In addition to a dozen coalmines within a radius of half a mile, the village developed a 'thriving ironworks, a tinplate works, two stoneworks, a wood sawmill and stampers for crushing iron cinders.' It was also the focal point for a network of tramroads providing transport to the outside world, and eventually was connected to the railways.

Ralph not only charts Parkend's industrial development, and eventual decline, but also introduces the reader to many of the characters who influenced life in general in the Forest over the centuries, as well, of course, as those more closely connected to the village. He also provides an insight into the conditions experienced by the various levels of society, and the tensions which could arise through a clash of interests or poverty.

Today Parkend has reverted to 'a quiet backwater', but there are still plenty of reminders of its fascinating industrial past if one takes the time to look around. **The Story of Parkend** provides all the necessary background to make the most of any visit to the area. It may well also inspire one to take a similar interest in the history of one's own village or town.

Priced at £9.99 the book, with its wealth of photographs, maps, plans and other ephemera, is available from local bookshops or direct from Black Dwarf Lightmoor ... an ideal Christmas present!

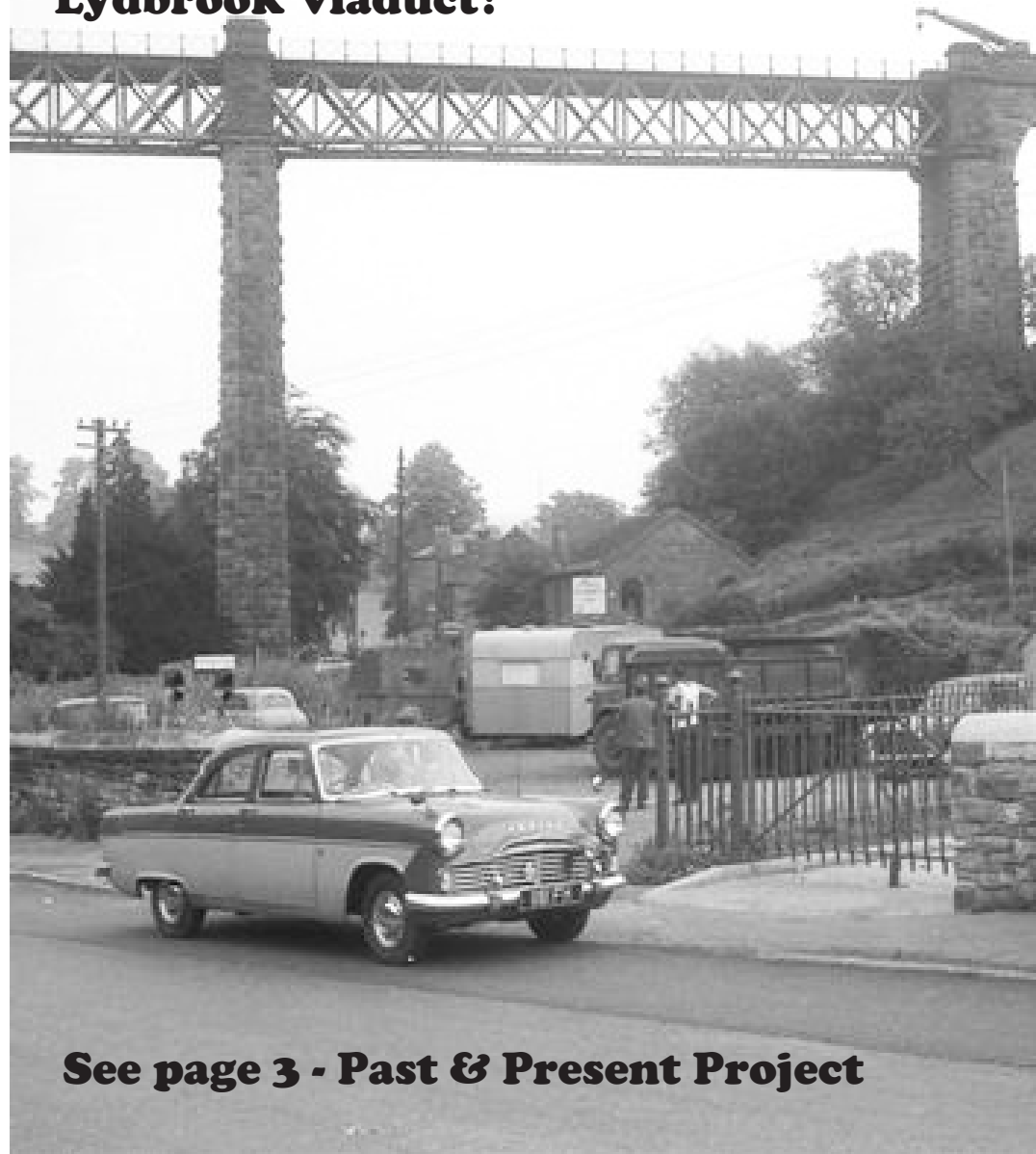
Mary Atkins

the Forest of Dean
Local History Society
news

October 2009



Do you remember the old Lydbrook viaduct?



See page 3 - Past & Present Project

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Editors Notes

Included in this newsletter is a report of the Annual General Meeting held on October 10th at Coleford Community Centre, for the benefit of our far flung members who were not able to attend. From the items arising, I would like to draw attention to our plan to hold meetings, walks or outings regularly throughout the summer months, as we feel that we all get out of touch during the long gap between the April meeting and the start of the winter programme in October.

As you will see, we are planning another History Fair in May and there will be an exhibition at the Dean Heritage Museum in the spring, mainly to celebrate the 25th edition of the New Regard, but all other achievements of the Society in the last 60 years will be recorded. Other outings and meetings are being planned, not all of which will be listed on your membership card. We will be making announcements at our regular Saturday meetings but I would also recommend that you consult our website, which Keith Walker keeps well updated.

It is hoped that some of our summer meetings will take the form of progress reports and hopefully workshops concerning our Past and Present project. We were delighted to have such a good turnout at the meeting in August and have already had a lot of interest from members. There must be many more memories out there waiting to be tapped. If anyone feels they would like to get involved with any particular subject, but is hesitant about the research, the website has a very helpful section on 'Resources for Researchers' and of course, Averil Kear, our queries officer and an expert archivist will be able to point people in the right direction.

Christine Martyn

NOTES & QUERIES



Capt. Martin Frobisher & The North West Passage

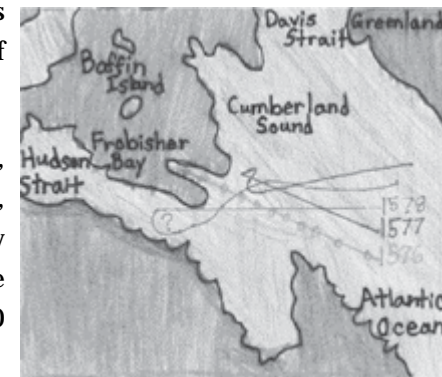
We are all familiar with the use of miners from the Forest of Dean in military service over the years, the siege of Berwick being the most notable occasion, and many more such occasions during the 14th century are mentioned by H J Nicholls.. However, researching the Forest miners, Roy Meek came across another intriguing reference which he has followed up and thought might be of interest to other members. I am indebted to Roy Meek and to the National Archives for the following.

The original reference was that ' in 1577, 12 miners were to accompany Frobisher in his search for the north west passage'.

Intrigued, Roy Meek consulted the National Archives and received the following:-On Frobisher's first northwest voyage in 1576 a small piece of black ore was discovered on Little Hall's Island. It was thought to be gold-bearing, which is why the miners were taken on the 1577 expedition. Large deposits of the ore were found on the northern shore of Frobisher's Bay, and 160 tons were mined and brought back to England, where it was found that the gold content was insufficient to make it viable. Frobisher had three ships, the *Ayd*, the *Gabriel* and the *Michael*.

This much is from the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. However, the National Archives have a document, E164/35, which consists of the accounts of Frobisher's business partner, William Lok, and gives the men's names and wages. This is headed "Mynares of the forest of Deane...for wags endinge the last of June"

The names are William Saylar, William Whitson, Robart Wilkoks, Richard Taylor, John Morgan, John Roke, John Yugon and John Heywood. They were paid 20s per month, and these payments were for 1½ months, £1 10s 0d each. This is about £150 in today's money.



NOTES & QUERIES

A Century of Fatherhood



We have been contacted by Testimony Films in Bristol who are making a programme charting **A Century of Fatherhood** in Britain. They are looking for lively members of the older generation who are willing to share their memories of childhood, their relationships with their own fathers or their own experiences of being a dad. They are particularly interested in the simple things, whether fathers played with their children, were they affectionate or authoritarian – or possibly both, or whether they were present at the birth. They hope to gain an insight into the way fatherhood has changed over the century.

I feel there must be lots of memories among our members, old mining families, fathers who were away during the war or those who moved here during the war and stayed, as well as more recent memories of the technological and social changes of the late 20th century.

If anyone feels they have a contribution to make, contact the researcher, Janet Mills at Research1@testimonyfilms.com or contact me and I will pass any information on to Janet.
Christine Martyn 01594 529358

OBITUARY

We regret to report the death of Harry Daniels who, at the age of 94, had been a member of the Society for over 30 years. During his long retirement, he developed a great interest and affection for the Forest and its history. His membership of the Society meant a lot to him, especially in his later years and he greatly enjoyed the meetings and outings and the friendships he had made.

It may be recalled that when he went into a retirement home in 2007, he gave a collection of tour guides, going back to the 1930s, to the Society library. We were pleased to lend these to a television company making a documentary, *Britain's Best Drives*, when they were filming in the Forest last year and they proved to be valuable source material.

We offer our deepest sympathy to his family.

Liz Berry

PAST & PRESENT

A Modern History of the Forest of Dean

A well attended members meeting at the Coleford Community Centre on August 22nd got the project off to a splendid start. An introduction by John Precious was followed by Mary Sullivan's excellent PowerPoint presentation that graphically demonstrated the idea of the project and how it will cover all aspects of the changes that have taken place in the Forest of Dean over the past fifty to sixty years.

There was an enthusiastic response from members many of whom selected project topics, listed on the form provided, to which they wished to make a contribution as well as suggesting ideas of their own. We look forward to receiving these contributions in due course and in the meantime would like to offer any help and advice to members in preparing their contributions.

There is growing support for the project from people and organizations outside of our Local History Society, including the Dean Heritage Centre. Bringing it all together will take time but we have been greatly encouraged by the response we have received so far and if there are those who have not yet responded but have views on how the Forest has changed over the past five or six decades we would very much like to hear from you.



Forest scenes from the 1950s



Outing to Wells

Once again we had a fine day for our coach outing to the Bishops Palace at Wells, a magnificent Grade 1 listed building in the heart of the city of Wells, parts of which date back to the mediaeval period. We were shown round by very knowledgeable guides, who gave us the history of the diocese and anecdotes about some of the incumbents. We also toured the gardens which have been restored in the traditional style and include the ruins of the Great Hall, now a sheltered walled garden, and we saw the spring which feeds the moat, home of the famous swans, and has supplied water to the town for over 300 years.

There was also time to take a tour around the Cathedral, famous for the galleries of mediaeval sculptures on the West Front and to wait for the strike of a 600 year old clock, believed to be one of the oldest working clocks in Europe, on which galloping knights in armour have marked the hours and quarters over the centuries.

On a fine sunny Saturday, Wells was bustling and busy, with the weekly market in the square lending a mediaeval feel, and we were lucky to coincide with the 50th Anniversary of the Somerset, Bristol and Cornwall Light Infantry who were parading on the green outside the Cathedral. In the afternoon they gave a display of marching, with the band playing traditional music including old English folk songs – a fitting end to a splendid day out.

MEMBERSHIP

May I remind members that the subscription for the year 2009/10 is now due? The sub for one member is £8 and for a family membership is now £12. Overseas membership is £14 to cover costs of postage.

Some members paying by standing order have not yet contacted their bank to alter their payment to the new amount. Please could they do so?

We would like to welcome the following new members to the Society:

Mrs L Alcock, Drybrook; Mr and Mrs J Jones, Bognor Regis; Mr M Davis, Malvern.



Lady Healey talking to Averil Kear at the 2004 Fair at Lydney Town Hall

History Fair

We will be holding our 5th Local History Fair on **Sunday 23rd May 2010 at Bells Hotel Coleford**, from 10am to 4pm. We have already received expressions of interest from several organisations and this time we intend to include a few different aspects to the fair. We shall be having a silent auction for some really good prizes, there will be an information desk so that people can ask any questions about the Forest of Dean and its history. We shall also be running short workshops in partnership with Glos. Archives

on topics such as starting your research, family history and house history. Finally John Putley from the Archives will be organising one or two children's events during the day.

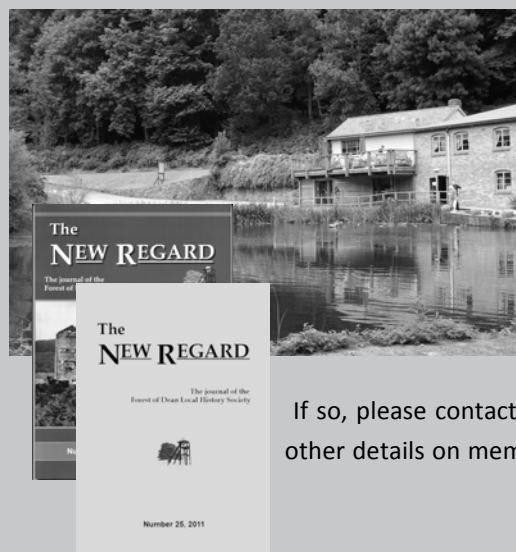
Once again FODLHS are trail blazers with our fairs, making sure that we always include something different, so please make sure that you put the date in your diary and come along to support your Society on the day.

Averil Kear



The 2007 Fair at Speech House Hotel

Exhibition at Dean Heritage Centre.



An Exhibition to celebrate the Society in general and, in particular, the 25th edition of the New Regard is to be held at the Dean Heritage Museum next year from 3rd April until 27th June.

Does anyone have any photos of early Society meetings, events, outings etc they would allow us to scan and use?

If so, please contact Mary Atkins or Pat Williams (addresses/ other details on membership cards).

FUTURE EVENTS

Meetings

Our November meeting will be held on Sat. 7th Nov at **Cinderford Belle Vue Centre** when J R Howe will give the second part of his talk on Sir Charles Dilke, perhaps the Forest's most eminent MP.

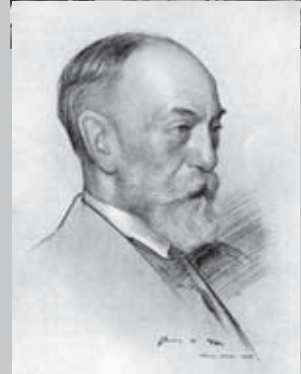
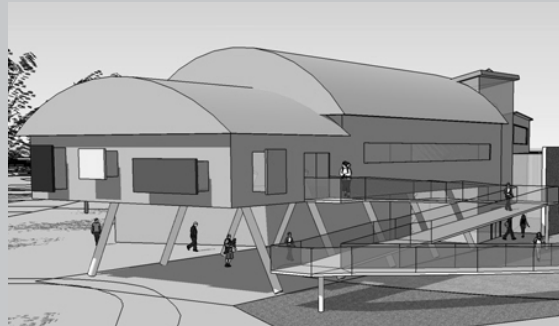
On Sat 5th December we meet at the Coleford Community Centre to see some more of Pete Ralph's superb photos, this time on the subject of Royal Forest of Dean: Its Heritage and People.

In 2010 we are looking forward to holding our meetings in the **brand new Coleford Community Centre**. We have been informed that the new building will be completed and ready for use in January 2010 so we will be one of the first organisations to use the new facilities. The Centre is situated behind the GWR Railway Museum in Pyart Place in Coleford and may be approached from either end of Old Station Way . Ample car parking is available at the nearby free carparks. The first speaker to take advantage of the new facilities will be Keith Walker, who will be telling us about 'Slag Blocks in Gloucestershire' on Sat. 9th January. We hope that the new centre will be much more comfortable and meet the needs of

everyone and that together with our new sound system will add to the enjoyment of our meetings.

NB Should the building work schedule slip and the new centre is not ready for use, we will meet as normal at our present venue in Bank Street, Coleford.

Anne Childs



Artists impression of the new Coleford Community Centre.

The old building below. Sir Charles Dilke.

Local History Afternoon

The Society boards were on display at the Local History Afternoon at Sir Thomas Rich's School in Gloucester on Sat. 3rd October, illustrating the theme of the afternoon, **Housing the Poor: Social Housing for All** The principle speaker was Prof. Steven King from University of Leicester, who explained the working of the old Poor Law (1598 & 1601) from the point of view of the inhabitants, dealing mainly with the Western counties of Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Shropshire. He explained the difficulties experienced by the inconsistencies of the original records and their varying terminology. He was followed by short presentations from local historians about their respective case studies of almshouses and workhouses in the county including Cecile Hunt on Almshouses in the Forest of Dean.

Congratulations go to Sally McGoon whose article **Some Memories of World War II** in Vol 23 of the New Regard, was shortlisted for the Bryan Gerard Award for the writer of the best published article on local history in the county, which was won by A Hamilton from Cheltenham Local History Society. Cheltenham also won the prize for the best display boards by a local history society.



4th Gloucestershire (Forest) Home Guard 02

Christmas present from FODLHS

We have commissioned some lovely new mugs for members to purchase. There are two designs, one showing our

Roll of Honour Memorial at New Fancy and the other showing Trafalgar Arch. The back of each mug has the name of the Society together with our logo. Caldwell Creations who designed and made the mugs have assured us that they are dishwasher friendly and make a really good cup of tea or coffee. They will be priced at £5.00 each.

They will be available at all our forthcoming meetings or you can phone Averil on 01594 563165 who will make arrangements with you for delivery and or postage.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



Baroness Royall of Blaisdon,
our new president

The Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday, 10th October at the Coleford Community Centre, chaired by Ron Beard. Apologies were received from Dave Tuffley, Nicola Wynn and Sue Gordon-Smith

Minutes of the 2008 AGM were read and approved. In his report, Chairman Ron Beard commented on another busy and successful year although marred by the sad death of our President, Dr Cyril Hart, which necessitated the appointment of a new president.

The Geomap project had received national recognition with the award of joint first prize in the ENI Challenge Award presented by the Geological Association, which Dave and Liz Berry had collected on behalf of the Society The Bixslade Walk leaflet produced in conjunction with the Forestry

Commission, a high quality document with considerable input from John Sheraton and the publication skills of John Precious.

With Conservation Officer Averil Kear, he had been involved with negotiations with the Coal Authority and other organisations to map and make safe all the mine sites, which negotiations were still on-going. Also on-going was a project with the owner of the Speech House Hotel to redecorate a themed bar, the Freeminers Bar.

The proposal to update the 'Photos for a New Century' CD Rom must now start in earnest, to see what changes had occurred in the intervening 10 years, and more volunteer photographers would be welcome. The Sites and Monuments was also continuing to expand, albeit slowly, but Geoff Davies of Sundean website had offered to prepare material for presentation on our website which will make it accessible to everyone.

The new exciting development for this year has been the start of the 'Past and Present' project, and he drew attention to the information display available. A meeting in August had been very well attended and we are looking forward to major contributions from members.

He also congratulated Sally McGoon for being shortlisted for the Bryan Jerrard Award for her article on World War II in Lydney, which had been based on personal memory, a good example of the type of source material on which our new project will be based.

Future events include a History Fair in May and an exhibition at the Dean heritage Centre in the spring. We are also hoping to hold some more meetings and/or walks throughout the summer months, details of which are yet to be finalised.

He paid tribute to the hard working committee, and also to the many other members who have made major contributions to Society activities over the year.

He concluded with the usual plea for more committee members, adding that members might like to just come along to a committee meeting to see how we operate but without any commitment, or to volunteer to help out with specific functions as they arose. He added that within the year we will be needing a new journal editor, as Mary Atkins is retiring. Ideally a new editor could shadow Mary and Pat for the next year, to see what is involved. We have also commissioned some mugs, with either a picture of the Miner's Memorial at New Fancy or of the Trafalgar Arch, which were on sale in the hall at £5 each – and would make splendid Christmas presents.

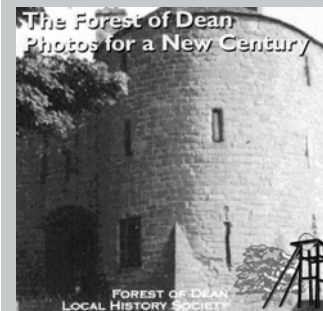
He thanked all members for attending and looked forward to seeing them at our regular Saturday meetings. The Treasurer, Cecile Hunt, reported a successful financial year, although rather less hectic than the previous year which had involved the expense of the Geomap. Increase in membership fees meant that they have covered the basic cost of running the Society. The publications account showed a surplus, the ENI prize for the Geomap had been £400 and Gift Aid reclaimed due to the Charity status added to a healthy financial position.

The Committee had voted to honour the memory of our late President with a Cyril Hart Award of £50, to be given for the best article in the New Regard. The first award will be made in 2010 for next year's journal and will be judged by Ray Wilson, a noted Gloucestershire historian.

Baroness Royall of Blaisdon was recommended by the committee as our new president. She was proposed by Averil Kear, who told members about the Baroness's commitment to the Forest, in particular with the preservation of the Northern United Colliery site, and her stalwart efforts to save the Forest hospitals. The proposition was seconded by Sally McGoon and approved by the meeting.

It was also proposed by Ian Standing that Ian Pope should be appointed Vice President and this was also approved.

Under the terms of the Constitution, Liz Berry, the general secretary had to stand down after three years, and Mary Sullivan was proposed for the position by Liz Berry, seconded by Averil and approved. Chris Sullivan was proposed as Press Secretary by Mary Atkins and seconded by Sally McGoon and approved. Other members of the Committee were re-elected en bloc.



The Gladys Scott-Garrett Award was won by Ben Lennon for his talk on *Trees and Woodland in the Dean Landscape*, but unfortunately was not present to accept.

After a short break for refreshments, Keith Wilkes talked about *The History of a Forest School* and his memories as a teacher at Berry Hill School.

More volunteer photographers wanted to update this CD