

## Society Officers 2016-17

**PRESIDENT** Mrs Beatrice Grant  
**VICE-PRESIDENTS** Brian Stephens, Peter Bolam, Peter Archer and Paul Crane  
**CHAIRMAN** Richard Perrin  
**VICE-CHAIRMAN** Chris Griffin  
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**TREASURER** Peter Archer  
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 Steven Bent  
 Bill Dewar  
**Cllr Philip Edmundson**  
 Dr Jenny Frow  
 Jock Gallagher  
 Martin Guard  
 Robert Limbrick  
 Pauline Lowe  
 Graham Luxford  
 Sue Perrin  
**Dr Alan Scaplehorn**  
 Robert Swan  
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 Ian Williams



## Bewdley Scout who fell at the Somme

Former local Boy Scout John Rollins (right) was one of three young men from Bewdley who fell while serving with the Royal Worcestershire Regiment at the Battle of the Somme in August 1916. He was twenty-six.

See Page 9 for full story

Cllr PHILIP EDMUNDSON says new Neighbourhood Plan will make

# 'Bewdley - bright, better, brave and balanced'



Changing the planning framework for Bewdley will address a range of issues that have faced us all; as a society and as a town as a whole. Having greater autonomy over who decides what building and development takes place, how this impacts on our future and how we feel that these changes affect our historic home is vital.

Consider Tesco's. Consider the Safari Park to name but two.

The vision set in January, to support the Council's consultation process is thus: *We aim to make Bewdley a vibrant, exciting, accessible town founded on the town's history, character and picturesque setting. We want to build on our past to guide our future and make Bewdley a bright, better, brave and balanced place to live, work and visit. We want you to Believe in Bewdley.*

We need to be clear that the Neighbourhood Plan, although Council-led, is determined by the people of the Town, culminating in a referendum, which we are aiming to hold in May 2017. The consultation process has begun, with an 'open house' event held at St George's Hall at the end of March, questionnaires have been available online and distributed via 'The Bridge', with many returns received by the middle of May. Although the questionnaire stage is closed, there will be further consultations, of which we will keep members of the society informed over the coming weeks and months.

### Vision for the town

The Neighbourhood Plan – if voted for by the people of Bewdley – will set out the vision for the town in terms of future land use and form part of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan. The plan will belong to the town and will be a legal document used to inform future planning and development issues.

The plan is intended to reflect the views of people who live, work, shop, enjoy and have an interest in Bewdley. Ultimately, whether the plan is to be adopted or not will be decided by a formal referendum for voting residents of the town. Bewdley's planning future will be shaped by the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Town Council has successfully applied for the maximum grant awarded by *Locality*, which administers government money for supporting neighbourhood planning. It has also allocated funding to the project. For Bewdley, the Neighbourhood Plan so far has been cost neutral. We have an active and energetic Town Clerk, Nick Farress, to thank for that.

At the time of writing, the project management group, Foxley Tagg, are

continued on next page



# But...a long way to go

Continued from previous page

processing the results. However, I thought sharing some of the views that have been expressed so far would be of interest to the society's members. These views are selected from the questionnaires and are offered as areas of interest and possible future discussion. Essentially, these views show the free thought on what Bewdley should be doing, should be planning, offered without inference.

- Provide out-of-town car-parking
- A footpath across river.
- Several zebra crossings in town instead of a single pelican crossing.
- It's concerning how many shops & business buildings are empty in Bewdley town centre.
- New businesses should not be warehousing, heavy industry or large supermarkets.
- More camping and caravan sites must be for touring caravans and tents only.
- New housing - it is difficult to see where new development would be best. We do not want to join up with Kidderminster.
- What is going to happen to the Leisure Centre on the Stourport Road? I have a concern that we need to consider developments in the context of the 21st century, whilst taking our history into account without being held hostage by the concept of the 'Georgian town'.
- Total lack of 'civic pride'
- Town is untidy and dirty
- Too little emphasis on residents
- Traffic should be encouraged to use by-pass
- NO HGV through High Street - why do they do it?
- All residents to be informed of responsible officers (names & contact no's) for policies and support
- Fast-food outlets to be responsible for the litter they generate
- Co-ordination of the disparate groups operating in the town
- Visitors don't respect my town because it is such a mess. Overheard from visitor conversation in Load Street..." *this place is a dump; let's go on up to Bridgnorth*" - we should be ashamed

**STOP PRESS:** The Town Council has now decided to extend the consultation period until the end of July. GO to the website [www.beinbewdley.org](http://www.beinbewdley.org)



The need for the St Anne's major cleaning exercise doesn't distract from the neat summer flower-bed that now brightens up the town!

## Building a better Bewdley

As we build the information and comments from the questionnaires submitted, we will build a complete set of the views offered. Some of these views you may well agree with, some you may not; the point is that people's views count. There are many improvements we could make to our town, together, that as long as we are heard and as long as we listen we can move forward in building a better Bewdley.

Key to the process is making sure that the Neighbourhood Plan expresses the opinions of the people and is formed by the people it will affect. The life of the plan is for fifteen years, so the pressure to ensure we all get it right is quite phenomenal.

We move to further, full public consultations as we build the objectives and the draft Neighbourhood Plan. Please participate; tell the Council what you believe in and help us shape the Town's future together.

**Councillor Philip Edmundson**  
Deputy Mayor of Bewdley



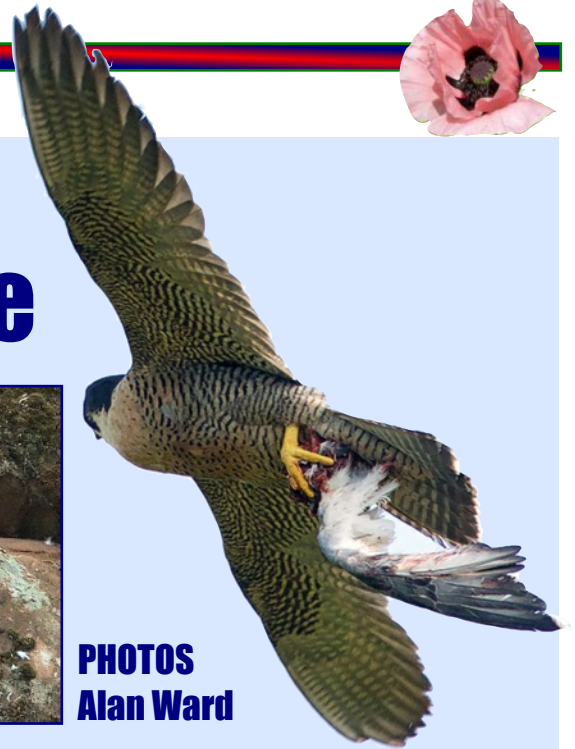


# Peregrine falcons soar over Bewdley

## The Severn air force



**PHOTOS**  
**Alan Ward**



**NESTING, RESTING and SOARING:** Photographer Alan Ward captures the glory of the peregrine falcons currently nesting three chicks "somewhere around Bewdley." They are one of only 1,500 breeding pairs in the UK, according to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. The Society also says peregrines have suffered illegal killing from gamekeepers and landowners and been a target for egg collectors but better legal protection and control of pesticides (which indirectly poisoned birds) have helped the population to recover considerably from a low in the 1960s.



*The peregrine is a large and powerful falcon. It has long, broad, pointed wings and a relatively short tail. It is blue-grey above, with a blackish top of the head and an obvious black moustache that contrasts with its white face. Its breast is finely spotted. It is swift and agile in flight, chasing prey.*





## Outing to Aldenham Park

### Memories of a Loyalist family

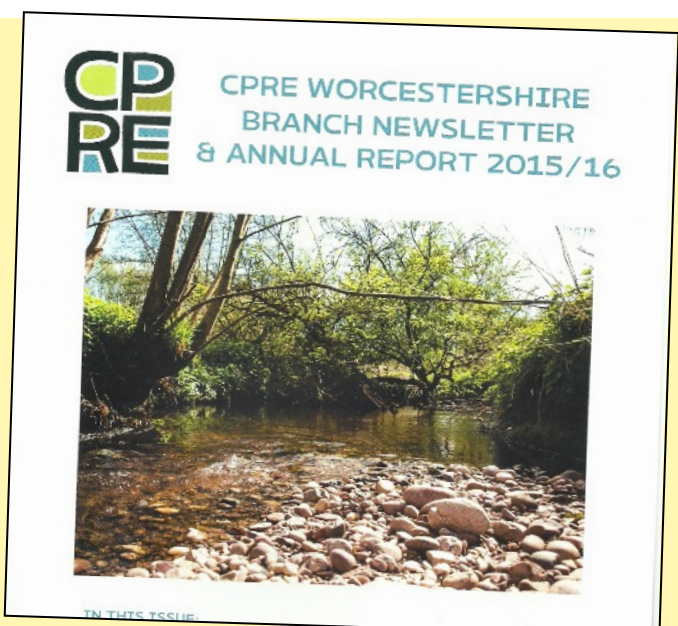
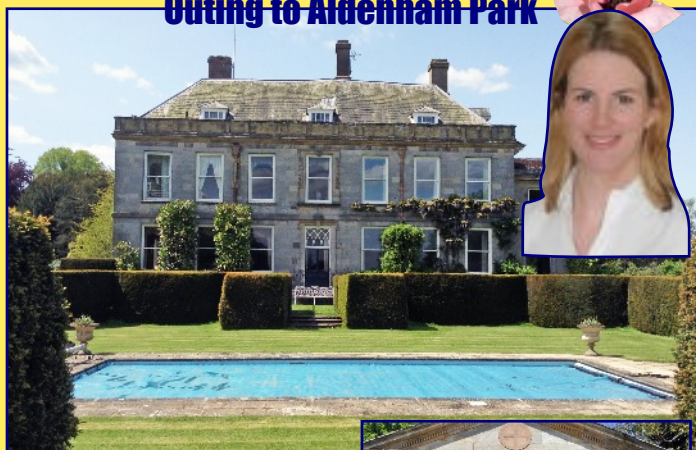
Our outing took place on a beautiful, warm sunny day, always a welcome bonus. After some free time in Bridgnorth, we made our way to Morville, through the imposing gates (original cost £50) and up the half-mile drive to the house.

We were met by Hettie Fenwick (inset right), the third generation of her family to live at Aldenham Park, who told us the Barons of Acton had been there since the 1400s. The present house was built in 1691.

During the second World War, a girls' school was evacuated to Aldenham and the Acton family finally sold the run-down property in 1959 to the Thompson family. Other more memorable visitors included Gladstone and Charles 1, who left his coat behind in the priest hole he hid in. We were shown the imposing library and ballroom and state bedrooms, as well as the entrance to the secret tunnel the strongly loyalist family used to attend the nearby church.

Our stroll round the formal gardens showed the herbaceous gardens at their best, although the original parterre was now a swimming pool. We also learnt that the neoclassical temple now doubled as a changing room! The day ended with the traditional tea and homemade cakes, and we had had a rare chance to see somewhere not usually open to the public.

JENNY FROW



*Extract from the CPRE's annual report for Worcestershire*

**Wyre Forest:** This year has been a quiet one. It continues to be necessary to oppose the proliferation of park home developments, supporting local policy. The major failure has been in opposing the expansion of the West Midlands Safari Park at Bewdley, a major developed site in the Green Belt next to Bewdley, which will have a major impact on the countryside. We were able to have a meeting with CPRE and Bewdley Civic Society, which might turn into a Wyre Forest district group. If so, it will be the first time we have had one.

### Super online booking system will help ease traffic problems



The long-awaited discussions between the Civic Society, the Town Council and the Safari Park's Ivan Knezovich proved to be tough and uncompromising. Mr Knezovich made it clear that his already-approved developments were essential to his business and he set out his plans with the clarity of a man who knew exactly where he was going.

But for those of us with a different view, there were some chinks of light.

One of the main concerns has been the fear of traffic pile-ups on the main A456 road between Bewdley and Kidderminster. Mr Knezovich made it clear he was well aware of the situation and has already ensured his computer booking-system will cope with the problem. He has no interest in making his visitors sit in traffic jams. Booking for the water-park will only be available online and careful marketing will ensure visitors will be allocated very specific times when they can enter the park and these will be spread throughout the day.

He also cleared up another anxiety about the primary colours of the main water-tower. That was a mistake by an artist. The building will be in subdued colours to help create the safari feel of the leisure park. He also insisted that the development would be good for Bewdley but only if the town grasped the opportunities.





# The battle against Balsam: Season 2

Steve Bent reflects on the continuing struggle with riverbank Himalayan Balsam



**ABOVE The Balsam-busters:** Steve Bent and the Society group who did battle last year and are preparing for another assault next month.

**BELOW The Enemy!** Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) is a relative of the Busy-Lizzie but reaches well over head height and is a major weed problem, especially on riverbanks and waste land, but can also invade gardens. It grows rapidly and spreads quickly, smothering other vegetation as it goes.



This year's "Balsam Bash" organised through the Civic Society will take place on July 23 from 10am - 1pm

We will muster at the riverside bench adjacent to Dog Lane car park above Severnside North.

The immediate objective is to re-visit the bank from the meeting place up to Dowles Brook and tackle the opposite bank from the "pumping station" up to Dowles Bridge. The ground here is relatively flat and even and there will certainly be extensive swathes to get stuck into.

For those unfamiliar with this not unattractive but pernicious invader, it's very easy to take down. No digging required!

The shallow root-system means that a firm tug low down on the stem will easily dislodge even a tall plant. For those more difficult to reach plants, simply cutting down with a stick of other suitable implement is fine.

Balsam is non-toxic and devoid of thorns or other physical deterrents and when levelled can be left in situ to bio-degrade.

If anyone wishes to get involved (and I would welcome all the help I can get !). Just turn up on the day at the appointed hour in sensible clothing and sturdy boots and gloves equipped with suitable pruning equipment if available .

If anyone has any queries then contact me via e mail at [stevenclivebent1@aol.com](mailto:stevenclivebent1@aol.com)

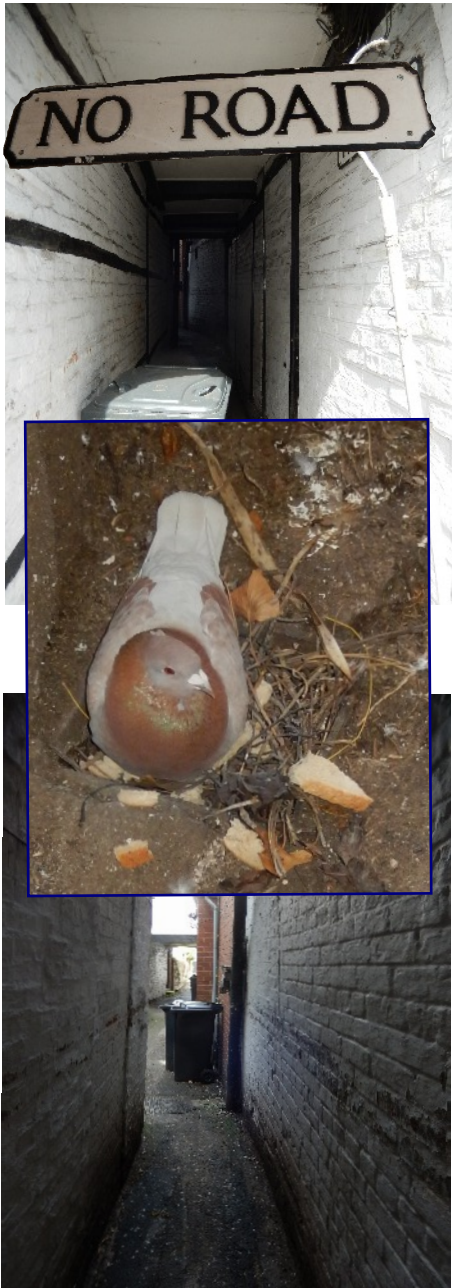


## Welcome to Summer

At last those long featureless poles that lower meaninglessly over the town throughout Winter and Spring have come into their own. Now they allow the glorious summer flowers to soar skywards

The NEWSLETTER is published four times in the year and contributions and photographs are always welcome. Please contact the Editor (Jock Gallagher) on 01299 403110 or per email [jyg@cix.co.uk](mailto:jyg@cix.co.uk)





## Nest in peace!

Nobody explained to this broody bird that *No Road* didn't include her. In fact she must have thought she was onto a good thing judging from the amount of bread that was left by thoughtful pedestrians. Come to that, no one seems able to explain to me why the seedy alley off Load Street doesn't seem to merit a name but does run to two street signs (one at each end of the alley). The good news is that the pigeon duly delivered and her one-time nest is available with vacant possession.

JG

## Baldwin of Bewdley



When the Baldwin campaign machine rolled into Bewdley, the great man disdained anything like a battle bus. Instead, he stepped as if out of a glossy magazine, impeccably dressed to match the elegance of his chauffeur-driven car, which attracted almost as much attention as the great man himself. One almost felt the gentleman (marked) who had the temerity to brandish an opposition poster was somehow letting the side down. The young toff in riding britches (extreme right) was certainly distancing himself from such a display!



## A Freeman of the Borough

Seventeen years after he first became the town's MP, the then Borough Council gave Mr Baldwin the Freedom of Bewdley. The presentation in front of the Town Hall was followed by a glittering dinner in St George's Hall in August 1925. So popular was the MP and his wife Lucy (both seen right at the back of the room), the hall was filled to capacity by the respectful citizens. Not many small towns can boast of seeing their MP also become the country's Prime Minister. Both photographs are, of course, from the unique archive of Kenneth Hobson, which is currently being digitised by the town museum staff. The Society will be establishing the Hobson Collection and other archive material at 18 Load Street (the former Morton Fisher reception) later in the year.





# C HERRY FAIR 2016

10am-4 30pm Saturday  
& Sunday, July 23 and 24

Bewdley's unique annual Cherry Fair is a free family-event with something for everyone. The Museum staff have arranged various stalls and events with a cherry theme. It is hoped that the whole occasion will set off the holiday season with an informative and enjoyable time.

The Civic Society display will be in the foyer of the Guild Hall. Visitors will be able to compare a number of different varieties of cherry, (depending on the season) and to buy young trees to plant.

Trees of old varieties of cherry will be for sale at a very reasonable price. These have been grafted on to medium and dwarf stocks which will develop trees suitable for gardens. Trees will also be a convenient size to carry home.

Sixty years ago Bewdley was the centre for a flourishing cherry trade and with a 200 year tradition of an annual Cherry Fair since at least 1817. So we hope that people may learn of former times, appreciate the different colours and tastes of these delicious fruits, and support our efforts to rescue and propagate the old varieties which have almost disappeared.

B M Stephens

Noble

Waterloo

White Elton







# Memories of the French connection

From a post-war report of a Society dinner



ANOTHER very interesting matter was referred to at the dinner, this time by Mr. Rowe himself. One of the stories he told concerned the visit to Bewdley, during the war, of General de Gaulle. The visit was a resounding success and the General, although not able to speak English very well was obviously impressed with the arrangements which were made to greet him. But he, like many others, did not know of the work that had had to be carried out or of the "tricks" that were played. The day before the General arrived it was discovered that the Corporation did not have a French tricolour or a record of the Marseillaise. Mr. Rowe described on Wednesday how he overcame these difficulties. He visited the Free French forces who were stationed at Ribbesford and borrowed a tricolour and a record of the French National hymn. But, since the detachment at Ribbesford only had one tricolour, the Surveyor had to undertake to get it back to Ribbesford before the General arrived there. This, said Mr. Rowe, was done by taking down the flag as soon as the visitor arrived and sending a despatch rider away with it. The only trouble about the record was that it was cracked! This difficulty was surmounted with the aid of Mr. J. H. Davies, Mr. Rowe explained. Mr. Davies played it so often before the General's arrival that he knew where the bad spot was. As the General stepped from his car and was greeted by the then Mayor, the late Alderman R. B. Jackson, the record was played. Momentarily the strains of the rousing tune were stopped while Mr. Davies lifted the needle over the crack! The General went from Bewdley very impressed and none the wiser for these little incidents.

## CIVIC SOCIETY SCHOOL HERITAGE PROJECT 2016

# Top artist to help students in their brass research



Plans for the 2016 School Project are well under way and we are once again working with the Bewdley School and Sixth Form Centre on an aspect of Bewdley's Heritage to produce the annual exhibition of the students' work.

However, this year's project is rather special as we are using the Civic Society Project to help to launch a wider community project which is taking place at Bewdley Museum throughout the month of July.

The museum has managed to win Arts Council England funding to provide the services of an internationally-known community artist, Joshua Sofaer, *above* (<http://www.joshuasofaer.com>) who will spend the whole month of July at the museum, facilitating visitors to research an item of the museum's collection.

As the item chosen is a \*one-grain brass weight produced by H. J. Exley in the Bewdley Brass Foundry (*see shop-front below*) – our project will follow the brass theme and look at the history of the brass industry in Bewdley and research the people, objects and science of this once important local trade.

The young people will spend a day in the museum, have the opportunity to explore the Brass Foundry together with museum and Civic Society research items and material and have access to Joshua Sofaer's art expertise during the day.

On the following day, the Civic Society will organise a workshop for the students at the school, to continue working on the project and developing their exhibition work for display in Bewdley Museum in the autumn.

Barbara Longmore



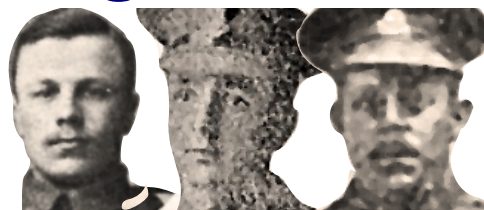
*\*Grain: One of the earliest units of common measure and the smallest, it is a uniform unit in the avoirdupois, apothecaries' and troy systems. The ancient grain was defined as the weight of a designated number of dry wheat kernels taken from the middle of the ear.*





# Three who didn't survive the grim battle

This is the story of three of the men whose names are on the St. Anne's War Memorial. Each served with the 3rd Battalion of the Worcestershire Regiment and each fell in the Battle of the Somme in summer 1916, a century ago. They are (from left to right) John Daniel Griffiths (Killed in action August 23), John Rollins (Killed in action August 24) and Thomas Griffin (Died from wounds October 24)



**J**ohn Daniel Griffiths was born on January 11, 1895 in Codsall, Staffordshire, the eldest child of Daniel Griffiths a domestic groom and Ellen Griffiths (née Wormington). The couple had married near to Ellen's home in Bromsgrove in the summer of 1893. By the beginning of the new century, the family lived at 63 Ash Street, Wolverhampton and John Daniel had been joined by Bertha (born 1898), Florrie (1900 ) and six-months-old William. At some point in the following decade, possibly following the death of Daniel senior in 1908, the family relocated to Bewdley.

In 1911, the Griffiths are living at 24 Wyre Hill and John Daniel (who seems to have gone by his second name) is employed as an errand-boy helping support eight siblings: Harry (1901), Richard (1903), Horace (1905), Ernest (1907) David (1909). The widowed Sarah Ellen Griffiths was a charwoman.

In the years before the war, Daniel set up trade as a butcher in Cotteridge, King's Norton. It was here that he married Polly Fletcher, a domestic servant and daughter of agricultural labourer William Fletcher, on November 25, 1914 at the Baptist Chapel in Wythall Heath.

With the intensifying battles on the Western Front, Daniel formally enlisted in the 3rd Battalion Worcestershire Regiment at Hollywood, near Solihull, sometime in April 1916. Conscription had just been introduced and it is possible he was an early conscript who had previously been excluded from service due to his trade as a butcher. He joined the battalion in July, at the height of the fighting on the Somme, possibly as part of a draft of reinforcements received on April 24.

His service on the Somme was to last less than a month..

**W**hen Daniel Griffiths joined the 3rd Worcestershire on the Somme in July 1916, they were heavily committed to the battle. The battalion was by then part of the 7 Brigade of 25 Division and saw extensive service during the early stages of the battle. 25 Division was not deployed on the first day but they received their orders to move towards the front on the morning of July 2. The artillery of the distant battle to the east was clearly audible and 7 Brigade moved along crowded roads to reserve positions to the south of Aveluy Wood. The next morning, an attack on the German positions in front of the Brigade (centred on Thiepval Ridge) failed, resulting in 7 Brigade being used to relieve the attacking units. 1 Wiltshire Regiment were sent forward, while the 3rd Worcestershire remained in reserve.

The British attacks had seized the German frontline but heavy fighting was taking place in the warren of supporting reserve trenches in the German position. By July 5, it was obvious the Wiltshires were struggling to stem the German counter-attacks, and two companies of the 3rd Worcestershire were sent to support them. For 48 hours, the two battalions fought in the rain soaked trenches under constant German

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# Waiting for war: July 1916



**3 Worcestershires  
on the Somme**

Continued from previous page/ artillery bombardment, with the majority of the fighting being hand-to-hand or using hand grenades (or "bombs" as they were known in the Great War). It was not until the evening of July 7 that the two battalions were withdrawn to reserve positions. Back at Aveluy Wood, twenty-one men had been killed, and over 162 wounded or missing.

After two short days in reserve, 25 Division was redeployed, and 3 Worcestershires found themselves marching through La Boisselle, the scene of heavy fighting involving some of their sister battalions in the previous stages of the battle. The aim of the next attack involving the 3 Worcestershires was to take part in the capture of the village of Ovilliers. On July 10, half a company supported 8 Loyal North Lancashires in seizing the spur of ground leading to the village.

The regimental history describes the position of the 3rd Worcestershire as like "a spear point into the broken German defences." Such a position was precarious; given the strong German intent to defend their position. The battalion managed to beat off determined counter-attacks on the morning of July 14. Fresh troops including the 48 Division's 143 Brigade gradually took up positions towards the north side of Ovilliers, and after further fighting succeeded in fatally isolating the German position. Further reinforcements led to the 3rd Worcestershire trenches being made secure and by July 16 it was described as "strongly defended." Early on the morning of July 17, 25 Division was withdrawn. The 3rd Worcestershires had suffered 177 casualties.

After two day's rest the 3rd Worcestershire redeployed as part of 25 Division, with the Battalion at reserve positions in Mailly Wood, while the rest of their Brigade took over positions previously held by the 29 Division. The battalion moved to the front line trenches immediately to the west of the River Ancre, the northern tributary of the Somme, on July 3. Despite heavy fighting to the south, this sector of the battlefield was quiet, and the Battalion was withdrawn along with 25 Division when they were relieved by 6 Division on 6 August 1916. Their initial rest area was at billets in Bertrancourt where they stayed until 11 August, before moving to rear training areas. This training, including inspection by HM the King, came to an end on 17 August, when the 7 Brigade returned to their previous battlefield of the Leipzig salient near Thiepval, where the situation remained much as it had done in the previous month. However, the capture of the Ovilliers spur (as described above) had made the German positions in the Leipzig salient more vulnerable, and on August 21, orders were received for the 25 and Divisions were to make a joint attack on these German positions.

Throughout that time, the 3rd Worcestershire were under constant attack from German fire. The Battalion held their ground throughout August 22, 23 and early part of the 24th. Despite the regimental history describing this period as being "without notable incident," on August 23 alone, the Battalion lost seven men killed and 50 wounded: one of the dead was 22 year-old Private John Daniel Griffiths. The attack on the German positions in

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# Grenades and hand-to-hand fighting

Continued from previous page/Lemberg trench began at 4:10pm on August 24 and both 3 Worcestershires and 1 Wilts went over the top, preceded by a very heavy British artillery barrage. Hand-to-hand fighting resulted when they reached the German position, using both hand grenades and bayonets. German counter-attacks pressed hard on the flanks of the newly seized position but they were resisted. When the Germans poured artillery fire onto their former positions, both battalions laboured to improve and secure the captured territory by reinforcing its defences.

At some point during August 24, Private John Rollins (see below) was killed. This artillery fire continued throughout August 25 but the two 7 Brigade battalions held their positions and prepared for the inevitable German counter-attack. German shelling increased in intensity towards the end of the day but British counter-barrages broke up an attack before it could be launched. 3 Worcestershires were relieved on the evening of August 26, after three days of battle which had cost them 243 casualties.

John Rollins was Leicestershire-born but moved to Bewdley in his youth. He was the eldest son of Charles Rollins, a coachman and gardener by profession who was born in Stoke Goldington, Buckinghamshire in 1857. He married Martha Ann Wallington in Northampton in 1879. Martha was born in Weston Favrell, Northamptonshire in 1885. The couple's first home was at 66 St George's Street Northampton, and their first child, Nora was born in 1880. The family spent some time at the village of Blaston in Leicestershire, where their daughter Jessie was born in 1883. By 1887, the family were living in East Gate Street in the village of Hallaton, Leicestershire, where Beatrice was born in 1887, and John Rollins was born in 1890. The family's other two sons, Charles Henry and Reuben were born in Hallaton in 1892 and 1894 respectively.

After the family moved to Bewdley in the early 1900s, John became a keen member of the Boy Scouts. A poignant photograph exists of him with other local Scouts including fellow soldier Frank Tolley. Neither of them survived the Great War.



**SIMON FIELDING**



**NOW SEE THE FILM**

## ***THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME***

**The fully-restored version  
of the original 1916 film  
7.30 pm Friday July 8**

**St. George's Hall**

**Free admission by ticket  
obtainable from June 13**





## New President continues the Baldwin link

I am delighted to announce that Mrs Beatrice Grant was elected as the Society's new President at the recent AGM. Beatrice is the great-granddaughter of Stanley Baldwin (Earl Baldwin of Bewdley).

Her election revives a long-standing relationship which the Society has had with the Baldwin family over the years. Indeed Stanley was our founding President and Beatrice is now the fifth member of the family to be our President. She is also a great-great-granddaughter of Queen Victoria).

Members will recall that she gave a wonderful talk about the private life of her great grandfather at our 2014 Annual Dinner and since then she has been part of a small group working on a project to erect a statue of Stanley Baldwin in Bewdley.

She is married to the well-known local estate agent, Andrew Grant, and the couple have two boys aged 17 and 14. Beatrice is looking forward to taking an active part in our activities.

Also at the AGM, Mr Paul Crane was elected as a Vice President. Paul has shown a strong commitment to the Society and its objectives and his family has played a part in Bewdley's history since the 15th century. Members of the family held the post of Bailiff in the 18th and 19th centuries and they were also involved in Bewdley pewtering and banking and farming their estates at Oakhampton and Habberley, where he is still Lord of the Manor.

He also descends from the noted hymn-writers, the Havergal family, who lived at Astley and Winterdyne. Last year, he bought the historic Redthorne House in High Street and is currently restoring it to its 18th century splendour - a project which goes to the heart of the Society's *raison d'être*.

Paul, who is also a lecturer, is one of the country's leading experts on 18th century porcelain and is a Trustee of the Museum of Worcester Porcelain.

Paul has recently offered the Society the use of a room at 18 Load Street (see right) for which we are extremely grateful.

All existing officers were re-elected and as regards the executive committee, Tim Willis retired because of work commitments and was thanked for his valuable contribution over the past few years.

The remaining members on the committee were duly re-elected.



## MEETING WITH SAFARI PARK CEO

Jock has reported on the meeting we had with Ivan Knezovich and the encouragement we gained from it. While he is uncompromising in his approach we cannot doubt that what he has told us is logical and sensible. He believes that Bewdley has much potential and that the Civic Society should be an important part of its future.

## THE KENNETH HOBSON ROOM

As mentioned left, Paul Crane has very kindly given the Society a rent-free lease on a ground floor room at his Archangel House property (18 Load Street,) which used to form part of the reception area when the building housed the solicitors Morton Fisher. Necessary facilities are included and the Society will only be responsible for utilities. The Society used to have such a room in High Street many years ago in which there was a small library and the Executive Committee had no hesitation in accepting Paul's generous offer. Plans are in hand to house the Society's archives and to use the room for historical research as well as it being our 'Shop Window' to the public. By naming it *The Kenneth Hobson Room*, it will serve as an excellent memorial to our immediate-past President.

## THE DUCK HOUSE TRAIL 2016

Bewdley Festival is again featuring this Community Art Project consisting of wooden duck houses decorated by local community groups and organisations. Last year the Society's entry was voted the best so it's only right that we should defend our title this year. I trust the artists amongst our membership will come forward and take up the challenge.

## WHAT'S ON

**September 14 Lecture** *TITANIC: the Midlands Connection* by Andrew Lound St George's Hall

**September 28 Madresfield Court - outing**

**October 1 - 2 Harvest Fair BCS Guided tours**

**October 7 - 16 Bewdley Festival**

**October 18 Lecture** *Ruskinland: the story of a Woodland Utopia* by Neil Sinden

**November 18 ANNUAL DINNER** St George's Hall