

## 2016 History Award

There were 4 entries to the inaugural Stourport Civic Society History Award. The winner was Bev Haywood and runner up was James Allaway. There were also entries from Society members, Rita Phillips and Margaret Dallow. The presentations were made at the Society AGM by Will Scott, Society President. A summary of each entry is shown below and a bound portfolio of the entries can be borrowed from the Civic Archive, or can be purchased from Pauline Annis .



### **THE HAYWOODS OF STOURPORT ON SEVERN**

*An illustrated History by Bev Haywood*

At the start of 2015 I began to research my family history online. What started as an occasional diversion became a passion when I discovered by husband had ancestors in Stourport, the town which we had only moved to with our children in 1995, not knowing of the family connection.

### **THE SHEPHERD OF ARELEY KINGS**

*Researched and Written by James Allaway*

A redaction of about 5% of a manuscript now nearing completion, ' In search of a Shepherd's Hut'. this is a general history of shepherding in the UK, taking as its cue the story of my ancestor James Bullock and his family, in particular during the second half of the 19th century when they were based at Areley Kings, Worcs. Most of this period was one of Agricultural depression when much arable land was turned over to the less labour intensive business of raising sheep - though it also saw catastrophic losses of livestock due to disease.

### **DRAWN FROM THE PAST**

*Researched and Written by Rita Phillips*

A selection of memories from the early days living at 9 Tontine Buildings. A few of the memories are from my Gran, Phoebe Cook and my Mum Vera Cook, but they are mostly from my memories I have I have of my childhood spent in the Tontine Buildings.

### **THOMAS MONK OF LOWER MITTON AND TIPTON IN THE BLACK COUNTRY**

*Researched and Written by Margaret Dallow 2016*

A short history of the inland port of Stourport created by the proprietors of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal by constructing a terminal, namely a basin on the banks of the River Severn at Lower Mitton, also the life and times of a young local man, Thomas Monk in the canal era, first as a narrow boat builder, then water carrier and builder of the famous "Euphrates" fly boat at his yard in Tipton and his family.

## Stanley Baldwin's Gates

By Pauline Annis



The journalist, Cassandra, writing in *The Daily Mirror* in February 1942 on a visit to Astley Hall, referred to Stanley Baldwin thus:

*"Here was an old and stupid politician who had tricked the nation into complacency about rearmament for fear of losing an election. Here was the skeleton of our shady past, still clinging to a couple of old gates that wouldn't keep a draught out-let alone a Hun"*

What had caused Cassandra to use such vicious language ?

In May 1937 Baldwin had retired from political life and was given the hereditary title of Earl Baldwin of Bewdley. At the same time Worcestershire Conservative Association had presented him with a set of iron gates for the main drive of Astley Hall. The gates were each surmounted by an earl's coronet and were decorated with the emblem of The Order of the Garter. Stanley Baldwin was obviously very proud of his gates.

During the course of World War Two the public were encouraged to surrender to the govern-



ment any metal gates, fences etc which, it was claimed, could be used to manufacture armaments. Somebody in Stourport appears to have been very industrious in this respect as much ornamental ironwork, including railings from funerary monuments in Mitton Churchyard, was confiscated. When it was suggested that Stanley Baldwin should contribute his gates, he dug his heels in and refused. Hence the vituperative article by Cassandra.

Stanley Baldwin won the battle over his gates. Sadly the large quantities of confiscated ironwork were not of a sufficient quality to be used for armaments production and were left to rot in various builders' yards.

In 1952 Oliver Baldwin, Stanley's eldest son, presented the gates to the Governors of Hartlebury Grammar School. "The Governors will be responsible for replacing the said gates with the original wooden ones

now in the stables of Astley Hall." The gates can still be seen today at the entrance of the former grammar school in Quarry Bank, Hartlebury.

*There will be a broadcast on Radio 4 in August highlighting the issue of Baldwin's gates. (transmission date still to be confirmed)*

## Stourport Civic Society Programme Sept 2016 – July 2017



8<sup>th</sup> September 2016      **The Severn Way**

*Brian Draper*

Brian takes us on his walk from the source of the Severn to the Bristol channel. A sight seeing tour without leaving your seat!

13<sup>th</sup> October 2016      **The Restoration of the Droitwich Canal**

*Roger Tapping*

Before and after - The story of the work and time involved in this local waterways project.

10<sup>th</sup> November 2016      **The Civil War**

*Max Keen*

Max gives us another of his brilliant insights into history, this time bringing the civil war between the roundheads and cavaliers into focus. Kidderminster, Bewdley and Stourbridge are brought into the frame.

8<sup>th</sup> December 2016      **A Drop of the Hard Stuff**

*Ray Sturdy*

Humour for putting you in the Christmas spirit! An amusing cycle journey around the remote west of Ireland.

12<sup>th</sup> January 2017 (tbc)      **Social Evening at a local restaurant**

9<sup>th</sup> February 2017      **From Apprentice Loom Tuner to Personnel Manager**

*John Wilson*

John tells the story of his working life in the carpet industry, from apprentice to through to management. He shares his hard work, the ups and downs, and the twists of fate that shaped his career.

9<sup>th</sup> March 2017      **Medieval Bewdley**

*Heather Flack*

Heather, very interestingly, takes us back to medieval times in Bewdley. Her books to be on sale.

6<sup>th</sup> April 2017      **Village Memories**

*Terry Church*

Reminiscences of growing up in a village on the edge of the black country in the 1950's.

11<sup>th</sup> May 2017      **AGM and Civic Award**

8<sup>th</sup> June 2017      **Owain Glyndŵr in Worcestershire - Myth or Fact**

*Heather Rendall*

The talk explores the standoff between the armies of Henry V and Owain Glyndŵr on Woodbury Hill in 1405.

13<sup>th</sup> July 2017      **James Brindley**

*Victoria Owens*

Going back in time to the construction of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal. An insight into the birth of Stourport, and of James Brindley himself.

## The Stourport Carnival (Items in the Civic Society Archive)



**Stourport Carnival was started in 1925** to raise funds for the less well off of the area.

It has always had a good following, but like all things has had its 'lean years'. It has started from various places in the town, but the river has always played a part on Carnival day.

We've had 'TV' personalities to choose and crown our Carnival queen, and even had a Carnival king. In 1932 it was called the Stourport Royal Carnival, as the Patron was the 'Duke of York'. For a good many years it was organised by 'The Guild of Help'. I don't know when it became Stourport Carnival Society but thanks to charity minded people of Stourport we have one of premium Carnivals of the West Midlands enjoyed by thousands of people from miles around.

*by Muriel Smith Stourport Carnival 2000*

### The Royal Party arrived by train for the first Stourport Carnival, 2nd June 1925



The train from Hartlebury puffed into Stourport station the wrong way round and was greeted by a fanfare from the amazed Town Band, as Ben Evers, centre, and Ernest Millner, right, descended from the train with Len Southall, left, Mary Southall and her cousin Peggy Evers. Their grandfather, Ben Evers Senior, was knighted as Master of Musique and the party set off by horse and carriage round the town. The royal costumes had been hired in London where Ben Evers Junior played at the Savoy Hotel!

**In 1932 the 'Stourport Royal Carnival' had as its patrons the Duke of York, the Bishop of Worcester and Stanley Baldwin MP.** Isaac Nunney was Marshall of the Parade. The Crowning of the Carnival Queen took place at the bandstand in the Memorial Park Entertainment in the park included; selections played by the Town Band, a bowling competition, and grand boxing displays, a Jazz band contest, Dancing Displays, Punch and Judy, and there was also Freak Bowling for a live pig! On the river, the houseboats, rafts, bungalows, club boathouse and bridge were illuminated and the Sydney Glover cup went to the best illuminated craft. Prizes in 25 classes were presented at the Drill Hall six days later, followed by the dance (in Carnival dress) to Mr Turner's Dance Band.

**In the 1934 Land and Water Carnival** you could also have a 6d trip up the river on the Hydroglider, Scorpion, and there were rowing and swimming events. the Townswomen's' Guild Choir and the Town Band gave a musical interlude from Captain Palmer's SS Princess Beatrice.



**We need your help.....**

**Stourport Civic Society will only continue to function and flourish if we can attract more members. How can we do this?**

We need your thoughts and views. We would like to set up a small working group, to consider how to publicise and promote the society to the local community and beyond.

Would you like to come along to an informal meeting in early September to share ideas and thoughts on what we need to do and how to go about doing this? No special skills required - just ideas and enthusiasm!

If so please Contact Annette More 01299 878718 or email [davidemore@btinternet.com](mailto:davidemore@btinternet.com)

If you are not able to commit to the working group but have some ideas to share then do please contact Annette, who would love to hear from you and will take your ideas forward to the group.

**Please get involved and help to secure the future of our Society.**

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**Brindley 300 Stourport Event, (Heritage Open Days in Stourport-on-Severn)**

*Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th September 2016 from 12 noon to 4pm*

In celebration of the 300th Anniversary of James Brindley's birth, Mr James Brindley will be appearing in the basins throughout the day. Details will be posted on A-boards around the site and will feature:

- Tontine Gardens - Mr Brindley meets John Fennyhouse-Green to discuss his new basins.
- The Windlass - Mr Brindley and John Fennyhouse-Green stop for coffee and discuss their plans.
- John Fennyhouse-Green demonstrates 18th Century surveying.
- A display of Brindley's Boats decorated by Stourport businesses and local community groups and schools. Come along and vote for your favourite boat!
- Georgian and Victorian characters at the Old Ticket Office and Tontine Stables.
- Return visit by Barney the Boat Horse to the Canal Basins—Day to be confirmed.
- Free children's activities in the Tontine Gardens.
- 1930's / 40's historic working boats in lower basins – Bramble and Scorpio.
- Plus a special show 'Idle Women of the Wartime Waterways' by Alarum Theatre (a collection will be taken after the performance).

**Why not come and lend a hand, and get involved over the weekend.** There is a Volunteer Meeting on Wednesday 17th August at 7.00pm, at The Angel, Severnside (venue TBC, depending on how many people can make it), to discuss Heritage Open Days.

Contact Eliza Botham, Development Manager, Stourport Forward.  
Call 01299 822 878 or 07850 784895.

## Alice Ottley School, Worcester

by Margaret Dallow



Alice was born during 1840 , the third of twelve children. Her father was Rev'd Laurence Ottley, Canon of Ripon and Rector of Richmond, Yorkshire. Her mother, the sister of Bishop Bickersteth of Ripton.

On the death of her father in 1861, his widow, with the daughters moved to Hamstead, London, where with their help opened a school for girls, with Alice becoming a teaching assistant to the youngest of the pupils. From an early age Alice showed her ability to teach, obtaining excellent honours which enabled her to educate her brothers, resulting in them obtaining distinguished careers. It was under the supervision of Miss Margaret Clarke at her famous school at Brondesbury resulted in Alice coming to Worcester in 1883 to take charge of Worcester High School for Girls which had recently been founded by Dean Butler of Wantage, in conjunction with others including Lord Lyttleton, Lord Alwyne Compton and Mrs Wheeler-Lea.

The school was set up in Britannia House in Upper Tything, the old mansion formerly the residence of the Somers family. The construction of the mansion is attributed to the local architect and sculptor Thomas White, which had during the 1860's become the premises of a young gentlemen's school. Later when Britannia House was acquired by Earl Beaucham, who for a nominal rent leased it to the Governors' of the Worcester High School for Girls. Following his death, and with the help of the benevolent John Corbett, the Salt King of Chateau Impney, Droitwich, the property was held in perpetuity. From its founding the school was a huge success. Starting with only eleven pupils, over the following 29 years when Alice was its headmistress the pupil numbers grew steadily to 200.

The aim of the school was to bring enjoyment to learning, loyalty to friends and an awareness of religious teaching. In her pupils she inspired a sense of responsibility and awareness of their place within the community.

In 1912, due to ill health, she resigned, much to the sadness of her pupils and fellow teachers. She was both loved and respected, not only at the school, but by the community of Worcester. It came as a shock when she died on 18th September 1912 in London, from where she was brought back to Worcester for burial. Following a service held in Worcester Cathedral, when the Canon in Residence paid her the greatest compliment, proclaiming that *"no other person during the last 30 years had contributed so much to the highest spiritual good of the City"*. After the service she was laid to rest in Astwood Cemetery. The City of Worcester commemorated her teaching, which benefitted all girls who came under her care, by a stained glass window in the cloisters of the Cathedral. Although perhaps the highest honour that could be bestowed upon her was the Council's decision to change the name of the school to the Alice Ottley School.

Amongst the many girls who benefitted from the education they received the writer Barbara Cartland, who was born in Edgbaston, Birmingham, who became the step-grandmother of Princess Diana, whose father Earl Spencer of Althorpe, married Barbara's daughter. Another famous pupil was the actress Vanessa Redgrave.

One of the teaching staff Miss Mary James, paid tribute to Alice by writing her biography entitled "Life".

*The grave of Alice Ottley in Astwood Cemetery, Worcester*




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**A Runaway Apprentice in 1750**

*by Margaret Dallow*

An announcement appeared in a Midland newspaper in which it stated that:

*FRANCES JONES, apprentice to John Lavender, Master Hammerman to the Rt. Hon Lord Foley from the Wildon (Wilden) Forge, near Kidderminster, did on the night between the 1st and 2nd May 1750, absentee from his masters service.*

*This is to give notice that if he will return to his business, he shall be entertained as before, otherwise all gentlemen belonging to forges are defined not to employ him, he having about three years of his time to serve.*

*He is a strong male, well, fit lad between the age of thirteen to nineteen years of age, he had his hair lately cut off his head, and had on when he went away, a dark brown coat and grey breeches with white metal buttons on them, and a brown waistcoat mixed white and yellow stripes with metal buttons.*

*Taken from my research on the Lavender family during 1990's, who were farmers' workers and bankers in Hartlebury, Wilden and Worcester.*

## Upcoming events

Stourport Regata  
Mikron Theatre

Saturday 13 August 2016

Thursday 1st September

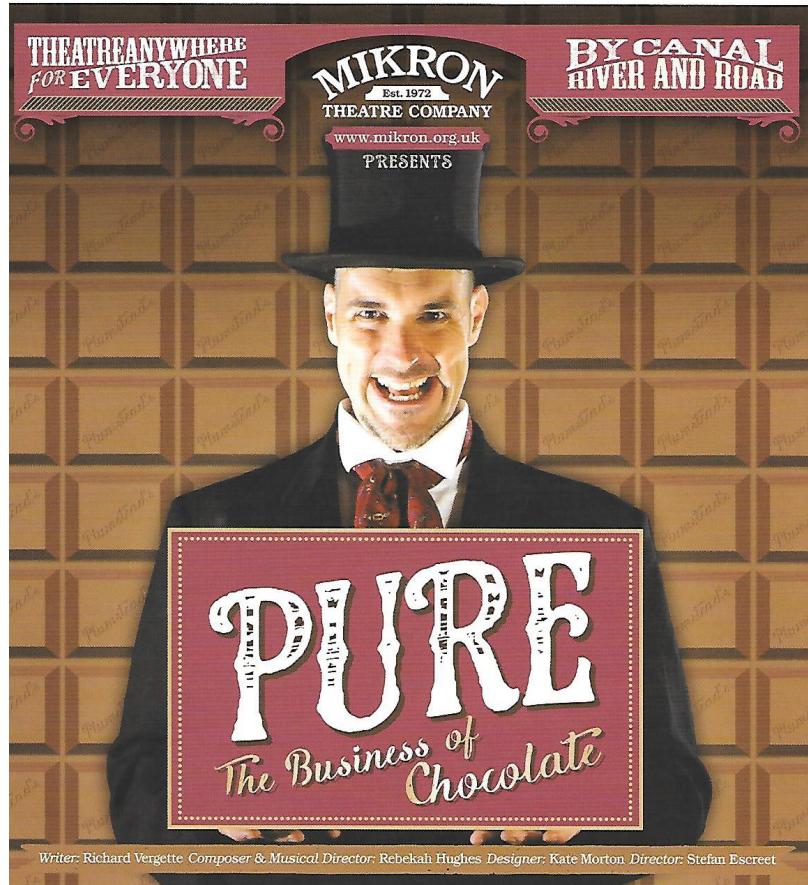
*Open air theatre returns to Stourport, see poster below*

Stourport Land & River Carnival

Saturday 3 September 2016

Heritage Open Days Stourport Basins

Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th September 2016



**THURSDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 7.30PM**

**TONTINE GARDENS**

SEVERNSIDE, STOURPORT ON SEVERN, DY13 9EN  
TEL: 01299 822827 EMAIL: INFO@STOURPORTTOWN.CO.UK  
WWW.STOURPORTTOWN.CO.UK

THIS SHOW IS SUPPORTED BY STOURPORT FORWARD  
NO TICKETS REQUIRED

A CASH COLLECTION WILL BE TAKEN AFTER THE SHOW.

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## Why not visit our two websites:

[Unlocking-Stourports-Past.co.uk](http://Unlocking-Stourports-Past.co.uk) For details of our project on the historical buildings in Stourport

[stourporttown.co.uk/stourport-civic-society](http://stourporttown.co.uk/stourport-civic-society) For information on the society and also a colour version of the newsletter

Also see:

“We love Stourport Past and Present Day “ on Facebook

[thecivicstourport.co.uk/](http://thecivicstourport.co.uk/) Check out The Civic in Stourport for dance, music and comedy events