

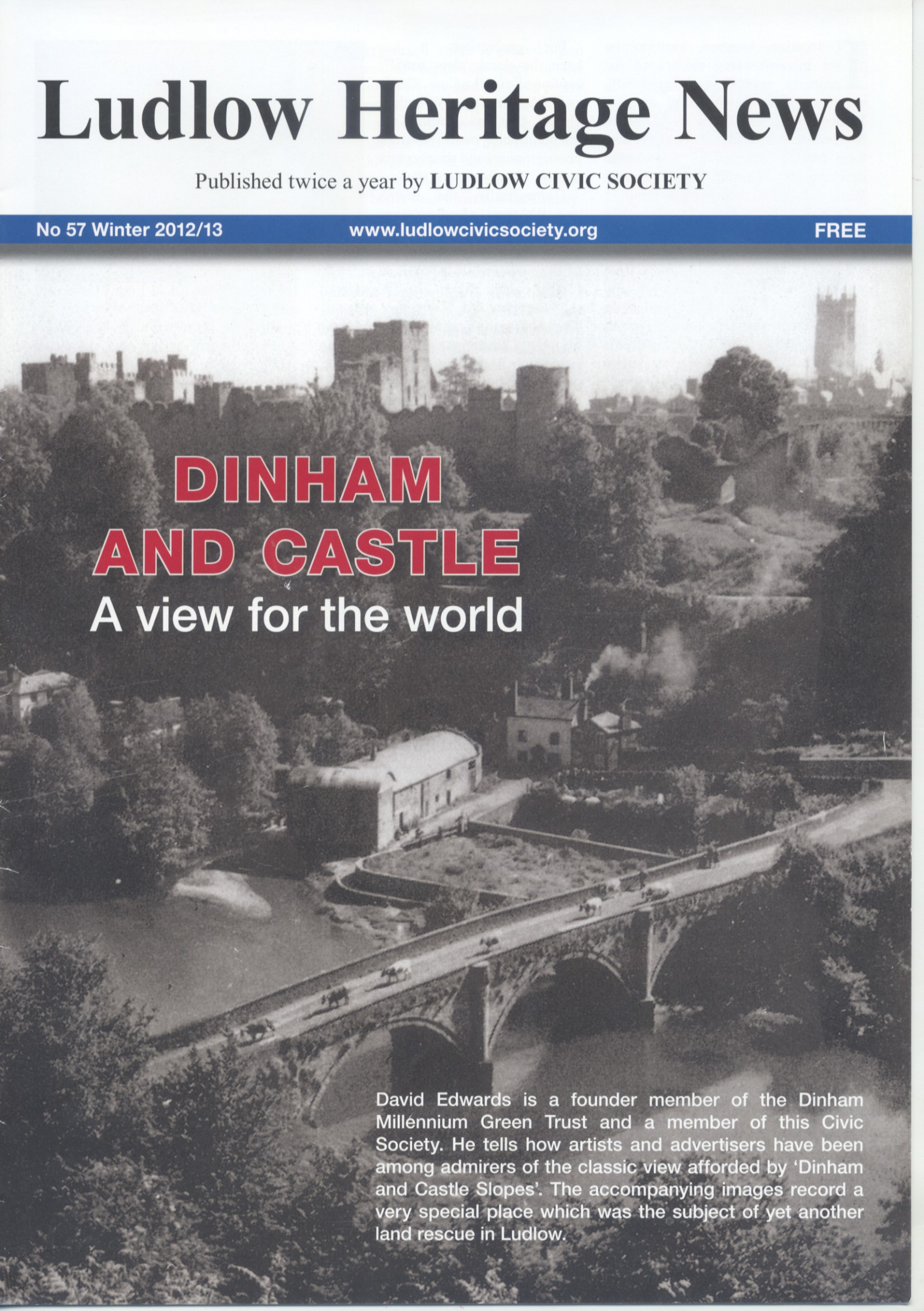
Ludlow Heritage News

Published twice a year by LUDLOW CIVIC SOCIETY

No 57 Winter 2012/13

www.ludlowcivicsociety.org

FREE



DINHAM AND CASTLE

A view for the world

David Edwards is a founder member of the Dinham Millennium Green Trust and a member of this Civic Society. He tells how artists and advertisers have been among admirers of the classic view afforded by 'Dinham and Castle Slopes'. The accompanying images record a very special place which was the subject of yet another land rescue in Ludlow.

If 'location, location, location' be the money-making mantra of the property marketer, it is hardly surprising that the beautiful area of Ludlow now occupied by Dinham Millennium Green should once have won local council approval for a six-house development. Do the words 'Church Walk' and *déjà vu* now spring to mind?

Of course, it was to see off such a proposal for the site of the town's old swimming pool that the riverside Green was fought for and created more than a dozen years ago. The next pressing challenge for the cudgel-brandishing guardians of yesteryear is to carry out essential repairs to the adjoining Castle Weir. It is not the intention to change the profile of the weir, but recent surveys have disclosed critical weakening of structure hidden beneath the waterline. To sit back and do nothing is simply not an option. The bill may amount to £350,000.

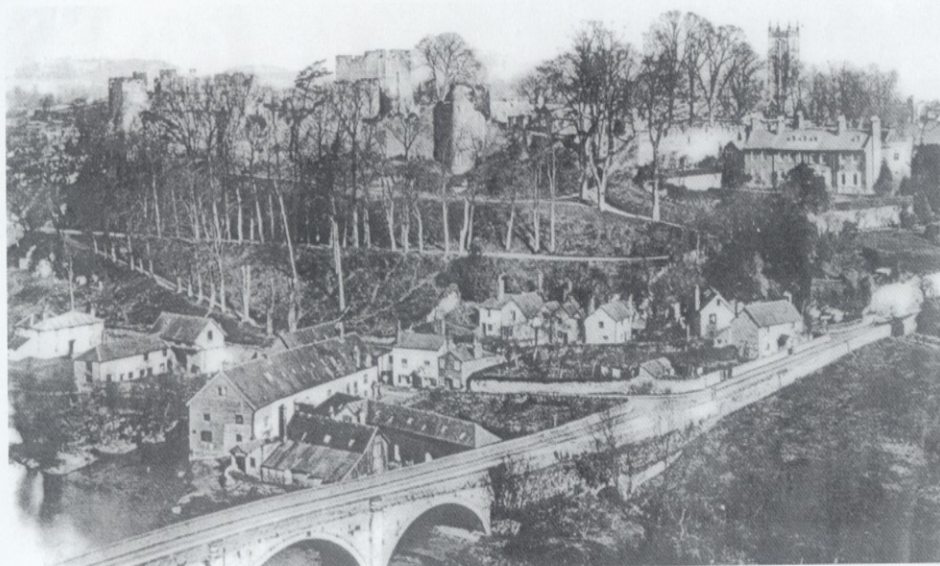
For generations it has been the classic view, usually captioned as 'Ludlow Castle and Dinham from Whitcliffe Slopes', that has captured the imagination of poets, painters, photographers and simply plain peerers. Of advertisers, too.

Domestically, the town's own 'Welcome to Ludlow' signs erected on approach roads make colourful pictorial use of the scene, while advertisers further afield have also considered that the view has 'Consumer Appeal'. The photograph showing the Castle Foundry buildings of Mr Chaplin Hodges, a Bodenham family ancestor, is thought to have been reproduced for display above the seats in a steam railway train compartment. Artistic impressions of the same Dinham/Castle combination were also used, with a great deal of licence, to help sell



the wares of the Lucas Lights Company and to adorn 'Blue Bird' toffee tins.

However, award of a gold medal for advertising and design must surely be made to the publicity committee of the Great Shropshire Historical Pageant of 1934. This highly attractive work not only graced posters, postcards and eight thousand souvenir programmes, but formed part of promotional displays mounted aboard some ocean-going liners and in the foyers of certain London hotels. The principal events taking place in Ludlow during that scorching July week of seventy-eight years ago were five pageant episodes and performances of *Comus* to mark the tercentenary of the masque's first presentation in the Great Hall of Ludlow Castle. During that summer of 1934, the town was not only well-publicised in the British press, but won a mention in the principal newspapers of Paris, Brussels and New York. 'Le



Above: The classic view as depicted on a 'Blue Bird' toffee tin

Left: A photograph showing the Castle Foundry buildings – as displayed above seating in steam-age railway carriages

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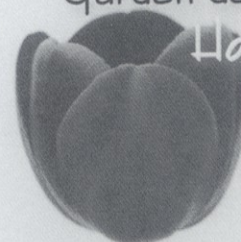


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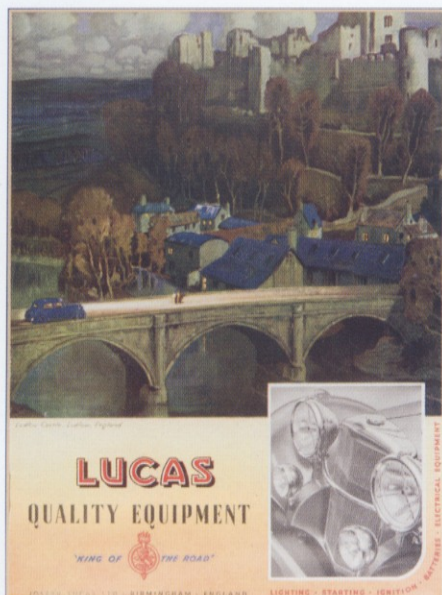
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Pageant Historique de Ludlow made news for the French.

Yes, surely 'Dinham and Castle' – with whatever variation of title – must rank as the most painted and photographed vista in South Shropshire. And not just by the casual amateur visitor. The great painter, J.M.W. Turner, used Castle and Teme as subjects for a work – reproduced in the time-line fresco above the Green Café's door – and so too did Thomas Hearne (1744–1817), who was one of the most admired topographical artists working in late eighteenth-century Britain. For his patron, Richard Payne Knight, Hearne was principally concerned with producing some fine paintings of Downton Castle and the picturesque Downton Gorge. But he also ventured downstream to Ludlow. A landscape of Ludlow Castle was sent to the Royal Academy in 1772 and a watercolour showing Castle, Dinham Bridge and Old Mill buildings was engraved for the second volume of *The Antiquities of Great Britain* of 1797.

The joy of Dinham Trustees in wresting this area from the clutches of a developer was probably on a par with that more recently exhibited in the vicinity of the Parish Church. We have certainly come to appreciate just



how very much value is placed upon the open-air breathing space of the Millennium Green. Ludlow has a pretty good record of self-help. A good scrap from time to time seems to summon up the blood and to fortify our feelings for those things we hold most dear!

One man who knew 'Dinham and Castle' better than most was the Linney-born photographer and artist, Henry Peach Robinson, who was hailed in a biography as 'Master of Photographic Art'. He wrote, 'Now a word for the paradise into which I was born...I suppose there is not so much beauty confined in so small a space anywhere as in my native town. There is scarcely a square yard that does not invite the youth blessed with intuition to become an artist.' Robinson (1830–1901) was the son of a schoolteacher – with a classroom above the Buttercross – and a very close friend of the two Gill brothers who were noted local artists. He is known to have exposed his first piece of sensitized paper around 1851–52 when he may also have submitted his oil painting, 'On the Teme near Ludlow' for Royal Academy exhibition.

Poets to take in the vista include John Drinkwater – who wrote the Historical Pageant episodes – and the angler-author Francis Brett Young (1884–1954). In his *Song of the Three Rivers*, the latter voyaged in verse down the entire seventy-five miles of the Welsh-born river, and proclaimed:

*Teme is Severn's wild, sweet daughter
A wayward child...*

In South Shropshire, as Brett Young left behind the flanking Bringewood Chase

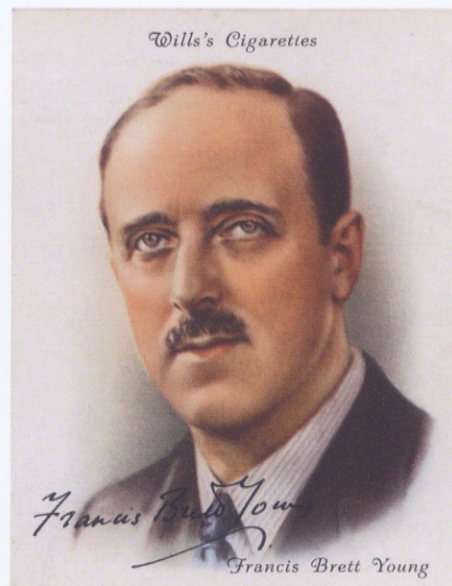
*Where Comus and his sisterhood
Of laughing dryads ruled the wood*

he was also leaving behind him the fish-rich waters of Downton and the upstream Harley estate around Brampton Bryan. Since about 1936 he had been a member of the old established Leintwardine Fishing Club, and had sought to lure both grayling and trout in much the same way as had an earlier Downton Castle guest, Sir Humphry Davy. As Brett Young approached the Dinham stretch of the Teme, he wrote:

*Above left: An advertisement for Lucas
Above right: Cigarette card depicting
author Francis Brett Young*

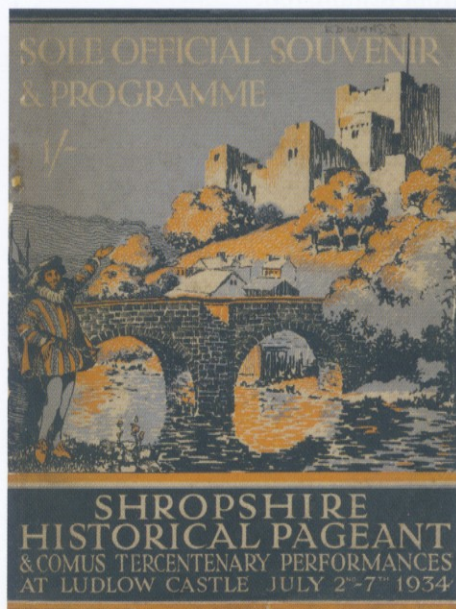
Left: Henry Peach Robinson in 1890

*Right: The cover of the official souvenir
and programme for the Shropshire
Historical Pageant in 1934*



*So the hushed river
Hurrieth, as her waters sweep
Under Ludlow's storied keep,
Where the Castle's crumbling walls
look down
Upon the many-chimneyed town,
And the sweet-tempered Ludlow chimes
Waver through wreathing smoke that
climbs....*

It will straightaway be evident that Peach Robinson and Brett Young extolled the beauties of Ludlow in quiet, sedate and artistic terms. In so doing, they were quite at odds with the drum-banging flamboyance of the Home Guard Liaison Officer who undertook the 'broadcast' which accompanied the mock 'Battle of Dinham Bridge' on 16th May 1943. He started by 'telling the world' and spectators that he was 'speaking from this Midlands market town of Shropshire, standing in a gem of English scenery'. But then he really went to town as, in perfect Captain Mainwaring tones he let them have it with both barrels:





A postcard view of Dinham Bridge and the tree-shrouded castle, with Castle Weir visible upstream to the left of the picture

"Hello, Great Britain – Hello, the Empire – Hello, America... If any Nazis drop upon us from the skies, they will truly find that they have come down in the lion's den. As the Prime Minister has pointed out, our motto may well be *Ubique* for we of the Home Guard are everywhere."

Well, a good deal of water has flowed under Dinham Bridge since the Home Guard fought their battle and since we of Dinham Millennium Green Trust had also to take up arms in a lesser conflict over a precious plot of land.

As things have turned out we have not had any nasty Nazis dropping in upon us but only some very pleasant Germans, and other visitors from those lands of former Empire, and from the great United States. And a huge number from Britain, too.

Oh, and that Home Guard Officer? Well, he may have sounded a mite jingoistic and a tad OTT, but the truth is he just couldn't help it. His name, believe it or not, was *Captain Churchill*. And when all the bodies had been cleared away from the Killing Field alongside Dinham Bridge, his wife served the teas.

Why should Britain tremble?

Footnote:

Not everyone has been keen to attract visitors to Ludlow or, indeed, give them directions. A security-minded Home Guard at Burford was asked by a private motorist if the road on which he travelled would eventually deposit him in Ludlow. The Home Guard replied,

'Well, it always went to Ludlow in peacetime, but I'm damned if I'm tellin' yer where it goes now that there's a war on.'

David Edwards

About the Weir

Repairs to Castle Weir, provision of a fish pass and restoration of old eel 'traps' for monitoring and conservation purposes are the principal goals in the Trust's current project.

Certain promises of financial support have already been made by Shropshire Council, Veolia and Severn Rivers Trust, and, key to the whole enterprise, a submission has been made to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Carrying out work on any river does present special problems. Unexpected 'high' and 'low' water levels during the last twelve months would have made work impossible, and even now – at the time of going to press – there may be need for a further condition survey. A fish pass in the weir is a priority. It will be recalled that very low water last November halted many spawn-laden salmon intent on travelling over weirs to breeding grounds upstream. Those of us at Dinham who were involved with cutting an emergency pass were amazed to learn that the monetary value of one fertile Teme salmon was reckoned at £8,000. Of course, other prohibitions on weir work come at fish breeding times.



Michael Rosenbaum documents

It is now 160 years since the railway to Ludlow was opened, running south from Shrewsbury, to great fanfare on 20th April 1852. However, a further year and a half would elapse before rail travel further south would be possible, the line opening to passenger service through to Hereford in December 1853. The 140th anniversary of this event was marked by *Heritage News* in 1992 with an article by Mr N.L. Warburton, and so the opportunity has been taken to amplify his story.

Prior to the coming of the railway, Ludlow was relatively isolated. Roads were poor and the nearest navigable river was the Severn at Bewdley, from where goods were regularly transported by animal-hauled wagons. But the fifteen-mile journey was slow and, during the wet winter months, difficult due to the absence of all-weather surfaces. From 1730 onwards, the turnpike system brought about improvements but also increased expense due to tolls. Indeed, nearly half a dozen toll houses still exist around Ludlow, for example on the old road to Richard's Castle, along Fishmore Road, just across Corve Bridge, and on Temeside.

Plans for a canal to Ludlow gained momentum when a public company was floated in 1790 for a scheme to link Stourport with Hereford, passing Woofferton which is just three miles south of Ludlow. Construction began in 1791 but problems, particularly driving Putnall Tunnel near Orleton through glacial moraine (a mixture of thick clay and fine sand), delayed opening until 1796 and massively increased costs, and so the



THE RAILWAY THROUGH LUDLOW

scheme only ever reached from Marlbrook (close to Sir Walter Blount's collieries at Mable) to Leominster. A wharf (at what is now the Salwey Arms) was constructed at Woofferton for shipments to Ludlow. In 1792 a Montgomery branch through Ludlow was also considered but, following the tunnelling problems noted above, although surveying proceeded, construction never began and the project seems to have been abandoned by the beginning of the nineteenth century. This canal would have come into Ludlow in the vicinity of Temeside, passing west beneath the castle walls and then north up Linney, and would have considerably altered the

nature of this residential corridor.

By 1803 the canal's funds were exhausted with little or no sign of any work east of Marlbrook. The company employed John Hodgkinson as consultant, who favoured a tramway rather than a canal to complete the link from there to Stourport. Although an Act of Authorisation was obtained, there was little Leominster support and the scheme foundered. Hodgkinson's advice was sought again in 1812, which remained the same, and just a few years later a similar scheme saw the opening of the Kington Tramroad from Brecon via Hay. This effectively killed off any real future prospects of extensions of the

The Down platform at Ludlow with 0-4-2T tank engine No. 1445 waiting to depart southwards through the tunnel with the 8.22 am service to Tenbury Wells on 15th July 1961. This was an autococh train, the driver sitting in a specially adapted cab at the far end of the coach whilst the fireman stoked the engine at the rear, pushing the coach in front of it. The train would have reversed at Woofferton Junction.

Source: Archive Images, 2012

canal beyond Leominster westwards, and dramatically reduced the future prosperity of what remained.



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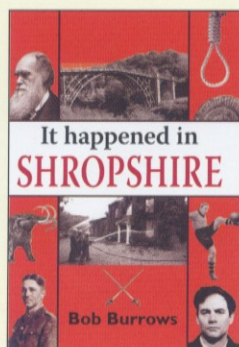
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The main station building at Ludlow on the 'Up' side, as it was between construction in 1852 and demolition in 1968. The footbridge still stands. A TT scale model (1:100) built by the late Mr Chittham on the occasion of the 140th anniversary of the opening of the railway through Ludlow, and now housed in Ludlow Museum. Source: Ludlow Library and Museum Resource Centre, 2011

By 1825 transport interests had become firmly re-orientated towards railways, offering both much faster journey times and significant cost savings compared with both road and canal. Within twenty years virtually every province in England and Wales had plans for its own railway, the Marches being no exception.

With a view to linking the two principal towns of the Marches, the inaugural meeting of the Shrewsbury and Hereford Railway Company took place on 24th April 1845 in London from where business was conducted for the first year. However, this was six years after a different scheme had been mooted, part of an ambitious plan to link London and the south Midlands to Ireland, with a line from Worcester through the Teme Valley, up to

Ludlow and on to Bishop's Castle and beyond to the Welsh coast north of Barmouth. This was formally discussed at Ludlow Guildhall in 1840, but subsequent survey showed the route to be too difficult and the harbour on the coast of insufficient depth to entertain large ships. Holyhead via Crewe was shown to be a more viable alternative.

Notwithstanding the trend, the Leominster Canal Company revived the concept of linking with the main waterway network at Stourport, in 1833 proposing a railway between Stourport and the Rea Aqueduct west of Southnet, effectively reviving Hodgkinson's scheme for a tramway. This was surveyed by the engineer Edward Powell. Various related schemes were considered in the next decade but to no avail. Then, in 1845, a meeting was held to consider the sale of the canal to the (abortive) West Midland Railway. Then followed an overture from the proprietors of the newly created Shrewsbury & Hereford Railway, which initially offered to purchase the canal for £12,000. However, the purchase proceeded only slowly and, after nearly ten years, led to a Bill in Chancery to be filed against the Railway Company. The Canal Company's Bill sought payment of the

£12,000, with interest from 1st January 1847! The Bill was dismissed on a mere technicality – that the two directors of the Railway had not signed the original agreement – but the Canal Company threatened to appeal, and the Shrewsbury & Hereford Railway was shamed into completion of the original deal.

By this time, 1857, the Shrewsbury & Hereford Railway had little use for the main canal alignment between Leominster and Woofferton, nor for the Teme Valley section, and thus, once again, the canal was put up for sale.

As a railway project, the Shrewsbury & Hereford had a better start than its predecessors, strongly promoted by the company's Chairman, William Ormsby-Gore M.P., and its Scottish architect, Henry Robertson. Surveying the route of the line began at the end of May 1845, but it was another year before it became a fully-fledged Railway Company, receiving the Royal Assent to the Parliamentary Bill on 3rd August 1846.

The 'Railway Mania' of the mid 1840s, with its plethora of schemes for railways to go anywhere and everywhere, brought with it financial problems for many as there were just not enough investors to fund every scheme. This nearly brought about the downfall of the Shrewsbury & Hereford Railway Company before work had even been started. A major disagreement developed during the Company's first year as Sir William Rouse-Boughton of Downton Hall, one of the original directors, tendered his resignation over the decision not to use the Great Western Railway's 7'0" broad gauge which he said 'was all the rage'. As Robert Stephenson (of London and Holyhead Railway fame) was a consulting engineer for the line, it was not surprising that the Shrewsbury and Chester Company's standard gauge 4'8½"

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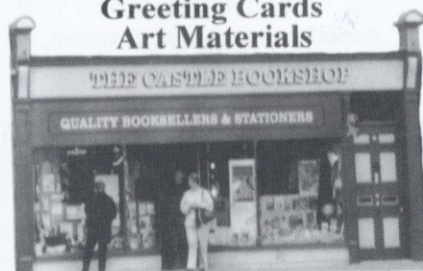


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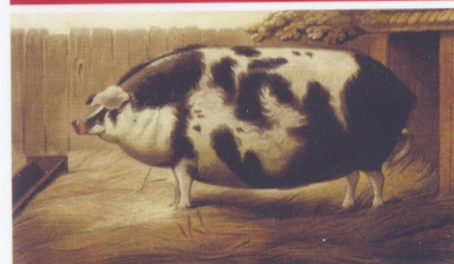
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was adopted for the southern extension. The Company was later proved to have made the right decision: the Great Western Railway eventually was forced to change from the 'broad' to the 'standard' gauge at the end of the century, at great cost and inconvenience.

At a meeting of the directors of the Shrewsbury & Hereford, again in London in 1847, the go-ahead was given to approach landowners to acquire the necessary land. The only Board members from Shropshire at that time were Ormsby-Gore M.P. of Oswestry and James Ackers of Heath House, near Ludlow. Later, R.H. Clive of Oakly Park became a director too.

Meanwhile, Ormsby-Gore and Robertson persuaded Thomas Brassey, the contractor who was already building the Shrewsbury and Chester Railway (completed in 1848) to take on the construction of the line from Shrewsbury to Hereford, and run it at his own risk. Brassey, who was wanting to keep his workforce together in order to be able to tender for bigger schemes elsewhere, agreed. Brassey was to lease the line at 3½% p.a. of the cost of construction (£239,592 for the Shrewsbury to Ludlow portion).

Thomas Brassey was a major force in the construction of railways. By 1847 he had built about one-third of the railways in the country and, by the time of his death in 1870, he had built one in every twenty miles of railway across the world, including three-quarters of the lines in France. However, although the French work had been dominating Brassey's contracts during the 1840s, the 1848 Revolution not only ended the Orleans monarchy, but also caused a financial crisis which terminated their railway construction. Brassey looked elsewhere for work and soon secured the first of many contracts in Spain and Italy. New contracts continued in Britain, including the Shrewsbury & Hereford.

Brassey's business had begun by supplying bricks and soon developed to other construction materials (stone and gravel). This expertise was a hallmark of Brassey's contracts, making optimum use of local materials. In Ludlow this saw the opening of new brickworks (in the car park between Station Drive and the Resource Centre, and where Quarry Gardens is now located). However, it is doubtful that Brassey would have controlled much of the construction on the Shrewsbury & Hereford, almost certainly leaving this to a site agent who would have had overall responsibility for executing the contract. The site agent would have worked for a fee plus a percentage of the profits, with penalties for late finishing and inducements to complete the work early.

Building of the railway commenced in 1850 and just two years later, on 21st April 1852, the line was opened for passenger traffic as far as Ludlow. The opening was accompanied

by an elaborate celebration banquet with a ball later in the evening, a detailed account appearing in the Shrewsbury Chronicle. Normal services commenced the next day.

Ludlow residents saw the railway as the means for urban regeneration. The station building reflected its importance as a prosperous market town. This was an Elizabethan-style structure of brick and stone, having windows which are uniquely characteristic of the Shrewsbury & Hereford, with a large central pane surrounded by smaller panes.

By July 1852 goods traffic was able to reach Hereford but, due to difficulties in both tunnels (beneath Gravel Hill in Ludlow, and Dinmore), it was not until 6th December 1853 that passengers could travel the full journey between Shrewsbury and Hereford.

Why a tunnel was driven beneath Gravel Hill is something of a mystery. From a civil engineering point of view this was a much more expensive and difficult operation than would have been excavation of a cutting and building a bridge to carry the road. The overburden is not deep and there are several deeper cuttings along the railway. Furthermore, it was already known that a geological fault cut the rock strata here, downthrowing the Raglan Mudstone against the Whitcliffe Beds calcareous siltstone and crushing the rock in the vicinity, making tunnel support very difficult. Such a geological contrast would also be expected to impede water flow, a tunneller's nightmare. Choice of a tunnel must have therefore been concerned with land ownership or acquisition issues. There is no written record of dispute, but the northern end coincides with glebe land and possible retention of those interests may have influenced the choice of construction techniques.

Thomas Brassey with his brother-in-law William Field, a prominent Shrewsbury merchant, eventually operated the line for ten years under the lease from the Shrewsbury & Hereford Railway Company during which time traffic, including mineral traffic from South Wales, grew sufficiently by 1862 for the line needing to be doubled. The rent would now (1862) be increased to 4% of the initial construction cost (some £1,000,000 from Shrewsbury to Hereford) and the operator henceforth would have to part with half the profits. This was not a commercially attractive proposition to Brassey and the Shrewsbury & Hereford realised they might not be able to renew their lease and would henceforth have to operate the line themselves, with their own stock, but they had none!

Meanwhile there had been a long-running dispute between the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) and the Great Western Railway (GWR) over a route from London to the Mersey. Seeing an opportunity to play one off against the other, the Shrewsbury & Hereford Railway Company offered to lease their line to the LNWR who had opened a direct railway between their junction at Crewe and Shrewsbury in 1858, so avoiding Chester. The LNWR, seeing this as a way through to the rich pickings of the South Wales coalfields, jumped at the chance. In an effort to 'bury the hatchet' with the GWR, they offered to share the line with both the GWR and the West Midland Railway, itself to be absorbed by the GWR the following year, from 1st July 1862. This arrangement lasted until nationalisation in 1948, the line through Ludlow being operated jointly by the LNWR and the GWR and its successors. Henceforth it has been known as the North and West Route.

Although jointly operated, the two railway



The southwest corner of Ludlow railway goods yard on 16th June 2008, just prior to site clearance for the new Aldi store. The large building is the stable block, built to accommodate horses for shunting wagons in the yard. The smaller brick building is for controlling the weighbridge. Source: author's collection

companies had responsibility for maintaining distinct parts of the infrastructure: the GWR south of Craven Arms, including Ludlow, and the LNWR from the junction with its own line to Llandrindod Wells (now known as the Heart of Wales Line) at Craven Arms and northwards. An obvious symbol of this subdivision was the semaphore signals, many of which can still be seen today (although not for much longer, as Network Rail proceeds apace with implementing its policy of centralising all signalling in a small number of regional control centres). All signals rested horizontally to indicate 'stop', but the GWR signals dropped down for 'clear road ahead' whereas the LNWR signals had to be pulled up. Apparently it was the risk of freezing which caused the LNWR to favour the rising motion, so it would be more likely that a signal would freeze in the safer (horizontal) position and, should the cable break, would drop back down to 'stop'. A cable break on the GWR could drop the signal to 'road clear', i.e. not a failsafe situation.

In its heyday Ludlow was a busy station. The main station building, on the Up (town) side, was built of local brick with ashlar facings to the main windows and doors, a slated roof and a timber canopy providing shelter and where most of the activity took place. There was a small waiting room on the Down (east) side. Most people who remember those buildings also recall echoing footsteps on the bare timber floor of the booking hall and the

warmth of the fire kept burning in the waiting room. Apart from signals at the ends of the platforms showing their approach, passenger trains were heralded by a bell sounding to summon passengers to the platform.

On weekdays during the 1860s there were four trains a day to Shrewsbury and seven to Hereford; it took one hour twenty-two minutes to reach Shrewsbury with eight stations en route, and one hour eight minutes to Hereford, with six stops. With the opening of the Severn Tunnel in 1886, and the development of seaside resorts encouraged by the railway companies, it was possible for people from Ludlow to travel direct to Weston-super-Mare and Penzance. In the other direction individual coaches ran through to Scotland as far as Inverness, giving rise to the line's soubriquet 'the Old North and West'. However, even though the exchange of coaches and remarshalling of trains was a time-consuming operation at junctions such as Crewe and Bristol, it gave the passengers a chance for a refreshment and comfort break during what was otherwise a journey some two or three times longer than would be the case today. Daily services now had nine trains a day calling at Ludlow, four of which were expresses that contained individual coaches that permitted such long-distance journeys. However, these gradually dwindled, and by 1970 there were just six trains a day calling at Ludlow. Quite a contrast to the twenty-six or so of the current timetable!

In addition to the mainline service, in 1861 the branch from Woofferton east to Tenbury opened and three years later it extended to Bewdley. A regular service ran from Ludlow to Tenbury until its closure exactly one hundred years later in 1961. This became affectionately known as 'the Bomber'.

Activities regularly seen at the station were the coming and going of the Royal Mail, an important daily business for the railway from October 1852. The railway also operated a very efficient parcels service with local deliveries being made in the early days by horse-drawn vehicles and later by small vans and lorries. The stables with their stalls are still in existence in Station Drive. They accommodated up to seven horses with a loft above. After many years as a store for Burgess and Austin Bros., the building was converted to retail use at the same time as the new Aldi was constructed.

Apart from its passenger traffic, Ludlow was an important goods station. In fact, in the 19th Century it was goods traffic that the Railway Company, particularly the joint Company, sought to provide the majority of its income. Coal arrived on regular coal or 'local' goods trains to be offloaded in the coal yard, being served by three sidings. There was a large goods shed (now owned by Ludlow Brewing Company) which had a through line for offloading trucks, together with a weighbridge and six small ancillary buildings for storage and use by staff.

THE JUBILEE GARDEN

During the visit of HRH The Prince of Wales to Ludlow on 17th September 2012, he chose to visit the Ludlow Jubilee Garden, and John Nash invited him to unveil a commemorative plaque, with the following words:

Your Royal Highness, we are honoured and delighted to welcome you today to the very beginning of the Ludlow Jubilee Garden.

It has been a long battle involving the whole local community, to save this special location and protect the setting of St. Laurence's Church and the Reader's House.

This land was purchased by the Ludlow Civic Society, initially via a benefactor, but then after funds had been raised from over 100 members and friends it was transferred into our ownership on 29th June this year.

May I ask you to unveil this plaque to commemorate your visit today?



Large numbers of cattle were handled at Ludlow, being loaded from cattle pens adjacent to the Up platform (where cars park today) into purpose-built cattle trucks and moved either in cattle trains or attached, usually at the rear, to other trains. The cattle market was just across the road but there was never any direct rail access to the market itself.

The goods yard closed on 6th May 1968. The warehouse now used by Shropshire Building Supplies was the engine shed for servicing locomotives used on local freight trains, including the freight-only Cleve Hill Mineral Railway. The engine shed remained in use until December 1951; thereafter, locomotives were serviced at Craven Arms loco shed. The Mineral Railway went to Bitterley from where inclines reached the quarries. The story of these mineral lines is very interesting in its own right, and can be told on another occasion.

April 20th 2012 marked the 160th anniversary of the first passenger train arriving at Ludlow station. Although Ludlow has now lost its magnificent brick station it still has two shelters for passengers' comfort and a small brick booking office. The station has seen a revival over the last twenty years with many more people using the trains, many of which now run through to Manchester and Cardiff with convenient interchange at Crewe and Newport to more distant parts. Although much of the goods yard and the engine shed have been sold off, the station area still requires much work to maintain the vegetation, largely done on a voluntary basis and hoping to emulate the gardens tended by staff when it was a fully manned station; for many years it held the regional award for the best kept station.

Michael Rosenbaum

OBITUARIES



JAMES MCFARLANE CBE

James Sinclair McFarlane was born in Didsbury, Manchester, on 8th November 1925. He was educated at Manchester Grammar School where he excelled in science. He studied Physics at Emmanuel College, Cambridge where he was awarded an MA and PhD. His first job was with the ICI research laboratory at Welwyn which he joined in 1949. It was on his first day at work that he met his future wife, Ruth, whom he married in 1951. He moved to Hereford in 1953, to Henry

Wiggins, a specialist manufacturer of metals, and he and Ruth lived in the local countryside, first in Weobley and then Leominster. James developed a great love for the Welsh Marches. In 1969 he moved to Lincolnshire to become Managing Director of Smith-Clayton Forge Ltd. which was part of the GKN group. He moved around the various divisions of GKN, finally becoming a Main Board Director. In 1982 he became Director General of the Engineering Employers' Federation based in Westminster. The early 1980s were a time of industrial unrest and James became well respected on both sides. The Trade Unionist Terry Duffy said of him, 'He said what he meant and meant what he said – they knew where they stood with him.' James was awarded a CBE for Services to Industry in 1986. He retired in 1990 and he and Ruth came to live in Ludlow, a town he knew well from his time working on the Welsh border.

Aside from work, James had many interests, particularly music – he always sang. He had played a fairy in a school production of *Iolanthe*! His deep base voice was well utilised as he was a member of four different male voice choirs. He learned to play the piano at forty. James also had a great interest in lacrosse which he played at Cambridge, and in 1998 he organised the fiftieth anniversary reunion of the Cambridge and Oxford Lacrosse Society.

James died on February 18th 2012 aged 86. He is survived by his wife, Ruth and their three daughters.

James first came to prominence in Ludlow Civic Society when, in 2001,



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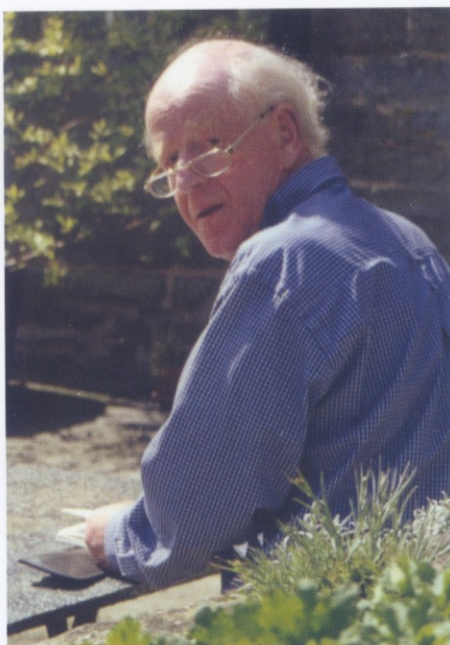
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there was a proposal to fill a gap in Castle Square with an ultra-modern building which he and many others thought would change the centre of Ludlow. When the Society voted to oppose it, he joined the Committee and became Chairman in 2002. He presided over the fiftieth birthday celebrations of the Society in 2004, and when he stepped down as Chairman, he remained on the Committee until 2010, lending his wonderfully powerful voice to many good causes.

As Chairman he was wise and judicious, only occasionally giving way to passionate outbursts of enthusiasm or indignation. His letters and Chairman's Notes were concise and effective and he was an infallible proof-reader for Heritage News.

He was always aware of the beauty of the town and under his leadership, the Committee replaced the bright green and orange litter bins which so disfigured the main streets with more suitable black ones. But it was in the long campaign to prevent the building of five executive houses behind the east window of St Laurence's and next to the Reader's House, that he really came into his own and never wavered in his opposition. Although he was no longer on the Committee last year, it was his initiative which finally broke the deadlock and enabled us to find the benefactor who made the purchase of the garden site possible. Ludlow owes him a great deal and will miss him very much.

*Stanton Stephens
Valerie Thomas*



PETER JAMES EGAN

Born in November 1932, the son of a respected Ludlow doctor, Peter grew up in the land-locked county of Shropshire. Under pressure to 'do the right thing' with his career, at the age of sixteen he duly ran away to sea!

Peter was educated at Ludlow Grammar School and, with much talk of pursuing a career in the navy, he gained entrance to the Nautical College in Pangbourne. Here he excelled in his new-found community, enjoying the discipline that came with formal training. He also reached the pinnacle of his musical ambition – taking the responsibility for bashing the cymbals in the College matching band!

Possibly being deterred by the

anxiety brought on by experiencing, at a young age, the trauma of a stray bomb being dropped on Ludlow during the Second World War, he chose to enter the Merchant Navy. Starting as an apprentice with the New Zealand Shipping Company, Peter's keen sense of adventure and a love of crossing the oceans meant he excelled in his new-found career. He also developed a love of all things New Zealand, with countless sailings into the Lyttleton Harbour on the South Island of New Zealand. No surprise, then, that he met and married in 1959 a New Zealand girl (albeit in London), Ida Lees. Setting up home in West London, he made the difficult decision to retire from the sea two years later when their first son was born in 1961. This meant the need to reinvent his career with regular trips to Eastern Europe, selling paint to the Russian Navy. In 1971, and now with three boys, Peter and his family returned to live in Ludlow.

Living in an historic part of Ludlow, he was energised to become actively involved in Ludlow Civic Society, whilst also being key in the development and success of the Friends of Ludlow Festival, which grew from strength to strength.

Work demanded that in 1986 Peter and Ida relocated to Yorkshire where they spent nine very happy years living in Harrogate. A further nine years later, with retirement looming and the opportunity of working with his second son and moving back to his beloved Shropshire, they moved in 1995 to Reilth Farm, above Bishop's Castle. Here Peter was able to flourish,

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combining energy and input into his son's business whilst retaining a passion for all things nautical and historical. He amassed a wonderful collection of prints, postcards and paintings recording the history of both the New Zealand Shipping Company and the historic town of Ludlow.

2009 saw Peter and Ida finally move off the hill and back to Ludlow where he continued to be indomitable at any cryptic crossword, Mahjong and Jerry Pots, along with continued dedication to voluntary work for the Bishop's Castle Community Hospital, St. Laurence's Church and Ludlow Civic Society.

Affable to the last, Peter always retained an impeccable sense of right and wrong, whilst living life to the full. He died on 20th June 2011.

Simon Egan

NOTES from the chairman

As we advance into the third quarter of 2012, I reflect on the achievements by the Civic Society this year. Looking back over the previous Chairman's Notes it is remarkable to read about the continuing and well-publicised achievements of the Ludlow Civic Society in recent times. In this, my first notes as your Chairman (since May this year), much of the hard work has already been done by my fellow committee members.

The successful completion of

purchase of the Jubilee Garden (off Church Walk) is certainly the top of the list, culminating in its official opening on 17th September by HRH the Prince of Wales. This is covered elsewhere in this issue.

There has also been influence and comment given by the Civic society in several projects affecting Ludlow. These include the new Hospital; St. Laurence's Church 'Vision Project'; the Shropshire Development Proposals to 2026 (known as SAMDev); the Guildhall and Buttercross, and the state of certain buildings around the centre of Ludlow. In this respect we will be restarting the initiative worked on by the Ludlow Conservation Area Advisory Committee (LCAAC) and Shropshire Council, known as 'Buildings at Risk'. Our proposal is to join forces with other interested groups to ensure improvements to certain buildings which are in a dilapidated state. Finding the actual owners of these buildings is often a challenge in itself. We want to maintain Ludlow's pride in its fine buildings, and it is a shame that a few properties in the town have not been adequately maintained in recent times.

There are about 100 clubs and groups in Ludlow. We are working more closely with relevant groups to try to get more consensus in decisions affecting the town and its infrastructure. This is considered essential now, as more non-consultative and remote decisions are made elsewhere. Both members and the Committee are encouraged to become involved in other groups and to raise common issues on a joint basis.

The Civic Society Planning sub-committee has been re-formed with Bill Eastwell as its Chairman. This group seeks to act to collect and comment on planning and building issues at an early stage. Already it has had an effect on pre-planning proposals by comment and positive action.

I draw your attention to the excellent series of lectures which have been arranged this year by Penny Wake who took over this demanding task from Prue Bellak earlier this year. We also welcome Richard Mangnall who has taken over the treasurership from Tony Cant, and Jane Hunt who is now Membership Secretary, taking over from Rebecca Buteux.

The Ludlow Civic Society Committee has a high work load with the varied projects being undertaken, and we would like to welcome any members of the Society who would be prepared to help in our efforts, either as committee members or to help out with some of the projects on which we are working. If you are interested or can recommend anyone you think would like to join us, please talk to a member of the Committee.

Dan Lloyd

EVENTS

The first lecture of this season, on the Staffordshire Hoard, was well attended, and Deborah Cane, the lead researcher at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, gave us a fascinating insight into the techniques used to conserve the collection. The original pieces are cleaned and left in the sometimes-mangled shape in which they were

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found whilst facsimiles are displayed on clear plastic mounts to reveal their original shape and beauty.

Richard Field, who has entertained us in the past, returned in October with a witty talk on Nancy Mitford, reading from her work and doing all the voices brilliantly.

Changes in building conservation techniques during the reign of Queen Elizabeth II, the subject of Stephen Treasure's lecture in November, will be of particular interest to those engaged in restoring one of Ludlow's charming but, perhaps, chaotic period pieces.

There will be some relaxing musical entertainment at the Christmas Party and Forum at Palmers' Hall on 12th December to get you into the appropriate festive frame of mind.

A visit to Birmingham's Gun Barrel Proof House on 11th March is a first for LCS. Places will be limited, so, if you would like to be included in this expedition, watch out for further information in the New Year. Do look out, too, for the new-look LCS posters announcing our speakers, and if you have any constructive criticism to make, let us know.

Penny Wake



Responses to articles are always welcome. Please address your letters to:

The Editor, Heritage News,
5 Castle Street, Ludlow SY8 1AS

Ludlow Civic Society 2012-13 Officers and Committee

President	Sir Keith Thomas	Hon. Treasurer	Richard Mangnall
Vice-Presidents	Dr Martin Speight Philip Dunne M.P.	Hon. Secretary	Valerie Thomas
Chairman	Dan Lloyd	Committee Members	Ian Bott, John Cartwright, Bill Eastwell, Jane Hunt, John Nash, Stanton Stephens, Penny Wake.
Vice-chairman	Mike Wake		

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MEMBERSHIP

It was an honour to be elected Membership Secretary to the Society in the early summer. My predecessor, Rebecca Buteux, and I have welcomed over the past twelve months many new members. Considerable interest in joining the Civic Society has arisen from the successful campaign to acquire the Jubilee Garden. There could be no more exciting time to join the Society as this project goes forward. Thanks are due from the Committee and myself for all the annual renewals of membership AND FOR THE KIND AND GENEROUS DONATIONS OF MONEY MADE BY LIFE AND ANNUAL MEMBERS. For those who have yet to renew their subscription, I shall be writing a reminder. The Gift Aid Declarations, in the new format, required by the Inland Revenue, have been diligently completed by members, giving tax benefit to both the member and our Charity, for which thanks are also due. We are looking forward to many new recruits to the society in what will be an interesting and eventful year.

Jane Hunt