

Son et Lumiere
September 9/10



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FOREVER**



Art competition
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The agony of choice



**Councillor Philip Edmundson
switches from *opaque* to *transparent*
in now voicing his personal views on
the town's Neighbourhood Plan**

The second consultation has drawn to a close and with a larger input from the residents of Bewdley than the first which concluded last July. As I write, project managers are poring over the stats and comments and I am preparing to take these results to the town council steering group for discussion, debate, deliberation and then to the next stage - the actual draft plan.

As we prepare, Wyre Forest District Council launches their draft Local Plan and the attempt begins to synchronise both. Or does it?

I see an impasse on the horizon and the timbre of what I am about to write becomes more clear: *A diversion* - some weeks ago in a private meeting with some residents, a chap who I won't name but who has been at the heart of some of the most important changes and developments to our town, a man I respect hugely, turned to me and said: *Your views on the Neighbourhood Plan have been somewhat opaque. Would you care to share them?*

NEUTRAL

I gave some neutral, high-Sir Humphrey response about trying to remain outside of the process. I genuinely believe the plan should be about the *public* response and not that of a few individuals.

However, after reading the draft plan from WFDC, the associated documents and various considerations about the initial findings of the Neighbourhood Plan, I feel it is time to become transparent.

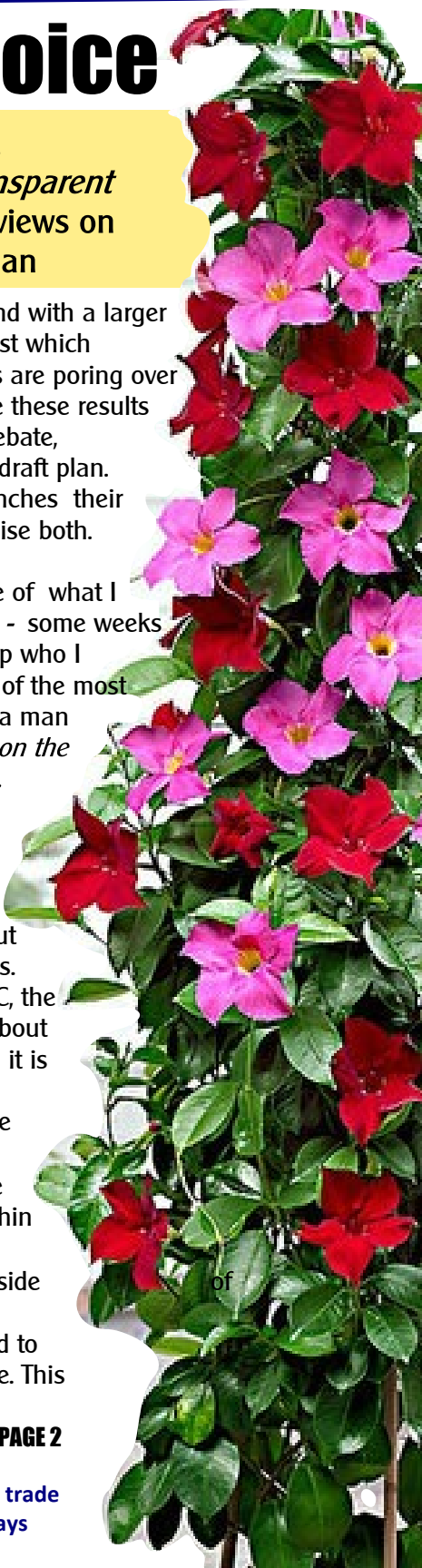
So here we go; two simple points that illuminate my own opinions. You have been warned!

1: To sustain the younger people of the town, we will need to increase the number of houses within the town.

2: There is no good reason to build on the west side the river.

In turn, let's look at the first point. What we need to look at is developing homes suitable for local people. This means increasing the range of properties to include retirement bungalows and similar

/CONTINUED ON PAGE 2





The Golden Valley by George Willis-Pryce 1866-1949 Bewdley Museum

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE/dwellings for the town's ageing population, freeing up larger family homes and then, we need to consider the younger population: starter homes, affordable housing and property that allows for shared accommodation.

We need a range of homes that suit every age group and not those that can finance their residential location through age or profession. We need the younger and older residents of Bewdley to have equality of access to homes and houses across our town.

Secondly, let's look at the west of the river. Over the past eighty years, Bark Hill and Hales Park estates have been developed, removing ancient orchards and small incursions towards the Wyre Forest.

There are a few developable sites, more suited to windfall properties, possibly even retirement homes. However, the cost is high. The stroll across the Golden Valley, the impact on the road networks, especially the congestion around Welch Gate, the near impassable nature of the top end of Park Lane and the bottleneck of Wyre Hill.

These arguments are familiar; think the Cockshoot and Baldwin Road. Yet the alternative has counter consequences: we know that the town will increase over the next fifteen years no matter what; the Neighbourhood Plan allows us to determine number and location. So, we head over to the Green Belt on the east side of the river. The circular nature of the argument becomes apparent. To change green belt is certainly high on the building agenda across the country and a key plank of the previous government's building policy.

We have to ask ourselves is it a bridge too far? Perhaps. Perhaps not. We need more homes and the neighbourhood plan has always received a modest response to increasing houses.

So, a small increase on the Stourport Road, Habberley Road and Kidderminster Road could well be the answer. The same nagging doubts return. What is the right way forward? The added complication is that the more we build on the east, the closer we bring Bewdley to Kidderminster and Stourport. Our aims should centre on keeping the three towns of the Wyre Forest separate and distinct. *Personally, I feel that the sacrifice is worth the rewards.*

Yet, this is the nub of the matter. It isn't and never has been about my personal choice. This whole process that I have detailed over the last year through this *Newsletter*, the consultations and discussions, the meetings with the steering group and the reports to council have never been about guiding my own views. It has been about eliciting and elucidating the views of the public. My views have always been expressed through the consultation process and through the robust discussion via the steering group.

We have a lot of work to do and we will never please everyone. However, we get closer to creating a plan that will offer the town a cornerstone of guiding its own future.

Philip Edmundson



Joining forces with the Museum

This year, the Civic Society Cherry Fair, promoted jointly with Bewdley Museum, will be the week-end of **July 22-23**...the seventh such event since the ancient fair was revived in 2011.

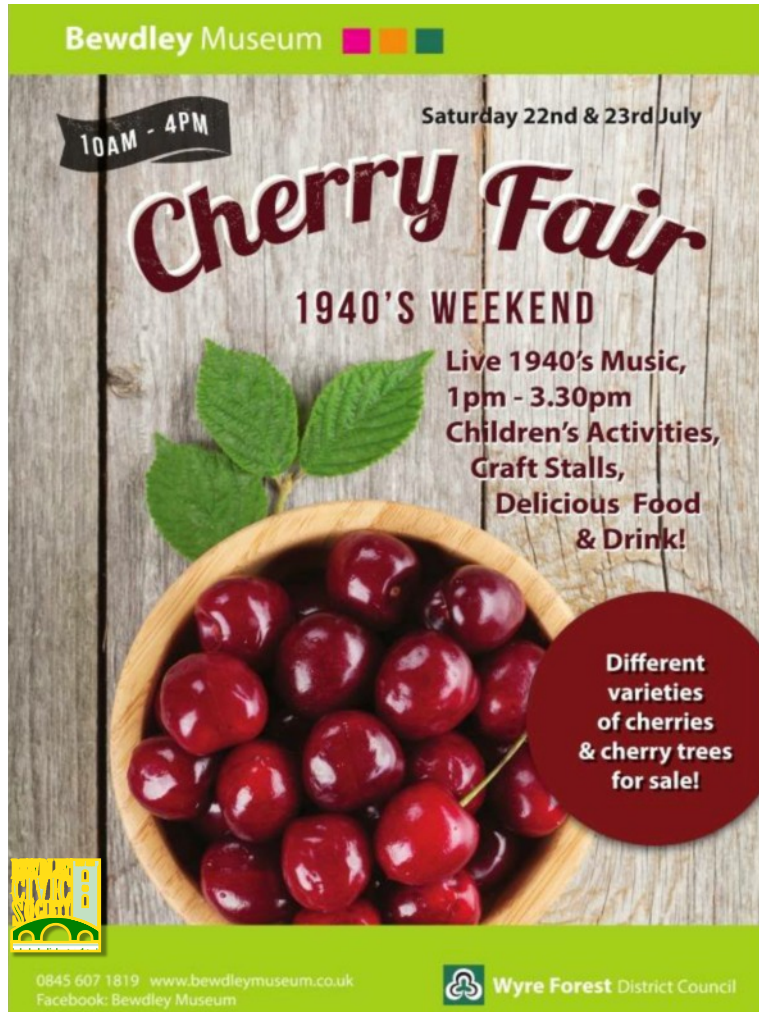
The Civic Society display in the foyer of the Guildhall will be accompanied by other stalls and events organised by the Museum staff. During both days, there will be live music, adding interest and atmosphere to the celebration.

As usual, there will be a selection of different varieties of cherry for people to compare and enjoy. The intention is to encourage more interest in and awareness of the many sorts and tastes available.

Modern, commercially-viable, methods of cherry growing mean that with increased consumer interest and demand, old varieties may be rescued, supply may increase and prices fall!

There will be young container-grown trees for sale at very reasonable prices. We hope to cover our costs but any profits will go to help the work of the Civic Society. Museum staff will sell fresh cherries with profits helping to support the Museum.

So, come along and enjoy a delightful afternoon, learn something about cherries and take away, if not a tree or a bag of cherries, a memory of delicious fruit and a renewed enthusiasm for cherries.



Bewdley Museum

10AM - 4PM

Saturday 22nd & 23rd July

Cherry Fair

1940'S WEEKEND

Live 1940's Music,
1pm - 3.30pm
Children's Activities,
Craft Stalls,
Delicious Food
& Drink!

Different varieties of cherries & cherry trees for sale!

0845 607 1819 www.bewdleymuseum.co.uk
Facebook: Bewdley Museum

Wyre Forest District Council

Bewdley Fields Forever

There is a new twist to protests about Gladman attempts to build on the Cockshutt Fields (off Lakes Road). After months of making their case in the dusty corridors of power, the *Bewdley-Says-No to Gladman* group is to celebrate the beautiful countryside (see Page 2 and right) in a more rewarding way.

The BSNTG committee have launched *Bewdley Fields Forever, a Summer Art Competition*, 'in celebration of the landscape, footpath and wildlife that we know and love.'

They have the support of local, professional artist, Hilary J. Baker, who has produced a fantastic piece of artwork based on The Cockshutts (see right) and she will head the judging. She will offer - as first-prize - a masterclass at her studio, plus a signed, limited edition print of her work (see right).

The competition is open to all and will run until September 9, so there is plenty of time for inspiration and to summon your creative talent. The full story with photos, further details and entry form can be found as a link - Art Competition - on the BSNTG website.



Cynical opportunists unwelcome - MP

Gladman Developments have cynically used the planning law to sidestep the District Council knowing the council would have thrown out their proposals for 195 houses on the land off The Lakes Road. They have appealed direct to the Government so their appeal will be given a hearing by Whitehall.

Mark Garnier MP said: *They are cynical opportunists and they are absolutely and in every way, unwelcome in Wyre Forest.*



VISIT TO SHREWSBURY

'An interesting and pleasant town'

The verdant English countryside was glorious and our pleasant journey to Shrewsbury was blessed with fine warm sunshine, panoramas of the 'blue remembered hills' and glimpses of the River Severn and its exceptional upper flood plain.

Why haven't we been to Shrewsbury before? What an interesting and pleasant town, There is so much to see! So many eating places from which to choose. Nice shops to explore.

Such were comments from members.

The coach delivered us near Welsh Bridge and Theatre Severn and we explored that area of town within walking distance, noting the flood defences similar to our own. There was time to wander among the many individual and stylish shops and the lunch-time crowds enjoying the numerous cafes and restaurants, before we met our guides for an afternoon tour.

Indeed it WAS pleasant, historic and interesting as the guides for our two separate groups clearly demonstrated, carefully choosing routes, through the level part of the town, to suit each group.

The fine buildings, medieval streets and discrete alleyways all within the great meander of river so distinctive of Shrewsbury, make orientation intriguing, yet confusing, for a visitor.

Much of interest could not be included in so short a time and further visits could be justified easily without any fear of repetition.

BRIAN STEPHENS



The stunning Darwin scuplure and below an example of the town's historic buildings



PHOTOS
Jason
Williams

Dressed for summer

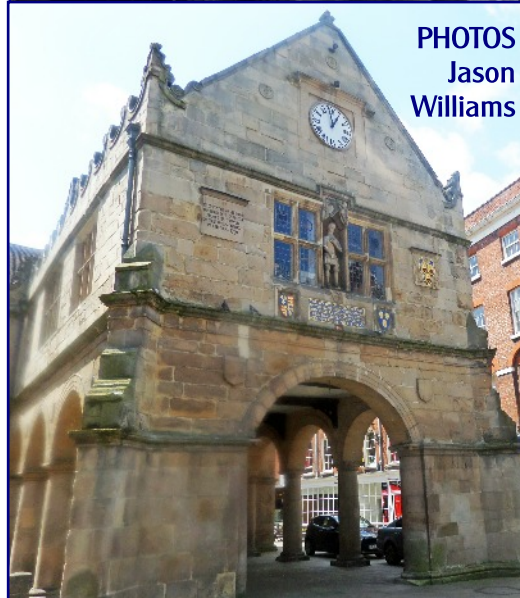


The council park staff turn up trumps again with their splendid hanging baskets all round the town centre.

COMMUNITY ART

Following the very successful Duck House projects of the past two years, Bewdley Festival's Community Art Project is taking a new turn this year and asking the community to join in creating an online photo album depicting 24 hours in the life of Bewdley between midday on Saturday September 30 and midday Sunday October 1.

Festival Chair, Anthea Coillina says: "We will be working with the team behind the *This is Bewdley* Facebook page to create spaces to upload pictures. As well as the online gallery, we will also arrange a screening of the photographs at St George's Hall." Watch out for more details on the Festival website:
www.bewdleyfestival.org.uk





BALSAM BASH 2017

This year we're extending the campaign to remove Himalayan Balsam from riverside areas near the town over a number of days (all from 10-1pm):

Saturday 29 July Saturday August 5 Monday August 7
Tuesday August 8 Wednesday August 9 Thursday August 10
and Friday August 11

We will meet at Severnside South, by the bridge. All volunteers welcome even if you can only spare an hour or two.

This rather handsome plant (*see right*) is an extensive problem nationwide. An escapee from the Victorian garden it has spread rapidly, particularly along river courses, to the detriment of most native species.

The good news is that it's an annual and can be successfully tackled by removal before the seeds set. It's an innocuous plant with no thorns or stingers, so recommended clothing is covering for arms and legs (there are nettles and brambles) and stout boots and gloves.

Pulling up the plant is the preferred method but it can be reduced with a stick or any cutting implement such as a bill hook if you have that available. I hope to see you there!.

Steve Bent

Any queries, contact me at stevenclivebent1@aol.com



SPRING LECTURE: The History of the Worcester Manufactory

Sabotage, blackmail, poaching workers and then...a Royal Warrant

Paul Crane, one of our Vice Presidents, delivered our lecture to a large and appreciative audience. He explained that following the death of Dr. Wall in 1776, the firm struggled with episodes of sabotage, blackmail and the loss of skilled workers poached by their opposition

In 1783 Thomas Flight purchased the company, and the factory began producing work to rival French porcelain, and received commissions from the nobility.

The turning point came in 1788. George III (*right*) was in Worcester for The Three Choirs Festival. He stayed with his friend, Bishop Hurd (*inset*), in the Bishop's Palace, which was next door to the manufactory, and one day the Royal Family made an unannounced visit and was shown round the works.

They bought some items and commissioned some too. An astute request during the visit resulted in a Royal Warrant being granted, and the firm flourished.

During the period when Thomas Flight and his sons ran the business some of the most important pieces produced were the garniture of vases in classical form often with religious themes. (Garniture, I now know, means a set of objects, similar but not identical)

We were shown photos of some of the vases plus many more pieces from the private collection of the Flight family, who still live in Worcestershire. These are not available to view, but they have allowed Paul access to their unique collection.

Of particular interest to our audience was the fact that Paul had found a Bewdley connection amongst the pieces! This was a depiction of Winterdyne which at that time was owned by the Moseley family.

A very enjoyable and fascinating lecture.

Jenny Frow



When town was centre of the pewterer's trade

Once upon a time, pewter, an alloy of tin and a small percentage of a hardening agent such as copper, lead, bismuth or antimony, was a basic commodity of life. In the 17th and 18th centuries, Bewdley, situated at the hub of a busy trade network, was ideally placed for the trade to flourish and became a nationally-important centre.

Tin and other raw materials would have been unloaded at the Severnside and Wribbenhall quays and the finished product dispatched to towns up and down stream.

Products ranged from kitchen utensils such as plates, tankards, basins, and spoons to candlesticks, bedpans and measuring weights and many other day-to-day items.

The quality of pewter was strictly controlled by guild and manufacturers took to identifying their ware with a hallmark as a marketing ploy.

Interestingly, hallmarks of Bewdley manufacturers incorporated a London cartouche because London pewter was considered superior (see illustration above)

The earliest reliably documented pewterer in Bewdley was Thomas Smith (died 1719). He lived and worked at 25 Load Street (now Perrigo opticians) and probably operated on a small scale.

Things took off with the arrival of Christopher Bancks from Wigan in 1697. No 55 Load Street was one property owned by the Bancks family later along with other substantial buildings such as 70 & 71 Load street which reflects the wealth and standing that the pewter trade helped the family to achieve. The Bancks along with the Duncumbs and later. Ingram, Hunt, Crane and Stinton ensured that pewtering was a major element of the town's economy for 140 years.

Quantities were vast. From the Ingram/Hunt order book 1803-05, 100,000 spoons were made a year in 50 different patterns, and 2,500 pint tavern pots.

The heart of the industry lay in the vicinity of what is still known as "Pewterers Alley" opposite the Bewdley Hotel. It was probably a maze of small workshops. Adjacent to this was a pewterers' guildhall, a seventeenth century timber framed building which was removed to Ombersley in 1841.

The industry declined from the late 18th century because of competition from Staffordshire pottery wares and the technological innovation of cold-rolling thin sheets of pewter in Sheffield that could then be easily moulded in dyes to produce goods more in the traditional labour-intensive casting method of Bewdley.

Pewter has a low melting point which made it easy to work but also easy to damage. Much pewter has been lost to fires but there has always been a healthy recycling industry. Apart from musket balls during the Civil War, tarnished or broken pieces were sold back to the pewterer, who then refashioned new items.

Not surprisingly therefore, there is a scarcity of pewter dating from before the early 18th century and particularly before the Civil War. However, a small display of Bewdley pewter is on permanent show in Bewdley Museum.

Steve Bent

with the kind permission of Davis Moulson





Stanley Baldwin and Bewdley

He was 'loved and worshipped' says Mayor

SEE ALSO
PAGE 8

in lyrical invitation to become a Freeman

At the Annual Dinner last November, the Society launched an appeal to raise funds for the planned bronze statue of Stanley Baldwin - the first Earl Baldwin of Bewdley - which, it is hoped, will be completed for unveiling in Load Street at the end of 2017, the 150th anniversary of his birth.

Many will be aware of the history of this three-times Prime Minister who was born in Lower Park, Bewdley and who served as Bewdley's MP for very nearly 30 years from 1908 until his retirement from politics in 1937. To mark the anniversary of his birth on August 3, 1867, there will be a celebratory service in Worcester Cathedral on Sunday, September 17.

The reason Bewdley was chosen as the site for the planned statue was because Stanley Baldwin loved the town and because of the respect felt for him by his constituents. When it was agreed to invite *SB* (as he was affectionately called) to become the first Freeman of the Royal and Ancient Borough of Bewdley, Alfred Maunder, the Mayor at the time, wrote a letter (see right) to him in which he said: "You are not like the big men of old, without honour in your own country. You, I might go as far as to say, are Loved and Worshipped in your own Country..." NB The under-scored emphases are the Mayor's.

At the dinner following the ceremony to grant SB the Freedom of Bewdley on August 8, 1925, SB said in his response: "*Bewdley, as most of you know, was in distant ages **a sanctuary town** to which a man, whatever his sins, might flee and be safe from justice. So whenever the rude waves of the outside world buffet me with more than usual vigour, I have only to remember that in Bewdley there is a sanctuary even for a Prime Minister...I have never failed to find in my own country understanding, sympathy and support.*"

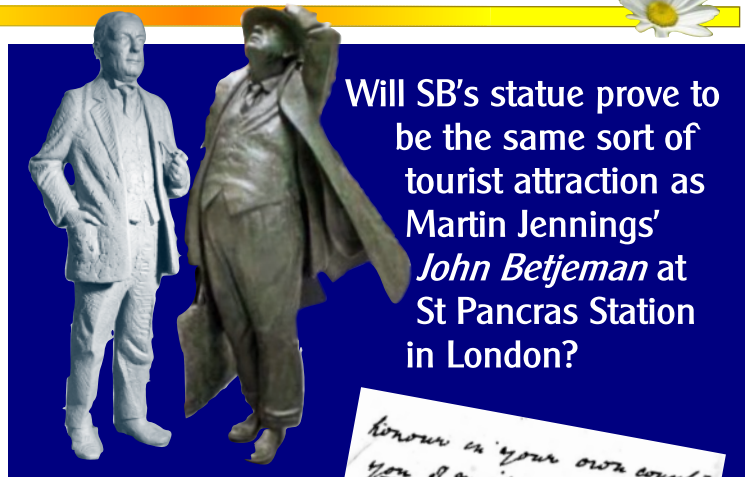
The proposed statue will be the first of Stanley Baldwin. Most other Prime Ministers were honoured closer to their deaths. After he died (during the night of December 13/14, 1947), a very modest sandstone memorial was unveiled near his last home, at Astley Hall, in 1950 by Winston Churchill.

The Stanley Baldwin Statue Appeal is hoping to raise £150,000 to pay for the statue, the work necessary to erect it on the chosen site in Load Street and improvements to the paving around it.

Sculptor, Martin Jennings, is currently working on the clay modelling of the full-sized statue at his studio in Oxford and when this is completed, around the end of June, it will go to the foundry for final casting. This will take about four months to complete.

Martin's much-praised statue of John Betjeman is a tourist draw at St Pancras Station, London and such an addition to the centre of Bewdley should prove to raise the profile of the town, to be an additional tourist attraction and consequently an economic benefit!

We are very grateful to the members of the Civic Society and other Bewdley residents who have already donated to the appeal. Of course, it is still not too late if you are thinking of doing so. **Barbara Longmore**



Will SB's statue prove to be the same sort of tourist attraction as Martin Jennings' John Betjeman at St Pancras Station in London?

*know in your own country
you I might go as far as
to say, are Loved & Worshipped
in your own country.
So I humbly ask you to
consider this & give me the
honour I desire.
I also am most anxious
to make a very big Empire
day next year, & of course
my wish from the United
Kingdom, my wish of
Empire for the coming
years & friends of Bewdley
to visit Bewdley, if only
for a short hour - hours
on that day, to speak*

****JOHN LELAND (1503-52)**, the father of English local history, relates that a *privilege of sanctuary* was formerly given to Bewdley and endorsed by Henry VII in 1491. *As a sanctuary town it would afford a refuge for those escaping from justice; and tradition relates that it was these fugitives who first built the Chapel in the town that they might receive the consolations of religion without going beyond their bounds. One fugitive, Thomas Crofte, said to have "commytted a detestable murder in the Welsh Marches hath taken the Sanctuary of Beaudeley."*

For donation and gift-aid forms, please get in touch using contact details
Email: bmlongmore@gmail.com
Telephone: 01299 403939
Bewdley Civic Society, 18 Load Street, Bewdley, DY12 2AE



Baldwin: Bewdley's first Freeman

August 8, 1925

He was met at Telford's famous bridge and escorted by the Mayor, uniformed mace-bearers and a detachment of the local militia up Load Street to the Town Hall: a Prime Minister in his second term of office but also a born-and-bred Bewdley man.

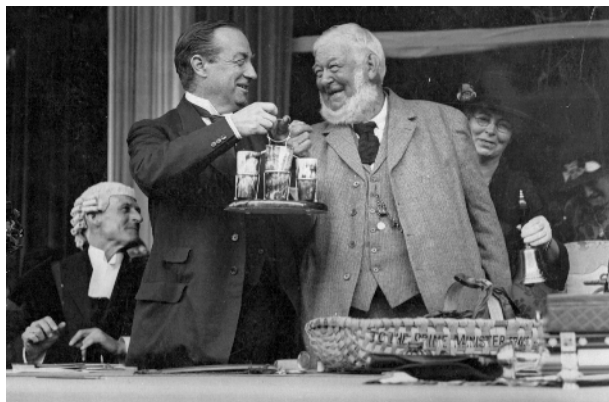
He had served as the town's Member of Parliament since 1908 and was hugely popular...as evidenced by the large crowds that turned out to help him celebrate!

But that didn't deter the Mayor from mentioning the cost of the celebration!

'Now, Dear Sir, my great trouble is not personally, but as Mayor, of the anxiety of my colleagues on the council how we can do this in the way we should like to, as a penny rate here only makes about £30, would you accept this honour, in a very humble way, at the lowest possible expense we could go to...'

Oath on admission of an Honorary Freeman
 You shall swear to be true to our Lord the King; you shall be obedient to the Mayor for the time being of this Borough and obey his lawful Warrants, Precepts and Commands. You shall also, as much as lies in your power, to do every act for the good rule, government and safety of the Borough and the Inhabitants thereof. So help you God.

Craftwork from the craftsmen



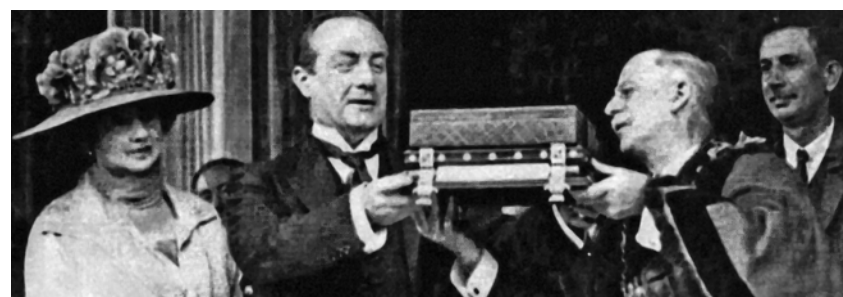
Local tradesman Joe Oakes presenting Stanley Baldwin with a number of Bewdley artefacts, made specially for him by local craftsmen. They include horn drinking cups, the brass bell (being held by the Mayoress) and a basket with lettering around it saying *To The Prime Minister*.



The march of honour: SB proudly strides into *his sanctuary* town while his wife, Lucy (inset) clearly shares the joy of the occasion.



The Oath The Town Clerk helps a pensive SB with the fine details.



The presentation: The Freedom of the town comes with scroll in a beautiful casket made by the Bromsgrove Guild

MADAME TUSSAUD'S EXHIBITION Baker Street Station Lifelike Portrait Model of The Right Hon STANLEY BALDWIN Music and Tea at Tussaud's
 Adm 1s (Tax 3d) Children 6d (tax 2d) 10am to 10pm

From the London
Evening Star of November, 1927



'Bringing the best to the town and bringing the best out of the town'

At a town meeting thirty years ago, the packed audience noisily urged the Mayor to carry out his proposal to stage an arts festival offering *something for everyone*.

The Mayor was Councillor Robert Barbour and he readily accepted the challenge and the date for the first event was set for October 1988. For no good reason, I emerged as the first director...with not a thought in my head about how I might fulfil the responsibility or where the money would come from.

Robert, who in an equally-weak moment became chairman of the organising committee, was ambitious. His aim was simple enough: *to bring the best to the town and bring the best out of the town* and he'd meant it when he said there should be something for everyone.

So we knew what we wanted to do: book headline artistes, enthuse local performers and produce a mix of local, national and international music, drama, opera, dance, poetry, art and arts & crafts.

Pretty comprehensive really...especially with minimal resources. Nevertheless, looking back from this distance, I think we got the festival off to a solid start.

The goodwill was phenomenal: the idea of an arts festival - as a kind of autumn counterpoint to the summer carnival - was well-received

Margaret Layton was the Visual Arts Co-ordinator (and organised art and crafts exhibitions and art workshops). Heather Fairs agreed to be Music Co-ordinator and took us into the schools. Pat Adams took on the very onerous job of secretary. Tony Hall was the first treasurer with the unenviable task of keeping the brake on spending money we didn't have while composing appeals for grants from every grant-making body we could think of. The first committee members were Alan Ferguson, Prisca Hall, Kim and Nick Neville and Ted Turner.

So with no budget, I ruthlessly exploited my BBC connections and in the first year, we had no fewer than four programmes to give us a solid base. There was Radio 4's *Any Questions?*; Jim Lloyd's hugely-popular Radio 2 Folk series; a Radio 3 recital with *Capricorn* / CONTINUED OVER



RETURN OF THE POET Roger McGough reprises his 1988 opening performance but this time with a musical twist.



LAURIE LEE: a joyous nightmare! (SEE Page 10) Aided and abetted by **STEPHEN FRY** and later commemorated by Roger McGough with this oh-so appropriate poem...

All for Laurie Lee.

I love the way he uses Words.

Will they work as well for me?

Sorry said the words

We only do it for Laurie Lee.

But words are common property

They're available and free.

Said the words: We're very choosy

And we've chosen Laurie Lee.

I want to write like he does

But the words did all agree:

Sorry son, we're spoken for.

We belong to Laurie Lee.

Copyright Roger McGough



FESTIVAL 30 October 5 - 16

Bewdley Book Week

September 3-9

FESTIVAL LAUNCH

Friday July 14



HANNAH GORDON the first Patron joined **FRANCIS MATHEWS** for *An Evening of Fear*



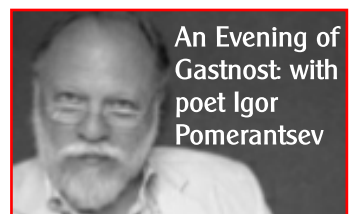
ISLA ST CLAIR teamed up with The Yetties!



Dinner with BARRY TOOK



Modern poet:
Benjamin Zephaniah



An Evening of Gastnost with poet **Igor Pomerantsev**

...and the **Armenian Dance Troupe**





Bewdley Festival: in the beginning 2

'From now on the Festival is to be an annual event'

Proclamation from the New Ministry of Culture

*A Festival is to be held during which
A competition is to be held during which
Work that exalts the free spirit of this land
May be submitted
The judges can be chosen from among yourselves
The prizes to be awarded are numerous
You may write or paint exactly what you wish
You may say exactly what you wish
About the free spirit of this land. Work in bad taste will be disqualified
Anonymous entries will be ferreted out. Those who do not enter will be considered Enemies of the free spirit of this land.*

From now on the Festival is to be an annual event



BRIAN PATTEN: prescient poem from 1988



Bewdley Festival beginnings Part 2



ALAN PRICE: Festival pop star



RICH PICKINGS featured PETER Mc ENERY and MARIA AITKEN

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE/ and a special edition of Radio 4's *With Great Pleasure*, featuring Laurie Lee (of whom more anon). These had the added advantage of being free although I spent the rest of the year repaying favours for large numbers of BBC colleagues.

Working with other local organisations we built on the programme: two evening performances by the Bewdley Players, an afternoon Schools Concert (including the winning entries in our composition competition), my own production of *Rich Pickings* and as a splendid finale, Bewdley Choral Society and Orchestra Pro Concerto (featuring the specially-commissioned *Festival Te Deum* by the late Graham Price).

We were on target to fulfil all our promises. So what could go wrong? Well as Rabbe Burns said: *The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men, Gang aft agley*. He knew a thing or two. What could go wrong went wrong! The barn venue for Isla St Clair and The Yetties was declared unsafe by the fire brigade. We had to move out of town...and double-checks St George's Hall, Bewdley High School, St Anne's Church, Wribbenhall Parish Rooms, Bewdley Library, the Town Hall and the Museum's Brass Rubbings Centre. They were all decreed safe for public performances.

The logo, on which we had foolishly spent most of our available money, turned out to be unusable but that led Margaret Layton to produce - for free - the wonderful *B* logo that lasted for thirty years.

At my suggestion, we gave the festival the extra tag of *Seven Days in October*. It sounded that much better than *A week in October*. We were half-way through printing when I did the maths...and found that my programme running Saturday-to-Saturday is one day more than a week. We had to reprint some items. It could have been worse.

My old friend Laurie Lee nearly became an ex-old friend. He piled on the pressure by cancelling three days before he was due to appear in a recording of the BBC's *With Great Pleasure* series- because, he suddenly discovered: "I have no shoes." I knew that was shorthand for saying he didn't want to do it.

Without arguing, I slammed the phone down and went into overdrive. A lifetime later I got a call back from Stephen Fry's sister. He could do the show and he went into overdrive: writing an elegant script around his favourite poetry within 24 hours. Then on the morning, Laurie rang wanting to know when I wanted him to arrive! I quickly decided to do a double bill and exhorted the producer concerned to record two programmes. The resultant evening in St Anne's is still the most memorable of my three-year stint as Festival Director. The audience were spellbound listening to Stephen's erudition and then gave Laurie rapturous applause for his Cotswold charm. Nobody seemed to mind we had gone on until just before midnight!

Jock Gallagher



ANY QUESTION?

Jonathan Dimbleby had travel problems but he arrived just in time!

And suddenly... a Festival Fringe

An elderly lady rang to say she wanted to do an illustrated talk about one of Bewdley's most popular doctors. She wouldn't take my very positive NO for an answer. In the end, her talk attracted more than 150 people. And so the official fringe was born. The second year saw no fewer than sixteen events - a mini rock concert, a string orchestra, a ceilidh, multiple plays and even cookery demonstrations - and it has grown every year since

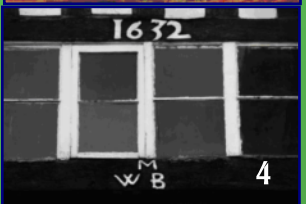


On the Load Street Trail

The spot-the-sign arranged by the Friends of Bewdley Museum in support of the *Changing Face of Load Street Exhibition* attracted a great deal of interest with locals and visitors alike.

Surprisingly perhaps, the winner was a lady from Nottingham. She won a voucher for Piccolo's Coffee Shop.

For the answers, see key at bottom of column



1&2 Town Hall 3 The Old Post Office 4 No 24
5 No 26 6 No 30 7 No 35 8 No 55 9 The George Hotel 10 No 72



Competition sponsors:
Civic Society, Piccolo's
and the Friends of
Bewdley Museum

Bewdley gets first Green Party mayor



Bewdley has its first Green Party Mayor. Councillor Mrs Anna Coleman (above) was elected for 2017/2018. Formerly sitting as a Conservative (since she was elected in 2014), she resigned from the party and joined the Greens last August, giving them their first-ever seat on the Town Council.

She takes over the role from Councillor John Beeson.

She plans to raise funds for the Friends of Riverside North Park and the local food bank operated by Bewdley churches during her mayoral year.

When joining the Greens, she said: "I have been very concerned about air pollution in Welch Gate for some time, and feel that the potential new housing development off The Lakes Road is sure to compound the traffic problem."

"I am frustrated that none of the other parties have got a plan of action to deal with such environmental issues in our local area."

The make up of the Council is now Independent 4; Independent Health Concern 4; Conservative 3; Labour 1 and Green 1.

Expert help on hand

Following our appeal in the last newsletter, we have the offer of expert help in handling appeals to The Lottery Fund for community projects within the town's Conservation Area. Former chairman of Bewdley Development Trust, Rob Smith, has volunteered his services and the Society will now be able to a broad range of ideas. Secretary Barbara Longmore says: "We are very grateful to Rob and we will now be able to consider a number of options at our next executive meeting."

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

As is evident from this Newsletter, the wealth of experience within the Society is tremendous. And as Editor I am very grateful for written contributions - especially when accompanied by photographs. So please don't be shy. Why not get writing now. Send contribution to jyg@cix.co.uk

Joek Gallagher



Richard Perrin

Town groups working in partnership

From the Chairman's Desk



I discovered a long time ago that if one hopes for a quiet time on the planning front, one is always going to be disappointed. It's certainly not quiet at the moment, not least the appeal to HM Government by Gladman Developments for their proposed development of 195 houses off the Lakes Road (see page 3). We have recently learnt that Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) voted unanimously to voice their opposition to the proposals when the appeal is heard by the Planning Inspectorate in October 2017.

On page 1, Philip Edmundson refers to the results of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) second public-consultation. The Society had responded to the rather lengthy questionnaire and added appropriate comments.

The draft NP proposed four sites for residential development; the field at the top end of Kidderminster Road by the by-pass island down to Catchem's End; the triangle of land at the end of Stourport Road; a parcel of land to the west of the Mercure Hotel and a field adjacent to the Highclere estate off Park Lane.

We said the Society is conscious of the need to balance the demand for new houses with the protection of our natural environment and noted that the site adjacent to Highclere was refused planning permission in 1989 because of its high landscape value.

We also pointed out that the other 3 sites are within the existing Green Belt and we offered to work with the Town Council (TC) to identify alternatives.

We now know, as a result of a strong opposition from members of the public and other bodies which participated, that, going forward, the TC has decided that no residential development in Bewdley west of the River Severn will be included in the NP.

No sooner had we learnt the TC's decision when we were confronted with WFDC's next stage of the Local Plan Review consultation (LPR) which includes proposals to accommodate housing and employment needs up to 2034.

It was a surprise and a disappointment to see included in core sites is the land adjacent to Highclere (30 units) this being at odds with the TC's NP. Also included in core sites are the triangle at Stourport Road (100 units) and land near the Mercure Hotel (45 units). It also proposes development of 76 units on land adjacent to the top end of Kidderminster Road starting at the By-Pass island and continuing past Catchem's End until it reaches all Saints Church, including the land known as Cordle Marsh. Also included in the LPR is a potential site for travelling show people situated on land opposite the Mercure hotel on the north side of Habberley Road.

The consultation exercise ends on Monday, 14 August 14 and there are various drop-in sessions including one in St. Georges Hall on July 19, 2- 7pm. Members of the public are encouraged to have their say on line by following the link www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/localplanreview

Autumn programme

September 27: Visit to Soho House, Birmingham See form attached



The Committee would welcome member's views which should be sent, please, to Barbara Longmore at bmlongmore@gmail.com

Notes from the AGM

We were delighted that our President, Beatrice Grant, took the chair at our AGM in April. We accepted with regret the retirement of Councillor Philip Edmundson from the Executive Committee and thanked him for his valuable contribution over the past three years.

He continues, however, to take a strong interest in the Society as can be seen by his latest epistle on the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) on the front page of this issue. We are grateful to him for keeping us up-to-date on this important matter.

We welcomed the election to the Committee of Sharon Harvey, who has actively supported us with our Youth Projects in recent years. Sharon is the Clerk to the Bewdley Almshouses charity and is well known in Bewdley for her voluntary work at SVR and the Museum.

**OUTING TO SOHO HOUSE. BIRMINGHAM,
FORMER HOME OF ENTREPRENEUR MATTHEW BOULTON
WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 27**



Soho House was the elegant home of the industrialist and entrepreneur Matthew Boulton from 1766 to 1809.

The house has been beautifully restored and reflects the fashions and tastes of the late Georgian period.

There's also the chance to see some of the products of Boulton's nearby factory – where buttons and buckles, clocks and vases, and silver and Sheffield plate tableware (*see below*) were made – and where he developed the steam engine in partnership with James Watt.

Soho House was also a favourite meeting place of the Lunar Society, a leading Enlightenment group. The Lunar Society would meet every month on the night of the full moon to dine, conduct experiments, and discuss philosophical matters of the day.

We shall enjoy a guided tour followed by tea and cakes.

The coach will leave Load Street (outside Cheap and Cheerful) at 1.00pm and will then also pick up at Blackstone pic-nic Park for those wishing to park their car there. We aim to leave Soho House at 5.00pm and be back in Bewdley by 6.00pm depending upon traffic volumes.

The cost of the trip will be £20 per person which includes the cost of the guided tour and the refreshments.

If you would like to join this outing please return the form below by August 27.

OUTING TO SOHO HOUSESeptember 27. Cost £20 per person

1/we would like to attend the above outing

Name(s).....

Telephone.....

Mobile.....

Please complete and return this slip together with your cheque by 27th August 2017 to:



Sue Perrin
59 Park Lane
Bewdley
DY12 2HA
Tel. 405823
Sueperrin11@gmail.com

