

Ludlow *Heritage*



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N E W S

FREE

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Ludlow Rugby
Football Club

Committee
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53 BROAD STREET

Igor Andronov

Dendrochronological dating of the timber in the hall at the rear of number 53 Broad Street shows that it probably dates from around 1460 and may have been part of the rebuilding of the town that occurred shortly after the 1459 battle of Ludford Bridge when the Yorkists were defeated by Henry VI and Ludlow was 'sacked'.

The current front of the house dates from around 1660, when many larger houses were being built in Ludlow to house the lawyers secretaries, treasurers and other officials that supported the Council of the Marches based in the Castle.

The house was occupied by various traders until 1674 when the owner, Thomas Lane, in his will left the house to his wife and then, after her death, to the Lane's Workhouse/Asylum Charity. The Charity then owned the house for some 250 years, renting it out to many people, including

at some time in the mid 1700s to 1790 to a Mrs Holloway who ran a 'Dame School' in the house, and during the 1800s to a Miss Heighington who ran a milliner's shop in the house.

In 1929 the trustees of Lane's Charity, with the permission of the Charities Commission, sold the house by auction for £460. From that time, Harry Jeffrey Clee, a dental surgeon, occupied the property, and it remained a dental practice into the 1970s, after which it became an antique shop.

continued overleaf



Fig.1 Appearance of house façade prior to 2000.

Fig.2 The result of death watch beetle in the timber work.

Fig.3 Cement rendering on the rear of the house.

Fig.4 Work progressing on the rear of the house.

Fig.5 Interior view of restored house.

Fig.6 Rear view of restored house.]



In 2000 the house was purchased by its current owners, and a major renovation project was completed over the next two years. [Fig.1]

Much of the oldest part of the house was in reasonable structural condition, but the rear addition and the front southern elevation had major problems: in both cases serious weakening of the structural timbers had been caused by death watch beetle. [Fig.2] At some time in the twentieth century both of these parts of the house had cement rendering applied as a way of weatherproofing the structure. [Fig.3] As the cement render was waterproof, it formed a barrier to moisture escaping from inside the house, creating a high humidity area surrounding the structural timbers within the walls. This damp climate became an ideal living space for the death watch beetles which relentlessly bored through the timbers, turning them to dust.

It was decided that as much of the original structure as possible should be saved. In the case of the rear, this was only the roof, so this was supported by scaffolding whilst the walls were demolished and replaced with new Herefordshire

oak timbers replicating the previous structure. [Fig.4] The front southern elevation was similarly supported by scaffolding, and a new timber frame was constructed, replicating the old, and tied into the existing structure with stainless steel brackets and bolts. In both cases the overall coating of render was not reapplied; instead, the spaces between the timbers were filled with insulation and steel mesh, and the resulting panels were then plastered over with lime mortar reinforced with yak hair. The structure was finished with linseed oil on the timbers and yellow ochre lime wash on the panels. Lime mortar and lime wash were used, not only to replicate what would have been the original construction, but also because this approach would flex with movements in the timber frame and also be breathable, preventing the moisture build-up that happened before.

Other external work focussed on preserving any existing old structure and repairing as necessary. The windows at the front, although twentieth century steel, were fitted in very nice old oak frames. As many of the windows at the back were either newer additions or rotten, it was decided to replace them all with custom-made steel windows in oak frames modelled on the ones at the front.

Similarly, interior work focussed on preserving as much of the old oak flooring and as many of the doors as possible, replacing as necessary with new oak boards and doors modelled on the old ones.

A new kitchen and bathrooms were installed were installed; electrics, heating and plumbing



Fig.3



Fig.4



A VIEW FROM THE TRACTOR
Roger Evans, everyone's favourite dairy farmer, is back with his account of daily life on his Shropshire farm.

A MOST RARE VISION
Shropshire from the air. Stunning aerial photos capture the beauty and the surprises of Shropshire, its rolling hills, farmland and towns. Bishops Castle, Clun, Ludlow, Long Mynd, Stiperstones, Wenlock Edge and much more.

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CHANGE

were brought up to date, and the garden was landscaped. [Fig.5]

On completion of the project, the property was awarded a Ludlow Heritage Award in recognition of high quality restoration work which significantly improved the appearance of the Ludlow Conservation Area in 2002. The main contractor was Treasure and Son and the architect was Neil Millward Associates. [Fig.6]

The house history was provided by members of the Ludlow Historical Research Society, the main contractor for the work was Treasure & Son and the architect was Neil Millward Associates.



Fig.5



Fig.6

I think most of us have a problem with 'change', and for a start, I imagine all the membership will not like the fact that Valerie Thomas is no longer our Secretary, myself included. The irony is that I am your new Secretary. I have not muscled my way in, but take on the role to relieve Lady Thomas. Furthermore, I am passionate about old buildings and have a concern for all things visual. My art college training, the time I spent working for the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) and my long and intensive training in Calligraphy, have all contributed to this.

During my time at SPAB there was a Ministry of Housing, English Heritage did not exist. Planning applications came from the local authorities to the three amenity bodies: SPAB, the Georgian Group and the Victorian Society, and we had twenty-one days to make our views known – never long enough. Local specialist architects and local societies, such as ours, were called upon for their views. The system wasn't foolproof as some pig-headed authorities were prepared to run the risk of going ahead and demolishing a building and face the consequences, but it was a system and I do not believe it has been bettered. The present situation, with the Government cut-backs, is terrifying, and makes the Civic Society's work even more important. This is a change for the worse.

I had an interesting experience with I outline to show the importance of an open mind where change is concerned. Every day I have reason to approach Ludford Bridge from the south. A sign on the side of the Charlton Arms I took for granted, and only noticed its disappearance when a

new sign appeared. The font was of particular interest as it was one which I believe would not have come into being without a hand created by one of the leading, if not the leading, letter carvers of his generation – Tom Perkins. This I was pleased to see, but I was irritated by some italic, which did not marry well, and further irritated by the distribution of the weight of the lettering – bottom heavy.

It so happened that the sign went up immediately before a visit from Tom and his wife, another leading calligrapher, and I was looking forward to a debate on the subject. When we went to the pub for a meal, the sign had gone. Cedric had not realised that, as he was using the same screw holes, planning was required. He has now been required to have another sign made to the same dimensions as before. It is very difficult ascertain reliably until the new sign goes up, but I felt that the illegal sign was a very

good shape for the elevation and rather better than the original. I think the shock of the change without the warning of a planning application took those in authority by surprise and that the return to the original shape was the safe option, whereas, given more time to make comparisons of the two shapes, the outcome would be different. How is it possible that the lurid signs on the front of the Blue Boar can be accepted and that on the side of the Charlton Arms refused? I believe that we need to be vigilant with our eyes as well as our heads.

So, back to the beginning, you will be pleased to know that Valerie Thomas remains on the Committee and is on the Conservation Area Advisory Committee. We owe her a huge debt for all her work in the past and her continuing presence. I will endeavour to be half as good and that will be difficult.

Juliet Diamond

OBITUARY

The Society was saddened to hear of the death of long standing supporter, committee member and former Vice-Chairman Paul Smith over the Easter weekend.

The Little Big Cheese Shop



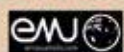
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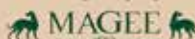
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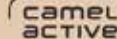


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LUDLOW RUGBY FOOTBALL

This article was written in 1983 by the late George Merchant, school master and founder member, and was intended for reproduction in the Jubilee booklet that was never produced.

A newspaper in the archives of Ludlow Museum records that at the inaugural meeting held at the Feathers Hotel on 31st October 1934, it was agreed that the name of the Club should be 'Ludlow and District Rugger Club'.

So began the town's venture into Rugby which, until then, was played only at Ludlow Grammar School.

Anyone who believes that the origins of Ludlow Rugby Club are shrouded in the mists of time is quite mistaken, for some of us still survive to tell the tale. It was only the other day – fifty years ago to be precise – that a group of us, having forgathered by chance for a chat and a drink, hit on the idea. It was at once hailed as brilliant, and can

be said, thus, to have been sired by draught bitter out of optimism. Unlike other products of that rather unreliable stable, it has proved to be a winner.

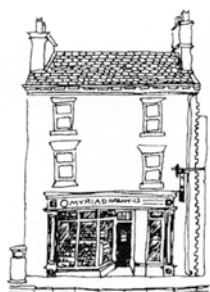
Like many another new enterprise in Ludlow, it relied on the energies of imported talent, but one dyed-in-the-wool Ludlovian at least took up the cause with enthusiasm. Geoffrey Robinson, for many years Ludlow's leading jeweller, had a shop strategically placed opposite

the Angel hotel, and was able in the multiplicity of his activities to cross the road from time to time to refresh himself and join in the gossip of the day. It was thus that he overheard our discussions and, though no longer in the first flush of youth and without any previous experience of any kind of football, immediately volunteered his services in a non-playing capacity. Nobody ever quite understood why. At the inaugural meeting which, for some reason, was held at the other favoured watering hole, the Feathers Hotel, 'Roby' was immediately appointed secretary and the club was born.

At this time, senior rugby was unknown between Shrewsbury and Hereford, and the game had only recently replaced soccer at the Grammar School. It was flourishing at schoolboy level and an attempt had been made to run an Old Boys' XV, but it was proving heavy going, and Jimmy Jones, the games master responsible, was quite relieved to hand over his future fixture list and his handful of players to the newly-formed Town Club. Neither Jimmy nor myself had been responsible for the introduction of rugby to the school, though we were given the job of overcoming the understandable reluctance to change on the part of boys who had never seen an oval ball. The game is now so firmly established in Ludlow that it is perhaps difficult to realise



The photograph shows the Grammar School side selected in the 1928/29 season. The founders of the club came largely from the serving teachers namely James Jones(JJ), Alfryn Jenkin David, and George Ernest Merchant.



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that the boys did not at first take to it like ducks to water, but so it had been at the beginning.

In the course of an early practice I was laying down the law when a somewhat reluctant convert suggested that I ought to write a book. I immediately kicked him off the field and now I am writing the book, or something like it. Incidentally, the boy in question came to me the next day and apologised most correctly. He went on to Oxford and a brilliant sporting career. The father of the game in Ludlow, though once it was born he took no very active part in its development, was Andrew Cecil Telfer, who came as headmaster in 1927. He came from Felsted and was a Cambridge athletics blue, and he was probably the last headmaster to dream dreams of restoring the old school to its public school image of the previous century. He gave up the unequal struggle and went back to Felsted, but he left behind a rugby

tradition which has perhaps been the best thing that has happened to Ludlow in our time.

Naturally, I am very proud of my part in that tradition, and when I open my Sunday paper and see that the Ludlow team of today has handed out another hiding to old rivals, I remember with great satisfaction how on a September day I walked on to the Burway school pitch clutching a new oval ball, the first ever seen in these parts, and punted it high into the air with the unspoken hope that I was inaugurating something that would endure.

Once the original resistance to the change of code had been overcome, the Ludlow schoolboys began to enjoy their matches, and a long rivalry was started with neighbouring Lucton who had been quick to follow Ludlow's lead. The man in charge at Lucton was a strict disciplinarian called Thomas, Welsh of course, who brooked no

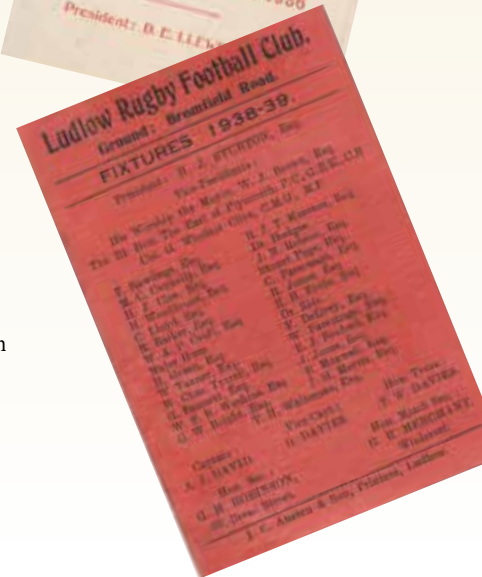
slackness and was always keen to win. His headmaster, with whom he was not on very good terms, was somewhat overkeen. In the Lucton team at that time there were two coloured boys who formed the right wing of the three-quarters and were all gangling arms and legs. They were supposed to strike fear into the hearts of their opponents, but in one of the early matches at Ludlow they so far failed to do so that their headmaster, in a fury, rushed on to the field and belaboured them with his umbrella, to the huge delight of the spectators.

Since these early days Ludlow Rugby Club has flourished and now plays in Midlands 2 West against many much larger communities such as Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth and Kidderminster.

It also has an active and enthusiastic junior section. The Club enjoys spectacular surroundings situated as it is beneath Ludlow Castle, which makes it the most picturesque setting of any Rugby club in the country.

Copies of the 75th anniversary brochure, which is a full colour 80 page publication, are available from me, Gerald Acton. My thanks to David Edwards who researched much of the 75th anniversary publication.

Gerald Acton,
President Ludlow RFC



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LUDLOW CIVIC SOCIETY



Celebrating 60 Years

Is it really ten years since we celebrated our Golden Jubilee in 2004? Who can forget our garden party on a wet summer's evening on the recently-opened Millennium Green, where we enjoyed a glass or two of wine with a smoked salmon sandwich while listening to the refined sounds of a string quartet? That autumn we produced a bumper edition of the Heritage News, some sixteen pages long, in which Valerie Thomas produced a most detailed and definitive history of the Society. We still have a few copies of that number collecting dust somewhere. There now follows a briefer and edited outline of the Society.

The Ludlow Civic Society, or Ludlow Society as it was then known, was established on 14th October 1954 with the aim of preserving the unique character of Ludlow. The Society was established because it was felt that, although Ludlow had in the main avoided unsympathetic development, this state of affairs was unlikely to continue much longer. The pressure of increased traffic had resulted in a plan to reorganise the Bull Ring, which the Society strongly resisted. The outcome of this was the Society's involvement in the restoration of the Tolsey. In 1958 the Society undertook a survey for the local council to determine

which historical buildings were in need of preservation. Indeed, they founded their own 'Housing Association', and several key buildings including Tamberlain House, next to the Buttercross, the 'Ballroom' at 45 Broad Street and the Star and Garter, 138 Corve Street, were restored.

In the early days of its existence the Society had a great influence on planning issues. It has always tried to have at least one committee member with an extensive knowledge of architectural matters who could advise on sensitive restoration and development. Apart from being the 'guardians' of the architectural heritage of the town,

the Society has been involved in a wide range of issues ranging from traffic management to the campaign to save the cobbles in Broad Street after the Council had decided to remove them to 'improve' parking, and the provision of distinctive litter bins throughout the town centre. Other activities include the publication of a twice-yearly newsletter, the running of a regular programme of lectures and trips, and the awarding of a History prize at Ludlow College. The Society has also provided grants for worthwhile projects such as the iron gates at the Oscar's entrance at Ludlow Assembly Rooms, and a grant for the Ludlow Boxing Club in 2013.

There have been some major losses, including the demolition of the Clifton Cinema and the Railway Station. There have even been decisions taken by the Committee that today would seem strange, including the support given by some members for the bypass to cut through Whitcliffe.

The Society has also been split on certain matters including the style of the replacement building at 18 Castle Street in the early years of the present century. Since 2004 the Society has been ever vigilant in an increasingly unsympathetic planning environment. It has kept a continuing close eye on the town's southern approaches, and it has helped create Ludlow's second Victorian Conservation Area. Perhaps its biggest challenge has been its involvement with the land at the side of the Reader's House, a case it won thanks to the hard work of many members of the Society. Indeed, the visual appearance and feel of the town, as seen today, owes a great deal to the work of the Society over the last sixty years.

To celebrate our Diamond Jubilee the Society is restoring the fountain in Castle Walk as described in the following article.

Stanton Stephens, based on research by Valerie Thomas.

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CASTLE GARDEN FOUNTAIN

This year commemorates the 60th anniversary of the founding of Ludlow Civic Society and the Committee has decided to commence the restoration of the Drinking fountain in the Castle Gardens to mark this event.

This fountain was presented to the town by George Woodhouse in 1908 and is still owned by the town. George was a prominent business man and Mayor of Ludlow from 1907 to 1911. Today he would be called an entrepreneur, having many fingers in many pies. He traded as a chemist at 45 the Bull Ring which remained a chemist's shop until the late 1960s when the lease was taken over by Boots. In addition to his day job, George was a registered dentist, also a seedsman, alchemist and druggist. He also carried out the duties of the deputy registrar of births and deaths. The fountain is constructed from cast iron and was made by Glenfields of Kilmarnock in Scotland who are still in business.

The Civic Society have recently made

representation to the full Town Council, seeking their permission to proceed, having obtained estimates from companies willing to take on this specialist work. The Society has also approached the Severn Trent Water Co., seeking their co-operation and financial clout to assist in this project.

The council will meet on 29th September, when it is hoped permission will be granted to commission the chosen contractor. The fountain will then be taken off site and restoration work commenced. It will be some months before we have the fountain returned, but it will assuredly be looking better than the sorry state at present, and hopefully be supplying fresh water to the townsfolk of Ludlow again.

Tony Mahalski



C O M M I T T E E

News

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

We have always worked closely with Shropshire Council to try to ensure correct maintenance and condition of the important buildings of Ludlow. The basis for information has been a register of properties around the town which is held in a database at Shirehall. This is a public document, although not always easy to access. Much of the

information has gradually become out of date, largely due to lack of resources within the Council.

Following discussions with the Conservation Officers we will soon start a joint initiative to review properties around the town, based on a street survey. The survey will be carried out by volunteers drawn from various Ludlow groups, who

will receive appropriate training on how the survey is carried out and on interpretation of results.

Our ambition is to make available general information on town properties to those who may be interested. This will help considerably in planning and conservation matters, and furthermore, will provide the Civic Society and other groups with up-to-date information with regard to buildings and structures which,

in some cases, should be in better condition than they appear to be.

It is essential that the proud buildings of our town are kept in a suitable condition for the benefit, not only of residents, but also of the increasing number of visitors who visit Ludlow because of its vibrant and spectacular compact townscape and our unique absence of new development 'out-of-town' urban sprawl.

Dan Lloyd



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TALKS AND EVENTS

Actually, dear reader, it isn't the millennium of the signing of Magna Carta next year, as those of you who read my offering in the last Heritage News will have spotted. It's the 800th anniversary: my deliberate mistake to ensure that you read, learn and inwardly digest this edition's contribution!

This is an appropriate opportunity to reinforce the message to members of Ludlow Civic Society that from Wednesday 10th September, until further notice, meetings at Ludlow Assembly Rooms will commence one hour earlier at 6.30 pm (doors opening at 6.00pm). It is also worth putting in your diaries well in advance that the talk to be given in April has been planned a week later than usual in the month, to avoid the holiday week after Easter. Not only are many members away at this time, but speakers find it hard

to commit themselves too far in advance during this holiday period.

As usual, I have had a wonderful time putting the programme of talks together for next season, and already have some blockbuster titles for the season starting in September 2015! But that is still under wraps, and in the meantime the Chairman and Committee are looking forward to seeing you at the Assembly Rooms for some really informative and enjoyable talks. I have tried to keep the topics as broad as possible so that there should be something for everyone. It is terrifically helpful to get feedback, so don't hesitate to let me have your views.

As I write this, once again the rain is falling unrelentingly. Time to dust off your wellies after what has been, until fairly recently, a wonderful summer, and prepare for a season of what I hope you will find invigorating and stimulating talks!
Penny Wake

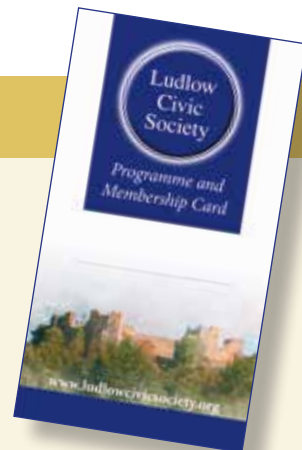
MEMBERSHIP

This autumn has brought a very quick response by members to sign up for another year of membership, maybe as a result of receiving advance notice of the programme of very fine talks and events in the coming year. The fees remain the same this year, but members are reminded that the earlier starting time for the talks is 6.30pm. This is an experiment for the coming year and the Committee hope it will be popular.

All members who believe they may not have completed and returned a Gift Aid Declaration (which, once returned, is valid indefinitely) should be in touch with me to send them the form; a reminder is needed about the tax benefits for both the member and the Civic Society from Gift Aid.

Likewise, if you would like to pay your membership fee by standing order, which greatly helps with administration and postage, I can send you the appropriate details to do this. I have had occasion to thank individually many members who have so kindly sent donations to the Society.

Jane Hunt



Ludlow Civic Society 2013-2014 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

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Vice-Presidents: Dr Martin Speight, Philip Dunne M.P.

Chairman: Dan Lloyd

Hon. Secretary: Juliet Diamond

Hon. Treasurer: Richard Mangnall

Committee Members: Gerald Acton, Bill Eastwell, Jane Hunt, Richard Hurlock, Tony Mahalski, John Nash, Stanton Stephens, Valerie Thomas, Hinny Varley, Penny Wake

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