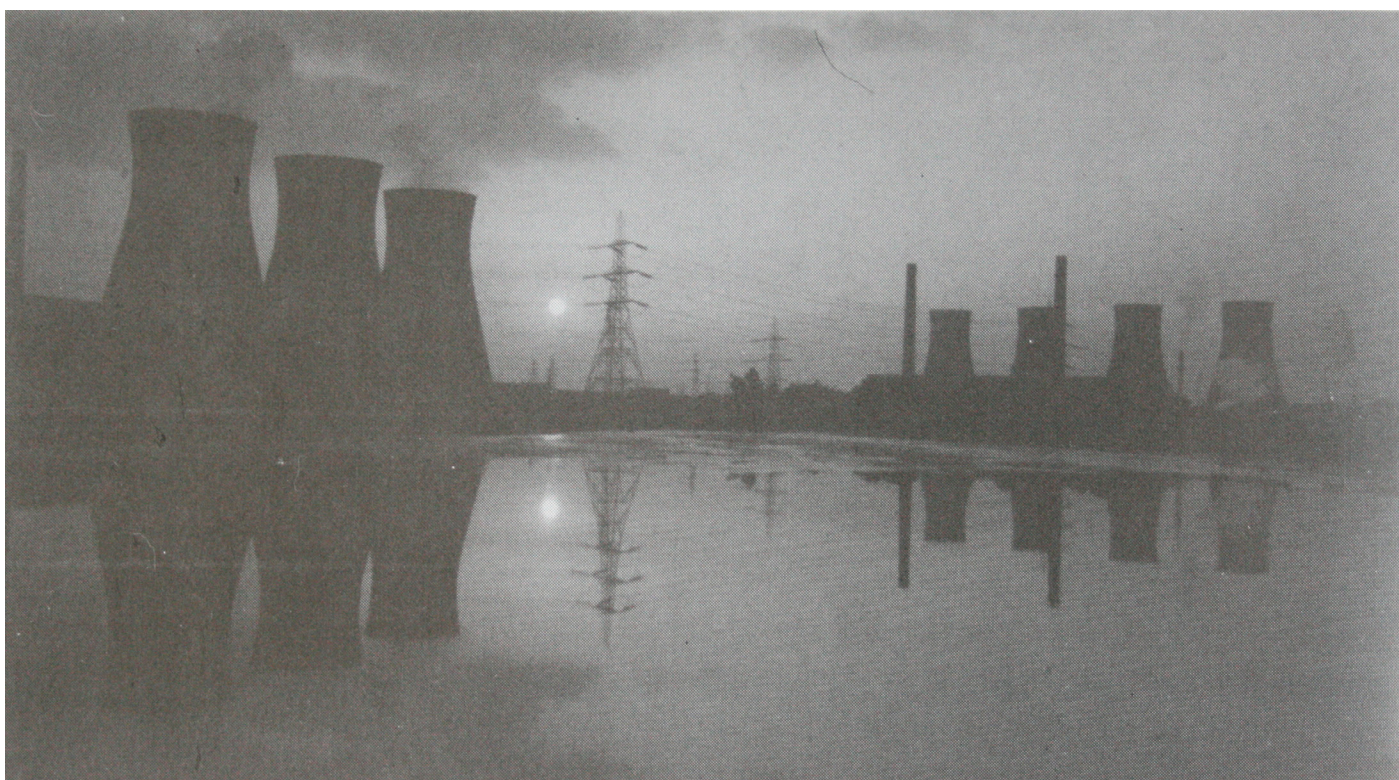


FRIENDS OF THE CENTRE FOR WEST MIDLANDS HISTORY

SHARING THE PAST WITH THE FUTURE

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TAME PAST PRESENT FUTURE



Hams Hall at sunset

Tame Past Present Future is a Heritage Lottery funded project exploring the industrial heritage of the River Tame as it travels from its two sources in the Black Country through North Birmingham. The river is the most urbanised in Britain, and flows gently through areas that were, and still are, highly industrial. Industry developed initially along the Tame as water-powered corn mills were converted for grinding blades, and as hammer and slitting mills in the 16th and 17th centuries. Many of these early mills were run by the great industrial families of the time such as Lloyd, Jennens, Carless and Elwell, and were part of the much wider development of industry across what is now the West Midlands. These early mills grew and grew and became the

centres of local industry, such as the wire and rolling mills in Bromford (Aston), Wednesbury Forge (which made gun barrels and edge tools) and another Bromford, in West Bromwich, which still works as a rolling mill today just a few metres from where the original water mill stood grinding blades over 400 years ago.

The project has been exploring this industrial heritage from the very beginnings to the present day and will be looking at how this history can be preserved as industrial areas are cleared for new uses.

The project is run by MADE and the Heritage Officer is Jenni Dixon.

The National Memorial Arboretum

It is difficult to put into words the emotions that visiting the National Memorial Arboretum evoke: for every visitor they will be different. Even those with strong feelings concerning armed conflict and its consequences cannot fail to be moved by the memorials and the symbolism that pervades the whole site. The arboretum commemorates those who lost their lives whilst on duty in the service of their country or through acts of terrorism since the Second World War and is not limited to the armed forces. There are memorials to the emergency services, medical staff and volunteers; even the four-legged variety. It also recognises some of the innocent victims of conflict: and there are memorials that are startling in their imagery.

On a personal level the most captivating aspect of the visit was the symbolism and without the aid of the guide we would have been unaware of the meaning in much of what we saw. The colour gradation in the War Widows' Rose Garden reflects the stages in the emotional journey that bereaved partners endure; the material composition or design of individual memorials have particular relevance, as does the planting. An avenue of horse chestnuts lines the police memorial because the original police truncheon was made of chestnut. There are areas set aside that reflect the process of reconciliation and at the centre there is the magnificence of the Armed Services Memorial.

The arboretum is located in 150 acres, on land adjoining the new national forest and the River Tame. There are marked walks and abundant wildlife and areas for picnics or tranquillity. If this all sounds like a promo, you are right: I came away uplifted by the experience and undoubtedly the Friends will be organising a future visit. But why wait?

Roger Bruton



Photographs by Roger Bruton

BOOK REVIEW

BIRMINGHAM BLITZ: OUR STORIES COMPILED BY BRIAN WRIGHT

During the Second World War Birmingham suffered 365 air raid alerts and 77 actual air raids, which took place between the 8th August 1940 and the 23rd April 1943. There were over 9,000 casualties of whom 2,241 were killed.

The Birmingham Air Raids Remembrance Association (BARRA) presents Birmingham Blitz: Our Stories to ensure the memories of local people not in the armed forces during the Second World War are captured for future generations.

Compiled by Brian Wright, this book contains first-hand accounts of some of those who survived. By using a combination of personal stories with a selection of images, the reader gains an insight into everyday life and the support communities provided to each other through this difficult period.

Inevitably there is an overlap in some stories, but less than may be expected. A collection of new poems written and read by Jean Frier for each of the Annual Services of Remembrance are reproduced in this book.

The Tree of Life memorial created by Lorenzo Quinn is dedicated to the memory of all victims of the Blitz on Birmingham and can be found near St Martins in the Bullring. A list of casualties as recorded on this memorial can be found at the end of the book which may be a useful and interesting resource for family and local historians.

By gathering the memories of people involved in major events in the Second World War this book brings alive the Birmingham war-time experience and may be our last opportunity to hear this generation's voice before it is gone forever.

Birmingham Blitz: Our Stories
Compiled by Brian Wright
Published by Brewin Books (Jun 2014)
ISBN: 9781858585246

Lorraine Wood

If you would like to contribute to our next newsletter, please send editorial and news items to Kate Iles at kateiles@outlook.com. Please note we do reserve the right to edit material.

A History West Midlands Evening with Jenny Uglow



Life in Britain during the Napoleonic Wars

Well-known social historian and prize-winning author Jenny Uglow is publishing a fascinating new book entitled *In These Times: Living in Britain Through Napoleon's Wars*.

Jenny will preview her fascinating book and explore the stories of people from the West Midlands in a special evening organised by History West Midlands in central Birmingham on 30th October.

While the political and military history of the Napoleonic Wars is well known, *In These Times* turns the news of the first global war upside down, seeing how it reached the people. Illustrated by the satires of Gillray, Rowlandson and the paintings of Turner and Constable, and combining the familiar voices of Jane Austen, Wordsworth, Scott and Byron with others lost in the crowd, the book delves into the archives to tell the moving story of how people lived and loved and sang and wrote, struggling through hard times and opening new horizons that would change their country for a century ahead.

An enthralling speaker, Jenny is well known in the Midlands for her prize-winning book *The Lunar Men: The Friends Who Made the Future*, which was described as 'an extraordinarily gripping account'. Her other works include *Nature's Engraver: A Life of Thomas Bewick*, which won the National Arts Writers Award for 2007 and *A Gambling Man: Charles II and the Restoration* which was shortlisted for the 2010 Samuel Johnson Prize. Her most recent book, *The Pinecone*, tells the story of Romantic visionary Sarah Losh.

Tickets for the evening are strictly limited.

Price; £10.00 per person including pre-meeting refreshments

Date: Thursday 30th October 2014

Time: 1800 hours for 1900 hours followed by a book signing

Venue: Austin Court

80 Cambridge St (Close to the Library of Birmingham)

To book tickets:

Online – www.historywm.com and click on link on home page

By mail – Send with a self-addressed and stamped envelope with a cheque made payable to West Midlands History Ltd before 20th October addressed to:

Jenny Uglow Evening, Sherborne Gibbs Limited, Minerva Mill
Innovation Centre, Station Road, Alcester B49 5ET, UK

SHARING THE PAST WITH THE FUTURE

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

The Beauty of Letters

*text, type and communication
in the eighteenth century*

THE CENTRE FOR WEST MIDLANDS HISTORY AND THE BASKERVILLE SOCIETY are pleased to announce their annual conference will take place at THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM 14-15 March 2015

KEY NOTE SPEAKERS

JENNY UGLOW: author, critic, historian, and editor. Her books include *Elizabeth Gaskell: a habit of stories*; *Hogarth: a life and a world*; *The Lunar Men: the friends who made the future*; *Nature's engraver: a life of Thomas Bewick*; and *A gambling man: Charles II and the Restoration*. Her latest book—*The pinecone*—is a study of a forgotten Romantic heroine, the Cumbrian, Sarah Losh, an antiquarian, architect and visionary. Jenny also reviews for press and radio and has been an historical consultant on BBC classic serials.

SUSAN WHYMAN: a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. She is the author of *The pen and the people: English letter writers*, which won the Modern Language Association prize in 2010; *Sociability and power: the cultural worlds of the Verneys*. Susan is also co-editor of *Walking the streets of eighteenth-century London*.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Professor Caroline Archer or **Dr Malcolm Dick**
caroline.archer@bcu.ac.uk AND m.m.dick@bham.ac.uk

THE BASKERVILLE FILM

For a short film on the life & work of John Baskerville:
www.historywm.com

*This conference is organised in conjunction with
The University of Birmingham and Birmingham City University*

www.typographic.hub.org
www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/cwmh

In his preface to Paradise Lost (1758), John Baskerville described himself as 'an admirer of the beauty of letters'. This conference takes his phrase as a starting point to explore the production, distribution, consumption and reception, not only of letters, but also words, texts and images during the long eighteenth century (c. 1688-1820). This conference will consider how writing, printing, performance and portrayal contributed to the creation of cultural identity and taste, assisted the spread of knowledge and contributed to political, economic, social and cultural change in Britain and the wider world. Conference talks will be divided into the following categories:

WRITING: teaching of writing and penmanship; styles of handwritten script; copybooks; shorthand; handwritten documents such as diaries, account books, letters, legal and parliamentary documents; the creation of texts by authors, poets, playwrights of the eighteenth century.

PRINTING: printers and typesetters; technology and technology transfer; typefaces and typography; manufacture and distribution of texts; libraries, and education; publishing and bookselling; the production of different forms of print media: books, newspapers, encyclopaedias, dictionaries, conduct manuals, scientific and medical literature, histories, travel literature, religious, legal and political texts, ephemera and street literature.

PERFORMANCE: the enactment and communication of text in theatre, music, politics and education through writing and performance of plays, ballad operas, songs and lyrics; the presentation of scripts and musical scores; censorship; theatre programmes; theatre merchandising; speeches; sermons; scientific lectures.

PORTRAYAL: the visual representation of text in maps; scientific drawings; architectural drawings; astronomical sketches; political/satirical cartoons; posters, labels; signs and shop-fronts including both architectural and fascia lettering; advertising.

Committee Member Biography:

Judith Davies



Judith Davies at Dudley Archives

When I began the M.A. in West Midlands History, Malcolm Dick asked us to introduce ourselves and I began by saying that I was 'a Black Country wench'. After spending my working life in the East Midlands, I have returned to the West Midlands where I grew up. In mediaeval terms, I am a spinster of the ancient parish of Kingswinford. My family has always taken its locality seriously. None of my childhood holidays would have been complete without my mother getting cross with strangers who misinterpreted our accents and assumed that we came from Birmingham. She would usually suggest that we came from somewhere much worse!

For me, a big part of the attraction of the Black Country is its parochialism. I can remember the anguish caused by local government reorganisation in 1966 when Brierley Hill was swallowed up by the County Borough of Dudley. I was, nevertheless, quite happy to use examples from Dudley for several of our M.A. essays and my dissertation featured the

Reverend Luke Booker, an early nineteenth-century vicar of Dudley. I have decided that the history of Dudley is far too interesting to be left solely to Dudleians and I am looking forward, with mounting trepidation, to starting work for a PhD, under Malcolm's expert supervision. I am hoping to build on the work I began with Reverend Booker by studying the religion and politics of Dudley in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

I am particularly appreciative of the wide range of lectures offered by the Centre for West Midlands History and of the infectious enthusiasm conveyed by our speakers. I am delighted to have the opportunity to join the Friends' committee and help continue its rewarding work.

I also spend time as a volunteer at Dudley Archives. It is a good antidote to my years as a salaried librarian. If you have not yet been to our smart new Archives building, I thoroughly recommend a visit.

CWMH FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friends of the Centre for West Midlands History will be informed of further details when they are available. Everyone is welcome to attend these events and there is **no need to book and all events are held at the University of Birmingham unless stated otherwise**. Events are held at the University of Birmingham, unless otherwise indicated. Seminars at the University are free. Note the different times of the events on Monday (People Places and Things seminars) and Tuesday (Historical Association talks). For some events booking is required and a fee is payable. Contact Malcolm Dick to register your interest for events indicated by* via m.m.dick@bham.ac.uk and details will be forwarded to you. If you are not on e-mail, contact Malcolm by phone on 0121 415 8253 to leave your address. The best way of keeping in touch with events is via the Centre's website: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/cwmh/index.aspx>

- Monday 6 October
Dr Manu Sehgal (University of Birmingham), 'Empire, violence and the making of early colonial South Asia, c.1753-1817'.
Lecture Room 3, Arts Building, 4.30 to 6.00pm.
- Tuesday 7 October
Dr Vicky Henshaw (University of Birmingham), 'Scotland and the British Army, 1707-1750'.
Lecture Room 7, Arts Building, 6.30 to 8.00pm
- Saturday 18 October
Black Country History Day. Lecture Theatre 4, Ground Floor, Strathcona Building, 10.00am to 5.00pm. Cost £20. Advance booking is required.
- Monday 20 October
Dr Mike Hodder (former Planning Archaeologist Birmingham City Council), archaeology and the natural environment.
Lecture Room 3, Arts Building, 4.30 to 6.00pm.
- Thursday 30 October
Book Launch, Jenny Uglow, In These Times: Living in Britain through the Napoleonic Wars. Austin Court, 80 Cambridge St, Birmingham, from 6.00pm. Cost £10. Advance booking is required.
- Tuesday 4th November 2014
Julia Hyland (Medical Effects Make-up Artist, Honorary Research Fellow, Medical School, University of Birmingham), 'Bringing Disease History to Life'.
Lecture Room 7, Arts Building, 6.30 to 8.00pm.
- Monday 10 November
Robert Hodge (PhD student, University of Birmingham), "Bewitched, bothered, and bewildered" (Ella Fitzgerald): researching the poor law'.
Lecture Room 3, Arts Building, 4.30 to 6.00pm.
- Saturday 22 November
Birmingham History Day. Large Lecture Theatre, Arts Building, 10.00am to 5.00pm. Cost £20. Advance booking is required.
- Monday 24 November
Janine Bryant (PhD student, University of Birmingham) 'Voices from beyond the grave: how coroners' rolls can inform our understanding of Warwickshire life in the late Middle Ages'.
Lecture Room 3, Arts Building, 4.30 to 6.00pm.
- Monday 8 December
Dr Mary Lewis (Department of Archaeology, University of Reading): 'The urban teenager: work, play and a final resting place'.
Lecture Room 3, Arts Building, 4.30 to 6.00pm.
- Tuesday 9th December
Professor Naomi Standen (University of Birmingham) 'Ecology and politics in pre-modern eastern Eurasia'.
Lecture Room 7, Arts Building, 6.30 to 8.00pm.
- Tuesday 13th January
Dr Mike Hodder (formerly Birmingham's Planning Archaeologist), 'Beyond Boulton: the archaeology of Birmingham's industries'. Lecture Room 7, Arts Building, 4.30 to 6.00pm.
- Other seminars will be advertised at a later date.

Dates for your diaries:

Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 March 2015
Annual conference of the Centre for West Midlands History 'The Beauty of Letters: text, type and communication in the eighteenth century'

Saturday 28 March 2015
Staffordshire History Day

Tuesday 12 May 2015
Historical Association Eric Hopkins Memorial Lecture 'Waterloo and the West Midlands' and book launch