

THE EARDISLAND PARISH MAGAZINE

MARCH 2010

ISSUE 118



It's still cold in March! Photo by James MacRae, March 2010

CHURCH SERVICES AT ST MARY'S CHURCH, EARDISLAND

The following are the known services for March/April 2010. Thereafter parishioners are asked to look at the notice boards at the lych-gate, in the church porch or in the centre of the village. Once the Reverend Doctor Rob Taylor has been installed future service details will be published.

Sunday March 7 th	9.30am	Holy Eucharist
Sunday March 14 th	9.30am	Mothering Sunday Eucharist

Wednesday March 17th 7.30pm at Kingsland Church:
Installation of Reverend Doctor Robert Taylor

Sunday March 21 st	9.30am	Holy Eucharist
Sunday March 28 th	9.30am	Holy Eucharist
Friday April 2 nd	12 noon	Led meditation for Good Friday
Sunday April 4 th	9.30am	Holy Eucharist for Easter Day

EARDISLAND VILLAGE DIARY 2009

Tuesday 23 rd March	Quiz Night
Thursday 25 th March	PC meeting, VH, 7.30pm
Saturday 17 th April	Afternoon Tea, VH
Thursday 29 th April	PC meeting, VH, 7.30pm
Weds 12 th May	PC (AGM) meeting, VH, 7.30pm
Saturday/Sunday 19 th /20 th June	Open Gardens
Thursday 24 th June	PC meeting, VH, 7.30pm
Thursday 22 nd July	PC meeting, VH, 7.30pm
Saturday 21 st August	Children's Pirate and Princess Party
Sunday 29 th August	Duck Races
Saturday 4 th September	Village Show
Thursday 9 th September	PC meeting, VH, 7.30pm
Saturday 18 th September	Curry Supper, VH
Thursday 28 th October	PC meeting, VH, 7.30pm
Saturday 30 th October	Halloween Party
Tuesday 23 rd November	Christmas Bingo
Thursday 25 th November	PC meeting, VH, 7.30pm There are no PC meetings in August or December
Saturday 11 th December	Christmas Dinner

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EDITORIAL

If you are slightly surprised to see the magazine back with me as editor, then so am I! After my last editorial I was overwhelmed with letters (including a very conciliatory letter from the Parochial Church Council, signed by all their members), emails, telephone calls and visits from villagers offering support and asking that I continued as editor. To all these villagers: thank you. I suppose, for me, the turning point was the Parish Council meeting in February, where at one point, no fewer than 50 villagers were in attendance. At a subsequent meeting of a sub-committee of the Parish Council, I suggested ways in which communication regarding the parish magazine could be improved. I understand that my proposals will be discussed at the next PC meeting on Thursday, 25th March.

Given that I was not expecting to put this edition together, I have had to fit quite a lot of work around my other commitments, which is a way of apologising for a rather hastily contrived production this time – normal service will be resumed in the next edition, all being well.

As a matter of record, the Parish Clerk, Michael Coleburn, has resigned. I imagine that the Parish Council will wish to appoint a new Clerk at its earliest convenience. I have no further details.

Chris Bivand

ST MARY'S CHURCH

The good news is that a new rector has been appointed to the Benefice of Kingsland with Eardisland, Aymestrey and Leinthall Earles!

On Wednesday March 17th at Kingsland church the Reverend Robert Taylor will be installed as our Rector. This news came just too late for the last edition of the parish magazine so some of you will not have heard this. Rob will be writing an introduction to himself and his family which is to be included in this magazine so we will let him tell you a little about himself and his family. We would like to say how delighted we are that the interregnum will be short and how much we look forward to welcoming him and his family here and to seeing him in our parish. We hope that many parishioners will be able to attend the installation service to welcome him. The Lent course for the whole benefice starts on 22nd February and will be held each Monday evening for five weeks at different locations. Details are on the church board or available from either of us, and all are very welcome.

At the church itself the repairs to the East window are progressing and should be completed by the time this magazine hits the streets. It has been particularly chilly whilst the work has been carried out and the support of those who braved the cold to attend services has been greatly appreciated!

We are grateful to the Church Commissioners who have accepted responsibility for the cost of these repairs, and we look forward to seeing the chancel restored to normality. Now that we have been offered a grant by English Heritage the business of investigating the various areas of concern will soon commence as we look at the roof, the drainage, the tower and the porch. It will all take time to calculate exactly what repairs are needed and to tender for them, but at last we are on the way. In order to find our share of the money required we need to continue to raise funds. At the same time we need to raise money for the day to day running of the church. A variety of events are being planned and the first of these will be a Big Breakfast in the Village Hall on Saturday March 13th. In early May there will be a coffee morning, Open Gardens will be on June 19th and 20th, and a number of events are being planned.

This is your church so please come to support these events. Please also note that the Annual General Meeting will be held at 7 pm on 19th April in the Village Hall. All are welcome to this which will also be the first meeting with our new Rector.

Meanwhile thank you to so many for your continued support and assistance, especially during the period of the vacancy.

Serena Askew

Alister Hoda

CORRESPONDENCE

Hello!

My name is Robert Taylor (Rob), and I am the new Rector for Kingsland with Eardisland, Aymestry and Leinthall Earles. The Bishop will conduct a service to appoint me to this position (officially an “Induction”) on the 17th of March at 7:30pm in Kingsland. I am very much looking forward to meeting you, working with you and serving the Community.

But let me introduce my family, and myself. I am married to Val, and our daughter Claire has moved with us. Val is presently Regional Secretary in the Electrical Contractors Association, but will be looking for work more locally. Claire has worked in the Care Profession, as auxiliary nurse, and personal care worker. Our son Chris, who is a sub-contractor in the building trade, will not be moving down with us.

Prior to this post, I was the Chaplain at Loughborough University and Colleges. Previously I had worked as priest

in Mansfield and Eastwood, near Nottingham. Like many clergy today, I had a work career before becoming a minister. I started out as a research physicist, studying cosmic rays and particles – so people say I have been interested in things out of this world for a long time! I then worked in the IT industry before becoming a science (physics) and maths teacher.

With a background in Physics, which I remain interested in and was privileged to be involved in its teaching at University, I am involved in the science-religion debate. When younger I was involved in sports, rugby and judo being the two I concentrated on. I enjoy the outdoors and walking.

But one of my real joys is meeting with and talking to people! Whilst this can be done anywhere and anywhen, over coffee always seems best. So please introduce yourselves to me, and let’s have a chat.

With great anticipation,

God Bless,

Rob

A letter to the Editor dated March 1st 2010, from Alister Hoda:

“It was with intense sadness that I saw events unfold at the last Parish Council Meeting and my honest belief is that the village is an unhappier place. Forty years of medical practice taught me that pain does not lessen over the years - but we can adapt to deal with it differently as time progresses. With this knowledge I am sure that the way for us as a village is quietly to deal with the hurt and try to move forward. I have seen the agendas of many of the Parish organisations and there is an enormously exciting programme of events for 2010 for which we all need to pull together in an attempt to recapture or rebuild some of our previous joyful commitment to friendship and integrated village existence.”

It was with deep personal regret that I learnt of Mike Coleburn’s decision to stand down as the deliverer of the parish magazines for the Hardwicke area.

Mike has carried out this duty for many years, collecting his 22 magazines within an hour of their delivery to me, regardless of sun, rain, wind or snow. I know his efforts were also greatly appreciated by those on his round. As I told Mike, good volunteers are very hard to find and he was one of the best and will be sadly missed.

However the good news is that John Hope, an equally genuine person, has kindly agreed to take over the responsibility. Welcome aboard John and thank you.

Phil Milchard

KINGSLAND AND EARDISLAND FRIENDS OF ST MICHAEL’S HOSPICE

On a sunny spring morning many gathered at the Luctonians’ Rugby Club for the Shrove Tuesday Soup and Pancake Lunch in aid of St Michael’s Hospice. They enjoyed potato and leek or carrot and coriander soup and ate 200 pancakes, as well as buying jam, marmalade and cakes, raffle tickets, guessing the name of the knitted Abraham the Gardener, and donated books and unloved Christmas presents! Along with donations, many gift-aided, this made a grand total of £1,030 for the Hospice. Thanks go to the Luctonians’ Rugby Club for giving us the hospitality of their club house, and to those who came from Eardisland to the lunch and those who made donations.

Annie Mitchell
Beryl Hoda
Dorothy Brown

EARDISLAND COMMUNITY SHOP

If you are wondering why the Dovecote has been closed to visitors these last couple of weeks, and what has been going on in there, then let me explain all.

As advised in our update in the last edition of this magazine we have secured the necessary funding to enable us to start the work required to transform part of the ground floor of the Dovecote into a shop.

On Monday 15th February, Dave Gittoes, a builder from the village, and Carl Evans from Euro Electrical Contracting, based in Hereford, began work on the project. Both Dave and Carl worked on the original restoration of the Dovecote in 1999 and we are delighted to have secured their services for this latest development. We are also replacing all the windows, again using a local contractor, Andrew James.

Volunteers will be painting the inside of the ground floor with a lighter, brighter colour to

enhance the whole appearance of the building and to meet with the requirements of the Trading Standards and Conservation departments.

We are holding a meeting for volunteers in the Village Hall on Wednesday 17th March, any amount of time you can give to the shop in any capacity will be greatly appreciated. We want to involve as many people from the community as possible.

Shares in the Association can still be purchased to enable you to have a say in how the enterprise is run and how any surpluses are distributed.

Should you wish to volunteer, buy shares or want to know more about the project contact any member of the Committee, details below.

We are targeting w/c 29 March to open the shop, please watch for announcements on village notice boards, the website and the Dovecote.

Albert Sheffield, Chair of Committee

Contacts :

Albert Sheffield	☎ 388026
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VILLAGE HALL NEWS

At a recent committee meeting we discussed the events for 2010 as appear in the Village Diary on page 2. Please look out for advertising notices and put the dates in your diary.

The Committee room floor should be completed by the time the Parish Magazine is printed; the Parish Council claimed for the work to be done through the Insurance Company and made all the arrangements. Thank you.

We would like your help for the afternoon tea, with donations of home-made cakes.

For the Open Gardens we will need people to help us all day on Saturday June 19th and some homemade cakes (Eardisland is well known for its delicious teas). If you can help with either of these requests please contact:

Pat Roche on 0388492 or Gill Richards 0388323

We hope to see you at some of the above events.

Gill Richards (Chair)

EARDISLAND TWINNING ASSOCIATION

On behalf of the Committee let me thank everybody who supported our 'Coffee Morning' on Saturday 27th February. We've had lots of positive comments back from members of the community who came to what was a very successful and enjoyable event.

As always the funds we raised will be used to entertain our French friends when they next visit us.

We recruited two new members, Gordon & Valerie Taylor, who have recently moved into the village and we are delighted to welcome them to Eardisland and wish them a long and happy stay.

We also filled all the remaining places for the trip to La Vieille-Lyre in July this year but are happy to have a 'substitutes' list should anybody need to drop out, so please do not be put off from putting your name forward.

We shall, in due course, be holding a meeting for those travelling to France to sort out the logistics etc.

Albert Sheffield
Chair of Committee

EARDISLAND BOWLING CLUB – OPENING DAY

At the time of writing, with the weather still bitterly cold, it doesn't seem possible that the outdoor bowling season opens at Eardisland in just a few weeks on Saturday 17th April @ 2pm. As ever we welcome along anyone who might be interested in giving the game a go, be it as a complete novice or a seasoned professional. There is no obligation to join the club and woods will be available should you not have your own. Last year our membership, unlike many other clubs, saw a small increase in numbers, which we hope to repeat again this year. Annual fees are just £35, which entitles you to play at anytime, subject to club fixtures and green maintenance. Club night is every Tuesday @ 6.30pm prompt and we play a number of friendly fixtures, both home and away, although there is no pressure on any member to compete. Further information can be obtained from either Pat Roche on 01544 388492 or Phil Milchard on 01544 388097.

EARDISLAND IN BLOOM 2010

The 2010 campaign started autumn 2009 when the E team planted crocus and narcissus bulbs (see January 2010 magazine p.13). The crocus can be seen flowering on the south side of the Manor House garden wall, opposite the Village War Memorial. The narcissus are just poking through the grass verge alongside the footpath, that runs from the east end of churchyard towards the village hall. It is

planned to plant more bulbs (subject to sufficient funds being available) to create a naturalised narcissus walk for residents to enjoy and photograph.

On February 22nd Angela Pendleton, a well known horticulturist and judge for Heart of England in Bloom, met with a group of interested parishioners to review the Silver Gilt award of 2009, aiming for 'GOLD' in 2010.

CORE PILLARS OF HEART OF ENGLAND:

Horticultural Achievement - maximum points 100:

Eardisland 2009 - 73 points.

Environmental Responsibility - maximum points 50:

Eardisland 2009 - 40 points.

Community participation - maximum points 50:

Eardisland 2009 - 48 points.

TOTAL: maximum points 200 - Eardisland 2009 - 161points.

Eardisland in Bloom volunteers welcome discussion with interested parties with sustainable ideas for the future and winning 'GOLD'.

Remember to enter the 'TALLEST SUNFLOWER COMPETITION' 2010 and photographic competition 'EARDISLAND: A VILLAGE FOR ALL SEASONS'. (see January 2010 magazine p. 14).

Derek Wareham
Co-ordinator, Eardisland in Bloom 2010

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Not Sure? Don't Open The Door

A national campaign to promote the risks posed by distraction burglars is being launched by the Association of Chief Police Officers on 4th March 2010. Under the banner of Operation Liberal, an initiative that police forces across the UK started a few years ago, a series of four posters will be in evidence at key locations.

Each poster carries a positive message depicting how elderly people kept out distraction burglars who were using different types of modus operandi: water, energy supplier, police officer and lost ball in the garden.

John called the police when a bogus meter reader did not give the password that John had pre-arranged with his electricity company. John refused the man entry and called the police. Jean called the police when two men said they were from the "Water Board" which, of course, no longer exists. Water company officials always have ID with them, which these two did not. The police arrested them and they are now behind bars.

Harbans had two men at his door claiming to be police officers wanting to come in. He was suspicious and made them wait outside whilst he checked with his local police station who informed him they were bogus. They decided to leave the scene when Harbans made them wait.

Mary was the quick-witted neighbour who saw a suspicious couple calling at her neighbour's house, claiming they were looking for a ball in the garden. Mary noted their car's registration number and called the police. It turns out that they were known distraction burglars.

We can all play our part in thwarting the activities of distraction by burglars - being vigilant and watching out for neighbours, recording registration numbers of suspicious vehicles, always asking for ID from callers that you do not know, checking who out who callers say they are with their company and agreeing pre-arranged passwords with utility companies. Above all, there is a simple message to remember - if you're not sure, don't open the door.

EARDISLAND FOOTPATHS - UPDATE

(For Amey, read Herefordshire Council)

Good News! Improvements in the Eardisland footpath network are beginning to show.

Amey Herefordshire delivered 2 tonnes of loose stone material, at no cost to the Parish, a few weeks ago, in order to stabilise and firm up the footpath KL21 beyond Lyme Cottage – this footpath leads on to Street. 4 volunteers made up of the footpath officers and 2 others from the E team spread it on 4th March.

In addition Amey have offered to supply a better gate and latches to a local landowner to make the access across his land easier to use. We understand the hardware will be delivered early in the new financial year, again at no cost to the Parish, or to the landowner.

The iron kissing gate adjacent to the bowling green on path ED1A is going to be refurbished by the Herefordshire College of Technology - Holme Lacy campus - beginning late March. This involves the gate and surround being taken away for a short period to be worked on by students of the Farrier School.

We are looking to repeat this sort of activity throughout the network, in co-operation between landowners, Amey, and volunteers as required.

The Parish Council's Parish Paths Partnership (P3) application has been submitted and we all await the outcome – a possible annual grant of up to £390 for the benefit of the footpath network.

Chris Watson/Derek Wareham

EARDISLAND COMMUNITY MILLENNIUM FUND

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR 2009

Presented at the Public AGM at Eardisland Village Hall, Monday 18th January 2010

THE GENERAL REPORT

Formed in January 1996, ECMF has now completed 14 years of service to our parish community. During 2009 we have continued to follow our established policy of using ECMF resources as widely and effectively as possible to benefit the whole community.

Flexibility and speed of response are always key factors, particularly when events follow one another in quick succession and expenditure for them

overlaps. Our greatest expenditure category is publicity, particularly press advertising. Adequate publicity for each event, and for the whole village as a visitor destination, is what brings outside revenue into our community. Without this inflow of revenue we would be hard put to maintain our church, village hall and dovecote finances and survive as a viable community.

In the September parish magazine ECMF published a Brief Summary of Achievements since 1996. This recorded that EMCF had attracted £167,000 in grants in the past 14 years. Unfortunately the good times are clearly over for the foreseeable future at least. We are therefore reliant largely on what we can afford to invest from our own local resources.

In the December parish magazine we published a further article listing our main objectives and contacts for discussing possible grants, stressing that we have always welcomed enquiries. A number of such approaches have been made over the years and ECMF has always responded positively. These have resulted in the funding of two periods of a youth club being run, various classes in the village hall, children's activities such as a Christmas collage workshop, the Millennium quilt in the church, on-going help for the village band, help for the cricket club with their younger members and our underwriting of the Fun Day for three years.

Although all these activities and many others have been publicised through the past 14 years, most people are probably unaware of the wide scope of ECMF support. The above examples of one-off projects are in addition to our normal annual programme of grants and support and the major capital projects were listed in the September magazine.

The annual Welcome to Eardisland colour leaflet is produced and distributed by ECMF but funded by local businesses, the PCC and the Dovecote Trust: 15,000 copies are distributed to tourist offices, attractions and accommodation providers throughout Herefordshire and neighbouring counties. This is another essential element of publicity attracting visitors to the village and its events.

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES IN 2009

In 2009 ECMF invested around £800 in press advertising and signs for 4 main events, which cumulatively generated net revenue of some £4,800. The events and beneficiary organisations were as follows:

- Open Gardens (church general funds)
- Fun Day (Breakthrough Breast Cancer and ECMF)
- Duck Races (Village Hall funds)
- Coffee Morning (St Michael's Hospice)

In 2009 ECMF made grants and purchases of around £1,100 spread over a variety of parish activities, including: the Cricket Club, the Village Band, the Flower Guild, the PCC and the Village Hall.

Most recently, ECMF has approved a request to fund some additional Neighbourhood Watch signs for outlying areas of the parish, at an anticipated cost of around £180, and a grant of £200 to the History and Heritage Society for outside speakers.

TWO ON-GOING PROJECTS

ECMF has promoted and funded two projects in recent years:

Eardisland in Bloom (since 2005)

Eardisland Fun Day (since 2007)

These projects, like all others, are the result of having one person as a motivated and inspirational leader. In this context, Derek Wareham has led In Bloom; Margaret Milchard has envisaged and developed the Fun Day.

In the past two years these two projects have cumulatively generated a net income of some £3,000 and have been the subject of numerous reports in the parish magazine. ECMF gratefully acknowledge the huge amount of time and effort Derek and Margaret have expended and the help they have received from numerous other people.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ECMF has been grateful for the co-operation and support of the main parish organisations; the Parish Council, the Parochial Church Council, the Village Hall Management Committee and the Dovecote Trust.

The Chairman would like to offer his personal thanks, as always, to all members of the ECMF committee for their wise counsel throughout the year and in particular to Jo Watson for her work as secretary and Derek Wareham for another year of painstakingly recording every ECMF transaction as our treasurer.

Report compiled by B.Freeman

SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 2009 FOR A.G.M.

The ECMF financial year runs from 1 January to 31 December.
All figures are to the nearest £

Summary for 2009

Opening Balance	1.01.09	£767
Income	1.01.09-31.12.09	3222

Expenditure	1.01.09-31.12.09	3700
Closing Balance	31.12.09	289

WINTER CAROLS

With Eardisland Village Band and Singing Friends

A Review and Appreciation by Barry Freeman

This was a cultural eye-opener for most of us who filled the village hall to capacity on the evening of 23rd January. Used as we are to the mainstream canon of carols which we can almost sing in our sleep, here were carols transporting us back across seven centuries, to the late mediaeval-rich mixture of folk song and the nativity which continues to this day.

What a splendid evening we all had! We sang carols with familiar words but unfamiliar tunes and carols we had never heard before but some with, it must be said, more apposite and inspiring words than many of the mainstream Victorian ones to which we are so accustomed.

On stage we enjoyed a wide repertoire from the village band, delightful singing from a quartet of spirited ladies and recent poetry from Thony Handy. Holding it all together was the presiding genius of Andy Davies: he sings, he plays the fiddle, he enthuses everyone and he provides enlightening commentary, mixing wit with erudition. On top of all this we enjoyed a running buffet and plentiful supplies of mulled wine. As they say nowadays WOW!

This was a mind-enriching addition to our local cultural heritage. If Andy's aspirations come to fruition, the evening will not be a one-off event. As he recorded in the previous magazine his aims are "encouraging community singing and enjoyment of the lesser-known songs and establishing a core repertoire which can be expanded year by year into a regular tradition of village carolling".

I do hope he succeeds.

FLORAL DEMONSTRATION

VILLAGE HALL
Wednesday 24th March, 2010
AT 7.30pm.

JEWELS IN THE CROWN
Demonstrated by
Beryl Griffiths from Longhope

Tickets £7.00

To include a glass wine and nibbles

RAFFLE

Tickets available from Wendy Priday - 01544 388570
Esther Simpson - 01544 388641 or the Tearooms

PROCEEDS FOR THE CHURCH FLOWER GUILD

Beryl Griffiths is a well known NAFAS Area Demonstrator and teacher, with a depth of knowledge, and a good repartee. This evening is not only for the ladies as I am sure the men would enjoy it too. The Tearoom is under refurbishment at present but tickets will still be available from there by calling at the side door.

EARDISLAND HISTORY & HERITAGE SOCIETY

EARDISLAND - A SNAPSHOT IN TIME - 1607

A small selection of events and circumstances early in the reign of King James I

In 1607:

Types of road, trackway etc are often described in very specific terms. In one case:

“ ... a highway that leads from Erslan to lyme ...”¹

A Glebe Terrier recorded:

“Item money which of ancient time is due for the water mills of the said parish as namely out of the mill of Erslan 11s 8d of the mill of Twiford 3s 4d of Burton 2s 8d of the mill of the demesnes of Erslan 3s 4d.”²

The lord of the manor of Burton was John Cotes.³

The lord of the manor of Eardisland was Robert Devereux, 3rd Earl of Essex.⁴
The name of lord of the manor of Hinton that year is unknown to me.
The name of the lord of the manor of Twyford that year is unknown to me.

Dated 24th December 1607 William Whittington made his Will. He was a major landowner and evidently not a very good payer of all commitments for, at the very end of his Will he states:

“I give unto John Burd the vicar twenty six shillings eight pence for tithes forgotten and to buy books.”

Probate of his Will [Canterbury] was granted on the 30th April 1608.⁵

.....

George Alderson

¹ HRO (Hereford Record Office, now Herefordshire Archives) Ref. HD2/3/14.

² HRO HD2/3/14.

³ HRO CF58/---.

⁴ Court Rolls via Longleat Catalogue extract.

⁵ PCC Wills.

LOST IN THE GRAVEYARD

In the 1950s, or thereabouts, the W.I. made an inventory of the Eardisland churchyard gravestone inscriptions, and this was followed, in 2002, by a similar recording by the Oral History Group, which also included more recent burials. In 2009 members of the Hereford Family History Society visited the graveyard and subsequently sent the Oral History Group a detailed list of all of their recordings of memorial inscriptions. All of these inventories recorded the grave of Henry and Ann Elizabeth Yeld, both of whom died in the 1930s. And here we come to the problem!

A descendant of these Yelds has visited our churchyard to see and photograph the gravestone, armed with the information mentioned above - only to find absolutely no trace of either the grave or the stone! It should be in the south-east corner, i.e. near the gate to the footpath leading to the Village Hall. It should be a flat-lying slab, possibly granite, with a clear but worn inscription, and near a wall and a yew tree. It is possible, although it seems unlikely, that its position has been mis-recorded or become overgrown, and I

would ask anyone who has noticed a stone bearing the Yeld surnames to telephone me on 01544388641 so that I can put this mystery to rest at last..!

Thank you,
Graham Simpson

EARDISLAND HISTORY: THE BREWSTERS OF EARDISLAND

When the Eardisland Archaeological Projects Group first undertook work at Burton Court in 2000, documentary sources were examined for information which could assist various aspects of the investigation. One of the experts who was asked to visit and talk to the group at that time was David Whitehead, who had been Head of History in the 6th Form College in Hereford and a past President of the Woolhope Club and an expert on the country houses and their gardens in Herefordshire. He pointed out the importance of the gardens of Burton Court in that they were once in the possession of John and William Brewster who would probably have used parts of them for medicinal purposes.

Members of the Brewster family lived in Burton Court from circa 1662-1715 (and even had some family connections with later owners until 1863.) John Brewster purchased Burton Court at the beginning of April 1662. He was the son of the mayor of Gloucester; and became an apothecary. In this capacity he would have almost certainly have had a garden for herbs and from which his medical remedies would have been produced. (The Chelsea Physic garden was established in 1673). He also had an extensive library in which there must have been books on pharmacy and gardening. He died in 1684. His son, William, who became a physician, catalogued the library in 1706. A transcript of this was made by the Hereford librarian, F.C. Morgan in 1964 and the Archaeology Group had access to it. The transcribed list was examined and it was found that there were 1,069 titles on topics such as astronomy, mathematics, gardening, agriculture, coins, architecture, heraldry, geology, and other branches of science. It is clear from the collection that both Brewsters were men of great learning, concerned with scientific developments in the seventeenth-century and also interested in a wide range of subjects.

David Whitehead made the point that if the books could be examined it may be that details would emerge of where the herbal or physic garden was situated in Burton Court, what plants were included and other relevant details. It transpired that some of the Brewster books went to William's old Oxford College, St Johns, some to the Bodleian Library in Oxford and some to All

Saints Church in Hereford, which is believed to be one of the latest examples of a chained parish church library. It was sold in the mid 1990s to the Mappa Mundi Trust.

It was common practice in the medieval and early modern period for libraries, such as those of cathedrals and the Oxbridge colleges in particular, to chain their books for security reasons. By the eighteenth-century the vast majority of library books were unchained, with some notable exceptions (such as that in Hereford, which is the largest surviving library of its type in the world.) It is recorded that in 1858, one of the churchwardens and a local bookseller, sold the entire library to a London bookseller, for export to America for £100. This was in order to raise much-needed funds for the church's fabric. However, just before the books and cases were shipped off, the Dean of Windsor ordered the library to be returned to Hereford and restored the books to their original position. A similar fate nearly befell the Mappa Mundi in more recent times, saved on that occasion by the generosity of the American Anglophile, John Paul Getty.

The Archaeological Group made enquiries to ascertain whether the books could be examined in St John's Oxford, but unfortunately, they are not available for public viewing yet. The Bodleian librarian informed us that they held four of his medieval manuscripts, one dating from 1638, but none threw any light on the gardens on Burton Court. When our French guests came to visit Eardisland in the autumn of 2009 one of the places we visited with them was the Mappa Mundi exhibition. In the course of this we were shown the Brewster chained books and we took the opportunity to ask if they could be examined at some future date to assist with our research. It is therefore exciting to find that there is a special exhibition of the Brewster library in Hereford Cathedral at present and that we may have the chance to view the books at first hand to see if any relate to the gardens.

The Brewster family had long and important ties with Burton Court. William Brewster was baptised in St Mary's church in 1665 and went on to work in Gloucester and Brecon before returning to Hereford as a physician. In about 1698 he built and lived in the house known as 'The Mansion House' in Widemarsh Street (a plaque recording this can be seen there.) It was said to have been the most elegant house in Hereford at the time. There is an ancient bowling green at the back which must itself have an interesting history. The house was later used as accommodation for judges and for the use of the mayor. William Brewster died at his home in 1715. He was buried in the east cloister of Hereford Cathedral; sadly all trace of his memorial stone has now disappeared.

If you are walking past Burton Court, examine the wall at the northern end and you will see a stone set in with several initials and dates carved into it, including those marked BB, a reference to Benjamin Brewster another member of the family who lived there in the seventeenth century. He was the younger half-brother of Dr William Brewster. Benjamin inherited Burton Court and the Manor of Burton from his mother, John Brewster's second wife, initially by deed of Settlement in May 1698. John Brewster died in 1684 and is buried near his first wife in the centre of the chancel floor in St Mary's church.

Opening times for the Brewster exhibition

25th January - 27th March Monday to Saturday 10am - 4.00pm

29th March - 31st May: Monday – Saturday 10am - 5.00pm

Open on Sundays: April 4th; May 2nd; May 30th

There is a charge for admittance.

WEATHER REPORT

It's a very short weather report this time as not a lot has been happening. I will start by correcting a misprint in the last issue. The start of the snowfall over Christmas was on 22nd December not the 2nd, when the weather was very mild. (sorry, not enough 2s. Ed.) This snowfall heralded the coldest winter for at least 20 years which ended on cue when fine sunny weather coincided with March 1st, the first day of Spring. On the coldest night of winter the night temperatures in

Herefordshire fell below -10°C (in Scotland the coldest spots fell below -20°C). Our county, along with the whole of the UK missed the storms of the 28th February which devastated the French Atlantic coast.

Rainfall so far this year has been normal – January somewhat above average, February below. Writing in early March the weather at the moment is sunny and so far there has been no rain in the first few days of the month.

Peter Glenn

DO YOUR BIT AND COLLECT DURING RED CROSS APPEAL WEEK

The British Red Cross is calling for volunteers in villages and communities across Herefordshire, to collect, or organise coffee mornings or other fund-raising events, during Red Cross Appeal Week, the charity's annual fundraising drive, 2 – 8 May.

Sue Burleigh, Senior Fund-raiser, at the British Red Cross in Hereford said: "During Red Cross Appeal Week we rely on our fantastic volunteers giving their time to fund-raise locally, in aid of the Red Cross. We couldn't do it without them, but the more help we have, the more we can raise, so we are urging people to sign up this year."

People who would like to find out more, can contact Sue at the Hereford office on 01432 272522.

Last year, Red Cross volunteers in Herefordshire raised nearly £14,000 during Red Cross Appeal Week and the money was used to support vital work in the county, providing unconditional care for vulnerable people in crisis.

COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY GROUPS – HELP AVAILABLE

Free help and advice is now available to voluntary and community groups in **North West Herefordshire**, the Golden Valley and North East Herefordshire through an exciting new project called REACH.

If you are involved in a new or existing voluntary or community group and would like support or advice to help with things such as **finding funding & volunteers, training courses, community consultation, buildings & facilities, social enterprise start-ups, youth projects and much more**, then REACH may be able to assist you.

If you would like to find out more about how REACH may be able to help your group then please contact **Hannah** on 07827 775701 or email her at hannah@herefordshireva.org. Hannah will be based in **Kington** at **Marches Access Point**.

If you are interested in volunteering or are an organisation looking for volunteers REACH will also be providing a new volunteer support service that will be available in **Kington** every **Wednesday** at **Marches Access Point**. Please contact Vicky Hamilton on 07827 775700 or email her at vhamilton@herefordshireva.org to find out more.

ATTENTION ALL GARDENERS!

Great Spring Gardening Event

Eastnor Castle, near Ledbury, Herefordshire

British Red Cross fund-raisers are busy organising this year's Great Spring Garden Event, which will take place in the glorious surroundings of Eastnor Castle on 28 April 2010, 10.30am - 4.30pm. Visitors will also be able to enjoy access to the Castle itself.



View from the lake at Eastnor Castle, Ledbury

Anyone interested in gardening is encouraged to put this date in their diaries. Over 80 quality garden, home and food-related stalls will be exhibiting, including many specialist plant nurseries. Delicious refreshments, including a limited number of pre-booked lunches, will be available throughout the day. Admission before 1pm is £7.50. From 1pm onwards it will be reduced to £5.50.

Nearer the time a 24 hour hotline number will be made available with regular updates about the Event, in the meantime, if you would like to receive a list of stallholders or have any other enquiries, please phone the Hereford office on 01432 272522.

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