

WELLAND HISTORY GROUP

Newsletter November 2025

Friday 28 November, Welland Village Hall, 3:00 pm

Alan Wadsworth of the Worcestershire Farmsteads Project will give a talk titled *Farm buildings: recording and researching the past for the future*. This will cover the following.

- * Background to the Farmsteads Project
- * History of agriculture from 15th century onwards, with reference to buildings
- * Different types of historic farm buildings and their uses
- * How farmsteads were organised and why
- * Building materials used
- * How we go about recording and researching farm buildings

All welcome, entry £1 at the door, refreshments.

You can read more about the project here:

<https://researchframeworks.org/worcs/worcestershire/built-environment/built-environment-worcestershire-farmsteads/>

Write-up of the meeting on 26 September

Come and talk to us!

Beverley led a session covering the formation of Welland History Group in 2018, the work we have done since and the various sources that we make use of. She appealed for people to record and pass on their memories of Welland's past.

Bev's own particular interest is **landscape history**. Chris Mesley, Wendy Jones and Wendy Gillespie also talked about their special interests:

Chris - **house histories, mills, non-conformist places of worship,**

Wendy Jones - **transcribing old documents, establishing the connections between families and individuals, solving photo location puzzles,** Wendy

Gillespie - **social and family history.**

Bev asked the audience for suggestions on what we do next and two ideas were **orchards** and **farming**. Although we have touched on these during past work we have not focused on them as topics.

We have decided to start with farming in Welland and Little Malvern in WWII. See the next article for details.

Farming in Welland and Little Malvern during World War II: can you help?

The National Archives at Kew hold the original paperwork from the National Farm Survey of 1941-3 for England and Wales. A census went out to farmers in 1941 and this was followed by surveys carried out by inspectors. Farms of all sizes, including smallholdings, were surveyed. The aims were to increase food production in the UK as part of the war effort, while imports were so restricted, and to plan for the post-war period. The returns include information about the size of the landholding, the crops grown, the condition of the land, numbers and types of livestock, and the labour available.

These are the official records, but the 1940s are close enough in time for family memories to have survived. Was your family involved in farming during the war in Welland or Little Malvern? Were they directed to grow particular crops or change their land use in any way? Do you have any memories or family anecdotes of what everyday life was like for farming families? If so, please email **Beverley Ramsden** via wellandhistorygroup@gmail.com.

As an example, here is an extract from ***Recollections of the Second World War and its impact on Brotheridge Green***, by John & Jean Pratley, 1995

'Returning to food production, all farms were required to produce lots more cereal crops and this led to the appearance of the first tractor and modern implements on many farms. The War Agriculture Committees (WarAg) were formed to not only direct what crops should be grown and where but also to farm much of the common land - one side of Castlemorton Common was ploughed and arable crops grown. Double summer time was introduced to give a supposed longer day for workers in the fields and often people were still working in the fields at midnight as it was light enough to see. Our memories are of standing round the remaining corn in the middle of a field when it was being cut by a binder and chasing the rabbits as they ran everywhere. Much sport was also had by those attending the threshing machines when the rats from the ricks started to run around.'

The BCH Journal, vol 5

The latest journal will be launched and on sale at a Christmas Tea Party on Wednesday 3 December, 2:30 pm - 4:30 pm at Castlemorton Parish Hall. All are welcome. Free entry. Tea, coffee and seasonal cakes will be available.

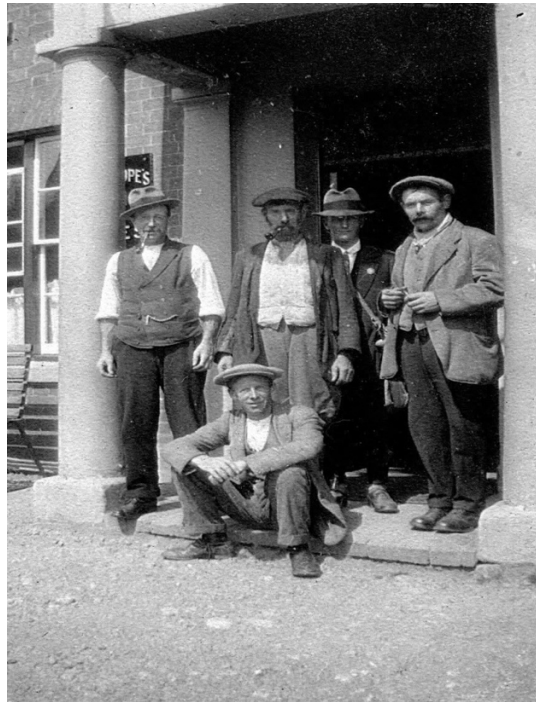
As with previous journals, the new one will contain a variety of items about the parishes of Birtsmorton, Castlemorton and Hollybush, including the Almshouse, Rye Cross Garage, the Weaver family and the Shindig.

Details of how to order copies will be available on the BCH Archive website nearer the date if you cannot make the tea party.

<https://bcharchive.org.uk/index.html>

Another event which may interest you at Castlemorton Parish Hall is the **Lest We Forget** exhibition of World War memorabilia. This is on Saturday 8 November, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm. Everyone is welcome.

Photo puzzle from Wendy Jones



This photo was posted on facebook c 2014 by Chip Andrew Bryon, whose grandfather, Henry Jefferson Byron, was landlord of The Pheasant for a time during the 1920s. Chip's father, Jeff Bryon, was born there in 1924. Chip asked whether anyone recognised these men standing in the porch of The Pheasant, presumably customers during his grandfather's tenure. Do any of these faces look familiar? Contact **Wendy Jones** via wellandhistorygroup@gmail.com.

Next meeting

We expect to hold four meetings in 2026, dates to be announced.

Our website

Exploring Welland <https://wellandhistory.uk/>

Wendy Gillespie
wellandhistorygroup@gmail.com

If you no longer wish to be on this emailing list, please email me, phone me, or put a note through my door.