

WELLAND HISTORY GROUP

Newsletter September 2026

Meeting: Friday 25 September, Welland Village Hall, 3:00 pm

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

1) Overseers of the Poor Accounts, 1792 - 1812

Wendy Gillespie has transcribed the Welland overseers' accounts from 1792 - 1812 and will describe some of her findings. Money was raised from the ratepayers of the parish to provide for those unable to survive on their own resources through age, infirmity or lack of work. Women with illegitimate children were also supported as were the families of men who were serving in the militia. Various parish expenses came out of the same funds. Each year a different overseer was appointed whose duties included dealing with applicants for poor relief, arranging for medical care where needed, organising coal deliveries to those who qualified, and liaising with local magistrates, solicitors and overseers of other parishes. Although there are only brief details about individuals in these many pages of income and expenditure, there is sufficient information to build a clear picture of this aspect of parish life.

2) Around the edges

For Wendy Jones' section, we will be trying out something a bit different, which will be a compilation of small items. As a spinoff from research on various topics, we often find out background snippets that can't be included in a presentation because they are just a bit off the central theme, or because of time constraints. Sometimes answers turn up in unexpected places months or more after the original question was posed and there are all these bits of information around the edges of our core 'Welland knowledge base' that generally will just stay sitting in our own notes and will never see the light of day. These assorted items of information also demonstrate that we don't always know where our research will lead us, but provide interesting background stories, nonetheless.

Who were some of the people we see mentioned in wills? What sort of houses did they live in? Where did some Welland families come from? Do we know what brought them here? Wendy Jones will be providing examples. The talk will also include other general items of interest that she has discovered along the way.

Write-up of the 29 May meeting

The May presentation by Wendy Jones was about The Pheasant at Welland's crossroads. The Pheasant had been purpose built by James Archer and opened in May 1843. This 'new' Pheasant replaced an earlier Pheasant that had existed since the mid 1700s, situated a short distance away on Drake Street, very near the row of cottages known as Pheasant Cottages. James Archer of London owned them both. Wendy's talk was about The Pheasant's history from 1900 up to the present day and focused on the Pheasant's incredibly chequered and turbulent past.

The talk was broadly divided into three sections. Starting with owners, tenants, licensees, landlords and their families; then moving forward to within living memory, which included anecdotes and locals' memories of the place - and finishing up with its closure and what has happened to it since then up to the present day.

Wendy's talk included many projected images - for which the new audio-visual equipment in the village hall was used for the first time by WHG. This greatly enhanced the presentation and we look forward to using it again in the future.

Every Picture Tells a Story

A forthcoming exhibition by the Birtsmorton, Castlemorton and Hollybush Archive.

Mary Watts writes:

If you are interested in contributing to our Every Picture Tells a Story exhibition in December, you are invited to post photos of people, identified or unknown, on our website - bcharchive.org.uk.

Alternatively, you can email them to me, post them on our Facebook page or, if you would rather use hard copy, please contact admin@bcharchive.org.uk to arrange it.

We are trying to assemble an exhibition of portraits, group photographs, school photos and family shots of local people of the past. There are photos of individuals in our collection that we cannot identify and we hope that visitors might be able to help with that as well as seeing pictures of their forebears.

All relevant contributions welcome!

Mary's email address: bcharchive2017@gmail.com

Exploring Welland

<https://wellandhistory.uk/>

Recent additions to our website: The Pheasant Duo, Welland's Church House.

Next meeting

Friday 27 November

Chris Mesley will talk about the history of Brook Farm (next to the boundary with Hanley Swan). Brook Farm was once known as Dutfields. In 1776 Charles Mayfield died and left Dutfields to his kinsman Charles Turner on condition that the latter took the name Mayfield. Rosemary Downes will talk about the Mayfield Turner family that resulted, several of whose descendants are known to us today.

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