

Rowell Heritage

The Rothwell Arts & Heritage Centre Magazine



No 8

September ~ October 2015

£2

Free to Friends of the Heritage Centre



Rowell Heritage.

Issue 8.

We are dependent on advertisers because their financial support is vital to the funding of this newsletter. Your contribution however, is equally important so if you have anything you wish to submit for inclusion in future issues, please send it to either the manager or the editor at the address below.

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I hope you enjoy this edition of Rowell Heritage I would like to thank all our sponsors and contributors for their support.

Editor.

Cover Picture:
Holy Trinity Church &
Jesus Hospital

G Davis. 2015

Programme of Events at the Heritage Centre for September & October

-o-

Saturday 5th September

Art & Craft Fair 10 - 3

At The Old Barn, Red Lion Inn.

-o-

Friday 25th September

Genealogy Family Tree

A Talk by Julie Hall 7.30

-o-

Saturday 26th September

**Macmillan Coffee Morning
and Volunteers Open Day**

10am onwards.

-o-

Friday 9th October

Battle of Britain

A Talk by Paul Trede 7:30

-o-

Friday 16th October

**Journeys on Horse Back
and on Foot**

A Talk by Zandra Powell 7:30

-o-

Friday 23rd October

**The London Livery Companies
and education today**

A Talk by Roy Sharman 7:30

-o-

Saturday 24th October

Table Top Sale 10 - 2

-o-

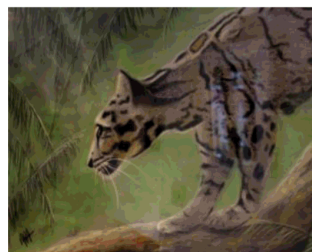
All events are held at The Heritage Centre
unless otherwise stated.

For talks please be seated by 7.15

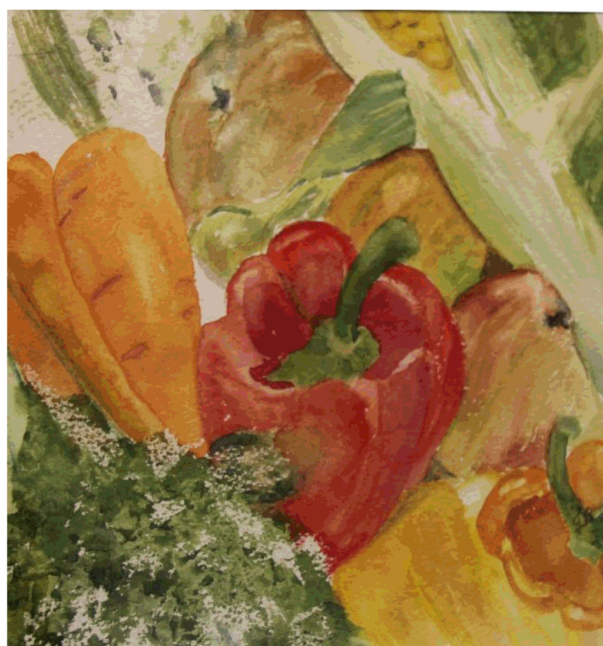
***Deadline for November - December issue is:-
Wednesday 14th October 2015***

***Please note that while we take every care to be
accurate, no liability will be accepted should any of the
contents of this magazine be incorrect.***

the GALLERIES



ON THIS PAGE IS WORK FROM OUR AUGUST EXHIBITION



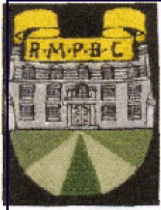
SEPTEMBER Galleries One & Two NORTHAMPTONSHIRE OPEN STUDIOS

Photography - ANNIE FORD CHRIS SHAW WARREN SHAW Metal Sculpture - WAYNE SUMMERFIELD
Paintings Ceramics Jewellery Textiles - WENDY CASSON Artist in Wood - FIONA KINGDON
Paintings Drawing Prints - CONRAD JOHNSON

- We welcome new artists •There is no charge to enter work
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Season starts on April 29th

Coaching starts Monday May 11th

WE ARE HERE



Club telephone number (during opening hours) 01536 711861

Holy Trinity Church, Rothwell

Zandra Powell

Holy Trinity Church is very much part of the heritage of Rothwell.

The building is nearly a thousand years old and has been a place of continuous Christian worship throughout the years. There is a very good guide about the history, and copies are available in the church.

It is most important however, to preserve the continuity of this history by supporting the church and the various services on offer. This support helps with the constant maintenance of the building.

So much of modern life blots out deep thought and faith.

Leave behind the television and computers etc. for an hour and come to Choral Evensong which takes place once a month, usually on the last Sunday.

It is based on the ancient Book of Common Prayer, and the excellent Rothwell choir sings all the hymns, responses and anthems. This is a real treat because the acoustics in Holy Trinity are well known for being superb, - attracting musicians from far and wide for concerts.

Choral Evensong is a wonderful concert in its own right, open and free to everyone - church goers and non believers alike, - all are welcome.

If you care for Rothwell's heritage, please do come, once a month, and support this service at Holy Trinity.

The next Choral Evensong is at 6 pm. on Sunday September 27th 2015.

Further dates, times and information can be found on the Holy Trinity website:
www.rothwellholyltrinity.org.uk



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Dancing to 'Sounds Familiar' with Paul Johnson and a special guest appearance by Alan Mills.



Congratulations to Trevor & Diana Smith who celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversary on October 2nd

Diana wrote:

We will be away enjoying a quiet week in our favourite haunt in North Norfolk - no party, no presents!

On Tuesday October 6th we will be at home all day and will be happy to see anyone who would like to join us for a piece of cake and a drink.

-O-

I would also like to thank Trevor & Diana who have kindly made a number of interesting old photographs of Rothwell available to us. These will be published in the pages of this magazine.

A Health and Safety warning for all Rowellians who are planning to pick apples or prune trees this September.

JESUS HOSPITAL APPLE TREE DISASTERS

FATAL ACCIDENT.—We regret to record the sudden death, under very painful circumstances, of the esteemed president of Jesus Hospital, in this town. On Tuesday, Mr. Dolby, noticing a decayed branch in an apple tree in the orchard belonging to the establishment, having procured a ladder and saw, climbed into the tree and proceeded to sever the unsightly bough. Owing to some want of caution in choosing his position, when the bough fell he fell with it, a height of 14 feet, and coming in contact with the fallen wood, broke his ribs and sustained fatal injury to the heart. Medical aid was promptly obtained, but was of no avail to save life, the lamented gentleman only surviving his fall about a couple of hours. The sad event has cast quite a gloom over Rothwell, where Mr. Dolby was universally held in the highest respect, and in his death the inmates of the hospital have sustained an almost irreparable loss, endeared, as he was, to them by the kindness and condescending urbanity with which he uniformly fulfilled the duties of his onerous and responsible position.

Northampton Mercury 18th Sept. 1875

ACCIDENT.—On Wednesday an accident happened to an aged inmate of Jesus Hospital, named James Foster. He was ascending a ladder to get apples in the orchard, when he slipped and fell, breaking his thigh. Dr. More was immediately summoned, and set the limb.

Northampton Mercury 16th Sept. 1904

Errors in the last issue

I apologise for a couple of mistakes that appeared in the last issue (no 7). They are as follows:
The correct line-up for the Lochinvar picture is left to right; Stephen Loveridge, Brian Buckby, Eileen Streather, Keith Johnson and Jennifer Hall.

The top Corinthians picture should have read: Winners of 2nd Division Kettering Amateur League Cup, and in the lower picture (back right) P Tebbutt should have been C Tebbutt.

ONE HOT SUMMER'S DAY AT NEWBOTTLE BRIDGE

by David York

We'd walked there - down Harrington Road taking a right turn off to Thorpe Underwood and beyond. We'd got jam jars - we anticipated getting a tiddler or two, and we had fishing lines - elder sticks with a piece of string attached and a bent pin for a hook on the end, and a tin of worms for bait. We being me, my brothers Wal & Jim and the next door neighbours Rod and Tony Burrows. It was July 1959, a scorching hot day and we were heading for Newbottle Bridge, east of Arthingworth, on the River Ise.

We'd tried the Slade a long time ago - useless, it only had shrimps, and we'd tried the Ise at the bottom of the Folly, but this was useless too - just leeches. We had luck at Rushton several times where the Ise was deeper and had caught minnows underneath the bridge with jam jars sealed with a polythene lid with a hole in the centre and bread inside. Then at Desborough Bridge on the A6 where the Ise is shallow on the east side and runs over lots of stones, we picked up stone loach and bullheads as we overturned the stones. On the west side, further back up the river there were sticklebacks swimming deep under the tree roots at the edge of the bank, but on that occasion we hadn't the appropriate equipment to catch them. On this day though, we had no idea what we'd find at Newbottle Bridge, if anything, but at least we were armed with some appropriate equipment.

When we reached the bridge we climbed over the fence and followed the course of the river as it wound out and then back towards the road and then out again. It wasn't far from the source of the Ise here and yet the water was very deep in places. As we continued following the river, we came across a bunch of kids fishing. We were a bit wary - you often bumped into gangs when you were out and about on these missions and they could give you a bad time, so we gave them a wide berth. I suddenly spotted my cousin Alan Woolston from Desborough so we cut in and joined the group. "What are you getting?" we asked. "Sticklebacks", they replied, "loads of them - just stick your rod in the water and you'll get one". Sure enough you only had to dip the worm in and pull it straight out again and a stickleback would be on the end. Within half an hour we had too many for the jam jars and had to start putting them into an isolated pool.

We didn't know what to do with them all, and they were such beautiful colours - it being the breeding season. There were red, green and silver ones, blue, green and silver ones and just green and silver ones (I suppose these were the females). We chucked a lot back in the river and headed home with loaded jam jars. Looking back, it was sadly suffocation for the poor creatures - it was a long way home on a hot day so hardly any survived - the rest lay dead on the bottom of the jars with their spikes sticking out. Those that did survive went into our pond along with other fish that we'd brought back that summer.



Left to right: Wal York, Tony Burrows, Rod Burrows, Jim York (used to be called Art), and David York at the back.

GLADSTONE STREET SCHOOL

by Helen Brown (nee Chapman)

I attended Gladstone Street School from 1954 to 1958. My teachers for those four years were Miss Sharman in Year 1, Mr Ball in Year 2, Mrs Woolston in Year 3 and Mr Woolston in Year 4. Miss Lewin taught a mixed age class of Years 1 and 2 and Mr Haigh taught a mixed age class of Years 3 and 4. Mr Davies was the Headmaster. There were 46 pupils in my class.

In each of the austere, Victorian-style classrooms with their high windows which prevented children from seeing what was going on outside, there were approximately five rows of five two-seater desks. These were wooden desks, each of which had a lid. We would keep our exercise books and stationery inside them. There was an inkwell in each of the desks. I loved being the ink monitor and taking around a small jug with a very long spout and filling up the inkwells. Most children didn't like using the school ink which was a dull, watery grey colour with floating debris and so they purchased their own ink (Stephens' or Quink were the only two brands available) from Jones' stationery shop (this shop is now the Thai restaurant). We all used fountain pens because biro pens, which only appeared in shops around 1954, weren't readily available - also they were expensive and certainly not acceptable for school use. In fact, I used a fountain pen throughout the whole of my school life.

The children in the top row of desks were positioned there according to their end of term exam results. The children who weren't very clever were seated in the bottom row of desks. Thus the 'pecking order' was highly visible! I well remember being naughty in Mr Ball's class, and my punishment was to be moved to the bottom row of desks – away from all of my friends and placed with those children who had not performed well in their exams. This was a huge blow to my self-esteem. It upset me very much and my mother made an appointment to see Mr Davies about it as I was crying myself to sleep and refusing to go to school. Mr Davies, a kind and well-respected Headmaster, resolved the problem.

I well remember being in Mr Woolston's class when he shouted at one of the boys in the bottom row of desks, after he had marked some arithmetic tests, – "You need to pull your socks up boy!" The boy in question promptly stood up and pulled up his socks!!



There were two playgrounds – the one at the top of the road was for the boys and the other one for the girls. Down one side of the girls' playground were some brick built toilets. These were very dark, dinghy cubicles which smelled of dampness, mildew and vaguely of sewers.

There were spiders' webs in the corners and no toilet paper was kept there because of the dampness. All the girls tried to avoid using the school toilets.

Hand-washing was not a priority – the sinks were inside the school building – not close to the toilets and we were never encouraged to wash our hands after going to the lavatory. If a child needed to use toilet paper, then the teacher would tear off a few sheets and give them to the child in front of the whole class. No wonder we always tried to avoid using the toilets!! Behind the girls' toilet block was a garden which incorporated a pond, a lawn and soft fruit area. In the summer time, sometimes we were allowed to use this area at playtimes.

When we first entered Gladstone Street School, we were each allocated to a House. I was placed in Dryden House – our house colour was green. The other Houses were Clare (red), Tresham (yellow) and Cogan (blue). All of these House names were surnames of famous men born in Northamptonshire. John Dryden was poet laureate in 1668 and royal historiographer to Charles 11; John Clare was the famous Northants peasant poet; Sir Thomas Tresham, the Catholic politician whose ancestral home was Rushton Hall, was responsible for building the Triangular Lodge, Rothwell Market House and Lyvedon New Bield; Dr Thomas Cogan, born at Rothwell, was a famous English scholar, philosopher and theologian.

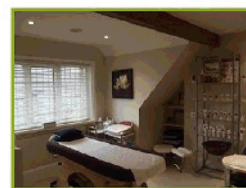
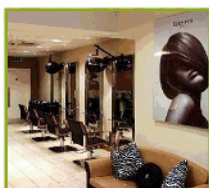
In our third year at Gladstone Street School, some of us were selected to take part in the musical 'Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs' which Mr Haigh produced. Children from the fourth year were also involved; all the performers can be seen in the photo. Three girls were chosen to play Snow White – Rosemary Jones (centre left), Kay Sturges (centre) and Jennette Haddon (centre right) - and they took their parts on a different night of the three performances. I was a dwarf – second left at the front. With help, I've been able to identify nearly all of the children in the photo.

In our final year at Gladstone Street School, a Head Boy and Head Girl were appointed. Mary Martin, (now Mary Cox) was Head Girl and Michael Pateman (who now lives in Sydney), was Head Boy. I was a prefect for Dryden and wore my green metal prefect's badge with pride! Other prefects were Sheila Powell, Stephanie Iliffe (Tresham) and Jane Austin. There were also four male prefects appointed and it is thought that Roy Houghton (Cogan) and Keith Johnson were two of them but I am not certain who the others were. Perhaps a reader might know?



On a more modern note, my uncle, the late Mr Maurice Roughton was Deputy Head of this school before taking up a Headship at Desborough. After he retired from Desborough, the Head of Gladstone Street would occasionally ask him to cover a class if a teacher was sick or on a course. He described to me how one day, a boy in his class announced "Please sir, my granddad says that you used to teach him!" "Did I?" replied Uncle Maurice – "What was his name?" Uncle Maurice recognised the name instantly and knew that indeed he had taught this lad's granddad! At that point he decided that perhaps he had taught for long enough!!

Postscript I am very grateful to Michael Pateman, David York, Janice Linnett, Patsy Chapman, Susan Austin, Mary Martin and Eileen Streather for assisting with some of the detail for this article – especially the names of the prefects and the names of some of the children in the photos. I have enjoyed some fascinating correspondence with them.



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Madam's Gardens, Madam's Hill

by Maurice Goodwin

We are often asked at The Heritage Centre, especially by new residents, about street names in Rothwell. How some of these came about is fairly obvious but delve a little deeper and some interesting stories are uncovered.

One such is Madam's Gardens and Madam's Hill. Looking over the enclosure claims map (1812) and associated documents, they reveal that a large part of Rothwell land and important buildings including the Manor House were in the estate of George Hill (deceased). So let us now find out something about George Hill and family. Records show that a George Hill of Rothwell Manor married Barbara Medlycott of Cottingham in 1744. George Hill held the position of Sergeant-at-Law and practised as a solicitor at the time of his marriage. He was, if not then at some time later, Lord of the Manor of Rothwell, as his father Nathaniel was before him. A copy of a solicitor's drawing with regard to one of the 'great fires' of Rothwell (drawn about 1810), shows an area by the old school as Madam's Gardens.

The article below from 'Lawyers and their Haunts' and 'Lawyers' wives' from the 'Leisure Hour', March 1883, throws further interesting light on the matter...

"Another notable lawyer was Sergeant Hill, the famous black-letter lawyer of George 111's earlier times. This equally eccentric and learned Sergeant married Miss Medlycott of Cottingham, Northamptonshire, an heiress who was empowered by special Act of Parliament to retain her maiden name after marriage. Even on his wedding day the lawyer could not get the better of his eccentricity so as to behave like a common place bridegroom. Beginning the day in perfect forgetfulness of the principal matter of to be done upon it, he was receiving his clients in his chambers when a party of his friends broke in upon him and carried him off by main force to the church where Miss Medlycott had been waiting for him more than an hour. The nuptial ceremony over, the Sergeant, forgetting to kiss his bride, and sublimely indifferent to the good cheer of the bridal banquet, hurried back to the chambers to a consultation (possibly on that interesting question about herbage and pannage). Whatever their differences at home, the Sergeant and his wife had the good sense to wear a show of mutual affection to the world, but from their opposite sides of the domestic hearth in Bedford Square (London) they exchanged sharp words about Mrs Medlycott's jealous and punctilious exercise of her right to her maiden name, in her estimation a name greatly superior to the Sergeant's patronymic of four letters. In these disputes about a name, the lawyer was often moved to remark, "My name is Hill, madam, my father's name was Hill, madam; all the Hill's have been named Hill, madam; Hill is a good name, madam; and I say this madam, as you are a Hill, you shall call yourself Hill, and shan't go on calling yourself Medlycott". On other matters the Sergeant was more compliant. Pride in and sensitiveness for the whiteness of the pipeclayed steps before the chief door of her Bedford Square mansion were amongst Mrs. Medlycott's old-maidenly peculiarities; and with proper care for her feelings on this matter, Sergeant Hill used to start daily for chambers by way of the kitchen steps. After Mrs Medlycott's death, the Sergeant remarked to a friend who was condoling with him on his recent bereavement, "Ay, my poor wife is gone! She was a good sort of woman - in her way, a very good sort of woman. I do honestly declare my belief that in her way she had no equal. But - but - I'll tell you something in confidence, if ever I marry again, I won't marry for money."

Perhaps from George Hill's quoted emphasis in this article on 'Madam' they reached a compromise. In other circumstances Madam's Garden could have been Mrs Hill's Garden.

Below is a little more of the family history:

Barbara had a sister Elizabeth who married George Hill's brother the Rev John Hill, LL.D., Prebendary of Windsor and Rector of Thorpe Malsor, Northants and also of Kelmarsh. George and Barbara Hill of Rothwell had two daughters, Anne and Barbara. Anne married Thomas Cecil Maunsell of Thorpe Malsor, as second wife, and died 1794. Barbara married the Hon. William Cokayne, 2nd son of Viscount Cullen of Rushton Hall, Northants, who died in 1809 leaving 10 daughters. The 3rd married William Adams, who died in 1873 leaving G.E. Adams, Norroy King of Arms, who assumed by Royal Licence in 1873 the name and arms of Cokayne, and was of Rothwell Manor. Two other daughters married Maunsells of Thorpe Malsor. Barbara, widow of the Hon. William Cokayne, was eventually sole heiress of Mr Sergeant Hill and also of her maternal grandfather Thomas Medicott of Cottingham, in accordance with whose will she took the name and arms of Medicott by Act of Parliament in 1801. She survived her husband by 30 years and died in 1839 aged 85. She was buried at Rothwell, where there is a hatchment quartering the arms of Medicott and Hill.

With acknowledgement to Henry Edmondstone Medicott

(Reprinted from a 2007 edition of the Friends of the Heritage Centre Newsletter.)

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GC-LIFT 9639



A nice early picture of Bridge Street showing West's Butchers and F.J. Dines, baker, fruiterer and general dealer. *(From the collection of Diana & Trevor Smith).*

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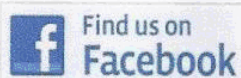
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This is a delightful summer photograph of Market Hill about a hundred years ago from the collection of Diana & Trevor Smith. The shops are all open so it isn't a Sunday yet the children are all dressed in their best clothes. There are two flags flying over the balcony of the now Frank's Butchers and it is clear that some special event is about to take place. The Editor would be grateful to receive your views on this picture.

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A STIRLING; A WELLINGTON; A HEINKEL AND SCHOOL

by Stan White

It was raining on the night of 17th May 1944 when a Stirling Bomber (EE956) of 1661 Conversion Unit RAF Winthorpe, Nottinghamshire, lost control in the cloud and broke up in the air, at least that seems to be the official version. Certainly people in Rothwell could see flames through the clouds and rain as the aircraft lost height. It crashed in the ironstone pits located to the left of the A6 before you reach Halfway House, going towards Desborough. The old ironstone railway bridge at that point on the A6 plays an important part in this rather bizarre story, which is all too true. It was said at the time that the aircraft was fully loaded with bombs. Whatever the truth of that, there is no doubt that there was an almighty explosion upon impact, which threw thousands of rounds of machine gun ammunition into the conifer trees which had been planted around this then disused quarry (now called Stirling Wood).

Whenever an aircraft crashed in those war years, grown-ups and children would comb the site for remnants. Perspex was a favourite find because all sorts of things could be made from it, the favourite being perspex rings. Some people built ornamental model aircraft when enough perspex was found. Children would tend to look for bullets and cartridge cases etc. That Stirling crash site was guarded but the children of Rothwell found a way to access it by climbing into the former ironstone railway cutting at the bridge on the A6 and crawling or walking bent double towards the wrecked plane. Not that you had to go too close because the ammunition was hanging from the trees on each side of the cutting, - great long strips of ammunition which had a fascination for many children. Looking back, it could so easily have been fatal because it was obvious that such long lengths of ammunition were not going to easily fit into pockets, - equally the chance could not be missed!

It was in no time at all that word went round the schools about this ammunition. Sacks were collected from barns and garden sheds after school, and away we went. I distinctly remember dragging a sackful back along the cutting with friend Colin Bamford, and meeting some Desborough boys crawling towards the site with their sacks. As I recall, several journeys were made, which ended up with heaps of ammunition being hidden in garden sheds and washhouses etc.

Eventually of course, the RAF and the police realised what was happening and the schools were contacted with instructions to ask all the children who had collected the ammunition to take it to school on the understanding that nobody would get into trouble. In our case we had to take our sacks to the Gladstone Street School and to the headmaster's little study in the corridor.

Mr Clark was the headmaster. A few years ago I saw a picture of him in the Evening Telegraph's 'Down Memory Lane' feature, amongst a group of teachers. This photo had been taken at Rushden School on Jubilee Day, 6th May 1935 and I must say that he looked happier than on that day in May eight years later. In fact, when I went to empty my sack of ammunition, his study was already half full of it. I shall never forget the look on his face; he was drawn and pale and was obviously beyond words. No wonder Mr Clark had looked so ill, for he knew that it was only by a miracle that some of the children had not joined those ill-fated airmen. Handled normally, the ammunition was reasonably safe but not when hit with a hammer. It happened. In Rothwell!!!

The crashes gave an extra interest to life in those days. There was the Wellington (LN245) from 84 Operational Training Unit, Desborough, which ran out of fuel and crash landed on 11th April 1944 into what is now part of the Kipton Fields estate. Only the rear gunner, an Australian, survived and he walked away dazed. He was found wandering about near Glendon Hall.

No doubt the best remembered crash is the one which took place in a field opposite Pentelow's Farm (then Holdsworths) on the A6 on 11th April 1941. A Hurricane (V7120) of 151 Squadron, Wittering, shot down a Heinkel Bomber (He111) of 9/KG55, Villacoublay, France. The tail, with the German markings, was all that was left to be seen at a distance. Pilot Officer R.P. Stevens was flying the Hurricane which shot down the Heinkel. He opened up on it near Kettering, hitting it with a short burst of gunfire. He then fired again, causing bits to fly off the enemy plane and setting the starboard engine on fire as well as the fuselage. The Heinkel turned over and dived. It broke into pieces as it hit the ground, sliding from one field into the next on its final journey.

There were survivors. The Heinkel pilot, Lt Gunther Buse, was captured after he landed by parachute and the same happened to Feldwebel Wilhelm Kanera, who was the bomb-aimer, but he died later from his injuries on 5th June 1942 and he is buried in Cannock Chase German Military Cemetery, Staffordshire. Two crew members died because their parachutes didn't open in time and another man was found in the remains of the Heinkel. The Germans were bombing Birmingham on the night this happened, 10th-11th April 1941. The next morning, quite a number of Rothwell people, both adults and children, were in that field to view the scene and see what they could find!

Hurricane night fighter pilot R.P. Stevens shot down a number of enemy aircraft. He was very bitter at the Germans because in a raid on Manchester they had killed his wife and children. He was a top scoring night fighter pilot, flying without a care for his own safety and this led to his death in December 1941.

In this article I have tried to present facts and not just hearsay. The book 'Aviation in Northamptonshire' by M.L. Gibson has been helpful. I was nine years of age when I was in the Heinkel field on 11th April 1941.

Footnotes from the Editor:

Richard Playne Stevens was certainly one of the most legendary night fighters. In the words of Lee Brimmicombe-Wood however, some myths have developed about his past....

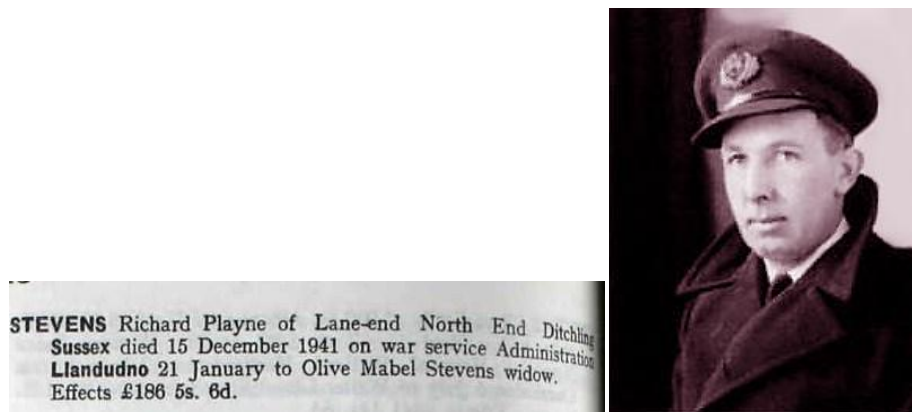
....."The legend, propagated in a number of published sources, alleges that his wife and children had perished during a German night raid on Manchester. His son John confirms that this is not true (see below):

"His wife (Olive Mabel) and his twin children (a boy and a girl) did NOT perish in a bombing raid on Manchester. His wife lived until she was 84 (died 1989) and his son (John Lawrence) is still very much alive. There was a tragic event however on the 1st of October 1940 when his daughter (Frances Mary) was killed in a house fire in the Sussex village of Shermanbury. She was 'the apple of his eye' and this event may well have had an adverse effect on his overall well being. I do not know for certain, because I never had the opportunity to personally know my father."

.....The summer months of 1941 were a period of great frustration for Stevens. The Luftwaffe had shifted east to support the war with Russia and raids over England were few. For weeks he never saw an enemy bomber and he cursed and fidgeted at the lack of opportunity. It wasn't until October that he spotted a Ju88 trying to slip in over East Anglia. He was to chalk it up as his 14th victory.

Soon after, Stevens was posted to another Hurricane unit, 253 Squadron, as a flight commander. Here he virtually pioneered the night intruder mission. He reasoned that if he could not find bombers over England, he would look for them over France or Holland. On 12th December 1941, the day his DSO award came through, he took off for the first time to Gilze-Rijen in Holland, to stooge around. He found nothing and came home. Three nights later he set off again. But this time his black-painted Hurricane never came back. His grave can now be found at Bergen op Zoom in the Netherlands'.

Years later, the ace Johnnie Johnson was to say of Stevens “To those who flew with him it seemed as if life was of little account to him, for the risks he took could have only one ending...We have the fondest memories of him”.



And below is the CWGC list of casualties from the Wellington (LN245) that crashed at Glendon

RAAF FATALITIES IN SECOND WORLD WAR AMONG
RAAF PERSONNEL SERVING ON ATTACHMENT
IN ROYAL AIR FORCE SQUADRONS AND SUPPORT UNITS

428830 Flight Sergeant TUBMAN, Ronald Vernon

Source:

AWM 237 (650 NAA : A705, 166/40/170 Commonwealth War Graves records

Aircraft Type:	Wellington
Serial number:	LN 245
Radio call sign:	
Unit:	84 Op Training RAF

Summary:

On the 11th April 1944, Wellington LN245 was detailed to carry out solo non operational night circuits and landings. The aircraft crashed at 0500 hours at Rothwell Glendon Road, North Hampshire. Two circuits had been carried out but on the third circuit the port engine failed and the aircraft crashed.

Three of the crew were killed and Sgt Farley was injured.

Crew:

RAAF 428830 Flt Sgt R V Tubman, Captain (Pilot)
 RAF Sgt C W Massey, (Bomb Aimer)
 RAF Sgt W A Bush, (Wireless Air Gunner)
 RAF Sgt R R Farley, (Rear Gunner)

Flt Sgt Tubman is buried in the Oxford (Botley) Cemetery, UK.

Sgt Massey is buried in the Castle Donnington Cemetery, UK.

Sgt Bush is buried in the Horsell (St Mary) Churchyard, UK.

The details of two aircraft crashing at Rothwell on such similar dates is not an editorial mistake. The Heinkel was shot down on April 11th 1941 and on April 11th 1944 the Wellington from Desborough crash landed.

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BONES DISAPPEAR AND COME BACK BY POST

An article published on 7th August 1936 in the Northampton Mercury and Herald.

The fact that within a few days of his institution as the new vicar of Rothwell, the Rev. T. P. Adler has had a leg bone, evidently stolen from the famous crypt under the Parish Church, returned to him suggests that thefts from the crypt, with its thousands of human skulls and bones, is still going on unabated.

The new vicar was instituted and inducted on July 24, and within a few days of his taking up the living he received a mysterious brown-paper package which, on its being opened, was found to contain a small cardboard box enclosing the bone referred to.

The package was simply addressed to "The Vicar" without any name being given, and no note was enclosed.

"It is another case of someone stealing a bone from the crypt and soon discovering that it is bringing bad luck to the person who helped himself", the church verger, Mr Reginald Hall who shows between 1500 and 2000 people over the world-famous crypt annually, told a 'Mercury and Herald' representative.

"We have had very many cases of people taking away bones surreptitiously as a memento or souvenir, but they all come back again. There are one or two bones lying about, many of them portions of larger bones. We know pretty well how many there are – one gets accustomed to seeing them several times day in day out, and although we occasionally miss one or two, we know they will be sent back.

When a mysterious-looking package is handed to us by the postman, we know at a glance what it is and we are always right. Sometimes they enclose a note; other times they just send the bone back and leave us to guess the rest".

Mr Hall, who has been the verger for 17 years, following his late father who acted in a similar capacity for 16 years, keeps a careful eye open for possible pilfering of the gruesome relics in his charge, but he does not worry to a great extent if he discovers at the end of the day that an odd bone or so is missing.

"They don't stop at bones" he told our representative, "teeth are favourite objects for their attentions. They are so easy to take and put in the pocket before they are observed. But they too come back".

Mr Hall is not, of course, in a position to state whether 'borrowed' bones do really bring bad luck. He can only go by what people write when they return them. "Most of them say possession of the stolen bone is sadly affecting their businesses" he said. "Others find they begin to lose their relatives and other dear ones. Some of the letters are quite lengthy and others are brief and to the point, but they all complain of the same thing, and they won't keep the stolen bones at any price".

When the bones are returned, Mr Hall merely shrugs his shoulders and replaces them on the shelf from which they are usually taken, and waits for the next.

Mr Hall's life is not devoid of excitement when he collects the sixpences from the hundreds of visitors to the crypt and shows them round.

"Now and then, but not often" he said, "I have seen women take one look into the crypt and run back in sheer terror, and nothing on earth will persuade them to return. On one occasion a young man took a young woman to see the bones. One look was enough and she refused to go another step into the crypt. But the young man's persuasiveness won and the woman was induced to re-enter. She was there only a few moments when she fainted and water and other restoratives had to be hastily brought into action. Most women however, can inspect the bones unmoved, knowing they are seeing what they want to see and expected to see".

"No, children are not in the least bit frightened of the bones", Mr Hall replied to a question.

One of the outstanding incidents Mr Hall recalled was this: On one occasion he was talking to a churchwarden after showing a party round the bone crypt, leaving the door leading to the crypt open. Happening to glance over his shoulder he noticed that three young men had, without permission, descended the stone steps and returned armed with a couple of skulls evidently intended for mementoes.

"We made them go back into the darkness of the crypt" he said, "shut the door on them and kept them there for half-an-hour. It was not until they offered apologies that we let them out".





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