Rowell Heritage

Rothwell Arts & Heritage Centre



No: 20

September - October 2017

£2

Dear Readers

Welcome to the autumn issue of Rowell Heritage Magazine.

Please could we start saying that in our last publication with the Rowell Fair Tart Competition photos, we incorrectly named one of the people as our Mayor, Mr Clive Cross. It was in fact Mr Paul Johnson, President of the Rowell Fair Society, although Mr Cross was one of the judges. So we give our apologies to both of them.

We have an assortment of articles this time including a family story from another Rowellian, Elaine Scarlett (nee Bailey) and of course it wouldn't be complete without something Halloween based.

Following our articles on The Factory Fortnight and Wakes Week and the history of Ice Cream, Ann Rowlett, one of our volunteers submitted two pieces to us. She has written about the annual Congregational Church Camping trips and also has some additional information about ice cream making.

If you have a story to share please let us know (contact details below). It doesn't have to be typed out - we can do that. It is important to share our history and life stories and preserve our heritage.

There are also details on page 9 of a junior art competition that we are running. The winner will get £20 and their artwork printed of the front cover of this magazine. Do you know someone who would like that?

Finally, thank you to all who continue to support our events. In July we held a Cheese and Wine Evening which was a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended and those who helped.

Here is a reminder of events coming up:

Tuesday Sept 12th An Evening with Dennis Binks (tickets available in the centre)

Wed Sept 13th Film Club – The Snows of Kilimanjaro (1952)

Saturday Sept 30th Macmillan Coffee Morning – support a very worthy charity

Wed Oct 18th Film Club – His Girl Friday (1940)

Saturday Oct 21st Coffee morning and Cake Making Competition

See page 17 for more Film club details

Address: Rothwell Arts & Heritage Centre, 14-16 Bridge Street, Rothwell, Northamptonshire, NN14 6JW **Telephone:** (01536) 711550

Open Monday to Saturday 10.00 am - 12.30 pm

Centre Manager: Ray Davis

Editors of Rowell Heritage: Barry and Valerie Panter - editor@rothwellheritage.org.uk

Website: www.rothwellheritage.org.uk

Deadline for submission of articles or adverts for Nov/Dec Issue is October 16th.

Please note that whilst every care is taken to be accurate, no liability will be accepted should any of the contents of this magazine be incorrect.

Front Cover Design by Barry Panter

The Origin of Halloween

In the eighth century, Pope Gregory III designated November 1 as a day to honour all saints and martyrs and it became known as All Saints' Day. The evening before became known as All Hallows Eve or Halloween.

October 31st was the last day of the Celtic calendar and was originally a pagan holiday known as the feast of Samhain (pronounced sow-in). This day marked the end of summer and the harvest and the beginning of the dark, cold winter, a time of year that was often associated with human death.

Celts believed that on the night before the New Year, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred and that the ghosts of the dead returned to earth and roamed the streets. Since not all spirits were thought to be friendly, gifts and treats were left out to pacify the evil and ensure that the next year's crops would be plentiful. This custom evolved into trick-or-treating.

Huge sacred bonfires were also built and people gathered to burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic deities. During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes, typically consisting of animal heads and skins, and attempted to tell each other's fortunes. When the celebration was over, they re-lit their hearth fires, which they had extinguished earlier that evening, from the sacred bonfire to help protect them during the coming winter.

So where do pumpkin lanterns fit in?

Well, the practice originated in Ireland where they are known as "jack-o'-lanterns". The name comes from an Irish folktale about a man named Stingy Jack.

for one year and that, should Jack die, he



According to the story, Stingy Jack invited the Devil to have a drink with him. True to his name, Stingy Jack didn't want to pay for his drink, so he convinced The Devil to turn himself into a coin that Jack could use to buy their drinks. Once the Devil did so, Jack decided to keep the money. He put it into his pocket next to a silver cross, which prevented the Devil from changing back into his original form. Jack eventually freed the Devil, but only on the condition that he would not bother him

would not claim his soul.

The next year, Jack tricked the Devil into climbing into a tree to pick a piece of fruit. While he was up in the tree, Jack carved a sign of the cross into the tree's bark so that the Devil could not come down until the he promised Jack not to bother him for ten more years.



According the legend, Jack died soon after and God would not allow such an unsavoury figure into heaven. The Devil, upset by the trick Jack had played on him and keeping his word not to claim his soul, would not allow Jack into hell. Instead, he sent Jack off into the dark night with only a burning coal to light his way. Jack put the coal into a carved-out turnip and has been roaming the Earth with ever since. The Irish began to refer to this ghostly figure as "Jack of the Lantern," and then, simply "Jack O' Lantern"

People began to make their own versions of the lanterns by carving faces into turnips or potatoes and placing them into windows near doors to frighten away Stingy Jack and other wandering evil spirits. Travellers to America took the tradition with them and found that pumpkins, made perfect Jack-o'-Lanterns.



Growing up in Rothwell in the late forties and fifties, I was often left in the care of my much loved grandmother whilst my parents worked at their Crispin Street garage. Nellie Bailey, nee Pollard, was everyone's ideal of a grandmother. Known to my brother, David, and me as Nanna, she loved us dearly, forgave us everything, and knew how to give us a marvellous time whenever she looked after us.

One of my favourite treats was when she told us stories from her earlier life, and recounted tales of her three bothers: Harry, the oldest, naughty one, Arthur, nearest to her in age, and Frank, whom she effectively brought up because their father, also Harry, had died when Nanna was only six. At a time before any Welfare State provision, Nanna's mother had to work to provide for her young family (Frank was born on Christmas Day 1892, five months after his father's death) so Nanna had looked after her baby brother whenever necessary. Furthermore, she had had to leave school aged 11, even though she wanted to be a teacher, to work in the local box factory, to help out with the finances and enable her eldest brother to become a pupil teacher at the Council School in Rothwell. Does anyone have any idea where this factory was situated? It was under the ownership of one Edward Hill.

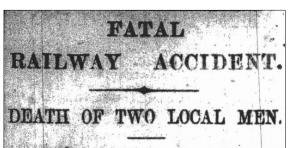
When I asked about her father, Nanna said she could hardly remember him but he had been run over by a train and killed. I imagined a fate similar to Lord Huskisson, President of the Board of Trade, who had gone to the launch of Stephenson's *Rocket*, had nipped over the line to talk to Lord Wellington, but, because of his cold, had not heard the train approach and had been run over and killed! My grandmother seemed very vague about what had happened, perhaps being too young to have understood the details, or perhaps blocking out what must have been very painful memories. The truth is like a saga from Catherine Cookson.

The Pollards were quite a big Rothwell family, though they had previously come from Market Harborough. My grandmother's great grandfather, James Pollard, had been badly injured in the Peninsular War in 1811, but made his way back to Market Harborough over two years later, and became a coal merchant. His son, Robert Pollard, who lived on Rock Hill, was at one time a carpenter, then himself a coal merchant, supplying coal to the station at Rushton. Perhaps that is how Nanna's father, Harry Pollard, became interested in the railways, which by the second half of the nineteenth century provided a very good way for a working class boy to progress in life. Harry married Mary Ann Hill and moved to Stamford, an important centre for the growing railway traffic.

In July 1892, he moved his family to Market Harborough and worked as a stoker and as a train driver for the joint Great Western Railway, and the London and North Eastern.

On July 25th, 1892, Harry Pollard was the fireman on the Nottingham to Northampton train. Approaching Melton Mowbray, the footplate men were not aware that workers were slewing (straightening) the line, and that flags should have been in place to warn the oncoming train. In the event, the train left the tracks, plunged down a 22 foot embankment and the driver, the fireman and a newspaper boy were killed. The Harborough Advertiser said of Harry Pollard, "The poor man was almost completely flattened".





Yesterday (Monday) afternoon an accident occurred at Melton Mowbray, by which two men resident in this district lost their lives-The full details had not come to land when we went to press, but so far as can be gathered it seems that as the 2.45 p.m. train from Melton Mowbray to Harborough was passing Melton Mowbray North Junction it went off the rails and was precipitated down the bank The driver of the engine, Robert Herron, who re sides in Great Bowden, and the stoker, Henry Pollard, residing in Little Bowden. were killed. The telegram states that third person Was killed, but his is name unknown to the officials here. Marshall, a Harborough man, was guard of the train, but he has escaped with a shaking. Herron leaves a wife and a grown up family, and Pollard a wife and a number of young children.

His widow and children were effectively evicted from their railway owned house in Little Bowden within a fortnight, and went to live with Mary Ann's parents in Gladstone Street, Rothwell. This was a two up two down home, whose front room served as a sweetshop.

Mary Ann provided for her little family by cleaning and emptying the "soil" from the school closets. She was engaged in this task until a few days before her final child, Frank, was born on Christmas Day 1892, and she was back at work a couple of days later.

Rita Gibbins, formerly Pollard, daughter of Dick and Vera Pollard, has given me a photograph of her great grandfather, who was Harry Pollard's younger brother, but as yet, I have no idea what my own great grandfather looked like. I should be so grateful if anyone can enlighten me.

My father said that his grandmother was a miserable old woman: I have some idea as to why this might be, especially as her final child, Frank, was reported missing, presumed killed in action in 1918, at the end of the First World War; but that is another story.

There was an official investigation into the accident and a document was published by the Board of Trade on 30th July 1892 which listed the primary causes as Track defect, inadequate worksite protection and site staff error and a secondary cause of Driver Error. There were three fatalities and three other people injured.

A more recent incident involving a train was on 3rd July 1963 so some of you may even remember it.

A freight train was travelling from Birmingham to London but had stopped between Desborough and Rushton (near Triangular Lodge) because of brake trouble. The train was just about to start moving again when it was hit by a passenger train travelling from Manchester to London. A signal error had allowed the second train to be in the same section of track as the first. Only two out of 70 passengers were injured along with the guard. Apparently the guard of the freight train heard the passenger one approaching and managed to escape unharmed.

This wasn't the only incident that year for on 10th December there was another one nearby.

This time it was at Glendon Sidings near Glendon Hall. Mid-morning, a passenger train travelling from Leicester to St Pancras, was derailed when some bolts on the train became loose. Fortunately all carriages remained upright and although a small fire broke out it was quickly put out by Kettering Fire Brigade who had been called to the scene. Two passengers suffered from slight shock and four railwaymen had minor injuries. A11 the passengers were taken on their journey within half an hour by another train travelling from Sheffield which had been stopped further up the line.

I'm sure over the years there have been other incidents. Do you remember any? Please let us know your stories.

Rothwell Congregational Chapel packed their bags and went off to the seaside for the annual Camp. This was of course mainly the younger element, but often the minister of the day would accompany them, and share in the fun and frolics.

A group of the young men went down to the chosen site on the Friday evening, after the factories closed down for the fortnight, in order to set up camp ready for the families, girlfriends, wives and friends to join them on the Saturday morning.

The tents were erected for individual families and groups of friends, together with a larger tent and cook tent which was usually under the supervision of Mr. Harry Arch. Pictured right.



These camps were very popular in the 1920's and 30's and did continue with smaller numbers into the 1950's.

I never went to camp myself, so all I know about them has been passed down to me, mainly by my parents. Dad was a very regular camper as I understand during his youth and 20's. Then he started 'courting mum', who although a member of the chapel was not in habit of going to camp.

The story goes that she said she wouldn't go and sleep on the floor! Dad solved that problem by buying her a camp bed, and so she had no excuses and did accompany him on some camps, before and after their wedding, and prior to the onset of the war. This started a trend as the other ladies saw the bed and wanted one too. This bed I have slept on, but it was not very comfortable, being constructed of wooden slats covered with canvas. It is now at Kettering museum, as I decided it was extra to requirements when Z beds were introduced, and it was before the days of Rothwell Heritage centre.



I wonder how many people in Rothwell still remember these camps.

I know there are a few still alive who participated.



Ice Cream History

In the last magazine mention was made of the Waterways Museum, near Kings Cross in London. I visited this museum last June when on a boating holiday, partially on the Regents Canal. We stayed for one night at the back of the museum in the basin which forms part of the museums exhibits.



As a canal museum I recommend it if you are in the Kings Cross area and have an hour or two to spare. However the article by Val in the Rowell Heritage July - August referred to the making of ice cream and the ice house pits in the museum, I thought you might like to see a picture of them, they are truly huge.



P.S. When I was a child, mum had a small shop and used to make ice cream from a powder. This was mixed with milk and/or water which were churned together in a special machine, which had a central paddle like the old fashioned washing machines.

Some other exhibits in the museum:





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Photograph ID

Last month we published this photograph and asked for more information about it.



Mr Stan White contacted us and told us the following:

The photo was taken early to mid-1930s during a trip to the Cotswolds with Rothwell Photographic Club. A camera with a self-timer was mounted on a tripod so that everyone could be in the picture. Henry Polmateer released the timer and hurried back to be pictured with the others. (It was his camera). Henry told me about the photograph when I was in the Photographic Club in the post war 1940s.

Left to right:

- 2. Bert Dyke
- 5. Fred Barlow
- 6. Lance Barlow
- 9. Frank Marlow
- 13. Henry Polmateer
- 15. Fred Buckby (Bus owner and driver)

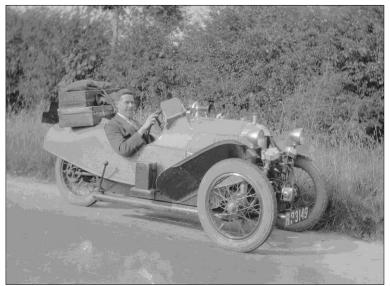
This month we have another photo that we'd like your help with. It was found in some books which were donated to the centre. We believe it was taken in 1935/6. Do you recognise anyone on it? If so please let us know



We also have two photographs submitted by another of our volunteers – Margaret Marlow. They are both of her father John Charles Bosworth who was born in Rothwell in 1902 and the photos were taken in the 1920s.

Does anyone know what sort of motorbike her father is riding?





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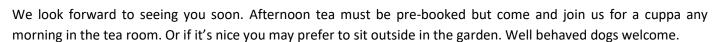
More than just a museum

I wonder how many of you are aware that we offer delicious afternoon teas in our delightful, atmospheric tea room.

One of our recent bookings was for the Townswomen's Guild on 9th August. We received the most favourable comments from all who attended regarding the quality of the food, the reasonable cost and the warm feeling surrounding the occasion.

If this sounds appealing and something that would be 'just what you fancy', please give us a ring on 01536 711550 for more information.

The menu will be varied with assorted sandwiches, bread and home-made scones and scones. Price varies according to menu and the maximum number is 18.











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If any of you fancy volunteering to help with the tea room it would be gratefully appreciated.

Please ask Ray, Pat or Christine for more information.

When you next call in to browse our interesting displays and gifts or for a cup of tea, please also take a look at our 'Book Loan/Swap' scheme. We have a great many books on a variety of subjects including fiction, fact, crime and history.

You can bring in a book to swap or simply borrow from the collection. A small donation would be appreciated as keeping the Heritage Centre alive and kicking is an expensive business.



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Three significant dates for the **Rowell Fair Society** - but what date is missing?

1204 saw the Rowell Fair Charter being granted by King John.

1614 is the date of the Charter (that is currently used at Proclamation) under the reign of King James 1.

2018 will see Proclamation Monday fall on May 28th, a Bank Holiday.

The date that is missing is a very crucial one in the long history of our Ancient Charter Fair. It is, of course, **1968** when the Rowell Fair Society (RFS) was formed.

Apparently, the post war years were a difficult time. Interest in the Proclamation declined and it was increasingly tricky to assemble a band for the event. 1968 saw Norman Hall, then Bailiff to the Lord of the Manor, and a few dedicated Charter Fair supporters rally together to ensure that the Ancient Charter Fair continued to thrive for future generations.

The first RFS Committee was elected in February 1968 and they worked hard to ensure the unique traditions were not lost. Subsequent RFS Committee members over the years as well as today's RFS Committee are as keen as the original members to keep, respect and build upon such unique traditions. I am not a Rowellian (although my husband RFS President Paul is!) but having experienced a number of Rowell Fairs (since the early 1980's) can clearly see that should the traditions be allowed to disappear it would be so sad for the Town, its heritage and community.

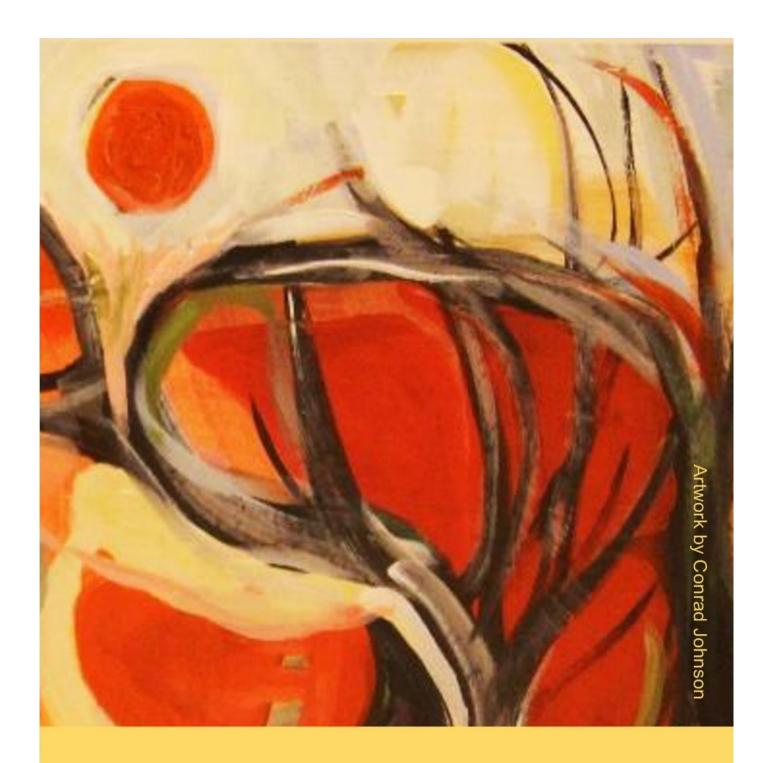
The current RFS Committee, chaired by Bailiff Frank York, is planning a few extras for 2018 Charter Fair week to celebrate its 50th anniversary and will be advertising activities nearer the time.

The RFS Committee then and now are also keen for the RFS to be part of the community throughout the year and so organise speakers for regular monthly meetings held for members and guests. These are held in the lounge of the Rothwell Conservative Club starting at 8pm, usually free entry, covering a variety of topics. The next three Members' evening dates are September 28th, October 26th and November 30th.

New members are always welcome as it is the support of the RFS membership along with the RFS Committee that will help to ensure the unique traditions will continue for many, many more years.

"God save the Queen and the Lord of the Manor".





Autumn Showcase

An exhibition of work by various local artists

Rothwell Arts & Heritage Centre 14-16 Bridge Street, NN14 6JW www.rothwellheritage.org.uk

1st Sept – 4th Dec

Film Club

Have you tried our film club yet? It is held every month in the Arts and Heritage Centre (2pm) and admission is free. Meet friends, share a cup of tea and watch a classic film. These are the films coming up:

September 13th

1952 American film based on the short story of the same name by Ernest Hemingway (although the ending is not quite the same). It stars Gregory Peck, Susan Hayward and Ava Gardner.



October 18th

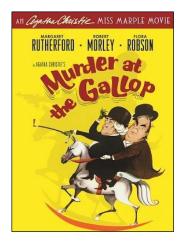
1940 American Comedy starring Cary Grant and Rosalind Russell and featuring Ralph Bellamy

The film was ranked 19th on the American Film Institute's 100 Years...100 Laughs, a 2000 list of the funniest American comedies.



November 22nd

1963 film, the second of four Miss Marple films made by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. It was based on the novel 'After the Funeral' by Agatha Christie, and stars Margaret Rutherford, Charles "Bud" Tingwell, Stringer Davis, Robert Morley and Flora Robson.



December 20th

1943 American musical comedy-mystery film starring Barbara Stanwyck and Michael O'Shea. It is based on the novel The G-String Murders written by strip tease queen Gypsy Rose Lee.



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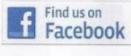




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Mondegreens

Have you ever heard someone misquote a saying or sing the wrong words to a song? For instance someone sings Little Miss Muffett sat on a tuffet, *eating her curtains away* instead of eating her curds and whey.

Did you know that there is a word to describe that? It's called a 'mondegreen'. The term was coined by an American writer called Sylvia Wright. When she was a child, her mother read to her a ballad called The Bonny Earl of Murray which contained (or so she thought) the following verse:

Ye Highlands and ye Lowlands Oh where have you been? They hae slain the Earl Amurray and Lady Mondegreen.

In Sylvia Wright's imagination she saw Lady Mondegreen as a poor heroine being murdered alongside her husband. It was years later that she discovered there was no Lady Mondegreen but rather she had misheard the end of the verse. It was in fact:

They hae slain the Earl of Murray and laid him on the green.

Wright wrote an article for Harper's Magazine in 1954 about this and it struck a chord with many of her readers and thus the term 'mondegreen' was born.

According to Collins English Dictionary 2005 it is 'a word or phrase that is misinterpreted as another word or phrase, usually with an amusing result'.

Here a just a few more but I'm sure there must be millions.

A small boy returning from the circus told his mother that he'd given his money to the trapeze man. When asked why he answered 'Well they told us he flies through the air with the greatest disease'.

Here are a couple from Christmas carols:

Away in a manger no crib for a bed The little Malteser laid down its sweet head, The stars in the bright sky looked down where it lay That little Malteser, asleep on the hay.



And

A Wayne in a manger

And then what about a cup of chino instead of a cappuccino and given up the goat instead of given up the ghost

More misheard sony lyrics include

They built this city on sausage rolls (rock and roll)

Dancing queen, feel the beat from the tangerine (tambourine)

It doesn't make a difference if we're naked or not (It doesn't make a difference if we make it or not)

One of the displays in the centre at the moment is of an old tin bath and laundry equipment including a dolly tub, mangle and copper.

It set me thinking about how the washing machine we take for granted today, was invented.

We've come a long way since our ancestors pounded clothes on rocks near a stream, using the fat of animals as soap. So where did the machines come in?



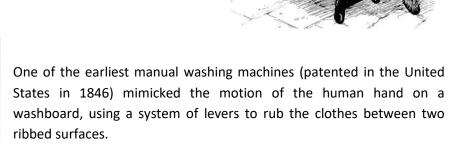
First came the wash board or scrub board which is believed to have been around since late 1700s.



Wash-tubs also known as dolly-tubs or possing-tubs were commonly used where clothes were pounded by a variety of implements which were mainly log sticks with blocks of wood or plungers on the end. Some had perforations to help the water circulate. We have one in our display.

Then the clothes had to be wrung out and this is where the mangle comes in. It was a heavy contraption about four or five feet high with a handle that turned two rollers. Wet items were fed through the rollers which squeezed out the water.

There was a screw on top to adjust the distance between the rollers according to the thickness of the fabric. For blankets, the screw was let out as far as possible. We have one of these on display too.



However, the washing machine considered to be the most similar to our modern appliance in terms of how it worked, was the machine built by Thomas Bradford back in 1860: it had an octagonal drum made from wood that was inserted into another, larger wooden box that was filled with soapy water. A crank was used to turn the inner drum.

However, historians give the title of washing machine *inventor* to an American by the name of James King. He patented the first washing machine to use a drum in 1851 which made the machine resemble a modern machine but it was still hand-powered.

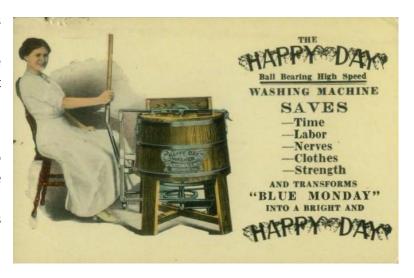


Then in 1874, William Blackstone of Indiana built a machine which 'removed and washed away dirt from clothes'. He made it as a birthday present for his wife! Lucky lady.

It had a wooden barrel that contained laundry immersed in soapy water, which was then moved around by a shaft equipped with different pegs, turned by hand. This was the first washing machine designed for convenient use in the home and went on sale

1900 saw the introduction of electric clothes washers which rotated the tub to clean the clothes. However, the motor wasn't protected beneath the machine exposing it to water – and causing frequent short circuits and even electric shocks.

Throughout the next few decades, major changes, updates and improvements were incorporated into the new washing machine designs — including the use of enamelled steel, which was more sanitary, easier to clean and longer lasting. The early 1920s saw a number of Canadian machines manufactured with built-in gas or electric water heaters.



In the 1950s, lots of American manufacturers were supplying machines with a spin-dry feature – this replaced the wringer and eliminated the risk of previous accidents which had involved hands and hair.

In time, clocks and timing devices were added which enabled machines to be set at pre-determined times s that you didn't need to constantly keep an eye on it.

By the end of the 1950s, GE had manufactured a machine with five push button controls which gauged the washing temperature, rinse temperature, agitation speed and spin speed.

Today we have top loaders and front loaders, computer programmed machines and some with built in dyers. Gone are the Monday 'washday's when women spent all day slaving over boilers, coppers and mangles. One of our volunteers tells how his mother used to get up at 5am to put the copper on and then go back to bed whilst the water was heating. Now we simply load the washing, program the machine and leave it to do its work whilst we do something else.



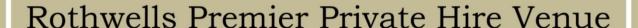
Of course alongside all of this we had the introduction of commercial washing soaps. First in the form of bars, then flakes and powder and now liquid.

And who remembers starch and blue bags?

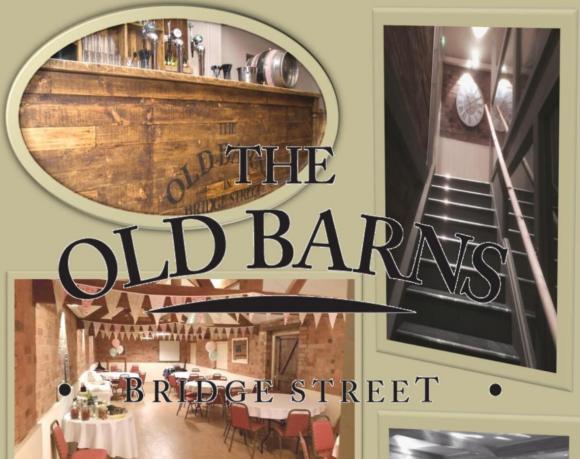
Well that's another story. Or maybe you have a story to share about the? Please let us know as we love to hear from our readers.







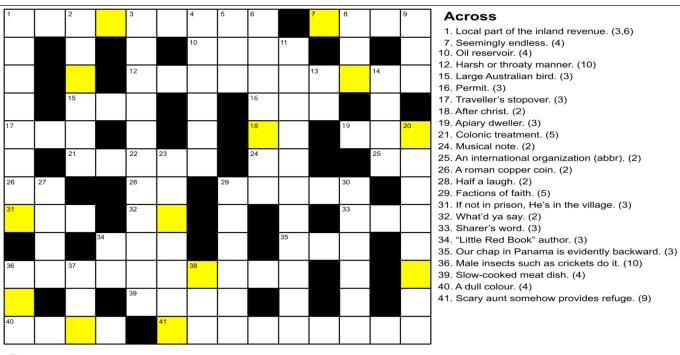
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Down

- 1. Transport hub. (8)
- 2. Antiseptic ingredient, Coal tar distillate. (6)
- 3. Ships bow decorations. (11)
- 4. Rita is moving to a peninsula in the Adriatic. (6)
- 5. Director's call (3)
- 6. Mirror, mimic. (7)
- 8. Hole making tool. (3)

- 9. Go for it. (3)
- 11. Trying situation. (11)
- 13. Used to indicate particular place or time. (2)
- 14. Instead of. (4)
- 20. Passage leading inside. (8)
- 23. Elephant handlers. (7)
- 27. Preservative. (4)

- 29. Boiled Indian meal; hasty pudding; mush. (6)
- 30. Moonlight opus. (6)
- 34. Mile (abbr). (2)
- 36. Bend in the middle. (3)
- 37. Eggs of fish. (3)
- 38. Tributary of the Thames. (3)

Rearrange the yellow squares to spell out

An ancient feast (3,7,3)

Answers in next Issue



Last Months Answer Glendon Road





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