

## Life in Lockdown

Although we have not been able to meet as a History Group since the start of Lockdown, your Committee has not been idle, - far from it!

As many members will know, we published our first film in what we hope will become a series, - "Birth of a Spa Town", something that we had been working on during the winter, with Mark Ellis, the designer of our website. The film traces the development of Leamington from its days as a small village, to the flourishing mid-century Spa town. We are fortunate to have so many experts happy to put their impressions on film, and to have talented students from local schools equally happy to perform the voice-over links.

Uploaded to the website and linked to LHG Facebook page, the film has attracted many compliments, from home and abroad, and some offers of sponsorship towards funding a second film, which we hope will be completed by the end of August. Contact details for further donations can be found on the website, - [www.leamingtonhistory.co.uk](http://www.leamingtonhistory.co.uk)

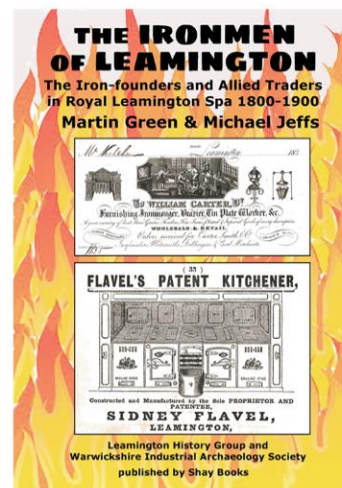
### *Virtual Local History Day*

September, 2020

Stella Bolitho is organising a virtual Local History Day, with a number of our usual contributors giving talks on a local history topic of their choice. The full programme will be available soon.

There will also be a virtual Tea Party, with a light-hearted quiz for you to try with family and friends, - start baking now! (if you can find any flour in the shops.)

As our usual Town Walks are shelved for the time being, Stella has also persuaded some guides to upload their favourite walk to our Facebook page. We have had Tom Lewin's Lost Pubs of Leamington walk, and Barry Franklin is exploring the work of the Camouflage Unit in WWII.



On 6th July 2020 the Warwickshire Industrial Archaeology Society and the Leamington History Group are proud to announce that this is one of the two books chosen for a Publications Award by the Association for Industrial Archaeology. The Judges were all "very impressed by the amount of work involved and the great variety of illustrations which were included".  
Copies are still available to buy

## Tom and Vicky Lewin, hosts to generations of students on language-learning trips to Leamington.

When their son Steven was coming up to fifteen and becoming more independent, Tom and Vicky Lewin felt that their house was growing too quiet, so they answered an advertisement in the press looking for host families for French students over here on a three-week English course. It proved to be the start of a steep but deeply satisfying learning curve, hosting students from all over Europe, and more recently, Asia.



Tom and Vicky's first student was a teenager from Paris, and not untypically for a teenaged French boy, he was not really thrilled to be here. Nevertheless, they took another student, - a girl named Stephanie, also from Paris, but as different from the boy as chalk from cheese. (Stephanie left, with Cloris, a student from China) Stephanie fitted in well, responded warmly, and became a family friend, - inviting Tom and Vicky to her wedding years later. Her parents came on visits, enjoying a meal out at the Angel Hotel and being shown around the town and the region.

Another student who became a long-standing friend was a stunningly beautiful student from Spain, Diana Vidal Blasco. Her father owned a restaurant at Tossa del Mar on the Costa Brava, where Tom and Vicky were made very welcome on a surprise visit. Delphine was another French student who remained in contact and invited Tom and Vicky to her wedding in the South of France. (They have had eight wedding invitations, and managed to attend five of them, in Paris, Lille, the South of France, Brussels, - and one in a stately home here in England!)

Over a thirty-year period, their home at Whitnash has hosted over 600 students, some here for a few weeks in the summer, some for a year, and enrolled at a local school, and some for longer, - attending boarding schools in the Midlands, and coming "home" to Tom and Vicky on their half-term and three-weekly "exesats". (Weekends off)

It has been a hugely enriching experience, - and not just for the students. Both sides have learned from each other, about food, culture, and customs. Tom can now introduce himself not just in European languages, but in Mandarin and Japanese. He has an extensive archive of thank you letters and photographs of the students, shared meals and visits, and of course the weddings that he and Vicky have attended.



*An interesting footnote: the students' favourite foods by far are crumpets, marmalade, and baked beans, - often carefully packed in a suitcase before leaving for home!*



Does anyone recognise this photo? - Answer at the end of page 3

## Wartime Memories of the Garrett Family, 24 Chandos Street, Leamington Spa



Many families experienced the hardship & sorrow of war and my maternal grandparents, Joe, and Eve (in the shop doorway, left) Garrett, were no exception. In addition to their own four children, Jim, Joan, Gordon and Clive, they brought up Grandmother's three orphaned nephews, Mick, Sid, and Pat Foley.

Jim Garrett, Joe and Eve's eldest son, was called up by the army & after initial training, joined the REME & was posted to Egypt for 3½yrs. (Early in 1941 prior to being posted, Jim married Hilda (aka 'Pip') Key). My mother, Joan, met a Czechoslovak soldier who was stationed in Leamington in 1942 & fell in love with him. She was called up to work at

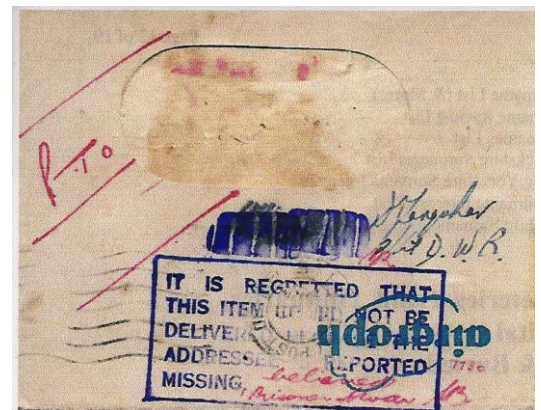
Lockheed making aircraft components before she was married & gave birth to me in 1944. Gordon joined the Navy in January 1945 as an apprentice artificer in the Fleet Air Arm aged 16. Clive, the youngest, was still at school.

Grandmother's eldest nephew Mick Foley failed his medical & so worked as a machinist throughout the war. (He married a distant relative by marriage, Hilda Garrett, from Birmingham.) Sid Foley was already in the regular army, - more about him later. Pat Foley joined the Navy & became an artificer in the Fleet Air Arm. He married a WAFF, Joan, whilst in the Navy. Towards the end of the war he served aboard an aircraft carrier in the Pacific, which was damaged by a Japanese suicide bomber, causing Pat to be blown down a flight of stairs cracking his spine.

My father, Josef Kalas, served in the Czechoslovak Army. My mother recorded the celebrations at home in letters to my father whilst they were apart. He fought at Dunkirk but was shipped out with 130 soldiers to join the American 3rd Army & the Russians, to free Czechoslovakia. After the war my mother & I joined him in Brno. Within in a short space of time my mother & I returned to the UK. My father followed a few months later and we settled in Lillington.

In February 1944, the War Office returned a letter addressed to Sid Foley, stamped "Believed missing in action". It wasn't until months later it was learned that Sid had been taken prisoner by the Germans and was in a POW Camp, with mainly Eastern European prisoners. He was forced to work in a salt mine but was repatriated just before the end of the war.

The Garretts put up flags and bunting on the shop front to welcome Sid home and left them in place for VE Day. Just prior to the day itself, the Garrett family & friends walked into Leamington to view all the decorations. The Courier published a photograph of all the Leamington repatriated POWs being given a civic welcome home by the town council. On VE Day, there was a children's party held in Burgis & Colbourne's Garage, just below the shop in Chandos Street, and afterwards, the children played games in the street. In the evening, a dance band was hired & the grown-ups danced the night away. Derek Squib, who lived opposite the Garretts with his parents, brother & sister informed me that they also had a large bonfire at the crossroads of Chandos Street & Oxford Row. Derek planned to put an incendiary device on the bonfire but was fortunately stopped by a neighbour, Bob Morris! Not entirely convinced of the danger, Derek took the device home & ignited it on the blue brick foot path at the rear of his parents' house. It melted the blue bricks, - and Derek walked away unscathed.



M Kalas, May.2020

\*The roundabout under construction linking Princes Drive, Myton Road & Europa Way (A425 and A452)

## Sherbourne Villa



Once a large, elegant and detached building, Sherbourne Villa, stood on the corner of Sherbourne Terrace, Clarendon Street and Villiers Street. In 1938, planning permission was gained to demolish the villa and replace it with 4 houses: 17 and 17a Sherbourne Terrace and 2 houses in Villiers Street.

Originally, Sherbourne Villa (later Sherbourne Lodge) was set apart from the adjacent Sherbourne Terrace. Its address then changed to 17 Clarendon Street and 17 Sherbourne Terrace. The earliest reference, as Sherbourne Villa, was in 1856. It became the home of 5 families until 1935, when its most famous resident, 'Leamington's Grand Old Man' died.

The house was home to a number of families. First, Harriet Marsland, a widow from Lancashire, made it her home between 1856-1859. Then a prominent catholic family, headed by Henry Bacchus, moved in until 1887. This was followed by unmarried sisters, Fanny Pattison Currie and Elizabeth Isabella Currie who quickly jumped at the chance of moving across the road from 46 Binswood Avenue. They lived at Sherbourne Lodge until 1894. They then sold all their 'first-class household furnishings' and pianoforte and downsized to nearby Norman Villa, at 33 Sherbourne Place.

On retirement from the Indian Civil Service, in 1895, Edward Turner arrived with his family at Sherbourne Lodge and stayed until 1924. He worked in Madras from 1864 as a collector, a magistrate and supervisor of the State famine relief operations. The family regularly worshipped at the nearest Anglican church, St Paul's, in Leicester Street with Mrs Turner leading the Mothers' Union and their daughter Mary teaching at the Sunday School and then marrying the curate. The Turners supported many worthy local causes including donating to the new St Paul's school buildings (1911). Tragically, in 1914, one of their sons, Richard Chase Turner, a Lieutenant-Commander of the Royal Navy, was killed in action in Zanzibar when H.M.S. Pegasus was shelled by a German cruiser.

Edward Turner became the Honorary Secretary of the Leamington Spa Golf Club with the difficult task of selling off the "golf pavilion on the Champion Hills, rollers [and] mowing machines" in 1898. Locals questioned, "after a fitful existence, is it about to die? Is there no hope of reviving the club?"

### "Leamington's Grand Old Man"

Sherbourne Lodge's most famous and well-respected Leamington resident was Dr Frederick Harry Haynes (1845- 1935), MD. FRC.P., M.R.C.S. He established his medical practice at 23 The Parade, where he lived with his wife Henrietta Hiron and 7 children, all born in Leamington. It was only in the year of his golden wedding anniversary, 1926, at the age of 81 that Frederick relocated to Sherbourne Lodge, a quieter place than the hustle and bustle of the Parade, in the centre of town. He served at Warneford Hospital for 50 years.

Stella Bolitho, June 2020

*Postcard showing Sherbourne Lodge 1907, courtesy of Michael Knibb and David Twiddy.*



Read more about Sherbourne Villa and Leamington's Grand Old Man on the Leamington History Group Website, [www.leamingtonhistory.co.uk](http://www.leamingtonhistory.co.uk)