



# Leamington History Group

## Newsletter September 2025

After a busy summer, learning more about our town, the Leamington History Group have had an excellent range of speakers at all our talks, over 10 different themed local history walks (with still more to go), and trips to the Gurdwara, the Polish Centre and Marton Museum of Country Bygones. Thanks to all LHG members who make these events possible.

Our Autumn Café Programme starts on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sep., with some interesting talks planned. Hopefully, everyone will be able to visit our Heritage Day, on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> Sep. in All Saints' Parish Church. There will be 24 exhibitors, including LHG and many local societies who will be sharing their latest history activities. We will also be selling the 2026 LHG Calendars and latest LHG books. Warwickshire College students have helped with the design of our Heritage posters this year too.

The LHG team continue to work on our new Digital Archive, and a new book, Creative Leamington Spa. Our monthly programme starts on 22<sup>nd</sup> Sep., and we finish with the premiere of our latest film, Leamington at War, at the Loft Theatre, on 15<sup>th</sup> Dec.

We will, again, be supporting the Leam Tree Fest, and some members are working on some special decorations. Meanwhile, others are beavering away with our new Digital Archive, improving our LHG Website, and researching and writing for our next book, Creative Leamington Spa.

Our membership has now increased to over 120. There is a special offer (Sep, to Dec. 2025) to join for only £7.50 until the end of 2025.

### Leamington at War – New LHG Video

Our film making team are making great progress in researching and capturing Leamington's story during World War II.

This will be premiered at the Loft Theatre on **Mon. 15<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2025**. Special thanks to the Loft Theatre for hosting. Further information regarding tickets will be available soon.

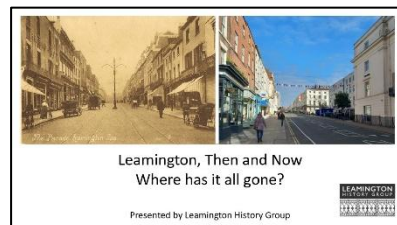
## Monthly Talks: Sep. – Nov. 2025

**Mondays: 7.30 p.m.**  
**Oddfellows, New St. Leamington Spa. CV31 1HP**



**Sep. 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Patrick Fitzgerald:  
A Lesser-known  
Spitfire Ace.



**Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>**

David Morse:  
Leamington Then  
and Now

**Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>**

Sheila Woolf: Stoneleigh &  
A Surprising Connection



## Leamington History Town Walks

*Most walks are free (unless indicated \*). Please just turn up at meeting place.\**

**Victoria Park Local History Tues. 2<sup>nd</sup> Sep. 11 a.m.** Meet at Phone Box, Archery Road.

**Jephson Gardens & Lights of Leamington with Sidney Syson. Wed. 3<sup>rd</sup> Sep. 11 a.m.** Meet South Lodge.

**\*William Louis De Normanville with Nigel Briggs.** Book on Eventbrite. Thurs. **11<sup>th</sup> Sep. 2 p.m.** Meet Aviary Café, Jephson Gardens.

**Places and People of Leamington with Sidney Syson. 17<sup>th</sup> Sep. 2 p.m.** Meet South Lodge.

**\*Street Art with BRINK with artist Tim Robottom** Colourful murals of Leamington. £10 per person. Book on Eventbrite. **Sun. 7<sup>th</sup> Sep. & 5<sup>th</sup> Oct. 10 30 a.m.;** Meet Visitor Centre.

**Christchurch Gardens' History with Paul & Jenny Dickins. Sat. 20<sup>th</sup> Sep. 11 a.m.** Meet Noticeboard by tennis courts.

**Jephson Gardens & Lights of Leamington with Sidney Syson. Wed. 1<sup>st</sup> Oct. 11 a.m.** Meet South Lodge.

## Leamington History Café

**Tuesdays: 9.30 – 11 a.m.**

**Band Factory, 13 Althorpe Street,  
Leamington CV31 2AU**

All Welcome  
Please donate.  
Tea/coffee available

For further information, please email  
[secretary@leamingtonhistory.co.uk](mailto:secretary@leamingtonhistory.co.uk)

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|---------------------------------|--|
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sep.            | Concealment & Deception: the Camoufleurs of Leamington Spa   |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> Sep.            | Leamington FC History  |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> Sep.           | 200 Years Leamington Police  |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> Sep.           | The Apollo Rooms Clemens Street, a conundrum! Is it on the East or on the West?  |
| 30 <sup>th</sup> Sep.           | Warwickshire Community Archive   |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> Oct. TRIP:      | Meet at Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum. LHG Members only.   |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> Oct. Students) | Anne Frank – her story (Trinity)   |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> Oct.           | The Winkless Letter Mystery  |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> Oct. Archive   | Deeper Dive into the Black Hole, the   |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Nov.            | St. Paul's Church History  |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> Nov.           | Meet at the Leamington War Memorial, 10.45 a.m. (No Café)  |
| *14 <sup>th</sup> Nov. Fri.     | LHG Wreath Laying Ceremony: Remembering Leamington's Citizens who died during WW2. Meet at the War Memorial 10.45 a.m. |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov.           | Falklands Experiences – Galtieri and Beyond  |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> Nov.           | The Special Constabulary Long Service Medal  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec.            | House Histories: Exploring Further   |
| 9 <sup>th</sup> Dec.            | Sporting Leamington  |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> Dec.           | LHG Café Closed Christmas Holidays   |

## Raising Funds for Leamington History Group Projects

Please sign up to support Leamington History Group for free on #easyfundraising today!

It is completely free and would make a big difference to our fundraising. Once you have signed up you can raise free donations for us when you shop online with over 8,000 retailers e.g. Tesco, eBay etc.



## LHG Charity Status

We are delighted to inform our membership that Leamington History Group is now registered as a Charity. Our charity number is 1213364.

There will be several benefits, including our ability to apply for further funding to support our projects. We have 7 Trustees on the Board, who are committed to continuing the excellent work that LHG achieved over the last 20 years, and before that, as the 'History of Bath Place Project.'

Our aim is 'to advance the education of the public by promoting the study of the local history of Royal Leamington Spa and surrounding areas in all its aspects.' We are currently working to put our new policies in place, and to organize the new charity bank account.

## War Memorial Services



We invite all our members to commemorate those who lost their lives during WW2 on **Tues. 11<sup>th</sup> Nov. 10.45 a.m.**; and on **Fri. 14<sup>th</sup> Nov. 10.45 a.m.** to remember Leamington's Citizens who died in WW2.

*Leamington War Memorial. Photo Courtesy of Gary Maxwell.*





Alan Griffin, Czech Memorial Fountain, 2024.

Photo courtesy of Allan Jennings.

## Alan George Griffin

(1941-2025)

Alan grew up in Southam, one of three sons of a baker living at Southam Windmill. He attended Leamington College until aged 16 and was then apprenticed to a Leamington engineer. He 'moonlighted' at weekends as a sports journalist and photographer, riding pillion on a motorbike to catch the latest scores and phoning them in for 'The Pink' publication.

Photography was always his passion. He dedicated 28 years to the Fire Service and published articles and *Fetch the Engines*. In 'retirement,' Alan was a County Record Office Archives Assistant, a Court Usher, Security at Warwick Castle, a volunteer at St Mary's Church, Warwick, and for many years a volunteer at St Paul's Cathedral. He enjoyed his role as Father Christmas at Burgis and Colbourne on the Parade. Alan was also a verger at All Saints, Leamington, where he explored local history further. From 2001-2016, Alan was also the Leamington Town Council Mace Bearer, which prompted his mayoral regalia research.

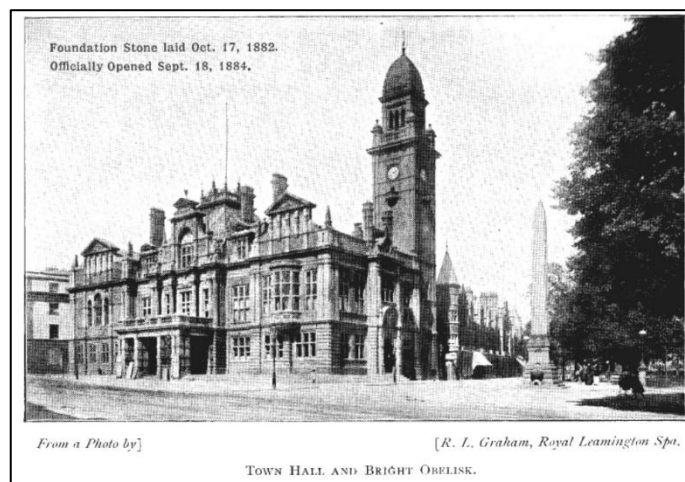
He was passionately involved in Walton, Southam and Leamington local history, and helping to found both Southam Local History Society and the Leamington History Group. I can safely say that the LHG would not have come into being without Alan's commitment to saving, archiving and sharing his discoveries, as part of the History at Bath Place Project. We remember Alan with gratitude.

Alan tracked down and interviewed Czech Brigade settlers in the UK, using their testimony and photographs to produce a book. He was honoured by both the Czech and Slovak Governments for his tribute, and until ill-health prevented him, attended every annual Memorial Fountain ceremony in Jephson Gardens.

The Memorial stands as a tribute to the parachutists, and Alan, with his customary energy and attention to detail, set up a Friends Association to help fund its restoration, after years of Leamington's legendary 'hard' water had damaged it almost beyond repair.

(ed) Margaret Rushton

## Town Hall Heritage Tours

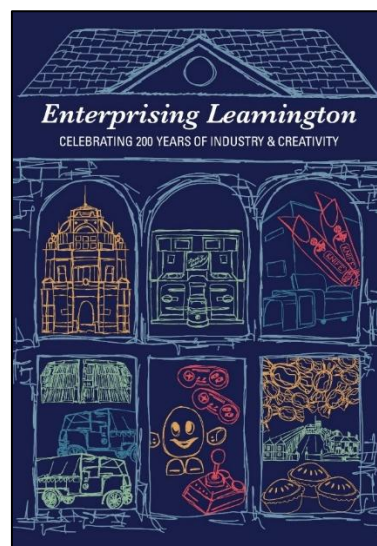


A FREE guided tour for Heritage Open Day with historian Paula Fletcher through some of the spectacular rooms of Royal Leamington Spa's Town Hall. This beautiful building by local architect John Cundall opened in 1884 and has many wonderful stories to tell.

Booking essential on Eventbrite Leamington History Group or ask at our Café. Only 12 places per tour.

Mon. 15<sup>th</sup> Sep. 11 a.m.; Tues. 16<sup>th</sup> Sep. 3 p.m.;  
Wed. 17<sup>th</sup> Sep. 11 a.m.; Thurs. 18<sup>th</sup> Sep. 2 p.m.;  
Fri. 19<sup>th</sup> Sep. 2 p.m.

## Enterprising Leamington Celebrating 200 Years of Industry & Creativity



Our latest book is selling well, Price: £15 for Leamington History Group Members: [secretary@leamingtonhistory.co.uk](mailto:secretary@leamingtonhistory.co.uk) Also available from Anthony Eden Barbers, Clarendon St. and Waterstones, Leamington.



## Royal Leamington Spa Police: 200 Years (1825-1925)



A special 200-year anniversary celebration took place in the old Police Station in August 2025, with the present Chief Constable, Alex Franklin-Smith, in attendance.

An Act of Parliament in 1825 included the right to form a Police Force. This was based in High Street in Leamington's New Town Hall, and now the base of the Polish Community Centre.

It started small until 1839 when it amalgamated with the Coventry Force. However, things did not go well and in 1843, another Act of Parliament was passed, and the Leamington Police Force was reinstated.



The Force was also involved with the Fire Brigade and the Ambulance services. Various people stand out within the Police: Chief Inspector Edwards, who completed over 45 years; Chief Constable Thomas Taylor Earnshaw who completed 36 years and died in office; and Chief Constable Arthur Edwin Young who became the government Police Troubleshooter and served as the Commissioner of the City of London Police.

Due to the 1946 Police Act, Leamington lost its Police Force on 31<sup>st</sup> April 1947.

## Leamington Borough Police



It became the Leamington Division of the Warwickshire Constabulary. Then it became a part of the Mid-Warwickshire Division. After that, it moved to Southern Police Area.

The Leamington Police Station is now housed in the Warwickshire Justice Centre, which was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II, in 2011. This also has the Warwickshire Police, the Crown Prosecution, the HM Courts & Tribunal, Probation, Youth Justice, HM Coroner, Local Criminal Juvenile Board, Victim Support and Witness Services.

Terry Gardner

## 57 Year: Leamington Police Connections



Terry Gardner. Photo Courtesy of Brian Lindo.

Our wonderful LHG Committee Member, and founding chair, Terry Gardner, pictured in Police Uniform.



# HERITAGE DAY

2025

Saturday  
13th  
September  
10am-3pm

FREE at  
All Saints'  
Parish Church  
Priory Terrace  
CV31 1AA

There will be a range of  
local history exhibitions by  
community organisations,  
showcasing research.

  
heritage open days



Leamington  
History  
Group





# Leamington History Group: What We Do

- Monthly history talks
- Free weekly café
- Summer guided walks
- Annual 'Old Leamington' calendar
- Exhibitions
- Annual Leamington Heritage Day
- Research
- Special events/projects (e.g. *Their Finest Hour*, *Lights of Leamington*)
- Newsletters
- Local history trips
- Digital archive

## Book Publications

- People and Places (2009)
- Royal Leamington Spa: A History in 100 Buildings (2018)
- The Ironmen of Leamington (2019)
- Global Leamington (2023)
- Enterprising Leamington (TBA, 2025)

## Films

Our latest films are available on YouTube: Leamington History Group:

- Birth of a Spa Town
- Leamington's Victorian Legacy
- Life After Victoria
- Many Cultures, One Town – the Story of Post-War Leamington
- Leamington Spa, University Town: Tracing the Impact of the University of Warwick

## How to join the Leamington History Group

Annual membership is £15. Special Offer Sep. – Dec. 2025: Only £7.50 for 2025. Please ask for details. Forms available on our website, at our events and by emailing [secretary@leamingtonhistory.co.uk](mailto:secretary@leamingtonhistory.co.uk)

For further information on all Leamington History Group activities please visit [www.leamingtonhistory.co.uk](http://www.leamingtonhistory.co.uk) and Leamington History Group Facebook/Eventbrite