

John Randall, photographed on his 100th birthday

THE GRAND OLD MAN OF MADELEY.

N these early months of the year many of us will send reetings cards to celebrate a pecial occasion. We will likely ely on the Royal Mail, just as ur Victorian forebears did, and ike today their receipt and elivery was the responsibility Postmasters such as John landall (1810-1910).

John was a prominent figure the neighbouring town of ladeley and famously lived to 00 years old. He was appointed 'ostmaster in Madeley in 1881, nd ran a shop selling books, tationery, artwork, and prints.

> ARTIST, GEOLOGIST & WRITER.

Before his role as a Postmaster nd stationer, John lived an xtraordinary life. At the age of 8 he was apprenticed to his incle, Thomas Martin Randall, s a porcelain painter. From 835 he was an artist at Coalport China Works where he pecialised in painting birds. in anecdote he enjoyed sharing elates to Mr. Rose, the owner of he Coalport Works, who had urchased what he believed to e a Sèvres vase painted with irds. John instead recognised it s one he had painted "when a ad". "A man can always tell his wn painting!" he claimed.

John was also a keen geologist nd an avid writer. He ontributed regularly to the ocal press, wrote numerous books rticles and ronbridge, Madeley and the evern Valley, and set up his wn printing business in 1871. o see a shop similar to John landall's, visit the Blists Hill ost Office, or visit the Coalport hina Museum to see where ohn worked in his days as an rtist.—KH

ST. CHAD'S MISSION CHURCH.

WHILST our readers are sure to enjoy the gaiety that the late winter and early spring months bring through the observance of Valentine's Day, Shrove Tuesday, and for some St. Patrick's Day, the presence of St. Chad's Mission Church within our town reminds us of the religious of origins many public celebrations. This unassuming church, made of timber and corrugated iron, was built in 1896 to serve the congregation at Granville Colliery.



PEW RENTAL.

Contrary to popular belief, the Victorians were not a very religious society. Whilst the middle classes attended church weekly, most of the working class were alienated from the established church. Industrial villages were often far away from parish churches, sermons were aimed at the social elite. and pews had to be rented at a cost that was unaffordable to the

After 1880, mission campaigns were undertaken by evangelical clergy in an attempt to improve the spiritual life of workingclass. However, worship was prohibited outside of a church or chapel, so Mission Churches like St. Chad's were erected as a cost-effective solution until funds could be raised for a permanent stone or brick building.—KH

MADELEY WOOD Co. ADVENTURE AREA.

BEYOND the green and past the Shelton Toll House is the splendid Madeley Wood Co. Adventure Area. This sports a collection of slides, see-saws, walkways and zip lines to entertain younger visitors. There is a mobile coffee and snack hut positioned near to the entrance (seasonal opening), plus ample toilet and baby changing facilities. A covered seating/picnic area is also provided, allowing parents and carers to relax as the children explore their surroundings.-JE



A HISTORY OF THE IRONBRIDGE GORGE.

S HROPSHIRE'S diverse geology was central to the industries that developed in the Ironbridge Gorge. Layers of coal, clay, limestone, and iron ore were mined, as well as used by iron and ceramic industries. Coal was the first of these to be exploited on a large scale and from the Middle Ages was mined by local landowners, who used the River Severn, with its many ports, to transport it.

The established coal trade allowed the iron industry to flourish in this region after the arrival of Abraham Darby I, whose innovations allowed for the mass production of cast iron and made the Industrial Revolution possible. His successors continued to revolutionise the iron industry and the Ironbridge Gorge became one of the most technically advanced areas in the world by the end of the 18th century. You can find out more about this globally significant history by visiting the Museum of Iron, the Darby Houses, and the Old Furnace in Coalbrookdale.

Ceramic industries developed within the Gorge thanks to the abundance of clay. Broseley became famous for its clay tobacco pipes and numerous brick and tile works were established across the Gorge, including at Blists Hill. In 1796 a china works opened at Coalport, which became an internationally celebrated company, receiving orders from aristocracy, royalty, and emperors. In the second half of the 19th century, two of the world's largest decorative factories opened Jackfield and made tiles that adorned the interiors of suburban homes, American hotels, Australian cathedrals, and Indian palaces. You can find out more about these ceramic industries by visiting Coalport China Museum, Jackfield Tile Museum and Broseley Pipe Works.-LC







· A TRIP TO THE MOON

February 10 - 18 · INDUSTRIOUS

WOMEN March 8, 9 & 10 · AN EGGSTRAORDINARY

EASTER March 23 to April 14 - BANK HOLIDAY MOP FAIR APRIL 27 & 28

HEAVY HORSE WEEKEND May 11 & 12

· VICTORIAN FOOD EXTRAVAGANZA May 25 to June 2

BLIST HILL ANNUAL DOG SHOW SPECTACULAR June 8 & 9

SPORTS WEEKEND

June 15 & 16 · STEAMPUNK

June 29 & 30

· BLISTS HILL ON SEA July 20 - September 1

This is not the full list! Visit www.ironbridge.org.uk/events for more details/changes/cancellations etc



TALLOW CHANDLER

Makes and Sells all Sorts of

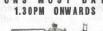
ANDLE RETAIL & WHOLESALE



ART PHOTOGRAPHER

ARAL STREET, BLISTS HILL, MADEL

HORSE DRAW! RUNS MOST DAYS





MSSTS, LEDSHAM, WESTON. BAKER, REYNOLDS & BRADBUR

PLASTERE

T. BIDDULPH



FINE WORK CARRIED OUT IN ALL STYLES



CANAL WHARFAGE - BLISTS HILL

S. CORBETT & So

CASTING MOST WEDNESDAY

ALL TYPES OF WORK UNDERTAKE MOULD MAKERS, CASTINGS, PIPES & GUTTERING, HANGERS.

· CRAFTS ·

PUZZLE PURSE VALENTINE.

TIRST GLANCE, THIS PAPER-FOLDING CRAFT MAY APPEAR PLICATED BUT BY CAREFULLY FOLLOWING THE INSTRUCTIONS CAN QUITE EASILY MAKE THIS CLEVER PUZZLE PURSE TO SEAL MESSAGES TO SEND TO A LOVER OR FRIEND.

OU will be required to make wo types of paper fold: y folds and mountain folds. lley fold is when you fold edges of paper up, so they e a creased depression like ley, and a mountain fold is pposite in which you bend r side of the paper away vou



btain or make a square of paper.

livide the paper into nine l squares.



Take two valley folds on the vertical lines so the right eft sides of the paper come rd each other. Press down u now have a tall thin piece ple ply paper. Next fold the and bottom towards each also, so you have now of the original size of

corners diagonally rd each other twice to make crease.

Now open. You should have an X crease in each of the 9 squares, and the four creases outlining the centre square should all be valley folds. This centre square will be the bottom of the puzzle purse.

If north is straight ahead and away from you, then take the northeast corner in your right hand and the southwest corner in your left hand. All corners should have a valley fold going from the very corner point toward the centre square. Fold this valley fold closed for the corner square you are holding in each of your hands.



This puzzle purse is based around the idea of a pinwheel, so bring your two hands towards the centre while bringing your right hand toward you and your left hand away from you, in other words spinning clockwise around the centre axis of the purse. It will only close in one direction. The tension should cause the purse (all four corners) to close in toward the centre, and if you push down when all four corner squares come together you will get a pinwheel.

Four points of the pinwheel will be sticking out. Each little triangle that sticks out should be folded in toward the centre (do so in clockwise order). Finally, tuck the last triangle into the pocket provided in the back the first one tucked in. You will now have a closed puzzle purse.

· Now that you understand how the puzzle purse works, you can open it to decorate it with drawings and written notes before refolding it.

· RECIPES ·



QUEEN CAKES.

UEEN CAKES have been loved ones.

Ingredients: 1/2 lb. of flour, 1/4 lb. of butter, 1/4 lb. of castor sugar, of milk, 1/4 lb. of currants,

Sieve the baking-powder well with the flour on to a sheet of paper. Put the butter, sugar, and cream or milk into a clean basin, and beat up to a light cream. Add the egg. When the egg is in, add the flour and fruit. and moisten with milk to the consistency of cake-batter. Put it into a small, greased tin, and bake from ¼ to ½ an hour. Grated lemon rind may be substituted for the lemon and almond flavouring, and will make the cakes equally nice.

enjoyed for over a hundred having first gained popularity in the 18th century. These delightful cakes are often baked in heart-shaped tins and therefore make perfect gifts for

1 egg, ½ a teacupful of cream or less

1/2 a teaspoonful of baking powder, essence of lemon or almonds, to taste.

Method:



Freshest fish and chipped potatoes. fried in the purest beef dripping.

OPEN EVERY DAY.

Canal St., Blists Hill

MANY OTHER SIGHTS TO SEE!

THERE ARE NINE other sites nearby to visit. All within the Ironbridge Gorge. If you have purchased an Annual Pass you will be able to visit all of them as many times as you like for a whole year:

COALBROOKDALE MUSEUM OF IRON

JACKFIELD TILE MUSEUM

COALPORT CHINA MUSEUM

BROSELEY PIPEWORKS

DARBY HOUSES

TAR TUNNEL ENGINUITY

THE IRON BRIDGE & TOLLHOUSE

If you didn't buy an Annual Pass on the way in don't worry! You can upgrade your day ticket as vou leave!

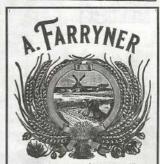
By visiting our sites you are actively helping the charity with its twin aims of conservation and education within the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site.

Thank you.

SITUATIONS:

V OLUNTEERS WANTED! Are you desirous of a fulfilling pastime? Would you like to help keep history alive? Do you want to meet like-minded people and make new friends? Why not consider being a volunteer at Blists Hill Victorian Town or any of the other nine sites operated by the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust?

If you could give us a day or two of your valuable time we would love to hear from love to hear from you. Please contact Mrs. Lesley Walker at The Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, Coach Road, Coalbrookdale, or speak to staff for more information.-JE



FAMILY BAKER

FRESH BREAD BISCUITS BAKED DAILY

FURNACE BANK . BLISTS HILL

A Music Hall in a PUBLIC HOUSE! Riotous Assembly HIGH-STREET BLISTSHILL SEE BOARD FOR DETAILS

CHORUSES

HEARD AT THE NEW INN

N the interests of furthering enjoyment of visitors to the town of Blists Hill, we set out below some of the choruses to songs that may be heard in the public house of a lunchtime. We condone none of the other activities that may take place there, but encourage wholeheartedly one and all to join in with the singing-it's 'right good exercise for the lungs!

HENERY THE EIGHTH

I'm Henery the Eighth, I am Henery the Eighth I am, I am I got married to the widow next door She'd been married seven times before

Everyone was a Henery She wouldn't have a Willie or a Sam I'm her eighth old man named Henery Henery the Eighth I am

BOILED BEEF & CARROTS

Boiled beef and carrots, Boiled beef and carrots, That's the stuff for your "Derby Kell",

Makes you fit and keeps you well. Don't live like vegetarians On food they give to parrots, Blow out your kite, from morn 'til night,

On boiled beef and carrots.

ANY OLD IRON

"Any old iron? Any old iron? Any, any, any old iron? You look neat! Talk about a treat! You look a dapper from your napper to your feet Dressed in style wi'a brand new

And your father's old green tie on I wouldn't give you tuppence for your old watch-chain Old iron, old iron!"

GORGONZOLA

Gorgonzola, Gorgonzola Three cheers for the green, white and blue Gorgonzola, Gorgonzola

It's good for me and also good for you.



TEA / COFFEE SUGAR, FRUIT. TINNED GOODS. MEATS. DRY GOODS. ENAMELWARE. TOBACCO. SEEDS.

HIGH STREET, BLISTS HILL



THE LAST STRAW.

From Constable Jarrett;

"Have you noticed how time goes faster as you get older?" a friend of mine said to me a few weeks ago. "Yes," I replied, "but have you noticed how winter seems to go on for ever?" I can't square the one with the other, I'm hanged if I can. Nonetheless, it's a certain fact that time does seem to go quicker with each passing year and here we are once again with spring nearly upon us. It's my favourite season. "In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love. as the poet Tennyson so blithely put it. If only the young man's fancy would remain turned to love not to thoughts and skulduggery...

A couple of evenings ago I was coming towards the end of my shift, having had a very peaceful day and not, in all honesty,



trouble, when, as I reached the top of Furnace Bank I was suddenly stopped in my tracks by the enormous shadow of some ungodly thing emanating from W. E. Gallagher's jobmasters yard. I got myself well in against the wall of Gallagher's office, for I wanted to see precisely what it was, without being seen by "it", whatever "it" was, for "it" was apparently a thing of enormous body, with no head, and a pair of spindly legs. Quite frankly, looking at it's shadow I couldn't fathom how on earth "it" was staying balanced, and "it" was swaying somewhat and appeared to be having difficulty in keeping itself upright.

What was "it"? In my mind I seemed to see one of the wilder fantasies of Mr. H. G. Wells' brain. I heard some odd noise, clearly issuing forth from the said creature, a sort of "Wo-oh-oh-oh, whoooooar!" I pushed myself further against the wall, trying to merge with it so that the creature would not see me. "Uh-uh-ugh, ooooh!" I heard, in a guttural sound most unfamiliar to me and causing me to wish, for the umpteenth time, that I'd never read "The Island of Dr. Moreau". The silence that followed these peculiar noises was made all the more eerie by the fact that I could see by the creature's shadow that it was still swaying slightly, whilst maintaining a dignified silence and pondering its next move. Suddenly the air was rent with an enormous roar and I could see that it would shortly be out of the vard and into the street. I pushed myself still further, if it were possible, into Gallagher's wall when, as though shot from a cannon, an enormous amount of hav, at least fourteen bales worth.

hurled itself into the street. "What the..." I exclaimed, when I noticed a young man, whose arms and legs were manoeuvring themselves in a frenzy at the centre of this maelstrom of hay.

It took me but a second to recognise Appleby's youngest but one, young Suetonius (I know, I know, it's decidedly odd, suppose it's their Romany traditions) as the rapscallion at the centre of it all, and with speed that would have been the envy of many a whippet, I'd got hold of him and demanded to know what, precisely was going on here. "Ah, sure I was borrowing a bit of hay for me father's horses," he said. "Borrowing a bit?!" I exclaimed, "It looks like a good fourteen bales to me!"

"Ah, now, Constable, 'twas fifteen and I think it's the fifteenth that's caused the trouble, you see it wasn't properly bound together and...." and before he could carry on with this nonsense, I gave him a clip round the ear and told him he'd have to put all the hay back in Mr. Gallagher's stores, which, with some reluctance, he did. The case comes up before the magistrates next week.

EXHIBIT WITH DEMONSTRATOR (MOST DAYS) EXHIBIT WITHOUT DEMONSTRATOR
ORIGINAL FEATURE OF THE SI

& ACCESS GUIDES ARE AVAILABLE AT THE ENTRANCE AND ALSO INSIDE THE BANK (2). THE INCLINED LIFT (50) IS AVAILABLE FOR VISITOR USE, IT CONNECTS THE CANAL TOWPATH TO TO THE LOWER SI

QUALITY DOGS - PART FOUR

A Quality Dog is a thing of joy For all of us, I would say, But an unlicensed dog is not so g So please buy a licence today.

It's been the law now for twenty y And so that you're not bereft, Get one at once from the Post O Up Canal Street, third on the left.

-Steady as yo

THE ILLUSTRATED BLISTS HILL

OBSERVE

KYLA HISLOP Journalist LAUREN COLLIER Designer & Journalist JULIAN EVANS

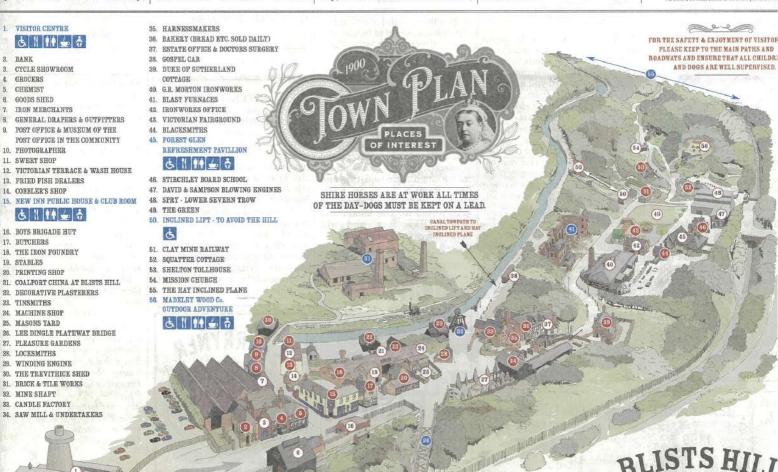
> Police Report: GUY ROWLAND

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anticipating much in the way of



THE ILLUSTRATED BLISTS HILL

OBSERWER

NO.1-VOL 3

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WELCOME!

TRAVELLERS from near and far, gathered together from all corners of the globe, from all faiths and fortunes, you are most heartily welcomed to Blists Hill Victorian Town!

Here you will meet all kinds of people, waiting to tell you all about life in 1900; one of the most important periods in our human story.

YOUR GUIDES.

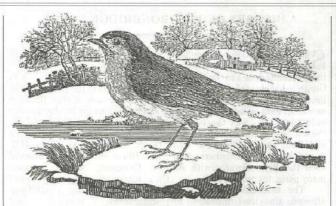
Make the most of your visit! You will find that our town has many different things to experience; a photographer's studio where you can have your image captured for posterity, a wonderful sweet shop, grocers, working bakery and candlemakers. Then there's the chemist, post office, draper, machine printer, plasterer and bank—all to be explored and enjoyed. Thaumaturgical!

The townsfolk are friendly too. You'll see them ensconced, making, baking, printing, pouring, riding, dipping, lighting fires and every other thing Victorian.

WHAT IS BLISTS HILL?

B LISTS Hill Victorian Town is a reconstruction of a typical working-class town in the East Shropshire Coalfield c.1900, which aims to show how the people of this area lived and worked at that time through an immersive experience. For this reason, you will not find panels or boards explaining our exhibits. Instead, please speak to our staff in Victorian costume who will immerse you in our museum's fascinating stories.

The museum is part of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust, a heritage conservation and educational charity within the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Ironbridge Gorge. By visiting, you are helping to protect and preserve this internationally significant area, and educate all about its importance.—LC



COLD HANDS, WARM HEARTS.

N these early weeks and months of the new year, we hope our readers feel inspired by the promise of renewed energy and change that this time brings. The burdens of the past seem to dissipate, and we look forward to the year ahead—one brimming with opportunities for change, personal growth, and the forging of new connections.

As a sense of rejuvenation spreads through our town, our thoughts naturally turn towards those we share it with—our fellow townspeople, friends, loved ones, and visitors.

Valentine's Day, that tender occasion dedicated to the language of the heart, reminds us to celebrate the bonds that tie, and of the power of love to transcend time and circumstance. The Victorians

showed their love by exchanging greetings cards, which were created by master printers. Our Victorian Printers Experience Days at Blists Hill allow you to walk in the printers' footsteps and have a go yourself. Please ask at John Edmunds Printers & Stationers for details, or visit that newfangled technology of the future, our website.

On Shrove Tuesday, families gather around tables to partake in this pancake-laden occasion. The laughter in the air and the clink of utensils against porcelain speak of a shared camaraderie. In the wake of its jubilance, we pivot towards the contemplative season of Lent. Through our shared restraint during this period, friendships deepen, and love finds expression in the simplicity of shared sacrifices.—KH

IMPORTANT WORKS IN PROGRESS.

D URING your visit to Blists Hill Victorian Town, you may notice that some of our historic exhibits are closed for conservation and repair work. This is being carried out as part of a three-year programme, Conserving the Historic Estate (CHE), to repair some 49 buildings, with work ranging from removing vegetation and undertaking external redecoration to reroofing and stabilisation works.

This work has been funded by a £5.5 million grant from the National Heritage Memorial Fund and will help to conserve some of the significant industrial heritage within our care. Unfortunately, you will not be able to access the exhibit whilst work is being carried out, but our demonstrators will be happy to talk to you about the building and its significance. —LC

THE QUEST FOR LOVE.

THE quest for love is one that many of us have experienced in our lives but we must be thankful that we were able to experience this in the relative ease of our modern society. For our Victorian ancestors, strong ideas of morality and Christian values created societal rules which, if adhered to, ensured that essential quality of "respectability". These rules influenced all aspects of life, including the search for love.

Opportunities for young people to meet were often limited to their existing social circles at public events. Middle class parents would introduce their children to suitable matches at dances, balls, picnics, or hunts and would keep a strict eye on the proceedings. For the working class, picnics, suppers, and concerts, often organised through the church, provided the most opportune situations to socialise, extensive workdays and limited social lives provided an additional obstacle.

DAWLEY.

In nearby Dawley a renowned opportunity for meeting a beau was the Sunday evening street parade. After church, young people in their Sunday best met in the High Street where they would promenade. Boys would call out to the girls and, if the girls were so inclined, they would pair up and walk with the young gentleman. A successful pairing would continue to "walk out together in the local streets or in the countryside, where they could find some time for private conversation.

Working-class couples would continue to "walk out" until marriage, which could take several years. A suitable quantity of savings had to be acquired first so that they could comfortably set up a home together. However, certain circumstances could drive a couple to marry sooner. In the 19th century, a significant number of babies were born less than nine months after their parents' weddings!—LC

BE SURE TO VISIT T BANK FIRST UPO ENTERING THE TO

A VISIT to Lloyds Bank provide great insight in monetary system in use the town. You can change newfangled money to Victorian and use them to purchase spoods in the shops and ex. Here's a useful aide-mémoire:

6d (1 sixpence or 'tanner') = £2

3d (1 threepence or 'thrupence') =

1d (1 penny) = 40p

1/2d (1 halfpenny or 'ha'penny')

& 1/4d (1 farthing) = 10p

OF HEAVY HORSE DOGS AND DANGEL

M. LEDSHAM, jobm and familiar face of parts, wishes it to be know fully contemplated that: "h can be easily scared b errant dog or daydre adult."—Therefore it mu considered desirous that vi to our town pay heed to his words and be ever aware.



JOHN EDMUND

HANDBILLS - STATIONE
CARDS - NOTICES
INVITATIONS - POSTEF
PERIODICALS

HIGH STREET-BLISTS H