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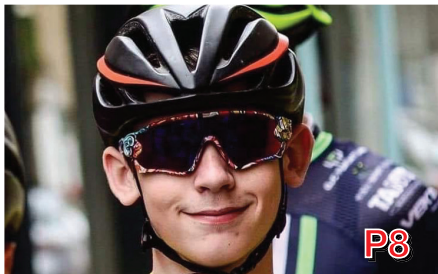
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Bilston magazine

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Dear Reader,

Welcome to the April/May, issue of the Bilston Magazine.

The theme for this issue is giving (no, I don't want any money from you!). Actually, it was my birthday on 24th March, but no, seriously, a belated card will do.

When I say giving, I mean doing things for nothing. People much older than me – sorry Mom and Dad! – talk about when we had a proper community, when people helped each other without wanting something in return.

To be fair, I know that still happens, but almost certainly not to the degree that it used to.

I very much appreciate that it's tough out there for many people, with the cost of living etc. but there are a lot of people who have time on their hands and could contribute more to society.

When people think of volunteering, they probably think of working in a charity shop. That's a start and I know a few of them need people to help out, but there's so many more things you can do. I've written a piece in this magazine to expand on this. Please read it and see if there's anything you fancy.

In the last magazine, I mentioned my new healthy regime and promised an update. Well, I managed to go 42 days without an alcoholic drink after New Year's Eve and since then, I've kept to having a few drinks on a weekend and have been a regular visitor to the gym and even managed to reduce my cheese addiction, so, all in all, I think I'm on track for a David Hasselhoff body for the summer – we'll see...

To finish this column and to stick with the theme of giving, I want to pay a small tribute to Bilston's Poet Laureate, Trevor Johnson, who sadly passed away just before we went to print (Trevor never missed a deadline!), not only gave immense pleasure to people through his poems, but also gave money to worthy causes from sales of his book of poems, which I had the pleasure of helping him get into print. It was a pleasure and an honour to have known Trevor and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him. RIP pal x

Due to the increasing cost of print, more than ever, our advertisers are vitally important to the continuation of this magazine. Please have a look at their adverts and if you do purchase anything from them, PLEASE TELL THEM YOU SAW THE ADVERT IN THE BILSTON MAGAZINE!

The next issue will cover June and July (hopefully, we'll have a good summer!) and will be out on 4th June so if you want to be in it, please contact me by 17th May.

Enjoy your read!

Simon

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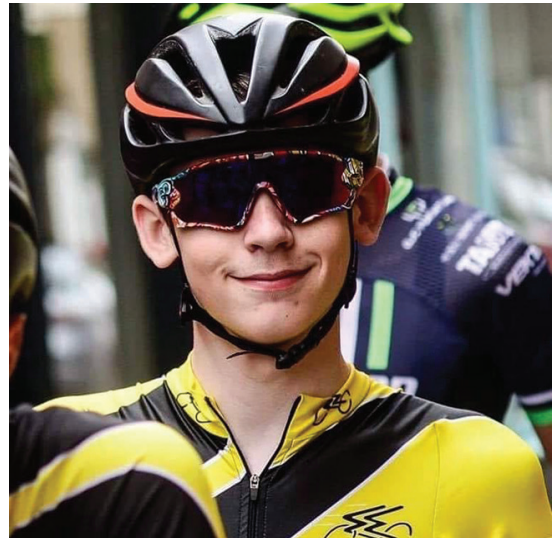
Eighth Annual 'Ride for Joe' Commemorates Legacy and Raises Funds for Midlands Air Ambulance Charity

In a heartfelt tribute to the late Joe Guy, the eighth edition of the 'Ride For Joe' is set to take place on the 09th of June 2024, starting from Aldersley Stadium.

This popular cycling event, established in memory of the aspiring professional time trial rider who tragically lost his life in 2017, continues to draw widespread support while honouring Joe's passion for cycling.

The event, which kicks off at 10 am, will feature two routes of approximately 30 and 50 miles, meandering through the scenic landscapes of Staffordshire and Shropshire. Cyclists from across the UK, including Joe's family, friends, and fellow enthusiasts, will participate in the ride, demonstrating the tight-knit spirit of the cycling community.

Co-organiser John Ireson reflects on the significance of the event, stating, "When Joe passed away, it resonated deeply, especially within the cycling community. 'Ride For Joe' exemplifies the solidarity and spirit that defines our close-knit community."



Steve Guy, Joe's father, emphasizes the event's importance, sharing, "Joe lived for bikes. He was amazing, and each year, this event serves as a poignant reminder of our wonderful son, taken from us too soon."

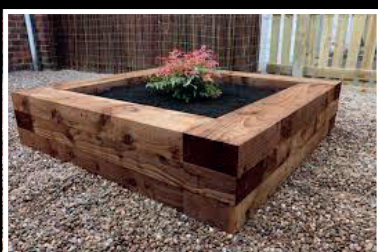
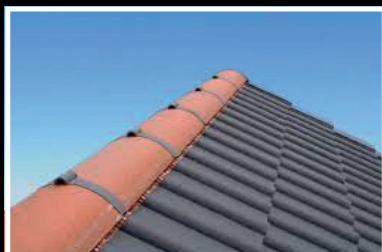
The 'Ride For Joe' has gained recognition, winning the Air Ambulance Community Fundraising award in 2022. Over the years, the event has raised more than £31,000 for the Midlands Air Ambulance Charity.

Craig Guy, Joe's brother, encourages participation, stating, "It's a fantastic event to honour Joe's memory and support the charity that attempted to save his life."

Come along, give it a try—it's not a race, but an opportunity to raise funds, remember Joe, and enjoy a day of cycling, smiles, and camaraderie."

Entries for the event are priced at £10 and can be booked on the day or in advance at www.britishcycling.org.uk/events/details/297125/Ride-For-Joe-2024

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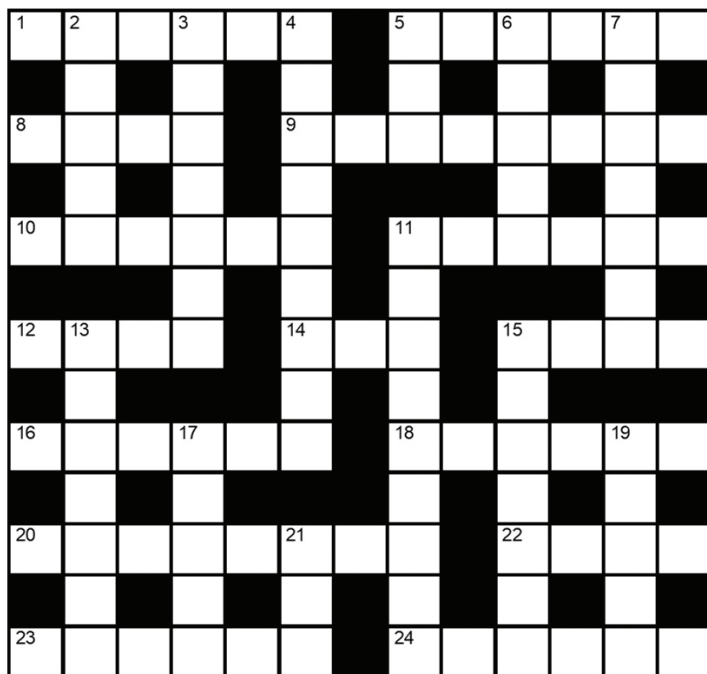
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Crossword

Please see answers
on page 47




Across

- 1 Material used to make tents (6)
- 5 Skimpy knickers! (6)
- 8 Earth, compost (4)
- 9 Green vegetable (8)
- 10 Bendy fruit (6)
- 11 Hard yellowish tooth deposit (6)
- 12 Area, region (4)
- 14 Frozen water (3)
- 15 Nip, chomp (4)
- 16 Expression, brief utterance (6)
- 18 Lightweight waterproof jacket (6)
- 20 Sticky insect trap (8)
- 22 Barrage, bombardment (4)
- 23 Undercover, secret (6)
- 24 Brine (6)

Down

- 2 Odour, scent (5)
- 3 Group of houses, rural community (7)
- 4 The Beatles sang about a yellow one! (9)
- 5 As well, also (3)
- 6 Coveted film award (5)
- 7 Dashing, debonair (7)
- 11 Dictionary of synonyms and antonyms (9)
- 13 Shakespearean play (7)
- 15 House of ill repute! (7)
- 17 Bramley, Granny Smith, Cox (5)
- 19 Extra-terrestrial (5)
- 21 Container, vessel (3)



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Paul

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Rotary offers a place for everyone, welcoming people of action who want to make a difference through volunteering their time and skills. Here are just some of the things you can get involved in:

- supporting Bilston children with educational needs
- providing medical equipment
- helping with basic living support
- providing clothes for the homeless

- providing food for the hungry
- providing shelter in disaster hit areas
- providing clean water in areas where it is scarce

What else do we do?

We make new friends, we network with others, we have fun and fellowship along the way.

Want to get involved?

Find out more about what Rotary has to offer you and start your journey today by contacting our secretary, Bob Stolz on rkstolz@hotmail.com or **07976 890450**.

Join us for our upcoming fundraising events in Bilston:

Sunday 24th March 10AM

at the Bert Williams Leisure Centre- raising money for Rotary and Bilston Swimming Club

Friday 17th May at 6.30PM

for our charity race night at Bilston Town Football Club, raising funds for the club's charity

Saturday 8th June at 11AM

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Double Celebration for Inclusive Bilston School

A primary school in Bilston has achieved a national award in recognition of its efforts to create a truly inclusive learning environment for its pupils.

Stowlawn Primary has been awarded an Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM), with assessors finding the school's leaders to be 'fully committed to inclusion' and making the school 'the best that it can be'.

At the same time, the school has also been recommended to become one of a select few nationally to be named a 'centre of excellence' by the IQM.

IQM assessors visited Stowlawn Primary just before Christmas, and found that staff and children working together to achieve the school's expectations to be Ready, Respectful and Safe throughout the busy day.

They noted positive interactions between staff and children in and out of the classroom, with leaders and staff 'fully committed to enabling each child to develop socially, emotionally, physically and academically in their own way and speed'.

This inclusiveness 'is fully embedded into the heart of the school' which has a 'positive family togetherness' feel.

Meanwhile, Stowlawn has also supported the reintegration of children from different backgrounds and cultures, celebrating the diverse backgrounds of its pupils with a Culture Week during which children and their families share their home countries' dress, food, music and stories.

Headteacher Kate Charles said: "Everyone at Stowlawn is delighted to have been awarded the Inclusion Quality Mark. Over the past few years, led by Stacey Whitehouse, our Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion, and Rachel Glover, our SENCo, we have worked incredibly hard to ensure our curriculum

meets the needs of all our learners – removing barriers to ensure all children are successful.

"Our important partnerships with outside agencies, and our commitment to curriculum enrichment, enable all of our pupils to engage in learning that promotes inclusion, equality and diversity."

Councillor Jacqui Coogan, the City of Wolverhampton Council's Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Work, said: "It's wonderful that the hard work of everyone at Stowlawn Primary School has been recognised with an Inclusion Quality Mark, and by being recommended to become a centre of excellence.

"I'd like to congratulate Kate Charles and her team on this excellent outcome."

It is the latest accolade for the school, which last year became a School of Sanctuary and gained the Primary Science Quality Mark.

IQM was established in 2004 with the objective of supporting both state and independent schools to become inclusive. It provides schools with a nationally recognised validation of their inclusive practice and ongoing commitment to developing educational inclusion.

Stowlawn Primary School Language Ambassadors celebrate their Inclusion Quality Mark award with Dexter, the IQM bear



Kids' Page

Try this test on your friends and family. First ask them to say the WORDS below and see how fast they do it. THEN ask them to say the COLOURS of the words and see how much harder they find it. This difficulty we have naming the actual colour when it is used to write the name of a different colour is called THE STROOP EFFECT!

blue green yellow brown
 grey pink black white
 red purple beige orange

Now can you find all the colours in the list above inside the word grid?

U	J	O	P	D	F	I	V	S	L	R
C	S	N	E	R	Y	H	X	W	V	B
M	F	R	A	M	U	Y	O	W	P	G
D	F	P	B	K	E	L	B	L	U	E
W	F	K	K	G	L	M	H	L	R	B
S	Q	F	N	E	Y	I	E	B	P	L
G	Z	A	Y	Y	F	G	L	R	L	A
X	R	L	Y	P	I	N	K	O	E	C
O	T	E	B	E	K	C	N	W	B	K
H	R	K	B	Z	Y	B	G	N	M	F
G	R	E	E	N	W	H	I	T	E	T

IF YOU DROP A YELLOW HAT
 IN THE RED SEA, WHAT DOES
 HAPPENS TO IT?
 IT GETS WET!



U	J	O	P	D	F	I	V	S	L	R
C	S	N	E	R	Y	H	X	W	V	B
M	F	R	A	M	U	Y	O	W	P	G
D	F	P	B	K	E	L	B	L	U	E
W	F	K	K	G	L	M	H	L	R	B
S	Q	F	N	E	Y	I	E	B	P	L
G	Z	A	Y	Y	F	G	L	R	L	A
X	R	L	Y	P	I	N	K	O	E	C
O	T	E	B	E	K	C	N	W	B	K
H	R	K	B	Z	Y	B	G	N	M	F
G	R	E	E	N	W	H	I	T	E	T

Word Grid Solution

Bradley Canal Festival Saturday 15th June 2024

Bradley Canal Restoration Society in partnership with the Canal and River Trust are very happy to announce that the Bradley Canal Festival 2024 will be taking place at the Canal and River trust Workshops in Bradley Lane in Bilston on Saturday 15th June.



This is the third time that we have had this Festival, and the weather in both 2022 and 2023 was absolutely superb, and we hope that the tradition will continue. Over 1,000 people turned up last year, to view the stalls, and to see the amenities that are on offer.

The festival is open 10.00am to 4.00pm; all events are bookable upon the day, so please turn up early to avoid disappointment.



There is a lock gate workshop on site, one of only two within the country, (the second workshop is in Stanley Ferry in Yorkshire) which build the replacement oak canal lock gates that you see throughout the canal network. There will be experts within the workshop who will be able to answer any questions that you may have. The lock gate works have been around for 250 years, and whilst most things are as they were, it has recently made small changes to increase speed and efficiency of producing the lock gates.

There will be a number of stalls within the event which will offer food, drink, local memorabilia, and organisations promoting their work.

There will be boat trips and tours which are free of charge, so please come along and see what is gently hidden away upon your doorstep. Bradley Canal Restoration Society is a charity set up to work towards the restoration of an infilled



section of canal in the heart of the Black Country; the infilled stretch contains 9 lock chambers, 7 of which are buried just below the surface of the footway, and in some cases are sticking above the ground; the heritage lottery semi-restored the bottom two locks about 20 years ago or so, and they were culverted to allow the seepage of water from the higher levels.

There have been working parties on the canal at the Moorcroft junction, (the end of the canal where the locks have been cleared) with a view to making more progress once the nesting season has finished.

The Canal and River Trust is a charity that cares for a 2,000 mile stretch of canals and associated waterways that has been around since the need to move heavy goods easily, over long distances, from the start of the industrial revolution.

Whilst the need to use the canals for industrial use has largely gone away, there is now very much a leisure activity within the canal network, both for leisure cruising, walking, and cycling along the tow paths, or just simply observing nature on a quiet day.

If you would like to become involved in the work that the Bradley Canal Restoration Society does, either as a member, as part of our committee, or become a volunteer on one of the work party events, please do not hesitate to speak to our colleagues on the BCRS stall, or the Canal and River Trust stall, and we will be only too happy to take your details; alternatively contact us at info@bradleycanal.co.uk or for more information search 'local canal' or canalrivertrust.org.uk to find out more.

See you on **15th June**.

John Oakley



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An FA Cup winner’s medal, a League championship medal and six goals in two Wembley finals – Reg Lewis was some footballer.

Yet when the famous sons of Bilston are compiled, the Arsenal forward rarely gets a mention. Well, he should, even though he left the town at an early age, just like celebrated poet Sir Henry Newbolt. “Play up, play up and play the game” famously wrote Sir Henry and when it came to football.

Reg, born in Bilston on March 7, 1920, certainly could play the game. In fact, he scored more goals for the Gunners than Thierry Henry.

His birth certificate reveals that Reg was the son of Stephen and Maud Lewis of 10 Lichfield Street, Bilston. His father’s occupation is listed as ‘stores clerk at motor works’ Reg attended Archbishop Tenison’s School which is across the road from the Oval. Indeed, when he was young there were big decisions that had to be made – cricket with Surrey or football with the Arsenal.

His first senior game for the Gunners was on a close-season tour to Denmark in May, 1937, and he scored in a 5-1 win over Copenhagen. The 17-year-old’s Football League debut came on New Year’s Day, 1938, when he deputised for England centre-forward Ted Drake and scored in a 2-1 home win over Everton. Next season Reg made 15 First Division appearances but figured mainly in the reserves. There his goal-scoring knack enabled him to set a club record, hitting 43 goals in just 31 games in the Football Combination. That total included six in one game and five in the next.

Reg played regularly for the club during the war before being called up to serve in the British Army of the Rhine.

Centre-forward for Arsenal in the first post-war league season, Reg hit 29 goals in just 28 appearances. The same number of games brought him 14

goals the following season but it helped the club become First Division champions. As such, Arsenal met Cup winners Manchester United in the Charity Shield and Reg scored two of the goals as the Gunners beat United 4-3 at Highbury. Despite approaching 30 when the 1949-50 season arrived, Reg was still a regular member of the side. Playing at inside-left, he added an FA Cup winner’s medal to his trophy cabinet when he again sparkled at Wembley, scoring the goals as Arsenal beat Liverpool 2-0 in the final.

As there was a colour clash, Arsenal wore gold shirts in the final, perhaps an unintended nod towards Wolves, the nearest club to the town of Reg’s birth. Liverpool wore white shirts and black shorts. It was one-time Wolves player Cyril Sidlow who was in goal for Liverpool at Wembley and he was beaten by Reg in the 17th and 63rd minutes.

With players like Chelsea’s Tommy Lawton, Newcastle’s Jackie Milburn and Blackpool’s Stan Mortensen around, Reg had little chance of England recognition but his Cup exploits did help him win a place on the England B team’s tour in the summer of 1950. He played in the side beaten 5-0 by Italy B and was then twice on the mark in a 2-1 win over Luxembourg.

By the time he retired in 1953, Reg had made 176 appearances for Arsenal and had amassed 118 goals. That total puts him 12th among the club’s all-time goalscorers. Top of the list is Thierry Henry with 228 from 377 games, yet if wartime matches were included Reg would total 256 from 298. Small wonder that Reg is one of 32 Arsenal greats on murals that adorn the outside of the Emirates Stadium. His image is on a section with those of Patrick Vieira, Lee Dixon and Mercer.





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Volunteering

By Simon Archer



Have you ever done something for nothing? You probably have. Maybe you've put the neighbours' bin out while they're away, or done their shopping when they're ill.

That's really all volunteering is. Being a good person. Helping someone or some people to make the world a slightly better place.

Surely, that's what we all want, isn't it?

Bizarrely, when I was growing up, I was led to believe that volunteers were not to be trusted....Do-gooders was a name I often heard them called. How strange that people who help others should be thought of detrimentally.

I've since realised that those giving out the negative labels were the ones that didn't want to do anything for anyone except themselves and just wanted to deflect their laziness onto others with a bit more community spirit.

Furthermore, when we do these good deeds, we all get a sense of satisfaction (especially if the recipient shows their gratitude).

You'd probably be surprised how many people do volunteering work. Almost a third (30%) of people over 16 years old volunteered with a group, club or organisation at least once per year.



Of course, many of you might struggle with commitment, with work and family obligations, but a lot of volunteering roles might allow for this.

I used to help at a local foodbank and we managed to come up with a rota system that enabled everyone to do what they could, when they could.

Time is also an issue, so perhaps something that doesn't require a huge amount of work, but enables you to get involved and use your skills and/or knowledge, might work best.



Being a school governor doesn't require you to do something every week, or even every month for that matter and you don't need to have worked in education to be a school governor.

I know a few schools that need people to step up, so give your local school a call. They might just be pleased to hear from you.

If you live alone or are retired, your local community centre could be an option. Pop in and ask if they need volunteers. You will find they're usually very welcoming and being involved might widen your circle of friends.

Wolverhampton Volunteers have over 200 organisations registered and between them, they offer over 400 unique volunteering opportunities covering every aspect of community life.

Anyone interested in volunteering can visit and register on www.wtonvolunteers.org or alternatively, call on 01902 328980 to arrange an appointment.

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Time to nominate your Young Citizen of the Year

Nominations have opened for the 2024 Wolverhampton Young Citizen of the Year awards.

The awards, now in their 11th year, recognise the achievements of young people in the city who have gone that extra mile to help others.

Previous winners include youngsters who have raised funds for charity, supported other members of their community, and made a difference to the people around them.

The awards, which are run by the Rotary clubs of Wolverhampton, were launched in memory of Tom Warren, a former Rotarian and the city's Education Director for a quarter of a century.

Vice chairman of the organising committee, former Wolves player Mel Eves, said: "The Young Citizen of the Year awards have gone from strength to strength over the years. Last year, we selected ten young people as finalists and invited them with their guests to an awards ceremony, with many others receiving a certificate of commendation for their efforts.

"This year, we look forward to seeing plenty more fantastic nominations."

This year's awards ambassador, Wolves Captain Max Kilman, said: "Young people who use their initiative and show kindness to others deserve to be recognised, so I am very pleased to support the awards."

There are two age categories for the awards, 13-18 and 19-25. Anyone can nominate candidates, who must live or go to school or work in Wolverhampton.

This year's awards are backed by, Collins Aerospace, the Wolves Foundation, the Express & Star, Wolverhampton City Council, Carvers Building Supplies, the James Beattie Charitable Trust, WCR fm and West Midlands Magazines.

A ceremony will take place later this year, to reveal the winners of these prestigious awards.

For more details and to make a nomination, visit: wolverhamptonyoungcitizen.org.uk/

Wolves Captain Maximilian Kilman with previous winners Luis Enache, Imane Sbihi, Eva Abley and Mel Eves from the Young Citizen of the Year Committee



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The Wolverhampton Young Citizen of the Year Awards

Do you know someone aged 13 - 25 who:

- **Has gone the extra mile to help others, their community, fellow students, work colleagues or someone in need.**
- **Lives, works or learns in Wolverhampton?**

Nominations for the **Wolverhampton Young Citizen of the Year Awards** are open
1 March to 31 May.

For more information and to nominate visit:

www.wolverhamptonyoungcitizen.org.uk



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News In Brief

St Leonard's Knitting Club

For the past 3 years our small group of ladies at Saint Leonards who meet every Thursday from 10am to 12pm have donated items to a dog's charity. This year it was Wings and Paws, local to us all in Bilston.



As a small group each year the small amount of monies we raise are divided between charities of our choice. The ladies put a suggestion of a charity in a hat and pull the winners out.

This year £50 each has been donated to breast Cancer Angels, Staffie Rescue, Mental health, Sheffield Hospital where one of our members had a serious operation and of course our church Saint Leonards.

We pay a weekly sub each member only £1 per week and join in on all activities in town eg. Christmas light switch on. By having table top sales that are local and if we're lucky sell a piece of our knitting to friends and family.

Sandra Walker

Portobello Methodist

Coffee Mornings on Saturdays
April 6, May 4, 18
10.00 a.m.-12.00 p.m. Hot & Cold drinks, Cakes & Toasted Teacakes on sale.



Table Top sale/Coffee Morning Saturday, April 20
10.00-1.00 Various stalls and refreshments.

Friendship Club Wednesdays April 10, 24, May 8,
22. 2.00-4.00 p.m.

Boys' Brigade/Girls' Association is a uniformed organisation which meets on Wednesdays in term time from 6.00 p.m. Children of school age most welcome.

Hall available for hire for children's parties, etc., call **01902 654650** for details/bookings.

KXNKSHXME Release Their Debut Single

Local band KXNKSHXME (pronounced Kink Shame) have just released their debut single Baby Blue.

Band founder, Jack Simpson says, "I got into music by listening to songs I heard as a child, and quickly built a massive urge to play guitar shortly after in 2021. I taught myself completely by learning my favourite songs through tabs on the internet, and when I progressed into sixth form in late 2022, I decided to choose to study music to progress my knowledge further. I played in the talent show with a drummer in my music class, and shortly after this another guitarist who had performed asked us if we wanted to start a band.

We then started practicing in my brother's garage in Bilston, as this was the cheapest option and we had no idea where else to go (sadly for his neighbours).

We played our first gig in December 2022 at the Newhampton Arts centre in Wolverhampton, where we have now played multiple times and even headlined.

Since then, through various promoters and our own bookings, we have played at the Sunflower lounge, Muthers studio, The Victoria, Tilt (all in Birmingham) and also in West park last summer for a community event. This year we hope to play more shows in Wolverhampton and Bilston, and also play at some festivals in the summer.

We're mainly influenced by 70s blues rock, but our originals also have a modern rock influence, as shown by our debut single 'Baby Blue' which released on 1st March. We're finally playing in Bilston at the Ale House, and hope to play around here a lot more!



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22:00 to close

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Food available to purchase on the afternoon.

There will be children's specials.

We are still taking bookings for 2024 and beyond

Ideal for weddings, birthdays, christenings, baby showers, gender reveals, wakes, retirement parties, and school reunions.

Step into Spring at National Trust Properties in the West Midlands

With the arrival of warmer weather and sunnier days, National Trust gardens and parks are a lovely way to spend time surrounded by nature. There's a wealth of properties across the West Midlands, and beyond, all with something different to offer. For visiting information and inspiration: www.nationaltrust.org.uk



Attingham Park, near Shrewsbury

See the estate spring to life with vibrant colours across the garden and parkland. Hyacinths, tulips, fruit tree blossom, apple blossom, daffodils and bluebells will all be in bloom at times during spring. In late spring the national collection of camassias will be in bloom. Towards the end of May we'll also see the rhododendrons, laburnum, azaleas in colour in the woodlands.

Biddulph Grange Garden, near Stoke-on-Trent

Explore the hidden treasures around Biddulph Grange Garden from quirky design features of Egyptian pyramids grown out of yew to tunnels, stepping stones and a trickling stream running through a Himalayan inspired Glen and the centrepiece of a Victorian Chinese Garden complete with golden buffalo, dragon sculptures and exotic plant collection.

Finish a visit with a traditional tea and scone in the former billiard room and pick up a plant to remember your visit from the plant centre.

Clent Hills, near Stourbridge

In spring, the Clent Hills burst to life with the sights, sounds and smells of nature. Bluebell valley becomes blanketed with an enormous number of flowers, blossom appears on trees and you can spot wildlife off the beaten track at Walton Hill. Take in the panoramic view from the four stones.

Dudmaston Estate, near Bridgnorth



Dudmaston comes to life in spring as blossom adorns the fruit trees in the orchard while spring flowers create a changing rainbow of colour in the Dingle. Spring is a time to enjoy the garden and to explore nature at Comer Woods.

Join a wellbeing walk through the trees or take part in the Trust 10, a 10k run through the woods. Dudmaston Hall and Galleries have recently reopened, offering a journey through some of the most iconic works of the British Modern Art Movement.

Kinver Edge and the Rock Houses, near Stourbridge

Kinver Edge and the Rock Houses are beautiful to visit in the spring. The cottage garden comes to life and an array of daffodils and snowdrops takes over. The informal garden boasts beautiful apple blossom on the dwarf apple trees in the orchard and the vegetable garden starts flowering.

The unique Holy Austin Rock Houses, carved into the sandstone ridge, are restored and offer a glimpse into the lives of the former cave dwellers.



Hanbury Hall, near Droitwich Spa

From beds of colourful tulips to buds of delicate blossom, Hanbury's gardens are finally waking up. This year, the Ribbon Border is back in the Parterre.

The explosions of stunning, bright colour are carefully planned with thousands of bulbs planted in autumn ready for the following spring. With a colourful array of tulips, daffodils and hyacinths the Parterre is sure to be filled with impressive colour and scent.

Moseley Old Hall, near Wolverhampton

Whether you wander amongst the bluebells or

race through the trees to the top of the treehouse, spring at Moseley Old Hall is a truly wonderful time. Nestled outside of Wolverhampton, Moseley is a natural sanctuary for both people and nature, offering space for all to relax, unwind and connect to the outdoors.



Shugborough Estate, near Stafford

Shugborough Estate comes alive in spring, with beautiful bulbs and blossom, a kaleidoscope of colour, there's plenty to see as the gardens wake up for the new year.

Wander through the arboretum and along the river to see a dazzling display of daffodils, or head to the walled garden where you will see preparations for a productive year.

The Mansion has reopened offering visitors the chance to discover the story of the Anson families travels around the globe. Down on the farm you can meet new arrivals including Tamworth Pigs, and newborn South Down Lambs.





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Top Tips to Get Your Home Spring Ready This April

It's now nearly April, and we are all looking forward to the warmer months, but how do we get our homes ready for spring? Here are some top tips.

We have weathered the long, dark winter months and now we are looking forward. It is time for all of us to come out of our hibernation and embrace the warmer weather of spring and look forward to summer.

Whilst getting out of doors to enjoy the fresh air will be a priority for many of us, we can also make the indoors feel optimistically springlike too!

Top tips to help you get your home ready for spring

Let there be light!

Now is the time to open your windows and introduce some long-awaited clarity into your home's atmosphere.

Who wants to go outside during winter to wash their windows? It is cold, wet, and your windows become dirt magnets. But now it is getting warmer the time has come to put an end to this! Clean your windows and make them sparkle, allowing natural light to enter your home.

What about changing your curtains during the warmer seasons too? Pack away the heavier, darker curtains and put up lighter coloured ones.

Go floral!

What could be more springlike than using plants and flowers to inject some life and vibrancy into your home? Why not grow your own flowering plants inside, cut some blooms from your garden or take a trip to your local florist?

And why not go floral around the house too with floral cushion covers and bedding?



Spring clean and clear out!

We all accumulate stuff over winter, in no small part due to Christmas. Why not review everything in your cupboards and wardrobes and clear out any unwanted or unneeded items? Decluttering your home is liberating. Why not recycle or donate anything you don't want?

Have a rearrange.

By simply moving one chair or sofa it can make a massive difference to how your home feels and it might even make it feel brand new. Have a shuffle. And don't be afraid to change it all around again. Rearranging your furniture is about finding the layout that works for you.

Go colourful!

Springtime is about light colours so why not embark on revamping the colour scheme in your home? Look in your garden for inspiration. See what is in bloom and utilise that colour in your interior colour scheme, then you will be bringing spring colour into your home.

Why not think about what flowers are going to bloom next and utilise those colours so you can even get ahead of the inevitable advance of the season?

Why not try some or all these top tips? Each in their own way offer quick, easy and affordable ways to get your home spring ready this April.

Rob Bullock <https://robbullockauthor.blogspot.com>



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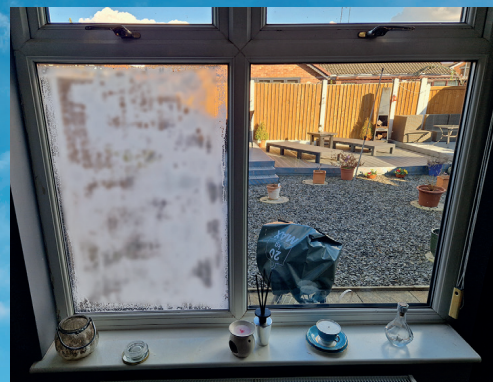


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Pat McFadden

A Word from your Member of Parliament



New Spring Vale Housing Scheme

Work has started on phase two of the new Spring Vale housing scheme on Millfields Road which will provide fifty-seven affordable, energy efficient homes in the constituency. This site has a special place in local hearts because it was the former home of the Springvale sports and social club. It's great to see it being reborn with new housing. I look forward to the development progressing and the houses and apartments being completed later in the year.



Central Community Shop and Pomegranate Café

The Central community shop and Pomegranate Café has recently opened at the historic Queen's building and is a fantastic initiative involving the Good Shepherd Services, Wolverhampton Wanderers Foundation, and the City of Wolverhampton. The community shop is part of a network of community shops across the city continuing to support residents through the cost-of-living crisis. Residents of the city can sign up for an annual membership of £3 a year for the Central community shop.



Visit to Collins Aerospace

I visited Collins Aerospace for the launch of a new project where 65 unemployed people from the West Midlands will be trained as advanced engineers. This is a joint project with the DWP and is funded by the West Midlands Combined Authority. It was great to meet with local constituent Toran who lives in Bilston and will be starting his training as an advanced engineer and has ambitions to work in the aerospace industry.



Happy Easter to all constituents

Easter is a special time of the year and as we all come together with our families and loves ones to celebrate this year, I want to wish all constituents a very Happy and blessed Easter.

Contact me

If you would like to contact me, please get in touch by emailing:
patrick.mcfadden.mp@parliament.uk or calling
01902 405762.

Please keep up to date with my work by following me as follows;

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Vote Rashpal Kaur for Bilston South

So why on earth should anyone bother to vote at all?

This is a question often posed on the doorstep when we call to say hello. Some people think it makes no difference whichever political party holds the reins. A vote for Labour is a vote to support people who are more needy than ourselves, a vote to support growth locally, to build affordable housing, to make a good offer to our young people and to look after adults who are frail. Your local Council has been Labour for a long time and, in spite of huge reductions in funding from a Conservative national government, the books have been balanced and rent and rate rises kept as low as possible.

Your Labour Councillors are not about to promise what they cannot afford to deliver but rest assured, they will consistently argue for better resources for Bilston South. The Urban Village is an example of making our area all the better and there is more money to come to improve the highly valued market area. Onwards and upwards for our town. We are delivering leaflets now and inviting you to comment on what your Councillors can do for you - please take the opportunity to feed back either by phone or message.

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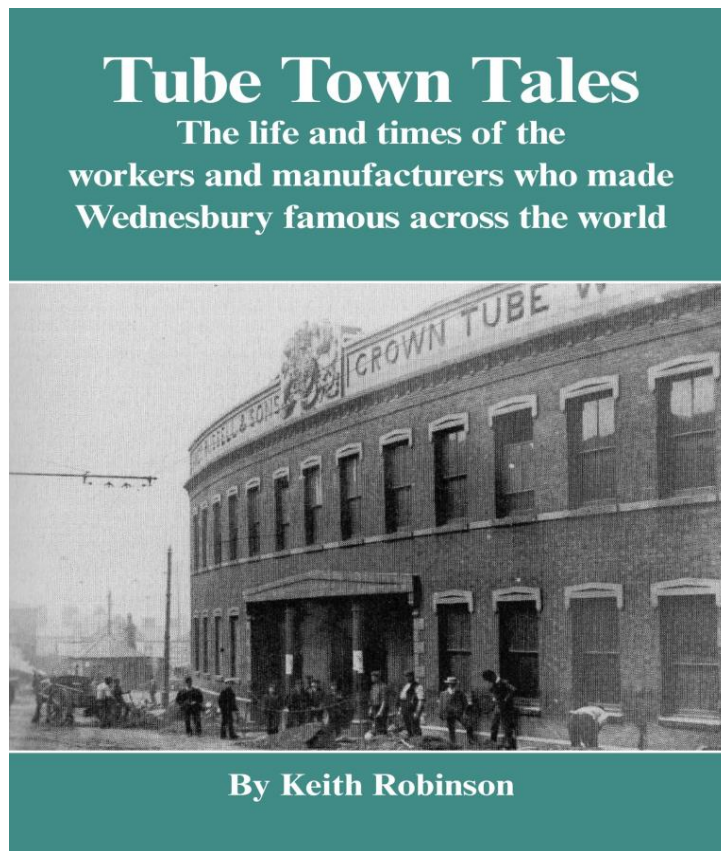
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New book on Wednesbury

Tube Town Tales

The life and times of the workers and manufacturers who made Wednesbury famous across the world.

A new book by Keith Robinson is now available.



Tube Town Tales tells the remarkable story of an industry which made Wednesbury world-famous. It details the rise of the manufacturers who developed the industry and its impact on the economy and environment of the town. It reveals the shocking stories of hundreds of tube workers on the factory floor and at home as well as their efforts to earn a living wage. Fortunes were made by a few before the industry declined after the First World War and Wednesbury was never the same again.

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**To order a copy phone Keith on 01743 873348
or email netcord9@hotmail.com**

Links to the Past

Black Country History with Tim Hamilton

Money, Money, Money... Must be Funny



Hello, my name is Tim Hamilton. I've been passionate about history since childhood; in part due to all our family holidays to steam rallies, classic car shows, battle re-enactments and heritage craft fairs

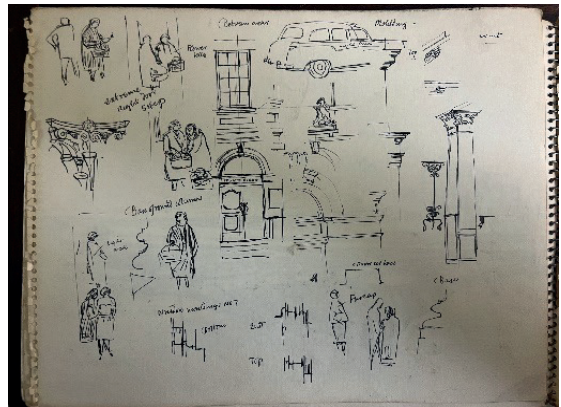
which our calendars and lives revolved around. I have worked with museums for over 10 years and now form part of the Collections Team at the Black Country Living Museum where we take care of the 80,000 plus objects which have been acquired from local businesses and donated by people in the community over the last 50 years. In 2023 I began volunteering as a Trustee at the British Association for Local History, a national charity which promotes local history by offering talks and lectures, we host a podcast and publish a range of material from books to journals and a local history magazine.

Harry Norman Ecclestone was born to Harry (A businessman in the furniture trade) and Kate (a dressmaker) on January 21st, 1923, in Coseley where he was raised. Having attended Bilston School of art as a boy of 11, he went on to the Birmingham College of Art in 1939. While his training was interrupted with four years of service in the Royal Navy during the Second World War, upon his safe return he dived back into his passion, became an associate of the



Royal Society of Printmakers and progressed his education at the Royal College of Art in London, on a scholarship, where he studied engraving under Professor Robert Austin (who designed the first £1 banknote depicting the Queen) from 1947 and 1951.

Having moved to London, Harry took up a job teaching illustrating and printmaking at a college in Essex in order to support his young wife Betty and his daughters whilst continuing to practice his craft.



His talent, skill and dedication to his work brought him great recognition and in around 1958 Ecclestone was brought on by his former professor at the Bank of England. In 1967 The Bank of England created a new role for him to fill as the first full-time banknote designer. In his capacity at the Bank of England Ecclestone worked on many projects revolutionising the way banknotes were designed, used, and protected against forgery. For example: the use of computer engraving, perception research, the use of watermarks, security thread and consistent background colours. Not only were all these measures taken up, but they are also still used today.

Bilston School Of Art

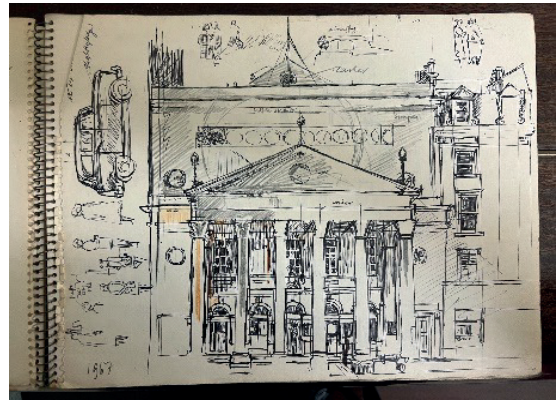
We have some really impressive buildings in Bilston, and each have a story to tell if you dig deep enough. On Mount Pleasant, Just a couple doors down from The Robin sits the impressive Bilston School of Art. It is a red brick and terracotta building with balustrades, decorative urns and pediments which more than hint at the classical inspiration for its architecture, but it also has huge almost factory-like windows. It was built between 1896 and 1897 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Historian Bev Parker reveals on their website for the Wolverhampton History and Heritage Society that the plans for building it were "borrowed" from an architect in Glasgow, but they soon realised the plans were for a building that sat on sloping ground so the earth at the Bilston site had to be excavated to match. While it is completely derelict today it was once a thriving hub of education and community, and we will most certainly discuss this and other buildings in the future. The building was sold at auction in October 2023, along with planning approval for conversion into residential properties. I'm all for breathing new life into historical buildings if and when they cannot be used as community spaces.



In 1978, the Series D banknotes came into circulation, and they ran until 1988. For the first time British banknotes were fully pictorial with Queen Elizabeth II on the front and Ecclestone's drawings of historic figures on the reverse. Some of you may even recall who was depicted on the notes, but for those who don't the characters and denominations were as

follows. £1: Isaac Newton, £5 Duke of Wellington, £10 Florence Nightingale, £20 William Shakespeare, and £50 Christopher Wren. I can imagine it must be a very funny feeling to have your artwork so well circulated it could be found in the back pocket or purse of almost every person in the country.

While Harry Ecclestone lived in London for the remainder of his life, he frequently visited the Black Country and was inspired by the sound and visual landscape of his industrial homeland. Just a few years before he passed away in 2010, he made a significant donation of his prints and sketch pad (where in the drawings pictured are taken), accompanied with an oral history to the Black Country Living Museum.



Share your favourite historical figure from British Banknotes with me on X (Twitter) **@MrTimHamilton**

Further Reading and sources:

Harry Ecclestone Obituary Guardian / Independent:

www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2010/jul/06/harry-ecclestone-obituary

www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/harry-ecclestone-the-first-in-house-artist-designer-at-the-bank-of-england-2015141.html

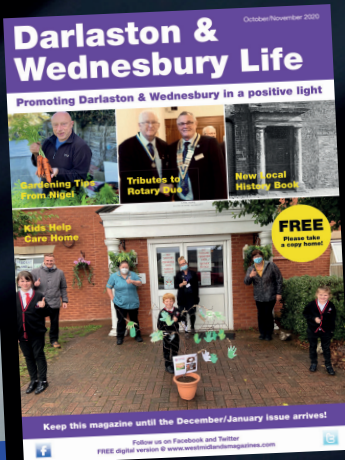
Withdrawn Banknotes

www.bankofengland.co.uk/banknotes/withdrawn-banknotes

History of Wolverhampton

www.historywebsite.co.uk/interesting/BilstonTech.htm

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Tribute to Alexen Henriquez (2006-2023)

Having lost a leg to cancer prior to his arrival at Ormiston SWB Academy, Alexen had already faced challenges beyond the comprehension of most.

This to Alexen, however was inconsequential. Despite his debilitating illness, he never lost his 'funny'. His smile was incomparable, his energy for life infectious. He was the first on the football pitch, intent to live his life with his friends to the fullest and this continued when, at the start of Year 11, Alexen's cancer returned leaving him with a terminal prognosis he was acutely aware of.

His indomitable spirit pervaded his entire outlook. With a mantra that encouraged all to 'be a rainbow in someones's cloud', Alexen leaves a considerable hole here at SWB. He forged the very best of relationships with staff and students alike and built memories that they look back fondly on now.



After the tragic loss of Alexen, the Ormiston SWB community wanted to do something, so we decided upon 'Cancer Research' being our nominated charity.

We have had multiple fund raising events which everyone has supported.

These have included:

- Non Uniform days
- Wear it Pink Days
- Raffles
- Cake Sales

Further to our fundraising, on the 21st March 2024, we held our first ever 'Race for Life'. 1300 students and staff participated in this event by walking (1 mile) or running (2 miles) around a route on our academy premises.

With students able to dedicate their efforts to someone close to them who has or is suffering from this horrible illness, made this a very emotional day.



Our target in September was £3000, with an aspirational target of £5000. However, in true community spirit, the staff, students and families from SWB have pushed the figure past £8000, with some individual students raising hundreds of pounds alone (one pupil raising £400)



As a result of these efforts, this is now the most successful fundraising campaign the academy has had in the history of SWB!

To conclude our fund raising programme, our Principal Mr Mason, will now run the London marathon in April 24 in memory of Alexen.



If anyone still wishes to kindly donate to our fundraising, please use this QR code or go to the following link <https://ormistonswbacademy.org.uk/our-academy/charity/>



Bilston Congregational Church



In September this year Portway Road Congregational Church in Bilston celebrates its 60th anniversary. The foundation stone was laid by Mr Fred Wolverson in 1963, Fred was a former Mayor of Bilston.

The then congregation had moved from Oxford Street. This was a real leap of faith because the original church building was very much loved. Sadly it was in a bad state of repair with escalating restorational costs. Although they loved their church building the act of witness was considered more important and this became the the driving force behind the move.

The members did not move into the new church right away. For at least another 12 months the fellowship worshiped in a wooden hut in Bunkers Hill Lane. It was therefore some time before the first service was held at Portway Road.

It is important that Oxford Street is mentioned because the sixty years witness at Portway Road does not cover the full history of the Congregational Church in Bilston. As already stated the original church was in Oxford Street, and it is believed that that the church was built around the same time as St. Leonard's Church, so that would make it around 1826.

Thanks to the meticulous efforts of the late – Linda Lawton – Portway Rd has volumes of photograhic memories that records their Portway Road history in the town. Sadly there does not seem to be much information available relating to the old church in Oxford Street. I did

however find a photograph of the old church in one of Linda's volumes. Although not perfect at does show internal and external images of Oxford Street Congregational Church (see photograph herewith along with a photograph of the new church in Portway Road)

Today's church is still very active within the local community. In the late eighties the church was able to secure funding from a government initiative called, Manpower Services Commission. The funding allowed the setting up of a community project which became known internally as The Project.. The facilities included, a mother and toddler group – youth club – and a day centre for the elderly. Although the project has ceased to exist the church community still do their level best to meet the local needs with coffee mornings – table top sales – concerts and other events as required by the community. In July this year a special service will be held to celebrate and thank God for all the achievements. (time of service still to be agreed) It is interesting to note that the only people to leave the church are those who have either moved away to another area or those that have passed away.

At Portway Road Congregational Church you will find a friendly group of believers who sincerely do their best to love the Lord and follow his example for the Glory of God.

There are those who have a distorted view of Congregationalism and assume that it some form of modern church that ignores the basic principles of the Christian faith. Nothing is further from the truth. We share the same common inheritance as do the Catholic Church – Anglican and others. What is different about us is that we have a very realistic way of being Church. We do not have a hierarchy that dictates our spiritual direction. Most Congregational Churches are affiliated to the Congregational Federation based in Nottingham. The Federation was set up in 1972 and it exists to offer advice and support on a wide range of matters as well as providing ordination training for those who believe that God has called them to ministry.

Some of the guiding principles of Congregationalism include:

- A church where Christ is the head.
- A meaningful relationship with God and with each other.
- A church of equality both male and female equally doing our best to serve God through our Lord Jesus.

This enactment of our Christian faith has a long and steady history. It has been said that a form of Congregationalism was evident in some of the churches set up by and referred to in St Paul's letters. Apart from the elders who sent either letters or emissaries to Paul there seems to be no hierarchy as in the established church of today.

Seeing that Elizabeth 1st was by nature a Protestant it seems strange that the Congregationalist did not do very well under her reign, this distrust carried on into the Stuart dynasty. Many Congregationalists were thrown into prison, exiled and even put to death. As a part of the Puritan movement all Congregationalists wanted to do was to purge the church of what they perceived as hypocrisy and superstition. The name congregational is simply taken from who they were – members of congregations who challenged the authoritative rule of the established church. The followers believed that they had the right to govern themselves without any outside interference or hierarchy.

One of the earliest Congregational communities were seized at Plumbers Hall, London in 1567. They had been granted a licence to perform a marriage ceremony but were actually caught in an act of worship. Yet in spite of the monarchy's practice of putting such people to death, the numbers of Congregationalists continued to grow.

It was under Oliver Cromwell's leadership, lasting Congregationalism became legal and some leaders sat in on the Westminster Assembly in the 1640's. Although general agreement was reached at that time, as to a way forward, Congregationalists still believed that they needed to establish themselves and their identity.

The Congregational way became more prominent in the 17th century civil wars. Its origins in England were thought to be connected to the Separatist movement of the 16th century and a man named Robert Browne. This man has been regarded by some to be the founder of Congregationalism, This view can be challenged for a number of reasons.

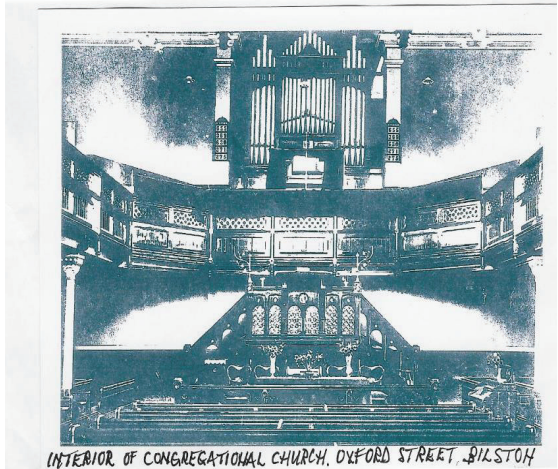
- Robert Browne was a man who often changed his mind.
- Congregational views were evident even before Robert Browne
- Robert Browne was connected to the Brownist Christian group of the 16th century who referred to themselves as - The Saints.
- In later life Robert Browne was reconciled to the Anglican church and was later ordained as an Anglican priest.

The Saints by themselves and the separatists by the outsiders. Whatever they are called they certainly wanted a break from the Anglican church. As I said earlier Robert Browne often changed his mind and obviously did as he eventually became ordained as an Anglican minister.

**Mike Shelley-Smith
Minister**



CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, OXFORD STREET, BILSTON



INTERIOR OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, OXFORD STREET, BILSTON

Trevor Johnson

Just before going to print, I learned of the very sad passing of Trevor Johnson, Bilston's self-styled, Black Country Poet. Trevor was a great friend of the magazine and often contributed his hilarious poems, which I gladly included in the publication.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his lovely wife, Sheila and their family and friends at this difficult time. We thought Trevor would have liked us to share a couple of his poems. I hope you enjoy it.
RIP Trev x

A Misunderstanding

Uz we lay in bed the other night,
The wife said she wuz cold,
Ar said, "I am, un'all -
It's 'cause wee'm gerrin' owd!"

She said, "Before we got married,
Mom would give me a hug,
In bed we used ter cuddle up,
We wuz nice un' snug!"

"Mom would put 'er arms round me -
Un' give me a goodnight kiss,
What aer'm tryin' ter say -
This is what ar miss!"

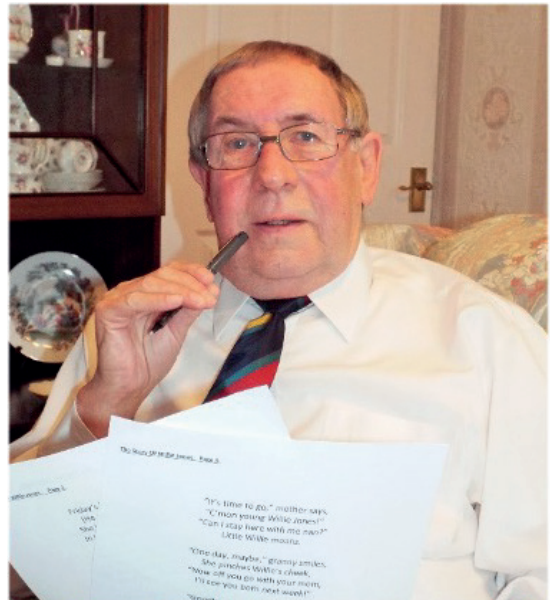
Ar said, "Ar've got the message -
Ar know weer yow'm coming from!
Ar'I get me bike aert the shed -
Un' goo un' fetch yer mom!"

Fifty Shades of Grey

A lady bought a paperback,
Just the other day,
Hubby found it in 'er bag,
It was "Fifty Shades Of Grey".

His wife started reading it,
So hubby went ter bed,
When his wife came upstairs -
The sight filled him with dread!

In one hand she had handcuffs,
In the other hand, a whip,
She put them on the bed -
'Un then began ter strip!



She wore stockings and suspenders,
(Hubby started ter sweat),
She tied him to the bed un' said,
"Yow ay sin nuthin', yet!"

Hubby thought, "Yeers agoo,
Ar might 'uv' 'ad a peek,
But she ay weathered well at all -
'Er's eighty-five next week!"

She made suggestive movements
(Sight couldn't 'uv' bin much grimmer),
Things went from bad ter wuss -
'Er tumbled off 'er zimmer!

She climbed back on her feet
A few minutes later,
Put 'er teeth back in -
Un' said, "Aerm the dominator!"

Hubby 'ad another peep,
Then he coughed un' spluttered,
He spent a month in traction,
The last complaint he uttered!

Sorry, ar cor reveal no more
About what occurred that day,
Except ter say hubby's jet-black hair -
Turned "Fifty Shades of Grey"!



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PSYCHIC



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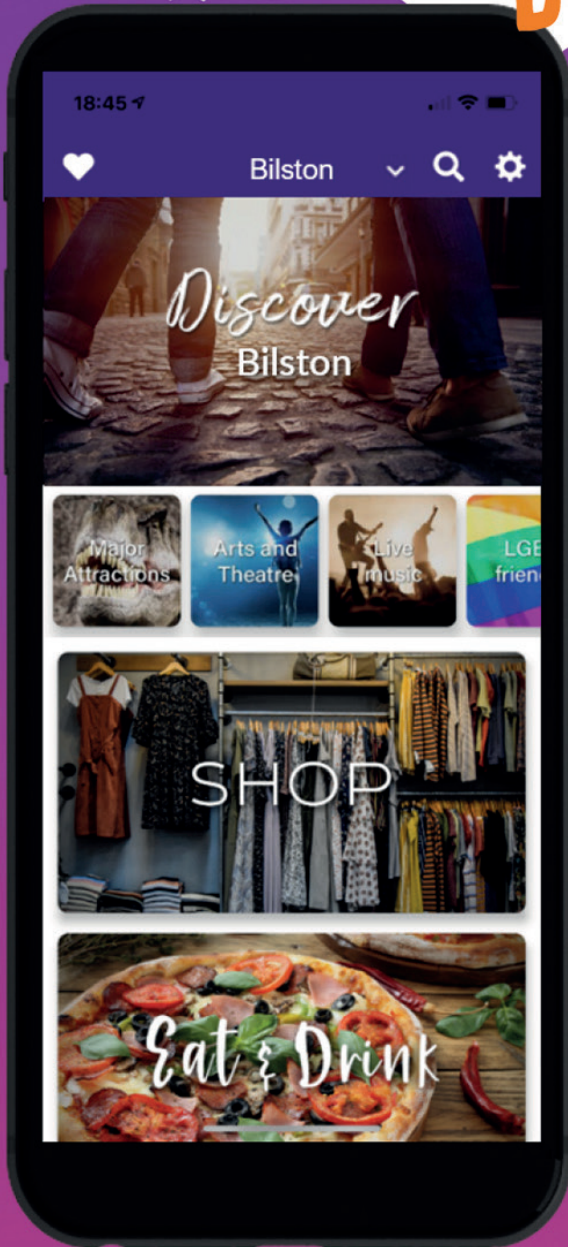
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Lower Bradley	01902 552212
Lunt	01902 552324
Portobello	01902 654650

Emergency Services

Anti Social Behaviour Unit.....	01902 551188
(Out of hours emergency)	01902 552999
Police/Fire/Ambulance	999
Police (non emergency)	101
Crime Stoppers (anonymous)	0800 555111
Electrical emergency	0800 328 1111
Flood line.....	0845 9881188
Gas emergency	0800 111 999
Water emergency	0800 7834444

Health Organisations

Arthritis Action.....	0203 781 7120
Bilston Heath Centre	01902 444003
Bilston Sports Injury Clinic	07445 119139
New Cross Hospital (switchbrd)	01902 307999
NHS Non-Emergency	111
Woodcross Health Centre	01902 675588
Wolverhampton City NHS Trust.....	01902 553909

Local Councillors

Bilston South (formerly East)

Gillian Wildman.....	07971 837375
Rashpal Kaur.....	07976 882469
Stephen Simkins	07775 007989

Ettingshall North

Zee Russell	07880 176838
Jeszemma Howl	07816 085166
Jenny Cockayne	07527 388564

Bilston North

Linda Leach.....	07771 836016
Rohit Mistry.....	number not available
Susan Roberts.....	number not available

Help Lines/Others

Citizens Advice Bureau	03444 111 444
Childline.....	0800 1111
Nation Domestic Violence	0808 2000 247
RSPCA	0300 1234 999
RSPB.....	0845 1200501
Samaritans	116 123

Places of Worship

Bilston Baptist Church	01902 401430
Bilston Methodist Church	01902 402137
Bilston Congregational Church	07704 322807

Bradley Methodist Church.....	01902 402137
Christ Church, Coseley	01902 687283
Church of God of Prophecy	01902 497370
Excel Church	01902 498781
Guru Nanak Gurdwara.....	01902 496135
Holy Trinity Oxford St	01902 493459
New Testament Church of God.....	01902 498861
Shri Durga Wbhawn Hindu	01902 354081
St Chads, Bilston.....	01902 494776
Stowlawn Methodist/Anglican Church ..	01902 402137
St Mary's, Oxford Street	01902 496306
St Leonard's Church	01902 491560
St Martins Church Bradley	01902 546460
The Asian Evangelical Church.....	01902 353705
Word of Spirit & Life Baptist Church	07976 713716

Schools

Bilston C of E Primary	01902 558690
Christ Church C of E Primary	01384 818375
Field View Primary.....	01902 925701
Green Park School	01902 556429
Holy Trinity Catholic Primary	01902 240901
Hurst Hill Primary.....	01384 818845
Loxdale Primary.....	01902 558570
Manor Primary.....	01902 556460
Moorcroft Wood Primary School.....	01902 495943
Moseley Park Academy.....	01902 553901
Ormiston South W'ton & Bilston Acad ..	01902 493797
Stowlawn Primary	01902 556463
St Martin's C of E Primary	01902 925700
The Rosewood School	01384 816800
Villiers Primary School.....	01902 558993
Wallbrook Primary	01384 818985
Wilkinson Primary	01902 558971

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Spring Vale	01902 556284
Wolverhampton Central.....	01902 556025

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Crossword Answers

From page 10

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	R	I		U			O	S		A		
S	O	I	L		B	R	O	C	C	O	L	I
	M		L		M			A		L		
B	A	N	A	N	A		T	A	R	T	A	R
			G		R		H			N		
Z	O	N	E		I	C	E		B	I	T	E
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C	O	V	E	R	T		S	A	L	I	N	E

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