

Express Community

Wire in the Blood

IN Issue 125 (April 25), we published a letter from Sharron Bilbey, a Beeston poet and author of the inscription on the contemporary sculpture installed at Broadgate Park, Beeston.

In her letter, Sharron shared some of her earlier experiences of poetry writing with *Express* readers. She also let us have copies of poems that have been accepted by a publisher.

Here we publish, with thanks to Sharron, 'Wire in the Blood', one of two poems to be included in a poetry anthology to be published in summer 2008.

*A prisoner of war
returned to his home*

*Relief and distress
mingled down*

*Encircling a family,
fiancée and friends*

*Freedom and peace
a prized crown*

*Marriage and fatherhood,
routines evolved*

*Entwined, contented
and blessed*

*The years escalated,
time dissipated*

*Full of toil,
achievement and rest*

*As seniors they strove
to lighten the load*

*Their diamond day
sailed into view*

*But just fifty-nine years,
one hundred and
twenty-one days*

*Were bestowed on our
brave, precious two*

*This armistice child
of eighty-nine years*

*Shoulders grief,
tinged with thankfulness too*

*A young soldier's fears are
replaced by fresh tears*

*He has won, lost and
battles anew.*



Probus Club Reports

Beeston Probus Club

Iceland – land of fire and ice

PEOPLE often think of Iceland as a bare and cold land inhabited by few people, but a talk by Ted Grey at the recent monthly meeting of Beeston Probus Club soon dispelled this notion.

He accompanied his talk with photographs of the island depicting the natural beauty of the land: the white glaciers, the brown rocks and boiling pools left from volcanic activity, the green pastures of farms around the capital city, Reykjavik.

Whilst Iceland has fewer persons per square mile than any other European country, Reykjavik has about 250,000 inhabitants, all of whom enjoy the full amenities of the 21st century – and then some.

Mr Grey told the club

members how Icelanders utilise the heat given off from underlying rock to create district heating schemes and heated swimming pools. "These, he said, "go some way to counteracting the cool climate!"

He described how there is a certain amount of pastureland lying outside of Reykjavik, but that this landscape gives way to barren land and volcanic rock containing a large glacier as one travels further away from the city.

Mr Grey's slides showed that the colours of the landscape are predominantly shades of brown, grey and white but in summer, a colourful show of wild flowers emerges, thriving amongst the cracks and

crevices of the broken ground.

He went on to explain a little of Iceland's history: Vikings settled on the island in the 9th century. They brought with them a breed of horse that, thanks to restrictions on importing 'fresh' horses from the European mainland, has remained unchanged to this day.

As a geography teacher, Mr Grey visited Iceland many times with his students, finding something new and interesting to talk about each time he visited. Now retired, he recommended to the Probus Club members that everyone should visit the island at least once in their lives in order to take in its unique and varied landscape.

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Hemlock Stone Probus Club

A busy time of year

THE Hemlock Stone Probus Club has been busy with visits out and about as well as its eighth annual AGM.

Seventeen members and their wives enjoyed a guided tour of Ruddington and a visit to the village museum on an April day blessed with warm sunshine.

Tour guide Gavin Walker pointed out some fascinating insights into Ruddington's history, including the re-sited graves of Rorke's Drift survivors Caleb Wright and Robert Tongue.

However, the highlight of the tour was the visit to the village museum, described as "a veritable Aladdin's cave" with an "unbelievable" fly-proof milk dish, a hand-operated sheep shearing machine and a piglet feeder. Other treasures included an Edwardian fish and chip fryer, discovered in a house in the 1950s after the owner of the house died. It was found exactly as it had been left – complete with fat well past its 'best before' date – when its owner was called up during the second world war.

Members of the club's Cross Country Walking Group enjoyed an additional outing; a five-mile circular walk from the Queens Head in Ockbrook, Derbyshire, through the countryside around Dale Abbey and passing Hopcroft Hall and the Hermit's Cave on the way.

A welcome drink and a hearty lunch followed the walk.

New President elected

At the April AGM, Peter Wilkes was elected as the President to succeed Reg Goodman. The existing committee was re-elected en bloc. Treasurer Michael Litchfield reported healthy club finances, enabling subscriptions to be maintained at their current level. He thanked club officers for keeping expenses low.

In his report, the retiring president told members how much he had enjoyed his year in office, although it had been tinged with sadness by the death of Joyce Wilkes, wife of Peter Wilkes, and that of member Gordon Matthews.

"On a brighter note," continued Mr Goodman, "Three of our members underwent serious surgery and all have recovered well."

He thanked the office holders for their work, which included organising the monthly meetings with excellent speakers, and a good social programme.

In accepting the President's Jewel from Mr Goodman, Peter Wilkes said: "The privilege of being elected President gives me the opportunity to discuss with members their views on running the club, and on the social events that take place as well as ideas for future events and tours.

"We already have a good and varied selection of speakers," he added, "of which we should be justly proud."

The new President chose the Nottingham Cardiac Support Group for his charity.

Bowls season begins

The bowls season began on May 1 and the team will be in action every Thursday afternoon until October.

News in brief

Sustainable housing on University Park

MEMBERS of Broxtowe Borough Council's Planning and Building control teams were invited to look around the first 'show' house to be completed as part of The University of Nottingham's research into the sustainable housing of the future last week.

The Creative Energy Homes project at the School of the Built Environment will ultimately showcase six state-of-the-art energy efficient homes on University Park, Nottingham.

The selected visitors were invited to view innovative design methods and building materials at the BASF house, the first to be completed.

Students will occupy the house, built in part from blocks of expandable polystyrene (filled with 'pumpable' concrete with improved thermal and acoustic qualities), and in part from foam insulated panels, as a living experiment to find out how comfortable a house is when built to exacting environmental criteria – energy efficiency, carbon emissions, cost per annum of light, heat and water.

Work to construct the other five houses is in progress.

Last surviving member of Barton family dies

ERIC Paul Barton, the last surviving member of the Barton Transport family, died on April 16, 2008, at the age of 82.

The youngest son Thomas Barton OBE, who founded the local and nationally renowned bus company in 1908, Eric was born in 1926 at the family home opposite what were the Barton offices and garage on High Road, Chilwell.

After leaving school at 15, Eric worked for the family firm on two separate occasions, once as a chauffeur. He also worked for a time as a chauffeur and driver for a local businessman.

Local girl Janet Morris, who worked in the offices at the Chilwell garage, became his wife in 1962. The couple briefly kept a greengrocery shop on Woodside Road, Lenton and in 1973, Eric joined the Civil Service, first at Chilwell Depot and then at Old Dalby, Melton Mowbray.

The funeral service of Eric Barton was conducted by Rev Chris Gray at Chilwell Road Methodist Church, Beeston, on April 28.

Attenborough lad made captain of all England

CHILWELL-born Steve Allcoat has been delighted to accept the England Captaincy for the Combined Universities England Cricket team.

Now 20 years old, Steve, a batsman/wicket keeper, started his cricketing career playing for Attenborough Cricket Club (CC) at the age of eight. He has represented Nottinghamshire 2nd XI, and plays his cricket for Wollaton CC in the Notts Premier Cricket League. He continues to play for Attenborough CC – Steve is also a Level 2 coach and helps coach the youth members' section at the club whenever he gets the opportunity.

He combines his studies for a degree in Construction Management at Sheffield Hallam University with playing cricket in any spare time he has available.

Steve said: "Last year, I was chosen to play for the England Universities team. To be given the captaincy this year is a great honour. We just need to avoid the floods of 2007 to enable the matches to go ahead!"