

Swindon Heritage Magazine Spring 2017

This edition contains articles on the following, by Vivien Moss:

Birdland: Denis Bird, Photographer, captures images of people and places in the 1960s and 70s including the Tabernacle, the Old Market and LImmex amongst others and shows the changing face of Swindon.

Tram 13 - set for its ticket home. The last survivor of Swindon's tram era looks set to be restored.

Throwing National Heritage out with the bath water. The GWR Medical Fund, founded in 1847, was the blueprint for the NHS. Its headquarters, the former Milton Road baths, are to be turned into flats.

"For Gods sake, shoot straight." The moving story of Edwin Dyett from Swindon whose execution in January 1917 led to his niece and great-niece, 100 years later, making a trip to France to honour and trace his life.

Join us for a walk with the dead. Guided walks of the Radnor Street Cemetery with accounts of bravery and achievement along with the more tragic and poignant.

A Swindon couple's precious gift to family historians. For over 20 years Duncan and Mandy Ball have been taking photographs of churches, shops, villas and memorials mainly in Wiltshire and have created a huge archive. Duncan's family history includes the Tydeman family who were significant builders in Swindon. Mandy has just published her own history of the Lea family as far back as 1675.

The lost legacy of a Swindon philanthropist. William Graham Little was a self-made businessman among whose properties was the substantial building on the corner of Faringdon Road and Catherine Street. As his wealth grew so did his sense of civic duty. He never married and wanted his fortune to be used for the good of underprivileged young people in Swindon whether for education or recreation.

Museum, Gallery and Providence. A proposed £22 million project for a Museum and Art Gallery on the site of Providence Row just off Regent Street is aimed at creating a cultural quarter for Swindon. It will contrast sharply with the history of one of the two bedroomed houses, the demolition of which, revealed it had been a bricked over, single railway carriage.

No flaming way to safeguard our heritage. The sad aftermath of the torched Agricultural Museum at Coate Water which was once part of the Richard Jefferies farm.

Where our star was born. A Swindon Heritage blue plaque has been unveiled at the former Haven Nursing Home in Kent Road where Diana Dors was born. A childhood neighbour records her memories of her.

Tales of the old Kent Road. Built in the late 19th century, Kent Road was home to an eclectic mix of neighbours.

The cashless society. You saw it here first. In 1994 Swindon was chosen to trial a card, Mondex, intended to create the cashless society. It involved a small metallic rectangle embedded in a card

and the concept of the technology was, "credit cards are like electronic loans; debit cards are like electronic cheques and Mondex is electronic cash."

A makeover plan for our, "old lady." Services are currently taking place at its new communal centre whilst Christchurch undergoes a four-part modernisation programme.

Swindon's first shopping centre. Opposite the Mechanics Institute are the impressive three-storey buildings that gave New Swindon its first shopping centre in 1847. Later in 1854 an octagonal market was built attached to the new Mechanics Institute. Known traders from 1855 - 1880 are listed together with the history behind the market's fountain.

The octagons that shaped Swindon. In addition to the Railway Village Market other octagonal buildings include the bandstand, a restaurant and a demolished Methodist Church.

The Robins have landed. The history of how businessmen Bert Hearse and Nobby Clark persisted in their dream of having a motorcycle racing stadium at Blunsdon almost 70 years ago.

Martha's tale. A tragic story of Martha Kallaway's back street abortion in 1895.

Time to brush up on your Romans. Wiltshire archaeologist Mike Stine organises a whole day whose topic is the rich archaeology of Swindon and the surrounding area.

Love thy neighbour. Chippenham Museum and Heritage Centre is housed on the site of King Alfred's Palace and tells the story of Chippenham's rich history with over 30,000 artefacts.

Farewell to Joyce, a true "Swindonian." A tribute to Joyce Murgatroyd 1916 - 2017.

The first of the Bowl Barrows. Bowl Barrows are funerary monuments dating from the Neolithic period to the late Bronze Age (2500 - 1000 BC). Swindon has a Bowl Barrow at Rushy Platt.

In the footsteps of Elizabeth I. The Heritage Lottery Fund has supported the conservation of the magnificent interior of St Mary's church at Lydiard. Mediaeval wall paintings and 17th century monuments will be conserved together with the re-opening of the hidden porch which also has mediaeval paintings. Elizabeth I is said to have used this porch when she visited Lydiard.