



# BOURNE CIVIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

April 2014

Registered Charity No 512420

Member of

CIVIC VOICE

Welcome to New Member  
Joyce Stevenson

## Speakers

Unfortunately Tony Stubbs, one of our regular speakers, is unable to give his talk on Churches and Memorials in Lincolnshire at our meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> April, but Brenda Jones has kindly offered to step in and give a talk about Charles Frederick Worth and the Worth Collection

Images of conditions on the Western Front in the early stages of World War 1 led a small group of men to have the glimmering of a remarkable idea. It was an idea that would lead to a small engineering company in Lincoln creating what can be considered the greatest fighting machine invented. On Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May Richard Pullen will tell us the story of the 'Lincoln Tank' and the part it played in the war.

WW1 Weblinks

[www.1914-1918.net](http://www.1914-1918.net)

[www.military-genealogy.com](http://www.military-genealogy.com)

[www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/)

[www.wwlcemeteries.com](http://www.wwlcemeteries.com)

[www.movietone.com](http://www.movietone.com)

## The 36<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting held at Baldocks Mill

There was a good attendance at the meeting on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014. The Town Mayor David Higgs chaired the meeting, he was accompanied by the Lady Mayoress, Angela Higgs.

Officers elected Mrs Brenda L Jones, Chairman.

Mr Robert Kitchener, Secretary.

Mr Anthony Burke, Treasurer.

Mr William Peasley, Membership and Social Secretary.  
Members of the Committee. Mr Alan Jones Mr James Jones.  
Dr Vaughan Roberts.

A presentation of a Pen and Ink drawing of Baldocks Mill was given to Dr Robert and Lynette Fuller, both have been members of the committee for a number of years and are standing down this year. Both made a number of contributions to the civic society, and will be missed.

A movie tone film of old cars was shown to close the evening. The film was donated by Mr Lynsey Johnson to the civic society.

Would you like to serve on the committee?

The civic society committee needs a few more members, Meetings are held in the daytime, Please help, this will give strength to the civic society.

Can you help at week-ends to man the Heritage centre.

For more information phone Brenda on 424740



***Griff Rhys Jones says too few communities using powers to protect their local assets.***

**Civic Voice to launch year long campaign to encourage listing of local assets**

Griff Rhys Jones, President of Civic Voice has today said:

“For far too long, people have assumed that they don’t have any voice in their locality. This is wrong. You do have a voice but you have to use it. The Government have introduced the Localism Act and yet figures released show that less than 1000 communities have utilised the powers available to list local community assets. Civic Voice wants to change this”.

Responding to a Parliamentary Question on 13th March, Stephen Williams MP said “we estimate that from February of this year over 900 assets have been listed across England”.

Griff added “Whether it is a heritage asset or community asset, you should get it listed. It can make a difference and that is why Civic Voice is launching a yearlong project to inspire communities across England to give buildings greater protection. We will be publishing case studies, holding events and mobilising communities to show people that they can have in their a voice local area. I look forward to the seeing people in Bristol on March 29th at the first such event”.

Civic Voice works to make the places where everyone lives more attractive, enjoyable and distinctive. We speak up for civic societies and local communities across England. We promote civic pride. We are the national charity for the civic movement and have a strong local presence. We believe everyone has the right to live somewhere they can be proud of. We know how people feel about places because we feel the same way. Civic societies are the most numerous participants in the planning system. Since its launch in April 2010 Civic Voice has been joined by 290 civic societies with more than 75,000 members. Further information is available at <http://www.civicvoice.org.uk> including how to join Civic Voice (£10 individuals) and contact details for local civic societies. More information on Civic Voice’s Planning for People campaign is available on our website here <http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/campaigns/planning-for-people>

**INDEPENDENT MUSEUM STATISTICS**

- **There are over 1,200 independent museums in the UK**
- **They attract 9 million visitors a year**
- **They provide nearly 6,000 jobs supported by 100,000 volunteers**
- **The sector is worth up to £930 million to the economy**

Old photograph revives memories  
Of a hospital romance

by REX NEEDLE

A photograph handed over to the archives of Bourne Civic Society has brought back memories of a war-time romance at the military hospital which was opened in the town during the First World War of 1914-18 to care for wounded soldiers from the front.

The portrait is of a pretty young nurse who worked there, one of the many girls who volunteered for medical service as the casualties began arriving from the trenches in France and she has been identified as Ida Shilcock, daughter of John Shilcock, landlord of the Nag's Head which he kept for 25 years.

Ida was born in the town in 1884 and later enjoyed a busy social life taking part in many activities, even playing cricket in matches organised by Bourne Ladies held at the Abbey Lawn where she proved herself to be a competent batsman and a successful bowler. But when the war broke out she joined many other young ladies who trained as nurses to staff a new temporary hospital set up in Bourne by the War Office in conjunction with the British Red Cross to provide medical care for wounded soldiers returning from the front to convalesce.

Bourne Military Hospital opened in makeshift premises at the Vestry Hall in North Street in December 1914, with additional accommodation at the National School next door, and between then and November 1918, the unit's forty beds were in continual use while the medical staff and orderlies recruited by the British Red Cross cared for almost 950 servicemen.

Among them was a young officer in the Machine Gun Corps, Lieutenant Charles Morton Wiggin, who had been gassed and wounded. He was there for six months before returning to the front but their friendship continued by letter and they met again after the war had ended.

Ida Shilcock's dedication to duty during her work at the hospital was acknowledged in the summer of 1919 during a ceremony at the Abbey Lawn when she was among 19 former Red Cross nurses who received a gold bar brooch with the inscription "Bourne V A D Hospital, 1914-18" in recognition of her work. The presentations were made by the hospital commandant, Dr John Gilpin (1864-1943), a local family doctor, who had been awarded the MBE in June 1918 for his services in conducting the unit in such an efficient manner.

Then in January 1922, medals were issued by the Red Cross to 39 nurses and orderlies who had each devoted 1,000 hours in attending the sick and wounded at the hospital, the presentation being made by the Countess of Ancaster, president of the Bourne branch. Ida Shilcock was again among the recipients, although by then she was Mrs Wiggin, having married her former hospital patient, Charles Wiggin, at King's Norton, Birmingham, in 1920.

The Vestry Hall, built in 1867 as a Calvinist chapel, still stands in North Street and after varied uses over the years was converted into a private home in 2004 although the original bronze plaque commemorating its role during the First World War can be seen over the front door in the entrance foyer.



Photograph supplied by Lynsey Johnson for the next exhibition on the first world war.

## 2014 - The Eightieth Anniversary Year of Bourne's ERA Racing Car

The 22nd May 1934 is a very significant date in the history of British Motor Racing. That day, at the Brooklands Motor Racing Track in Weybridge, the first of the ERA racing cars was demonstrated before the motoring press. Raymond Mays was the driver. Back in Bourne the finishing touches were being made to a building on a plot within the orchard of Eastgate House, the home of the Mays family. That building was to be the headquarters of a newly formed company, English Racing Automobiles Limited, better known as just, "ERA".

The year before Raymond Mays had met with success driving a much-modified Riley sports car. Peter Berthon, Raymond's friend, with the co-operation of the Riley Company, had made the modifications with help from a young engineer called Murray Jamieson. The car had so impressed Humphrey Cook, a fellow racing driver, that he agreed to fund the construction of a racing car based on the Riley. He saw in such a car the potential for success in the then popular races for Voiturette Racing Cars - the class below the Grand Prix cars of the day. It was from this offer of Humphrey Cook that the ERA company came about to produce ERA racing cars. Raymond Mays and Peter Berthon were to play the major part in it all, save for the need to raise the funds.

In all, nineteen ERAs were produced in Bourne. One of these was written off after an accident leaving twenty ERAs now remaining. Yes, the maths are imperfect but that's a long story.

In the 'thirties the ERAs met with success in international races, the first time that a racing car from Britain had been in contention for race victories for such a lengthy period. After WW2, although now out of date, the ERAs continued to make their presence felt. Now they are stars of the Historic Racing Car scene. Six ERAs now have owners based in the USA but all but one of them are regularly seen racing in the UK. Indeed there are only three of the ERAs, including one owned by HRH King Bhumibol of Thailand, not now regularly seen in competitions.

This year ERAs will be in action at the prestigious Historic Race Meeting in Monaco where they have regularly met with success. Indeed they are quicker around this tight street circuit than some of their younger brethren! In April, to mark the car's Eightieth Anniversary, the Vintage Sports Car Club plan to hold a race at Silverstone with its entry limited to ERA cars. This year is also that Club's own Eightieth Anniversary and they will be having a week long celebration based at the East of England Show Ground. So we ought to expect to see some of its members in Bourne during that week.

Sadly, Humphrey Cook's major part in the success of the ERA cars has largely gone unrecognised, save by those who know the story. At Baldocks Mill we have noted the essential part he played in ERA, and therefore in the story of Bourne. Likewise noted at the mill is the similar role played by Sir Alfred Owen (together with his family's company, Rubery Owen) in the survival of BRM.

As well as the welcome recent formation of the BRM Association there is a long established ERA Club. It is centred on those still racing the cars, but none the less is open to all.

By the way, the ERA workshop still exists in Bourne. It is now incorporated within the premises of the Delaine Bus Company.

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### Our Mission Statement

It is the aim of the Society to make sure that new developments are of the highest possible quality and developers are made aware of the issues surrounding their schemes. Good design is only possible through a full understanding of any scheme's environment and urban context. We seek to safeguard our existing heritage and the many listed buildings from demolition or neglect.

**Visit to Elton Hall and Gardens – Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June**

I/We would like to join the visit to Elton Hall and Gardens.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

**The plan is to meet at the Heritage Centre at 1:30p.m. and travel in members' cars to Elton to arrive in time for our 2:30p.m. visit.**

Please tick one of the following:

I will be using my own car and can offer  spaces to members without their own transport.

I do not have my own transport and would like a lift.

**Please complete and return this slip (along with payment of £8.50 per member) to**

**Mr W Peasley, Social Secretary,  
Bourne Civic Society,**

**32 Great Northern Gardens, Bourne, PE10 9EH by Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June.  
Cheque's should be made payable to Bourne Civic Society.**