

February 2018

This afternoon we welcomed Lizzie Hill, originally from Bewdley. She told us about the houses and the people who lived in the Welsh (Welch) gate area of Bewdley in the 19th century.



Today's area of Welch gate looks very similar to that of the 1850s. Some of the very small cottages have had their roofs removed and an upper floor added. Lizzie's sister lives in one of the houses that, from the outside has not changed at all. Several old postcards showed the houses and original town gates that stood at the end of Dog Lane and at the Winwood end of Welch Gate, In the 1850s there were at least 20 ale houses, many standing next door to each other. The biggest being the recently closed Woodcolliers Arms.

The talk was accompanied with many reports from the Berrows newspaper of the times. The area of Welsh Gate had more than its fair share of fights, verbal abuse, neighbour fallouts all reported graphically by the newspaper. Parts of the area were classed as slums with poor water supply and inadequate sanitation.



Many of the family names are still to be found in Bewdley today. Much to the "delight" of one of our members! It was not quite revealed of how much a criminal he was! Members had many questions for Lizzie who seemed to be a mine of interesting information.

Following tea and cake another new member introduced herself and told us about her life, having been born and bred in Kidderminster. As usual she and her family had much in common with other members, which is really interesting to hear.

We talked about some of the topics that would be covered in 2018, with members coming forward with their own ideas as what could be presented.

We are looking forward to the visit to Hagley Hall at the end of this month.