

## So much to see during Coventry's Heritage Open Days!

AN amazing range of historic places in Coventry and Warwickshire will be open next month during Heritage Open Days.

The national heritage celebration - described as "England's largest festival of history and culture" - takes place between September 6<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, and there's lots on offer locally. Some buildings not normally open to the public will be available for visitors to explore, and all venues will offer free admission, sometimes with guided tours.

Places featured in Coventry include the city's major visitor attractions such as **Coventry Cathedral**, **St Mary's Guildhall**, **Coventry Transport Museum** and the **Herbert Art Gallery and Museum**. But many other places will also be open, some of which are less well known. Some of the highlights include:



*Inside St Mary's Guildhall: entry is free on Saturday and Sunday, September 14-15, 10-4pm.*

**Dalecote House** in Warwick Road, an imposing late Victorian house built in 1878 for the Twist family (multi-generation solicitors of Coventry) which retains many of its original architectural and design features. It's now used as a meeting place for Coventry's Freemasons, guilds and other charities. The whole building will be open, including the masonic lodge. It can be found on Warwick Road, next to the Leamington Road junction, close to the Memorial Park. It's open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 13-15<sup>th</sup>, from 9.30 to 5.30pm.



*King Henry VIII School: open for tours.*

*Photos: John Marshall*

**King Henry VIII School**, Warwick Road.

This is an opportunity to take a walking tour of the senior school site and view documents and artefacts illustrating 479 years since the school's foundation in 1545. The school moved to this site from Hales Street in 1885. Staff, with assistance from current students and Old Coventrians, will provide a guided tour of the most historically important parts of the school buildings, including the Memorial Library and the Jeff Vent archive room. The tour starts at 1pm on Saturday September 14<sup>th</sup>. Pre-booking required. ... continued next page

**Bagot's Castle**, Church Road, Baginton. A 14<sup>th</sup> century ruin with an interesting history, set in a 19-acre site, with woodland paths, river walks and ponds. Includes an Education Visitor Centre. Open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 6-8<sup>th</sup> and 13-15<sup>th</sup>, 10.30 to 4pm.

**Coventry Synagogue**, Barras Lane. The city's only purpose-built Synagogue and Rabbi's house, it's been in use from 1870 until about 1995, since when it's been empty and decaying. Steeped in history, it is currently being restored. Limited access. Open between 11am and 1pm, September 8-12<sup>th</sup> inclusive.



Coventry Synagogue

Photo: Coventry Society

**Ford's Hospital**, Greyfriars Lane. Considered to be one of the finest examples in England of a 16<sup>th</sup> century domestic building, Ford's Hospital was founded as an almshouse and still provides sheltered accommodation. Visit on Saturday September 14<sup>th</sup>, 10-4pm. Another almshouse, **Bond's Hospital** in Hill Street will open its historic quadrant for viewing on Saturday September 7<sup>th</sup>, from 10-4pm.

Many other places are open. For a full listing see the Heritage Open Days website for Coventry.

## Open Afternoon for Kingsfield Orchard in Stoke



Visitors explore Kingsfield Orchard during last year's Heritage Open Days, with apple juice and music (below).

**A HIDDEN gem in Stoke, close to Gosford Green, will open for one afternoon during Heritage Open Days – on Sunday September 15<sup>th</sup>, between 2 and 4pm.**

Kingsfield Orchard, the historic community allotment garden which dates back to at least 1860, was sealed off and largely forgotten when the dual carriageway road was built on the old railway track behind Kingsway. But Coventry Tree Wardens have been working hard to preserve the ancient fruit trees and plants, and to preserve wildlife habitats.

The Tree Wardens say: "Do come and have a wander round, have a glass of apple juice and learn a bit about its history. If you haven't been before, entry is through the gates on the island between the A444 and Binley Road/Kingsway."

(Walk down Kingsway to Binley Road, turn right and you'll see the entrance to the orchard a few yards ahead on the right, through a large green gate).

Photos: John Marshall



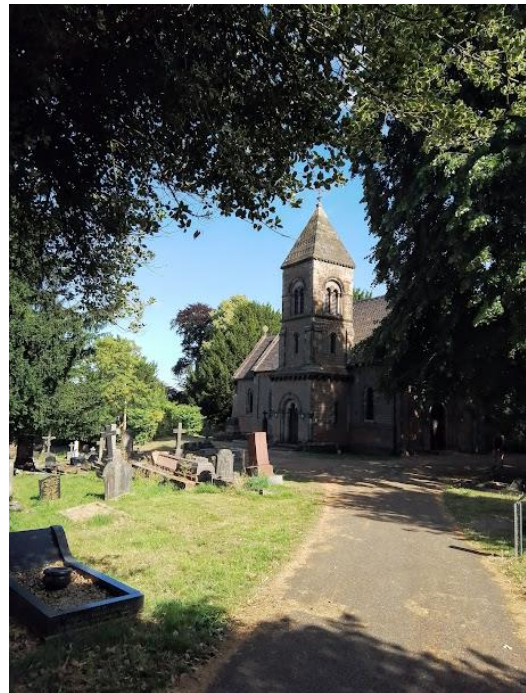
# Two more 'Tomb Tales' events at Paxton's London Road Cemetery

FOLLOWING a special day at London Road Cemetery in July, exploring the weaving trade in 19<sup>th</sup> century Coventry, two further 'Tomb Tales' events have been scheduled at the cemetery by Historic Coventry Trust.

On **Thursday August 22<sup>nd</sup>**, only days after this issue of *Jabet's Ash* is mailed out, Tomb Tales will take a look at notable women buried in the cemetery. Historic Coventry Trust explains: "Women in the cemetery are often portrayed as wives, sisters, daughters – our research volunteers will explore the lives of women in their own right.

"There will be two short talks and a tour of the cemetery to find out the stories of women. The talks will feature Elizabeth Lomax, society hostess, and Lavinia Lenton, entrepreneur, socially aware factory owner and inventor."

The talks will take place in the Anglican Chapel (pictured) at London Road Cemetery between 2 and 4pm. Bookings for the talks, cemetery tour and refreshments can be made via the website of Historic Coventry Trust.



Another Tomb Tales event is set to take place on **Thursday October 3<sup>rd</sup>**, when researchers will look at Coventry mayors. The Trust says: "Many of Coventry's great and good from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries are buried in London Road Cemetery, including quite a few mayors. Our volunteer researchers will talk about Thomas Soden and John Gulson and lead a tour to find them and other Coventry mayors in the cemetery."

Bookings for the Coventry Mayors event, which takes place between 2 and 4pm, can be made via the Historic Coventry Trust website. The cost of each Tomb Tales event, including talks, tour and refreshments, is £10.

- Ian Wooley, chair of the Friends of London Road Cemetery, will offer a free guided tour of the cemetery on Sunday September 8<sup>th</sup>, during Heritage Open Days. No need to book. Meet at the Paxton Memorial at 2pm.

BILLED as a celebration of the city's historic River Sherbourne, the **River Festival Coventry** promises "lots of fun and awesome activities" at this two-day event, to be held at FarGo Village on Saturday and Sunday, September 7-8<sup>th</sup>, from 11am to 4pm.

The event is organised by the Sherbourne Valley Project, which aims to heighten awareness of the river, improve access and boost its biodiversity.

Free tickets and further details are available online at Eventbrite.

## Looking back to 1950s Trinity Street



THESE images show an instantly recognisable scene – Trinity Street in Coventry city centre – but they also vividly illustrate how the streetscene has changed since the pictures were taken. The photographs date back to the 1950s when the city was still buzzing with the excitement of post-war reconstruction. Trinity Street itself was created before the war, in 1937, as part of an effort to improve traffic movement in the overcrowded old town. Corporation Street had been opened in 1931. The photograph above shows an old Coventry Corporation bus, coloured maroon and cream, and the shop on the right is Timothy Whites, the chemists. Notice that cars were allowed to park down the middle of the street. In the distance is the Coventry Theatre (formerly the Coventry Hippodrome), later a bingo hall and finally demolished in 2002. The photograph below shows the bottom of Trinity Street, with the theatre on the right. The building in the centre of the picture was demolished to make way for the striking Millenium View tower block, which now stands on this corner. The photograph also shows the old mock-Tudor Smithfield Hotel in Hales Street.



*Photos courtesy Rob and Steve Orland, Historic Coventry*