

NATIONAL HORSE BRASS SOCIETY

INAUGURAL MEETING

22 Nov. 1975 MUSEUM OF LEATHERCRAFT, WALSHALL

PROGRAMME

- 10.30. The Museum of Leathercraft will be open to those who wish to attend the meeting. A display of Manufacturer's Catalogues depicting Harness Decoration designs over the 50 years from 1870-1920 has been arranged by the Museum and Library staff from their own collection and from that of Mr. G.C. Nicklin. A bookstall will also be available for the sale of books on horse brasses.
- 10.45. Those wishing to visit the premises of W. Thacker and Co. will move off to Fieldgate (10-15 mins. walk)
- 11-12. Visit to W. Thacker and Co. This firm has been active in the harness decoration business since the 18th. They are still producing stampings much as they did over 70 years ago. It is hoped to have a demonstration in progress by the last of the once numerous craftsmen in Walsall who chased the decorations for the finer harness. The concentration of these craftsmen, together with the already extensive production of brass buckles and other harness fittings, led to the birth of large scale manufacture of horse brasses in Walsall from the middle of the 19th.
- 12 pm Parade of Shire horse dressed overall in the Lancashire style of decoration - the property of J. and G. Calder of Kidderminster. This set of harness and decorations won many first prizes at shows during the summer.
- 12.15 The Mayor of Walsall, Councillor Harry Ashby, will perform a short ceremony to inaugurate the National Horse Brass Society by attaching one of the specially cast horse brasses on to the bridle of the show horse.

BREAK FOR LUNCH - See Map for nearby Cafés and Restaurants

- 2.30 Assemble in the Museum of Leathercraft for Inaugural meeting
2.40-4. Meeting of the proposed National Horse Brass Society.

AGENDA of MEETING.

1. Opening Remarks
2. "Think Tank" - or discussion session - the pooling of ideas from the floor.
 - a. Is there enough support and interest present to form a Society?
 - b. What should we call the Society?
 - c. What should be the aims of the Society?
 - d. What officers are needed to run the Society?
 - e. Any other ideas
3. Either, a) Form a steering committee, or b) Elect officers of the Society.
4. Other Business
5. Enrolment of Members and distribution of special horse brass to founder members.

NOTES.

1. The 'think tank', or discussion session has two principle objectives. Firstly - to create a reservoir of ideas of what members want from a National Horse Brass Society, for the use and guidance of the elected committee. Secondly - to show up to the body of the meeting those individuals who are likely to take the lead in running the Society.
2. Members who have special talents should come to the meeting prepared to take up positions on the committee. The two most important positions to be filled are those of Chairman and Secretary and much of the future success of a Society depends on the abilities of these two persons.
3. If sufficiently talented persons are not forthcoming a small steering committee should be formed with the aim of calling a General Meeting in about 6 months, to elect officers and confirm the objects and rules of the Society drawn up by the steering committee.
4. There are many exciting ideas which can make the formation of a National Horse Brass Society so worth while, and whilst every chance will be given for people to put forward their ideas from the floor of the meeting, time may not make it possible to hear them all. For this reason, it would be a great help if you could write down your ideas on the form provided.

Here are a few suggested ideas which, it is hoped, will foster other ideas -

The formation of a National Horse Brass Collection.

Publication of a Journal - say annually - or, eventually, quarterly.

Formation of Regional Clubs within the Society.

An Annual Exhibition - at different venues - eg. The Royal Show.

Formation of a Library of all known literature on the subject.

Compiling a list of collections on view to the public.

Gathering together all known information on horse brasses and publishing a book in the name of the Society.

An annual competition for a horse brass design - to be produced for members attending the annual meeting.

Sponsoring a 'Best Decorated Horse' class at a national or local Agricultural show - and presentation of a Society 'martingale'.

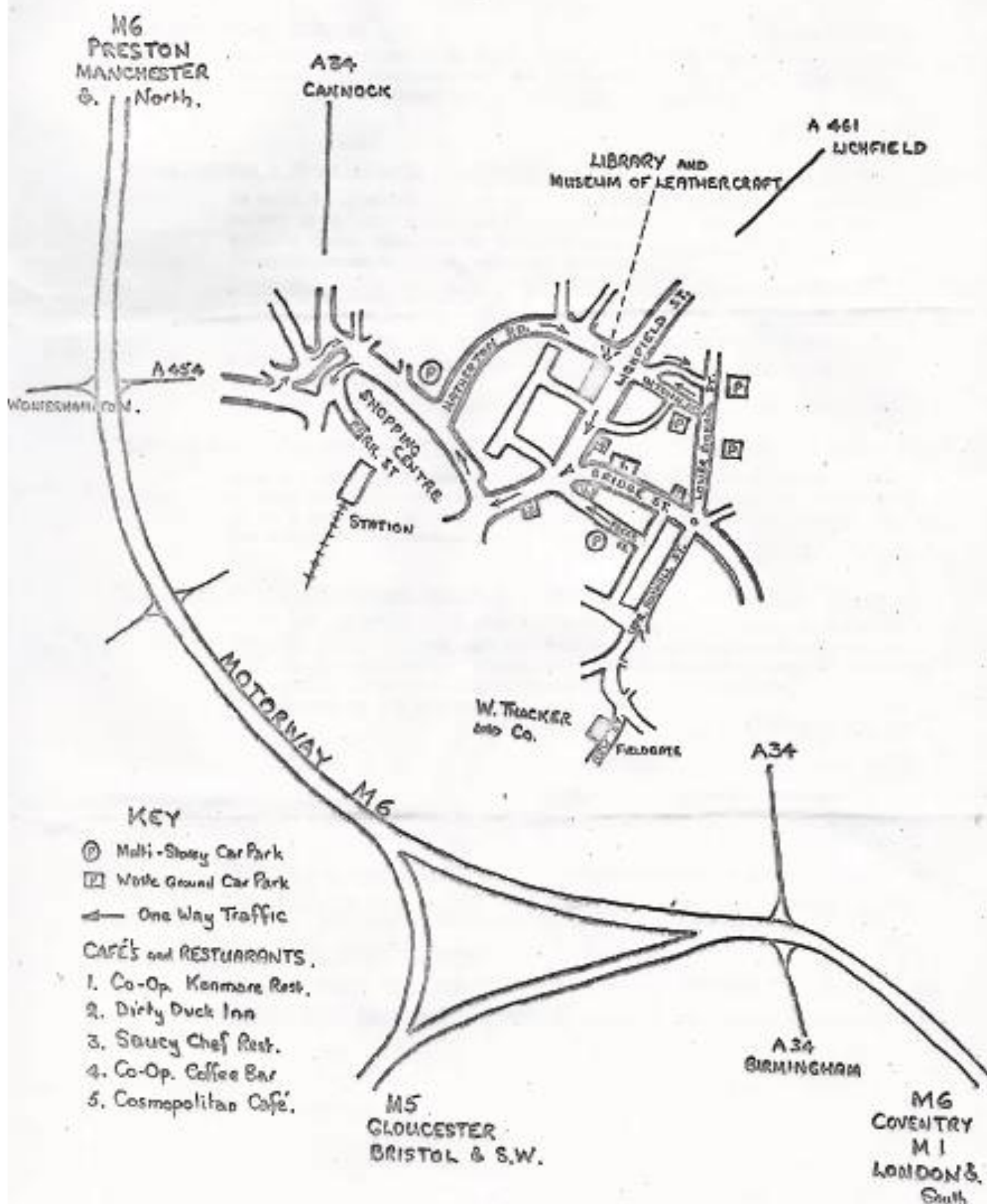
Members Auctions

5. To prevent the Newly formed Society being presented with the cost of making the inaugural meeting possible, a bookstall is being run, and the profits from this should attend to inaugural meeting costs. A list of books available is included with this circular.
6. To make it easier for those who have to enrol members and distribute the 'founder member' brasses, please fill in the form provided - in BLOCK CAPITALS. Any information on your own special interest in relation to horse brasses could be extremely useful at a later date.

7. The 'Founder Member' brasses will be distributed only to those who attend the meeting. Each brass will be numbered and they should attain considerable collector's value in the future. The price to each individual should be about £1.-which covers the cost of making the pattern and producing the brasses. Any brasses not given out at the meeting will be handed over to the Society to decide what should be done with them. Many people who wish to be founder members and who cannot attend the meeting, have expressed a desire to purchase the special founder member's brass. This will be left to the committee to decide.
8. Below is the design of the founder member's brass. The Walsall town badge has been chosen as the most appropriate centre-piece. The words 'founder member' will appear on the back - as will the individual number of each brass.



MAP OF WALSALL



H O R S E . . . B R A S S - B O O K L I S T

- "All About Horse Brasses" H. S. Richards.
Originally published in 1943, this little book was, for many years, the only one available for the collector. Its chief value today lies in its illustrations - 340 different patterns.
52 pp. 75p.
- "Horse Brasses - Their History and Origin" R. A. Brown, O.B.E.
As well as a brief history of the wearing of amulets on harness, the Author goes into great detail to describe the origin of various symbols found depicted on horse brasses.
Illustrated with photographs and drawings.
88 pp. £1
- "Discovering Horse Brasses" John Vince
For its size, one of the best books produced on horse brasses. Collates and summarises most of what has been written about horse brasses in the past.
Over 200 patterns illustrated.
50 pp. 35p.
- "A Scrapbook of Harness Decorations" Terry Keegan
Over 500 designs of harness decoration, from buckles to bells and brasses of all sorts, reproduced from old manufacturers' catalogues. It is a very useful addition to the serious collector's bookshelf, as the original catalogues are so few and far between.
66 pp. £1.50
- "The Heavy Horse, its Harness and Harness Decoration" .. Terry Keegan
About one third of this book is devoted to the harness decorations - covering their history and manufacture as well as illustrating how the brasses were worn. Covers all the harness decorations, including the Scottish ones which have never been recorded before.
Illustrated by 100 photographs and drawings.
217 pp. £3.25

ALLIED SUBJECTS

- "Salute The Cart Horse" Rev. Phillip Wright 88pp. £1.50
- "The Horse in the Furrow" Ewart Evans 292pp. £1.20
- One chapter on Horse Brasses and Decorations.
- "The Heavy Horse Handbook" Lee Weatherley 40p
- "Draught Horse Magazine" No's 2, 3 and 4 available 60p
- "Heavy Horse Magazine" No's 1, 2 and 4 Back Copies, Reduced 20p