

Wrexham County Borough Museum & Archive Wrexham Community Heritage Project

Heritage News

Issue No. 3



Preparing the foundations for the new glazed extension

Men At Work: Site News

Since work started on March 8th, the main contractors ISG have been busy removing some of the more recent additions to the building, specifically those added by the Art College when they occupied the building in the 1980s. In so doing they have revealed some insights into the building's earlier life, as a barracks for the Denbighshire Militia (1857-1877) and as a police station and court (1879-1976).

At the front of the building on the ground floor behind the arches, the removal of the relatively modern Art College ceilings has revealed fragments of the earlier brick vaulted ceilings of a row of five police cells. Another surprise was the discovery of the largely intact barracks' ceilings with huge chamfered beams and the original plaster. Our intention is to both retain and display these original features where possible. Upstairs, traces of wall paper have been revealed in rooms that once served as quarters for militia or police officers and their families.

The main contractor is due to finish work towards the end of August, when the work to fit out the new exhibition galleries will begin.



Brick arch from the vaulted ceiling in one of the former police cells

Women at War - A Recent Donation

Like all museums we rely on object donations from the public to create a collection that is both historically interesting and relevant to life in Wrexham County Borough. We were therefore very pleased to recently receive items relating to the incredible life of Mrs Margaret (Peggy) Ellis. Amongst these items are two nursing capes, which formed part of Margaret's World War II nurse's uniform.



Nursing cape, kindly donated by Mrs Margaret Ellis

After growing up at Berse Drelincourt orphanage, just outside Wrexham, Margaret achieved her dream of becoming a nurse by training at Bury Infirmary, Lancashire. However, in 1939 war was declared, and Margaret at the age of 23 enrolled in the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service. Within a couple of days Margaret was in northern France, where she experienced the horrors of war at first hand while tending to the troops. These donations will enable us to share Margaret's story with future generations.

More news stories available at
www.wrexham.gov.uk/heritage

- History Alive!! Sunday 1st August 2010
- Online tour of County Buildings

