

From Austerity to Prosperity – 1950s

About 60 people enjoyed the first of Paul's talks for the year, this time he gave us a lively, and of course interesting, talk on the 1950s. It was a fast-paced period of our history lasting just 10 years with 2 main events defining the start of the decade. In 1951 Festival of Britain sent a message to the world that we were able to manufacture goods again after being our knees after the war and in 1953 the coronation brought people together to celebrate the coming of the second great Elizabeth reign, the first had been a time of plenty and wealth for the nation and people the second would be the same.



In the late 40s all councils had to produce a plan for what their cities and towns would look like in the 1950s, Worcester's plan is available to read in The Hive. Luckily not all the ideas were carried out, for example there was to be a large open square in front of the Guildhall. Here Paul shows us the map that Worcester Council produced on the possible future for the City.

We were told about the Co-op Divi books and green shield stamps and how Paul enjoyed the taste of the stamps! Adverts

were starting to appear, and we saw a very happy woman with her Epic Wringer to help with the laundry. We also had the start of proper toilet tissue, well the shiny medicated stuff!

Women's Weekly had a column for the housewife, for example – 'when your husband gets home from work make yourself presentable as he has had a hard day in a male environment and needs to see someone pretty, don't worry him with your problems.' Not my words of course as I value my life! Self-service supermarkets started to appear as well, and Paul showed us a leaflet produced by Sainsbury's to show the housewife how to shop in the new self-service stores, how to use



the basket to go round and collect all your shopping by picking it from the shelves before paying for it at the end!



Paul showed us a children's book about space, published about 1958, where it states that the Moon will be the first stopping point for space travel, over a decade later. It also has pictures of a Space Station and about taking holidays on other planets, such as Mars, which has lizard-like creatures inhabiting the surface!

The next talk will be on the Plague and will be on March 15th at 1pm.