

## **WREKIN AND SHREWSBURY DFAS**

### **HERITAGE VOLUNTEERS 2015**

Wrekin DFAS and Shrewsbury DFAS volunteers are currently working for the Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust (IGMT) assisting in the cataloguing of one of the Museum's most important collections, the Elton Collection.

Sir Arthur Elton Bt was a contemporary of John Betjeman at Marlborough and they shared a passion for trains. His career was in the film industry for the Empire Marketing Board Film Unit later taken over by the Post Office. Most of his films were based on the lives of ordinary working people. He produced propaganda films during the war and after was production head for Shell films. He gave his house at Clevedon to the National Trust in 1960. He died in 1973 and his collection was taken by HM Treasury in lieu of death duties. In 1978 the collection was deposited with IGMT.

The Collection consists of over 4,000 books on transport and the industrial revolution as well as drawings and paintings, film making papers and ephemera. It is the IGMT's largest collection. So far the volunteers have catalogued over 2,000 books.

There are 30 volunteers of whom 21 are members of Wrekin and 9 from Shrewsbury. We work in teams of 6 per 2½ hour session (including a half hour tea/coffee break) on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons and Thursday mornings. We work in pairs with one laptop per pair (thanks to WDFAS for the third). Work will continue through September, October and November but there will be a winter break until sometime in the New Year. We wear NADFAS badges and NADFAS supplied aprons.

Each book is cleaned and then recorded, first on paper then in the laptop; accession No., shelf, author, full title, place of publication, publisher, date, No. of pages and whether illustrated, size, condition and notes. The records are then checked and added to the Museum's main programme by Dr Tamsin Bapty the head library curator who is our supervisor. Our greatest difficulty has been to resist dipping into the books which are fascinating. We have seen some of the pictures which are equally interesting.

Paul Joseland

12<sup>th</sup> July 2015