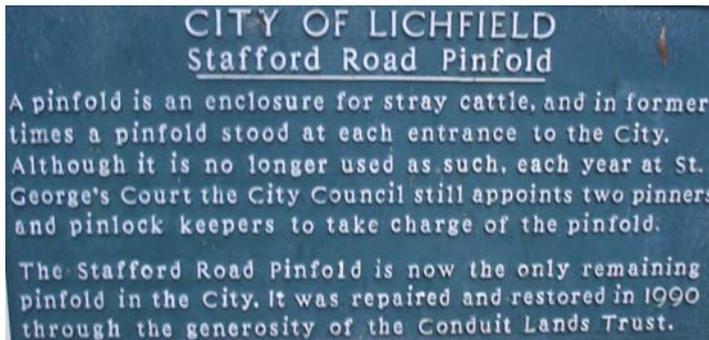


A local history article will be included in this and future editions of this newsletter. BSARA thanks Kate Gomez for her contribution to the article below. Kate is the author of Lichfield Lore, <http://lichfieldlore.co.uk> an excellent local history blog. Due to limited space, the history of Lichfield's pinfolds is covered in more detail on the BSARA website <http://www.beaconstreetara.org/local-history>.

The Pinfold



Many local residents will know of the pinfold that is at the junction of Beacon Street, Stafford Road, and not surprisingly, Pinfold Road! Pinfolds were used to impound straying animals, which would be released to their owner on payment of a fine. In the 1890s this was around 1s 4d per animal.



The Beacon Street pinfold was originally located near to where Anson Avenue meets Beacon St and was moved to its present position in 1809. According to the listed building description, the walls of the structure date to the eighteenth century but were heightened in the nineteenth century. The gate, steps and paving are twentieth century additions as is the information plaque, added when the pinfold was restored in the 1990s, with money from the Conduit Lands Trust.

Other pinfolds existed in Lichfield and they stood at various entrances to the city, although their location did change over time. Apart from the pinfold in Beacon Street another stood at Greenhill, from the fifteenth

century to the early nineteenth century, when it was moved to the junction of Broad Lane and Boley Lane.

In Lichfield, the maintenance and administration of the pinfolds were the responsibility of the pinners, two officials elected at the annual St George's Court. One represented St Michael's parish and the other St Chad's. Writing about Beacon Street in 1943, City Librarian and local historian, Mr J W Jackson recalled how "*the old pinfold still remains, but is rarely, if ever used for its original purpose though in our younger days it frequently contained horses, cattle or sheep which had been caught straying on the road and 'penned' by the official pinner old Watty Bevin*"

Pinfolds may have fallen out of use by the mid-twentieth century but the Pipe Green Trust, still have a pinner as a member of their Committee. Originally this person was responsible for ensuring that the boundary of Pipe Green was secure and that the animals could not stray from the Green. Today this is still one of the roles of the pinner, although picking litter up on the Green is probably more time consuming!

Unsurprisingly, some owners would try to remove their animals from the pinfold illegally, to avoid paying the fine. According to Mr William Russell's account of the Manor of Lichfield, appearing in the Mercury on January 26th 1894, this offence of 'pound breach' was very common. He includes a bill of the charges claimed by one time pinner John Bancks for the repair of the 'pind-fould' in Beacon St after one occurrence. Mr Bancks charged 1s 4d for his own two days work whilst masons received 2s for the two days. The pound was also fitted with '2 staples for the gate and a clip and a lock, and other ironwork about the gate' at a cost of 1s 8d. Mr Bancks noted that, "This time I cannot prove who broke it. It is supposed they were 'souldiers' who took lock and staples away, and let out a cow of Nevills". Unfortunately, no date is included.

