

## COLESHILL in WARWICKSHIRE

Coleshill in Warwickshire, is an ancient market town situated on a hill above the River Cole, which is spanned by a fine medieval bridge. The parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul dominates the town and the surrounding countryside. The town is simple in plan. It is situated on a main street, running north to south from Lichfield to Coventry, which in turn is crossed by an east to west route from Birmingham to Nuneaton. Both of these roads are linked by Church Hill.

The Romans were the first documented people in the area, having a small settlement to the north of the town. The towns shape as we see it today is medieval with the centre around the church, the former Market Place and the Market Hall. Colleshill was an agricultural centre with regular markets and fairs. The Digby family owned almost all of the land in and around the town.

In the late 18th century Colleshill was a focus for coaching routes between London and the north – west. There is still much evidence of this past importance and associated prosperity of the town that survives to this day. Notable writers such as Daniel Defoe and Torrington described their journeys through Colleshill. Coaching declined with the coming of the railways; the town once boasted two stations, both of which are now closed. Colleshill is on the fringes of the expanding city of Birmingham and continues to be the focus of communication; motorways, railways and Birmingham airport bear witness to this. The town sadly lost some of its most beautiful buildings under the guise of progress; however it still has a lot to offer visitors. The trail begins in Church Hill at the newly renovated Market Hall and Heritage Centre.

This illustrated walk was prepared jointly by Elizabeth Waters and Brian Teall for Colleshill and District Civic Society and sponsored by the Millenium Lottery Fund.

The Civic Society meets at the Old Market Hall on the third Thursday each month at 7.30pm.

The Natural History section meet on 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays at 7.30pm. Contact Paul Taylor 01675 481578

The Family History section meet on fourth Tuesday at 7.30pm. Contact Liz Maxwell 01675 463626 .

The Market Hall Heritage Centre is open each Saturday from 10 – 12noon. The Centre houses a permanent exhibition, which will change at regular intervals.

Both the downstairs exhibition hall and the function room upstairs are available for hire. Enquiries to Mrs Margaret Smith 01675 465557



## AN ILLUSTRATED WALK AROUND

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