

DERBYSHIRE  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER



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## DERBYSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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## COVER PICTURE

One tries to be Christmassy (or at least, seasonal) when it comes to the cover of our December edition, but thanks to age and seasonal torpor, on the rare occasions when it *does* snow, I feel acutely disinclined to venture forth to photograph some delightful Derbyshire scene *en niège*. I must admit to thinking about this on the 9<sup>th</sup> March this year, when Carole and I had to drive to Leek from Derby to collect a wedding cake, made as part of the wedding celebrations for our daughter, Cornelia, and which we then had to transport to Combe Abbey in Warwickshire. All very straightforward, you might think, but no: it snowed prodigiously the night before and continued unabated until nearly lunch time. I did counsel the use of a firm of couriers, but Carole, bravely ignoring the vision I conjured up of the Staffordshire moorlands in a blizzard, decided we were going for it, and we experienced an epic and at times slightly hair-raising journey to Ashbourne and thence ‘over the tops’ to Leek. Thanks to being in the hands of an excellent driver we made it. Consequently, I had every opportunity of taking an excellent snow-scene of a variety of possible subjects, but was so stunned by the entire experience, that I failed to take even one. Next year, if conditions allow, I will attempt to do better.

Hence, drawing on my archive, I present as our cover picture one of the stone urns from the second Derby Guildhall (Richard Jackson of Armitage, 1731). When this handsome baroque building was taken down in 1828, the parapet urns were transferred to the grounds (then of 2 acres) of the Jacobean House, Wardwick. After several moves, it ended up in the grounds of Parkfield, a listed grade II Regency villa in Duffield Road, itself demolished in 1997 for a small enclave of houses, and it was shortly before this that I photographed it one snowy day in February that year. Where it is now is anyone’s guess.

I received a letter from our member John Arnold, who delivered the fascinating lecture on that important if neglected figure, Aetheflaeda of Mercia, in April. He pointed out that the picture I included was of the queen attacking the crannog of king Hwgan of Brycheiniog on Llangorse Lake in 916, not of her taking Derby a couple of years later. The print, which I had copied many years ago from a lantern slide made by Richard Keene Ltd. of Derby, was clearly marked that it depicted the re-taking of Derby (which I had no reason therefore to doubt), was included entirely light heartedly, as I have always been keen to prevent the content of this newsletter getting too earnest or taking itself *too* seriously. However, I am sorry that John was put out by this, and will endeavour to do better next time. Incidentally, my additions to the report were to enlighten those who, like me, had the misfortune to miss the lecture itself.

I would also like to place on record my appreciation of the contribution of my wife, Carole, whose efforts, since I took over, in aiding me in getting the Newsletter out have been tireless and invariably performed without demur and whose advice is very much valued by your editor.

As members should be in receipt of this newsletter well before December 25<sup>th</sup>, I would like to take the opportunity to wish you all a joyful and peaceful Christmas and a very happy New Year.

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## NEWS FROM THE SOCIETY'S COUNCIL

*From the Chair*

Members will have read in the Summer 2023 *Newsletter* that the bulk of the archive for the archaeological excavations directed by Harold McCarter Taylor, Birthe Kjobye-Biddle and Martin Biddle that took place at Repton in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, but which are as yet largely unpublished, has now been deposited with Derby Museums. At its meeting in September the Council received a proposal from a member of the Society to establish a fund for the purpose of furthering the analysis and publication of the findings of the excavation and has accepted the generous offer of a substantial donation for the project.

The fund will be managed by a committee, membership of which will include: the Chair and Treasurer of the DAS Council; and representatives of the Repton History Group, Derbyshire County Council's archaeological service and Derby Museums.



*Martin Biddle addressing participants in an open day, Vicarage Garden, Repton, August 1983.*

[M. Craven]

The first stage of the project will be to appoint an archaeological specialist to produce a post-excavation assessment, setting out what material found during the excavation would best contribute towards an overall account of the findings of the project, together with an assessment of what analysis has already been carried out. The committee will look to appoint an individual or firm to do this work as soon as possible. Once this assessment is complete, the fund will be devoted towards the production of an overall site narrative employing archaeological specialists in a range of disciplines to identify what analysis needs to be done to further our understanding of the site, and those periods for which it may not and for which the material has

already been published. The actual form of publication will then be decided. If any funds remain, these will be devoted to digitising the paper archive to be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service.

The Society is pleased to be able to play a role in working towards the publication of one of the most important archaeological sites in the county, thanks to the generosity of one of its members.

Earlier this year, the Society received a bequest of £5,000 from the estate of Mrs Margaret Mallender and the Council has resolved that some of these funds will be used to commission 3D recordings of the Society's two properties, the Morley Park furnaces and Cromford Bridge chapel. Although both have been in the ownership of the Society for many years, neither has previously been recorded in any detail. Using this technology, a combination of terrestrial laser scanning and photogrammetry, the work can be done in a few hours. As both sites are scheduled, copies of the data, together with the survey report and metadata will be made available to the Historic England Archive. We hope there will be the opportunity for members to view the recording work in progress. More details will follow when a date has been arranged for the survey to take place. The work will be undertaken by MSDS Heritage, a member of the Society. The initial survey will provide site plans and outline elevations while additional outputs (such as stone by stone elevations) can be obtained from the survey data at a later date as required. This work will provide base line surveys for the furnaces and chapel which can be used to monitor their condition over time.

The Georgian Derbyshire Festival provided an opportunity for a number of the Society's collection of Zachariah Boreman watercolours to go on public display in a small exhibition 'Our Landscape as the Georgians saw it', curated by Doreen Buxton for the Arkwright Society, held at Cromford Mills on the weekend of 30<sup>th</sup> September to 1<sup>st</sup> October. Boreman, who was both a skilled artist and a ceramic painter, worked for the Derby Porcelain Factory from 1784 to 1794 as it began to use topographical views of Derbyshire to decorate its china and the wide range of subjects depicted in his small, but exquisitely detailed pictures are typical of the Georgian interest in all aspects of the landscape from brick kilns to country houses and cotton mills to lead smelting.

The collection was presented to the Society in the early 1920s by the ecclesiastical jurist, Aubrey Trevor Lawrence, then Chancellor of the Diocese of Southwell, and is on permanent loan to Derby Museums. Of the 55 watercolours and sketches in the collection, 30 have been attributed to Boreman by ceramic specialists Anneke Bambery and Andrew Ledger (*Derby Porcelain International Society Journal* 3, 1996) while the other 25 are a mixed group of different periods, styles and sizes, which remain 'unattributed'. Low resolution copies of all of the items in the collection are on the DAS website.

One of the Society's lesser-known resources is the Derby Buildings Record which was set up in 1987 by Barbara Hutton FSA (1920-2015), President of the national Vernacular Architecture Group and the first editor of its Journal. The DBR consists of reports and measured drawings of farmhouses and cottages and other similar vernacular buildings, in some cases also including

photographs and reports of tree ring dating. Information from many of the reports has added substantially to the content of the Historic Environment Record. The project focus was the area around Derby, but properties were also recorded in some areas of Staffordshire and Leicestershire with one in Nottinghamshire. Several members of the Society assisted in the work and there are 301 reports in the series, the majority compiled and written by Barbara, whose intent was always to make this research publicly available. In order to facilitate this, her son Michael Hutton has very generously assigned his copyright in his mother's unpublished reports to the DAS, the Derby Local Studies Library and the Historic Environment Record – all of which hold copies of the DBR reports – so that these can, in future, be made accessible in different formats including digital downloads. It is hoped that work will begin on this shortly. Copies of all of the reports are held at Derby Local Studies Library (reference A720) and there are also copies of some of the series, kindly donated by Joan Davies who worked on the project, in the DAS Library. A complete list of the reports is on the DAS website.

As part of its review of how the Society operates, mentioned by Ian Mitchell at the AGM and in his last report as Chair, the Council and members of the Section committees recently spent an afternoon looking at the work and organisation of the Sections, past and present, the annual programme of talks and visits and discussed how to ensure that what we have on offer continues to be of interest to members. There was unanimous agreement that the Sections are important to the Society and play a significant role in planning the annual programme, to which they bring a wide range of specialist knowledge. However, there is a need to define the sections' roles more clearly and explain that they represent the spectrum of the Society's interests and activities, rather than being stand alone, semi-autonomous societies in themselves – something that has created some confusion in the past.

In relation to what we have to offer members, there was general agreement that we should try out alternative venues (such as Strutts), times of meetings and formats to see if other days, times and venues could make the Society's activities more accessible to everyone (and not just those who live close to Derby) and also there was much enthusiasm for more members' contributions, like the short talk format that has worked so well on Library open afternoons.

The Society was represented in October at the 'Ashover Artefact Exhibition' at which local exhibitors demonstrated a huge wealth of knowledge about their village and community, while in November there was an opportunity to provide information about what the Society has to offer to researchers at the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Research Workshop. To those who do not appreciate the Society's 19<sup>th</sup> century origins, its name continues to obscure the extent of its interests and it is important to keep saying that we are 'not just an archaeological society'.

We are now well into what is a very full and varied winter programme which can be enjoyed in person at St Mary's Hall and, thanks to Zoom, (including recordings which may be viewed after the event) by anyone, anywhere, with online access. Please do make the programme widely known. The Society is open to everyone – and there is a great deal on offer.

**Rosemary Annable**

## **SOCIETY SUMMER TOUR 2024**

### **Hidden Gems of the North West**

The Society is arranging a short summer tour to the North West of England, based in Blackpool at the Savoy Hotel on the seafront. The tour will run from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July to Friday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2024. The tour cost will include coach to and from Derby and throughout the stay and rooms with private facilities on a half board basis (buffet evening meal). Rooms for single, double or twin occupancy are available.

Our itinerary is not quite complete, but apart from Blackpool itself, we plan to visit Lytham Hall, Ribchester Roman Museum, Clitheroe Castle and other sites nearby, Lancaster, Heysham, Morecombe and a selection of fine ecclesiastical buildings in the area, with probably Rufford Old Hall and Speke on the journeys there and back.

We estimate that the cost will be £430 per person sharing a room and £490 for those requiring single facilities.

If you would like to book a place on the tour, email or post to Mrs Jane Heginbotham [jane.heginbotham@btinternet.com](mailto:jane.heginbotham@btinternet.com) 59 Hickton Road, Swanwick, Alfreton, Derbyshire DE55 1AG, with your requirements, together with a non-refundable deposit of £50 per person, which may be paid by cheque or by bank transfer to Derbyshire Archaeological Society CAF Bank Ltd., Sort Code 40-52-40 Account Number 00032054. Bookings should reach us by 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024. Please indicate if a receipt is required.

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### ***SECTION REPORTS:***

#### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP**

##### **Visit to Mam Tor (the ‘Shivering Mountain’)**

**6<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

On a cold, misty morning, an intrepid band of DAS members set out to visit the Iron Age fort at Mam Tor under the guidance of Sebastian Chew, the Countryside Engagement Officer for the National Trust’s High Peak Estate. We were there to learn of the problems presented in maintaining Mam Tor; what is going to be done to restore it and manage it to avoid further damage and also to hear of the National Trust’s wider plans to restore the area to its former state. This means reversing recent interventions of man such as draining the peat bogs for agriculture and burning off vegetation to turn wide swathes into grouse moor.

We took the ascent fairly slowly, with quite a few pauses, some of us were not in the first flush of youth. One of the main problems the National Trust (NT) has to cope with is the number of

visitors, which has increased dramatically since 2019, although not all of them come on foot; those on e-bikes and other mechanised transport are less welcome, as they do a lot more damage. We welcomed the fence beside the path, one of the NT's recent additions to encourage visitors to keep to the designated ways. As we approached the summit, it was noticeable that here the verges of the path were bare of vegetation and erosion scars, especially at the entrance to the Iron Age fort, were very deep. Attempts to steer the footfall from sensitive areas such as the entrance to the fort or the Bronze Age burial mounds have not always been successful. Since the Peak District was at the centre of the campaign for the right to roam, many visitors see attempts to protect the monument from further damage as a restriction of this right. However, a reseeded Bronze Age burial mound with a very low barrier around it and small notice saying that it had been reseeded and please to keep to the path, seemed to be working.



*View from Mam Tor*

*[David G Jones]*

The NT hopes that providing alternative routes up Mam Tor and publicising other attractions in the area such as Odin's mine, will help reduce the footfall and hence the damage. Unfortunately, the only fences permitted in order to help preserve the archaeology have to be exactly where the existing fences are and the posts have, in order to preserve the underlying archaeology, to be in exactly the same position and no larger than the existing posts, limiting the scope of the NT to direct footfall. One ever-present risk for the whole area is fire, for the dried out peat bogs and climate change are greatly increasing this danger. However only a few small signs are permitted to alert people to this peril.

Work is due to start very soon on healing the erosion scars and the National Trust are looking for volunteers to help. They are planning to fill the scars with hessian bags full of earth and then grass over them, contouring them so that the form of the fort is restored. This technique has been used successfully elsewhere. As a reward for the climb, there is still the most



magnificent view from the summit, despite the weather. Here Seb explained to us the wider vision of the National Trust – a 50-year plan which began in 2013 to restore, protect and improve the landscape of the moors, for the benefit of people, nature and climate. Already, many trees have been planted and water management is leading to the restoration of some peat bogs which soak up CO<sub>2</sub> and help prevent flooding. Farmers are being encouraged to remove sheep which eat young shoots and stop the moorland from regenerating, replacing them with cows will allow the increase of biodiversity and growth of woodland. We then made our way back to the car park, past a very small and unobtrusive box for donations. The NT are missing out here!



*Odin Mine, the crushing circle*

[David G. Jones]

The Odin mine, which it is hoped will provide an alternative attraction to Mam Tor itself, is a short distance by car (the minimum possible number of cars were used). At present the site is not very prepossessing. The main entrance to the mine is in a poor state, partly due to the instability of the land around. It is very close to the old A625 road from Castleton to Chapel-en-le Frith which was closed in 1979 because of the instability of the land. The old road is used at present as parking for camper vans and as a turning place for local buses, so should be easy to get to without a car. The lead mine itself was worked possibly from Roman times but there is no direct evidence for this before the 13<sup>th</sup> century. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, it was worked extensively but mining ceased in 1869, although some flourspar and barites were extracted in the Edwardian period.

It is an attractive site with the gorge formed by the early above-ground mining of the seam, and rare lead-loving wild flowers. The NT hopes to restore the entrance to its original state, but the instability of the land may prevent this from being a viable option. The old horse drawn crushing platform, built in 1823 with its circular iron track and the wheel with its iron tyre are

still there, although the platform is no longer level. The National Trust hopes the mine entrance and gorge will become a destination in its own right. The improvements they plan and good signage should increase the footfall here and discourage thoughtless visitors from building dangerous fires in the area.

We thanked Seb Chew for a very informative trip and for making the walk so enjoyable and not overstretching us. We wish the National Trust well with its plans. Remember, if any of you would like to work on such an important archaeological site in such a glorious landscape, the NT are looking for volunteers.

Janette Jackson

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**A walk around the prehistoric complex at Aston-on-Trent  
Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2023  
Dr Mark Knight, Cultural Heritage Officer  
Transforming the Trent Valley Partnership Scheme**

Transforming the Trent Valley (TTTV) had undertaken archaeological investigations on behalf of Historic England in January of this year on the prehistoric remains at Aston-on-Trent, with especial focus on the Neolithic cursus. No upstanding remains of this monument are visible and the method employed by the archaeological contractors, who were Worcestershire Archaeology, follows the *Conservation of Scheduled Monuments in Cultivation* method, (COSMIC+) with an additional questionnaire about land use and cultivation practice to the farmer. The Historic England listing document seems to imply that the cursus is Iron Age, which is not accurate (Listing No. 1003279).



*The party with Mark Knight, about to set out.*

[Jan Jackson]

On a pleasant summer's morning, the walk was well attended by Society members and some TTTV cultural heritage volunteers along with Mark's beautiful dog, we also made sure to follow public rights of way around the site. Mark was able to update everyone with the outline of the report on the findings by the archaeologists, which are that the monument is in good health for its considerable age, that farming practice on the site is not intrusive or damaging the monument at all and that there is a good soil buffer protecting it. We were also able to look at the low rise of the Bronze Age barrow mound and at the exterior of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Weston Grange.

During the walk we were treated (at leisure) to a barge passing through the nearby lock, and the anticipation, although not really too clear, of crossing over the 'curser' (a Neolithic landscape ditch).



Lots of interesting conversation and points were raised about the site and members kindly donated to a collection donated, at Mark's request to the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. My thanks to everyone who attended and made for interesting and lively conversation.

Jan Jackson

*A passage through Aston lock.*  
[Jan Jackson]

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**Taking a walk through Repton's past lives**  
**29<sup>th</sup> August 2023**  
**Andrew Austin, Repton History Group**

The above title seemed to be the most suitable one to use, as Repton has experienced so many changes over the centuries, as Andy Austin, leader of Repton History Group, unveiled to us.

On 29<sup>th</sup> August we were a group of 34 people, a few more than we anticipated, for it appeared that the draw of a visit to Repton was too appealing, so people had ignored the notice stating the visit was full!

Meeting Andy, and Chris Wardle who would later give us a talk on the archaeology, at the lych-gate, Andy began by talking to us in the grounds of the church and the outbuildings. We were always very aware that this was the very hub of Repton school, with sounds of music and

smells of a barbeque in the grounds behind the buildings. We were given some history of the background of Repton and how during the 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> century this was the principal residence of the Islingas, the ruling dynasty of Mercia, during which time an Anglo Saxon monastery was founded.



*Some of our members approaching the parish church of St. Wystan: all well wrapped up for August!*  
[Jan Jackson]

Crossing the road to the Science Priory, where previous archaeological digs had taken place, we were taken back to the Bronze and Iron ages, where flints and debitage from flint knapping had been found, also evidence of metal working-hammer scale and near molten metal fragments, so possibly the site of a forge. Another dig had excavated early Derbyshire pot, and possibly 30 dwellings, and demonstrated the way in which the inhabitants during the working day had swept charred remains and rubbish into the ditch, all dating from the Iron Age through to the Medieval. Also found here was evidence of another Anglo-Saxon hall.

Crossing over once again to the site of the main buildings, Andy pointed out the closeness of the bridge over the River Trent, leading to Willington, where also further excavations had uncovered Iron age evidence. He also pointed out how, over the centuries, the River Trent had played a major part in the story of Repton, winding its way through the middle of England bringing in goods, trade, and transport and, at a later stage, where longships could have moored to bring in vital supplies and reinforcements for the invaders.

Thus Repton, as the heart of the kingdom of Mercia, was so centrally located with respect to the four major Saxon kingdoms, the rest being Northumbria, East Anglia and Wessex.

We traversed around the buildings, Andy describing the various changes in the architecture noting where a major change had taken place, pointing out the difference in the brickwork, indicating the different periods of time change; St. Wystan's church was thought to have seen four phases of such alterations. We were then taken through a gate and in to the Vicarage Garden, where Chris Wardle took over.

Most Society members will know the history of the Viking invasion in the Autumn of 873, and how, after more than two centuries as a royal and religious centre, the life of this community was shattered by the arrival of the Danish Great Army. Led by four Danish kings, the armies took over not only the buildings and possessions they also took over the Mercian royal authority.

Chris, gave us a detailed account of the archaeological excavations done by Professor Martin Biddle and his wife Birthe and how, during the 1970s, they first uncovered a shallow mound that was found to cover a partially destroyed Anglo Saxon mausoleum containing the remains of at least 264 people. However, that was only the beginning of further discoveries that lasted for 20 years. Chris went on to describe the many finds, further excavations and other fieldwork under the guidance of Cat Jarman.

Chris then took us to a further site in the present churchyard, where the Biddles had found further important Viking interments, immediately north and south of the crypt. The finding of the artefacts, including a handful of coins, some rare<sup>1</sup>, and with the bodies buried in true pagan fashion, was a unique historical discovery.

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<sup>1</sup> Now held in Derby Museums, along with many other finds including the huge fragment of a high cross ('the Repton Stone') showing King Aethelbald (716-757) in full military kit, almost Frankish in appearance.

Andy then took us in to the church, and crypt, where St. Wystan's shrine was once a place of pilgrimage. Very many thanks to both Andy and Chris; what a lot to take in!

Jan Jackson

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### **Visit to the Magic Attic, Swadlincote 7<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

On the day, a disappointingly small number of members visited The Magic Attic which is above Sharpe's Pottery Museum in Swadlincote. A pity because you missed a real treat.

When we arrived, the Attic was brightly lit and a hive of activity: people at the computers, at tables working and a buzz of chatter. The Magic Attic is a charity, run entirely by volunteers and funds are raised from donations, selling publications and photographs, along with organising historic walks. It seemed, when we arrived, that most of them were there getting on with their work!

We began our visit with a brief history of the Attic given by Graham Nutt, one of the founders. The project began in 1986 because the *Burton Mail* was downsizing and its archive was in danger of being lost. Local historians banded together and acquired the *Mail* archive. Space was found to house it in the attic of the local snooker club. This was not ideal having originally been part of an 18<sup>th</sup> century barn. However, in the late 1990s several local groups joined together with the aim of turning the derelict Sharpe's Pottery into a separate museum and heritage centre. After a lot of fund-raising and applying for grants, The Magic Attic moved to their present location in 2002 in a well-planned operation which seems to have involved a lot of volunteers and a fleet of cars and small vans.

The material they hold is primarily, but not exclusively, from South Derbyshire and its near neighbours and more is being added maybe not daily but very frequently. DAS member Keith Foster, the Attic's IT expert, demonstrated to us the extensive electronic flatfile database they have built. Although it is still a work in progress it is already extremely useful. Needless to say, being Keith it was a freebee (called Cardbox). Unfortunately (and understandably) the Attic database is not available on line – they need funds to bring this about.

After very welcome hot drinks and biscuits, provided by Jackie Jones another volunteer (apparently all visitors are offered these), we were taken on a tour round the premises by the very knowledgeable and enthusiastic volunteer Ron Causer. First we saw a large room full of bound volumes of newspapers (and some loose ones): no wonder the floor had to be specially reinforced! The earliest is a 1782 copy of the *Derby Mercury*. As well as Burton and Derby, Ashbourne and Uttoxeter are also represented. Then came shelves of maps, many quite large scale OS ones (they also have a digitised 1901 map of Derbyshire which can be viewed at any scale you like) as well as a few earlier estate maps. The earliest is 1837, a map of Ashby de la Zouche.



They also have a very large number of photographs (37,000 was mentioned, but there are probably more by now) .and although it is an ongoing project more than 25,000 have already been digitised and can be searched for in their database using simple keywords. If you want early photographs of a village, an industry, an event, they are likely to have one. They are especially strong on military history having lists of local soldiers who were injured in the Boer War as well as both World Wars.

*A welcome at the Magic Attic*  
[Ann Jones]

The Magic Attic also has a reference library and volunteers have written and published books based around the archives. An impressive set of shelves displayed some of the Magic Attic publications. Not content with all this, they hold an interesting collection of artefacts with a local history: railway signs, local pottery, gas masks. If all this were not enough, they run a stall at the local market, put on exhibitions and arrange heritage walks. If you want to look into your family history and your antecedents come from South Derbyshire for a very modest donation one of the volunteers will help you find what information they hold. They have had visitors from as far afield as Australia and the United States. It is a really vibrant and dedicated group.

The Magic Attic was indeed well named. Physically it may no longer be an attic – although it is on the floors above Sharpe’s Pottery Museum. However, like any good attic, it is a trip down memory lane and has many unexpected treasures and surprises. Magic? Maybe it is a bit like the Tardis, although not as small; it fits an enormous amount in. However, I think you really would have to visit it to realise just how apt the name is.

Ann Jones

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## **Recent research monitoring earthwork heritage monuments**

**6<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

**Helen Malbon**

In the context of this talk, both Helen and I were venturing in to new territory: Helen on recently completing her PhD and professionally, venturing in to public speaking, and for my part, in control of the equipment in order for Helen to deliver her findings, not only to the audience in the room, but also to enable the Zoom listeners to hear and make sure the talk recorded. I was certainly the more apprehensive of the two.

Helen began by explaining that although she was originally a geography student, she had ventured into Archaeology as this she felt was the best combination in order to conduct her research.

Helen's choice was Arbor Low, the Bull Ring, Gib Hill and Pilsbury Castle, as her subjects to focus her study. Arbor Low, a Neolithic henge, the Bull Ring a similar monument, Gib Hill, a round barrow on a long barrow, pre-dating Arbor Low and Pilsbury Castle, really the odd one out – but Helen felt she wanted to stretch herself – an 11<sup>th</sup> century Norman motte and bailey castle.

Helen's object was to create a 3D digital model by setting up a contemporary volume of each of the heritage sites, and then to attempt to reconstruct them when they were first built or completed. Then, putting the data in to a computer to see how much they had eroded. Helen had used the original archaeological data previously recorded by John Barnett, to calculate how much they had lost.

In Helen's findings, she suspected that most sites, in particular Arbor Low, would have been eroded by animal damage, sheep and livestock, but the Bull Ring, in a recreational area and during the earlier period, under the threat of mining and, later, ploughing, would have caused quite a lot of damage. Similar erosion had created threats to Gib Hill, a round barrow on a long barrow. Pilsbury Castle was a little more challenging, being a large site and completely different from the others.

Helen discovered there was not always enough data to show, as the image had been built by computer, so Helen, braving the weather and with the landowners' permission, collected measurements herself then, spending hours to calculate and find a computer that could cope with all the information, sometimes using a second computer to follow on with data from the first computer.

She concluded by asking what the benefits of all this work were; first of all, it's non-invasive, and secondly the data collected could be used in different formats to re-build and maybe use in different ways, for example, showing these Heritage Monuments to people who are unable to visit these sites themselves, so they too can enjoy. Helen related that it had been fascinating and challenging research, and would be interested in using the results in further research.



Whilst Helen expertly answered questions and discussed suggestions, I went off to do something I was more qualified to do - making the tea!

Jan Jackson

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## ARCHITECTURAL SECTION

### Visit to Stone House Prebend, Little Chester Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2023

John d'Arcy, chairman of our Section, hosted and guided more than 30 members, divided more manageably into morning and afternoon groups, around his historically important and interesting house on a pleasantly sunny day.

Stone House Prebend is situated within the area of the 1<sup>st</sup> century Roman fort at Little Chester (Roman Derventio), close to what had once been part of the later 8ft (2.4m) thick and 23ft (7m) high 3<sup>rd</sup> century defensive walls. Close by, is a reproduced section of the fort's *principia*, identified now by its pebble covering. Coincidentally, part of the modern flood defence against the river Derwent follows the line of the Roman wall.



*Zachariah Boreman, Stone House Prebend from Parker's Piece, 1787* [DAS Collections]

Historically, Henry I gave the manorial estate of the area to the Dean of Lincoln to support the six priests (prebends) and a sub-dean of the combined College of St. Alkmunds and All Saints. At least three of these houses (the others were at Quarndon and Little Eaton) were built to farm these estates at Little Chester, of which this house supported the sub-dean. In 1555 Queen Mary

granted the property (sequestered to the Crown in 1549 by Edward VI) to Derby, with whom it remained until about 1776 when it was damaged by fire and sold to the d'Arcys, who bravely took on the task of repairing and restoring it. Among the early tenants it is known that the Bate family lived there for three generations, from 1594 until 1676, when on the death of Nathaniel Bate, a detailed inventory of his goods and chattels in the house was made and has survived.

John walked us around the outside of the L-shaped building pointing out some of the main features. On the north side, two massive stone chimneys dominate but there are also some rather large bricks, dating from the time of a tax on bricks. The north-south wing of the building is believed to be the oldest part, probably with a timber frame as its core, predating the present brickwork. One of the beams has been dendro-dated, but without its sap wood, to circa 1560.

Above the three-light first floor window on the south front is a stone plaque of a deer within a palisaded enclosure, the quasi-armorial device of Derby and the date 1594. In the garden, just beyond this south front, there is an armillary sphere commemorating Joan d'Arcy who made major contributions to the life of the Society in many ways. The kitchen wing, which extends in an east-west direction has been dendro-dated to 1593, but perhaps replaces an earlier building. Against it on the south side is a later addition single storey 'potting shed' but which contains the oldest pair of timbers, dated to 1520, now reused as purlins but perhaps originally cruck posts.

Inside, the principal room on the ground floor of the south wing, now serving as a dining room and sitting room, is oak panelled throughout with seventeenth century square panels, complemented on the west wall by a magnificent oak chimney piece with inlaid panels and small reproduction Delftware tiles, produced by a local craftsman, which flank a Georgian grate. Outside this room is a stairwell, whose south wall is close studded all the way up to the first floor. The two remaining rooms on the north side of this wing are linked by four steps because there is a cellar below the one in the northwest corner. The latter has barrel vaulting in brick and some very substantial blocks of stone in its wall which, it has been suggested, may be *in situ* Roman stonework. One room of particular interest, adjacent to the kitchen in the east-west range, is the dairy, now used as a pantry, with an impressively large cheese press. Joan gave a detailed account of its history, with links to the Bate family, in *Derbyshire Miscellany* (2014, Vol. 20, Pt. 3, p.72).

Upstairs, the main room in the south wing, now the master bedroom, has two very substantial beams supporting the ceiling, above which there is an attic accessible by a door visible from the landing. The bedroom has a fine view across playing fields towards the former Derby School cricket pavilion, beside which a Roman bath house was excavated in 1926, although it was subsequently recorded and back-filled.

The most interesting upstairs rooms are in the north west corner. A small bedroom up a few steps, reflecting the presence of the cellar on the room below, has an odd non-rectilinear shape and a charmingly old rehung door. Beside it lies a double bedroom, against the north wall of the house, where one of the large chimneys is located. This has a close-studded wall nogged

with plaster, which has been cleaned to reveal some 17<sup>th</sup> century graffiti. A date of 1646 and the word REX reminds us that the Bate family were royalist supporters.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, a sealed door carries a witch mark, with several more in the same room.

In the eastern range, over the kitchen, the d'Arcys located their library, with more than 2,000 books. Next door to it is a small room with a centrally positioned bath, which John calls the Nymphaeum. A bedroom with a staircase down to the ground floor completes the east end of the kitchen range.

Our warm thanks to John for guiding us around his house and revealing, at almost every turn, many fascinating features of this 16<sup>th</sup> century grade II\* listed building.

D. G. Jones

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### **A Tour of Barrow-on-Trent 12<sup>th</sup> August 2023**

Jill Scarfe and Anne Heathcote and others of the Friends of St Wilfrid's welcomed the Society on a guided tour of Barrow-on-Trent as a follow-up of the talk they gave us on their church in February. The necessity to safeguard the church's future had led to a thorough investigation, the re-ordering of its interior and to the foundation of this enthusiastic and effective local group.<sup>3</sup>

The medieval lay-out of the village is still apparent on the ground with a crossing of the roads running west-east (Twyford Road – Chapel Lane) and north-south (Brookfield – Church Lane) providing the skeleton of the village. Almost all the buildings, many of them of ancient origin, lie along these roads. An east-west bypass lying to the north has preserved Barrow's character as a quiet, riverside village. Our tour illustrated all aspects of a thousand-year history. In 1165 the Bakepuize family gave the church and some land to the Knights Hospitaller of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, based at the preceptory of Yeaveley. There was a *camera*, the residence of the Hospitaller's bailiff, at Barrow but with the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the property and lands were confiscated in 1543. Swarkestone Bridge is perhaps of eleventh or twelfth century origin and thus during the Hospitallers' tenure of Barrow and afterwards the road running thence one mile (1.6km) eastwards would have been important. The Beaumont family (a branch of those of Grace Dieu, Leics. and fiercely recusant) acquired the hall estate and much of the land of the village. Jill explained as we walked around how the surviving buildings often illustrate the Beaumonts' long rivalry with the incoming Sale family of the Manor (always Anglicans).

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<sup>2</sup> The family was recorded in the Heralds' Visitations of Derbyshire in 1634 and 1662; Nathaniel's royalist credentials are confirmed by his nomination by the King as a member of Charles II's projected Order of the Royal Oak, membership of which would have recognised (inexpensively!) the sacrifices of his leading supporters 1649-1660. It was, in the event, never proceeded with [Ed.].

<sup>3</sup> Rosemary Annable in DAS *Newsletter* 96 (6/2023) reported on the lecture of 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023 by Anne Heathcote and Jill Scarfe: *St Wilfrid's Church, Barrow-on-Trent: a Transformation Back to the Future*, pp. 11-14.

Barrow Hall and Barrow Manor House were different buildings that have often been confused. The former, a Tudor house re-cased in 1816 by Richard Leaper, lay north of the church and was demolished in 1957 following a fire in 1956 (a Regency lodge survives on the main road and an exceptionally pretty Gothick one in the village). The Manor (see rear cover, upper) lies to the east of the church: it lost its upper story also as a result of a fire of 1954; this was re-instated relatively recently after several decades as a Georgian bungalow. There are chapels, nineteenth century schools (Sale & Davys being a very pretty brick building by H. I. Stevens of Derby, 1843) and sundry other places.



*The Row: late 18<sup>th</sup> century cottages now owned by the parish.*

[John Morrissey]

Several farms and former farms are old and have impressive buildings. There are also more modest houses. By the crossroads is what our guides believe is unique in England. A row of ten houses was built in 1789 from a local levy of which the Parish Council is the landlord. They are available to rent by parishioners or their close relatives.

The walk ended at St Wilfrid's church, which is in the south east quadrant of the village on a small mound just north of the River Trent and just clear of the reach of flooding. The rest of the southern part of the parish, close to the river, is pretty low-lying and does often flood. The Friends served us tea and cakes while we learnt about the church. Like many medieval parish churches there are no records of its early history. St Wilfrid is recorded as having travelled widely in this country and on the continent. He lived c. 633-709/10. It is unlikely that a country church founded after the Norman conquest would have been dedicated to an Anglo-Saxon saint.

Peter Ryder in his 2013 survey of the church believes that there is evidence of work of an Anglo-Saxon nature—namely long-and-short work at the SE angle of the nave (to the right of and parallel to the long drain pipe). Jill pointed out to us as we walked near the river several small incised mediæval crosses built into a wall to the south east of the church. Peter Ryder had thought that they were probably grave markers from the churchyard. Another one has been found recently. It is now thought instead that they are boundary markers from fields lying south of Church Lane and adjacent to the river. They seem of very appropriate design for stones of Hospitaller origin.



*The party walking along Church Lane beside the Trent.*

*[John Morrissey]*

The Hospitallers' estate extended beyond the present parish's boundaries. It has long been thought that their bailiff's house was in Arleston – a hamlet to the west of Barrow-on-Trent. In 2020 Joan Davies plausibly suggested that the now largely demolished Twyford Old Hall a little further to the west had actually been the bailiff's residence.

Most thoughtfully our hosts had provided a rescue car to escort us for if the walk proved too much for any participant; fortunately, it was not needed. Afterwards, some of us repaired to the community pub (itself an historic building) for a meal and a drink.

John Morrissey

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## INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY SECTION

### Visit to Snibston Colliery, Coalville, Leicestershire 10<sup>th</sup> June 2023

A group of nine members assembled in the impressive modern café at Snibston Colliery Park on 10 June to be greeted by Stuart Warburton on behalf of the Snibston Heritage Trust. He outlined the history of the site, which began as a consequence of the construction of the Leicester and Swannington Railway in the early 1830s. George Stephenson and his son Robert were the engineers for the railway and they saw the opportunity it would open up to exploit the coal reserves of the area. They bought an estate that was up for sale and set up two collieries. The present day Snibston Colliery Park is the on the site of Snibston No.2, which continued to mine coal until 1983.

After closure of the mine, the site was bought by Leicestershire County Council and became Snibston Discovery Park, which featured the preserved colliery structures, a country park and a modern museum building with interactive exhibits focusing on science and working life. However, the Discovery Museum only survived from 1992 to 2015 and has since been demolished, leaving the historic colliery buildings and mining machinery with an uncertain future until the Snibston Heritage Trust stepped in. They are a group of volunteers, who campaigned for the preservation of the site and are now restoring the equipment and leading tours to interpret it for public.



*Snibston No. 2 Colliery, June 2023.*

*[Ian Mitchell]*

Our tour was led by a former miner, wearing his orange overalls and helmet, and carrying his miner's lamp and pit deputy's stick. The tour included a selection of mining machinery from the 1960s, and a visit to the headgear of one of the shafts on the site, constructed for a major expansion in 1914. We also saw the mine control room, preserved as it was when the mine closed with mid-20<sup>th</sup> century equipment such as a manually operated telephone switchboard and an early computer and black and white closed circuit television screens for controlling the coal conveyors.

We had a surprise when entering the mine's medical facility, where we were greeted by a nurse in full uniform who explained her role in dealing with health issues and injuries in the workforce, including some gruesome details of underground amputations. The tour ended in the explosives store with a chance to handle an extremely heavy drill that was used to make holes into which the explosive charges would be set. Throughout the tour, what we saw was brought to life with stories from our guide's own working life underground.

This was an excellent visit, and even those of us who have been on colliery museum visits elsewhere came away having learned something new. The tour we had is also available to the general public once a fortnight and is highly recommended if you missed the DAS visit.

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### **Visit to Bradford and Saltaire, Yorkshire Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

After a good start, a lengthy wait for a replacement 'bus due to a windscreen wiper failure, resulted in arriving an hour and half late at Bradford. However, apart from compressing the afternoon the delay did not spoil the day.

The first visit was to Bradford Industrial Museum which has a very large collection of machinery dedicated to the spinning and wool industry. By chance they were running some of machines during our visit, which was a bonus and gave us some idea of the noise levels in the factories when all machines would have been running to capacity – ear defenders were not mandatory in the 19th century! Extremely good information boards brought everything to life, too. We also saw a selection of Jowett motor cars manufactured just outside Bradford, including one covered in an imitation leather called Rexine, and an array of printing machinery was also on display. Industrial photographs by Draycott-born Maurice Broomfield, whose photography was inspired by the paintings of Joseph Wright, were on exhibition and was an unexpected connection for us.

A quick trip in the 'bus took us to the World Heritage Site at Saltaire, where we were taken on a guided tour by Les Brook of the Saltaire History Club. His extensive knowledge of Saltaire and Sir Titus Salt, Bt. (1803-1876) certainly enriched the visit, though a question about the Salt coat of arms unexpectedly gave him pause for thought.

Together with the notes which Les sent out prior to the trip this provided a very full introduction to the town – a result of the forward-looking and philanthropic nature of Sir Titus, the industrialist set on improving the working conditions for his workforce away from the slums of Bradford, and ultimately increasing the output of the factories. The Grade I listed Saltaire United Reform Church chapel, built in 1859 by Sir Titus for the spiritual needs of his workforce, was open and we were able to enjoy this Victorian treasure with its Italianate influences both inside and out. Saltaire is still a living and working town, which sets it apart from many other World Heritage Sites.

Our final visit was to the Five Rise Lock at Bingley, on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, with a quick look at this remarkable feat of engineering – the steepest set of staircase locks on the longest canal in the country. It was enhanced by two narrow boats in the bottom lock waiting to go up, one by one. Unfortunately, time prevented us watching the whole process in action. An uneventful journey back, despite the rain, brought us back to Derby later than intended and completed an interesting and successful visit.

Anne Allcock

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### **Recent work at Heage windmill**

Heage Windmill was fully restored to working order in 2002, and since then has been operated and maintained by the Heage Windmill Society. Prior to that, in 1997, the two main beams in the framing that supports the rotating mill cap, known as the sheers, had been replaced in pitch pine, a timber traditionally used in the past. However, routine inspection in 2019 noted deterioration in one of the sheers where it projected outside at the rear of the cap, and it had to be reinforced by clamping with steel beams. Total replacement became inevitable.

In view of the very short life of the previous timber, it was decided to replace the sheers with greenheart, a heavy but very durable tropical timber, which should last well into the next century. The work involved removing the cap down to ground level, so the opportunity was taken to undertake a number of other works, including fitting a new brake lever. The proposals were supported by Historic England, who were so concerned that they added the mill to their Heritage at Risk register.

The Mill Society had built up a team of skilled volunteers who were competent to maintain the mill and had in fact successfully made two new sails a few years back, but this new major work required professional assistance. None of the traditional millwright companies were able to offer to do the work in the short time required, so the Society brought in Beighton Construction of Chesterfield, who had undertaken the building elements of the 2002 restoration, and who with some professional guidance were prepared to work in close cooperation with the skilled volunteers from the Society's maintenance team. Beighton's site foreman had been an apprentice carpenter in the 2002 restoration and led the work with considerable enthusiasm.





*Caps off! – removal of the rotating cap of the mill*

[Ian Mitchell]

Site work started with the removal of the six mill sails with a small crane in the last week of July 2023 followed by the removal of the mill cap with a large crane a few days later. The cap was placed on a temporary structure of concrete blocks and steel beams in the carpark area, which permitted access beneath and provision for local jacking to relieve loads on the sheers and allow them to be removed.

The need for the work was dramatically demonstrated when the first sheer, although 12 inches square, snapped completely in two as it was being removed. To extract the sheers, sections of



the cap roof had to be cut out and then replaced, and the roof was re-covered with a high-performance coating to match the previous canvas and white paint.

*Sheer awkwardness: one sheer is carefully removed from the cap.*

[Ian Mitchell]

The work was due to be completed by the end of September but unfortunately a spell of very wet weather in September delayed the application of the roof coating to finish the cap, and the cap was not returned to the tower until mid-October, with the sails being replaced and the mill returned to working order a fortnight later. Slightly longer than planned, but still rapid work by traditional millwrighting standards!

To fund the work, the Society had built up some reserves from charging visitor entrance fees, and from the sale of the stone ground flour the mill produced. However, for this major project grant aid was required, with contributions from the County Council, various charities, local companies and private individuals. Nevertheless, funds are still very tight and further contributions would be welcome to finish further work to the stone tower.

John Boucher

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### **Visit to Peak District Mining Museum, Matlock Bath 9<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

In September, the Section visited the Peak District Mining Museum at Matlock Bath. We were greeted by the museum manager Clare Herbert, who explained the history of the museum and its future plans. The museum has operated in the former Grand Pavilion building in Matlock Bath for 45 years and contains an impressive collection of artifacts relating to mineral mining in the Peak District. However, the building is in a poor state of repair, and the museum is facing a significant rent increase in a few years time. An opportunity has now arisen to move to a new building to be funded by the Institute of Quarrying at the National Stone Centre near Wirksworth.

The aim would be to expand the scope of the museum to cover quarrying as well as mining, merging the existing collections of the Mining Museum and the Stone Centre. As well as a thousand square metres of exhibition space for the museum, the new building will include facilities such as classrooms and a café/restaurant (and customer toilets that are sadly lacking in the existing building). Planning permission for the new building has just been granted, and planning the new exhibitions and how to fund the move is now under way.



*Members examining the Temple Mine  
[Ian Mitchell]*

After a chance to explore the existing displays, Lynn Willies led us across the road and up to Temple Mine, a 1920s lead and fluorspar working incongruously located in the heart of Matlock Bath. Hard hats and sensible footwear were essential as Lynn led us into the hillside, explaining the geology that was visible in the walls of the tunnels, and how the miners had worked to find and extract the minerals they were seeking.

The 15 members who participated had a fascinating morning. We shall now be watching with interest how the plans for the new museum of mining and quarrying develop over the next few years.

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**The Evolution of Manufactured Solid Fuels**  
**Talk by Graham Donkin**  
**13<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

The Clean Air Acts of the 1950s created a demand for smokeless solid fuels to replace bituminous natural coal in domestic open fires and furnaces. This was initially satisfied by products made by means of a coking process at plants such as Coalite at Bolsover and Avenue at Chesterfield, but modern smokeless fuels are manufactured by cold blending of a number of components into briquettes. These are typically based on anthracite as this is a natural smokeless fuel, but this requires combining with more volatile components to make a product that is easy to light and produces attractive flames on an open fire.

Our speaker works for CPL which was formed out of the privatisation of the coal industry and consolidated a number of UK firms in the industry. Their current manufacturing operation is based at the port of Immingham in Lincolnshire, as the raw material now has to be imported. Recent developments have focused on reducing carbon emissions using renewable components that are the waste from food manufacturing, such as olive stones and molasses. The market is also changing, with the heritage sector (steam railways, traction engines and stationary engines) becoming significant. This has created new challenges for the producers, such as the need for a low chlorine content to avoid corrosion of copper locomotive fireboxes. In these applications, replacing traditional ‘lump coal’, the shape of the briquette end-product is just as important as the content itself.

*Bolsover: the Coalite works, 1992, mistily overlooked by the Duke of Newcastle's great schloss. [RCHM(E)]*



This was a fascinating talk, giving an insight into an industry that few of us were aware of, and some reassurance that there is a future source of fuel to keep our favourite preserved industrial archaeology sites operating as the age of coal comes to an end.

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## LOCAL HISTORY SECTION

### Visit to Repton School Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2023

Twenty three members of the Society met Mr Paul Stevens, Librarian and Archivist for Repton School who took us on a tour of the School and its past.

Repton was the place where Christianity was first preached to the pagan Anglo-Saxons in the Midlands in AD653 and an abbey was established there. The church has distinctive Anglo-Saxon stonework both inside and out. The church graveyard and vicarage garden was pointed out as the site of the famous excavations by Professor Martin Biddle and Birthe Kølbye-Biddle who led the team which found the Viking burial ground and the ditches which provided the fortifications for the Winter camp for the invading Viking Great Army of 873-4.

By 1086 a new church was built near or on the ruins of the abbey and in 1172 the Augustinian Priory was founded by Maud, Countess of Chester. In 1250 the priory guesthouse was built and the southern arch of this still stands as the entrance to the School today. After pointing the archway out to the group, Paul then turned us away from the church to look at the building which has been the main School building from its founding in 1557 by Sir John Port, when he bought the remaining buildings of the Priory from the Thacker family, which had purchased the priory estate from the Crown in 1538. This building is constructed from sandstone and red brick over two stories with seven gabled bays facing west.



*Repton, St. Wystan: remains of the Saxon church visible in the later chancel, Saxon crypt below; Aug. 2013.*  
[M. Craven]

The priory church foundations that were not built over were the next point in our tour behind the school room. The Pears School (which runs at right angles from the school building) was

built over the priory chapel and was lost until the school boys were encouraged to dig the ground behind the Hall in 1922 and, to their evident pleasure found skulls, with which they decorated their dormitories and took home at the end of term!

Paul then took us to the Prior Overton's Tower which is a surviving part of the 1437 Priory building and is now incorporated in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century former Repton Hall and houses the Headmaster's rooms. Next, we walked through the Garth which is on the footprint of the Priory Cloisters and has been carefully constructed as a War Memorial to all the Old Boys of the School who fought and died in both World Wars. No less than 355 old boys died in the First World War and 188 in the Second. All are named on the walls of the Garth and it is sad to see how many family names are repeated.

Paul then led us through the ground floor of the Old Priory to the front of the building where a slope up to the first floor is enclosed by waist high walls which are heavily marked by the graffiti of countless generations of boys. The original wooden entrance door leads into the room which was the entire school in its early days, with a dark wood raised dais supporting a large desk and seat for the headmaster to oversee the room. Portraits of all past Headmasters are hung around the room and Paul has stories for most of them; some were of the kind to be the cause of nightmares, whilst others were of real benefit to the school and the boys for whom they cared.

We then descended to the basement floor, where we admired a model of the school, before walking along the corridor lined with photos of some of the most famous or noteworthy old boys of Repton. These ranged from the athlete Harold Abrahams to novelist Christopher Isherwood and from Roald Dahl to Jeremy Clarkson. At the far end of this floor which is the undercroft, we saw that the wall has been constructed or decorated with pieces of architecture from the ruined priory buildings. Paul then concluded our visit with a selection of interesting items from the library

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**Donington Le Heath Manor House**  
**The 1620s House and Garden**  
**18<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

Nineteen members gathered on a rather wet day for this visit. We were divided into two groups and the one that went on the garden tour first was the lucky one as far as the weather was concerned.

This beautiful house is a survivor from the 13<sup>th</sup> century which was modernised in 1618 and today's visitors can see the rooms and garden presented as the family would have known it in the 1620s.

The visit inside the house begins in the kitchen and moves from thence into the dining area. At the head of the table is the grandest wooden carved chair for the master to sit in and the whole of the family and servants would sit to eat together. The upper storey has two rooms laid out

as bedrooms with four poster beds and one room as the study of Sir Everard Digby complete with strong box for his valuables

The house has been home to many families over its 700-year history, but the Digby family, which included the gunpowder plotter Sir Everard Digby, lived in the house for over two hundred years. It is towards the end of the Digby ownership that the house is focused, showing how people lived in late Elizabethan and early Jacobean times. The guides told us how the house was used over the years and of its descent into ruin with the last private owner who, because he was not allowed to redevelop it, used it to house pigs – even encouraging student part time workers to attempt to carry pigs up the spiral staircase! The local authority eventually took over ownership and restored the house.

The house is set in beautiful 17<sup>th</sup> century style gardens with labelled plants and flowers, an orchard, herb gardens and a small maze. The volunteers, who work very hard in this beautiful setting, showed us around in the rain and shared some of their plans for continuing the restoration of the original 17<sup>th</sup> century layout.

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## LIBRARY MATTERS

The usage of the library continues to grow. This year 177 books and journals were issued to members and 57 books have been added to the collection, either purchased or by kind donation. Here is a selection of some of the books new this year since the last newsletter.

- ❖ *Wonders of the Peak Then and Now*, Roly Smith 96 pp. 2018
- ❖ *Spondon's Power Stations A Century of Change and Innovation 1917 – 2017*, Peter Heath and Alan Hunt 48pp. 2017
- ❖ *Belper Voices: Life in Belper in the Nineteenth Century Vol. 1* Christopher Charlton, Bernard Holden, Adrian Farmer, David Hool. 154pp 2023
- ❖ *History of the Village of Stoney Middleton* Thos.E Cowen 56pp 1910

All the new additions are on the online catalogue.

There will be another Open Day on January 13<sup>th</sup>. The library will be open and books can be issued or returned then. Material and books will be on display including a book from 1736 by James Gibbs whose Baroque designs were used for the rebuilding of Derby Cathedral's nave in 1723-25. This splendid volume, an 18<sup>th</sup> century text book for architects, with the most meticulous drawings, has been newly repaired and has been kindly loaned by Jane Steer. Apart from the link with the Cathedral this book belonged to the Denston family. Both father and son were plasterers of note in Derbyshire. The son Abraham was a master plasterer and his most well-known work is in St Helen's House and Kedleston Hall. The book is lovely to look at for everyone but for those of you with a particular interest in architecture it is a 'must-see'. There will be more information on this book at the Open Day (further details, p. 42).

Please do let us know of any books which may be of interest for the library.

Anne Allcock  
Hon. Librarian

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## UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

### Matlock Area Archaeology Group

A small group met in April to form a new archaeology group. The purpose was to bring together those who had an interest in visiting local sites. Derbyshire has a rich heritage of archaeological sites and the various members bring a variety of experience and expertise. From the first, the desire was to make the group accessible to everyone, from those who were just interested to those who had some knowledge to share.

Having planned our meetings in April, the group's first visit was to Stanton Moor in May. With over 200 scheduled monuments recorded it was a fascinating if rather frustrating visit trying to understand the landscape and where the monuments were located. The second visit in June to Arbor Low was more familiar territory, a glorious sunny day meant we lingered among the stones. In August we visited Lea Wood and heard about the excavation of the Q pits from a member who had taken part in the last dig. In September, we visited the site of Fin Cop Hillfort at Monsal Head. Concluding our programme of visits with one to Warslow field barns in October.



*Members of the group photographed whilst visiting Fin Cop, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023.*

*[C. Butland]*

In each of our visits a different member of the group leads. Much of the benefit, though, is in the informal conversation that arises during the site visits and then afterwards over some refreshments. From the first, we were determined that the group, although knowledgeable, shouldn't be overly academic; rather we aim to be friendly and encouraging of everyone's

views and opinions. Some members of the group are actively involved as volunteers at various sites and bring this current knowledge into our discussions.

The group comprises just under thirty people, although fewer attend each of the site visits. We stagger our visits on different days in the week to ensure that everyone can attend at least a few of the site visits.

During the winter months the group continues to meet, but indoors. In November a member of the group will reflect upon her experiences of local field archaeology. In January members of the group are attending the Derbyshire Archaeology Day in Chesterfield. In February we meet again to plan our visits in 2024.

The group welcomes new members and anyone interested should contact the co-ordinator, Cameron Butland via email – [cameronbutland@gmail.com](mailto:cameronbutland@gmail.com)

Cameron Butland

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### ***OTHER NOTICES***

#### **DERBYSHIRE RECORD OFFICE**

**Update October 2023**

##### ***Recent Acquisitions***

There are too many to new acquisitions to provide a full list, but the following are particularly noteworthy:

D3045/T Caudwell Mill Trust, Rowsley: including minutes and administrative papers from 1977 and photographs of the mill from the early 20<sup>th</sup> cent

D7993 Clayton family of Chesterfield, tanners: including business accounts, staff registers, directors' minutes, annual reports and ephemera 1925-c2000 (gaps)

D8346 Crompton family of Derby, bankers: including Bank Account Books 1715-1783 and Correspondence Registers 1813-1822

D8427 Chapel-en-le-Frith Parish Council: first deposit containing minutes 1894-1915

D8483 Derby Assembly Rooms: Title deeds, minutes, accounts, trustees' records, administrative records 1520-1987

D8482 Derby West Indian Community Association: including community newsletters from 1983 and Carnival brochures and other records from 1987

D8495 Crich Parish Council: first deposit containing minutes 1894-2008

D8498 Eastwood, Swingler and Company Limited, engineers, Victoria and Railway Iron Works, Osmaston Road, Russel Street, Derby: title deeds 1808-1959

See Our Collections webpage

[www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/record-office/records/collections.aspx](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/record-office/records/collections.aspx)

for links to the catalogue listing new acquisitions in 2022 and 2023, recent publications added to the Local Studies Collection, and recently catalogued archive material (including items acquired before 2022).



### ***Exhibitions***

The record office celebrated Derbyshire Day on 22 September by launching 13 new online exhibitions featuring material from our collections – our take on what makes Derbyshire such a great place to live, work and visit – all with an historical twist of course! These exhibitions, and others previously published online, can be seen on Google Arts and Culture:

<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/derbyshire-record-office>

A small selection of the material in the online exhibition features in an exhibition at the record office until 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The next exhibition, provisionally entitled Bills, Bills, Bills! will showcase almost 400 years of printed notices, from the most official to the satirical.

### ***Other news***

The record office is very pleased to welcome Benjamin Longden as a project archivist to develop more sophisticated procedures for the preservation and access of digital archives. In July, with funds from the Friends of the National Libraries and V&A Purchase Grant Fund we purchased the manorial records of Duffield Fee, which have been in the custody of the record office since 1974. As part of the grant, the record office will re-catalogue the collection to make it more accessible for researchers.

See our blog: <https://recordoffice.wordpress.com/> for more news and stories from the collections. You can also find us on Facebook @DerbyshireRO, follow us on X (formerly Twitter) at DerbyshireDRO and Instagram @DerbyshireRecordOffice.

### ***Contact us***

Opening Hours: Tuesday-Friday 9.30am-5pm, last Saturday of the month 9.30am-4pm

Tel: 01629 538347

email: [record.office@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:record.office@derbyshire.gov.uk)

Booking in advance is not required, but is highly recommended.

Becky Sheldon

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### **DERBYSHIRE MISCELLANY**

Unfortunately, it has not been possible to catch up with the publication of Miscellany and we continue to run one issue behind the intended schedule. Although the same extenuating circumstances remain, I do hope to resolve the delay during 2024.

Please continue to send your articles and shorter features to [das.miscellany@gmail.com](mailto:das.miscellany@gmail.com) with a view to future publication. To minimise the time required for editing and preparing references, contributors are asked to read the new guidance which can be found in the Spring 2023 issue of Miscellany (published November 2023) and are also available via the Society's website.

Becky Sheldon

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**THE SOCIETY'S EAST SUSSEX TOUR**  
**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

***Day One: 3<sup>rd</sup> July***

Making sure of arriving at Derby Bus station at 9.30am on a Sunday morning is always a bit tricky, this time however, a lift from my son-in-law made life so much easier. Upon my arrival, I was surprised that this year the usual late arrivals were early and the usual early birds, finding the new layout of the Derby traffic flow frustratingly complicated, caused them to be last.

A comfortable drive down to Sussex took us to our first stop, the very picturesque Michelham Priory at Upper Dicker, a former Augustinian Priory of the Holy Trinity. The priory was founded for 13 Augustinian canons in 1229, probably as a daughter house of the priory at Hastings. Michelham Priory and its surrounding buildings are situated on an island of almost 8 acres within England's largest medieval water-filled moat.

The Priory boasted many guests over time including, John Peckham OFM, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1283 and King Edward I in 1302. However, by 1441 the buildings had fallen into decay. When the Priory was dissolved in 1537, some of the surrounding buildings including the church were probably demolished and in 1556 it was sold to John Foot, who built a timber framed extension to form a house.

After two further owners the Priory was sold to poet and statesman Thomas Sackville, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Dorset (1536-1608) who made further changes, culminating, as with many large properties of that time, in leasing the estate to various tenants. Eventually it was sold in 1905 to James Gwynne, who in 1905 began to restore the house.

The house was archaeologically excavated in 1925 but a fire in 1927 gutted the SW wing. During the winter of 1941-42 it was used as a base for Canadian troops, preparing for the Dieppe Raid and in 1943 it became the East Sussex headquarters of the ATS.



*Michelham Priory*

[Janette Jackson]

Eventually the house was purchased by Mrs Stella Hotblack who donated it to the Sussex Archaeological Society in 1959. The site was further archaeologically excavated in 1959-60 and 1971-76. Various rooms in the house can be visited, all containing beautifully preserved unusual pieces of furniture. Outside are a dovecote, a farmyard, a watermill, and the foundations of an earlier house. The grounds are well laid out, including a sensory monastic style physic garden and a Victorian kitchen garden. Two footbridges give access to the moat walk. A wonderful start to the day.

Our follow-on visit was to Pevensey Roman Fort and Medieval Castle, where our very knowledgeable guide, David Carder, informed us of the history of these impressive ruins which stand on what was once a naturally defensive peninsula. The Roman Fort (Roman name, *Anderitum/Anderida*) was probably built in c.295 when the coastal defences of Roman Britain were being systematically strengthened. This was the so-called, Saxon shore, a network of huge forts extending from Brancaster on the Norfolk coast to the best preserved, Portchester in Hampshire, providing a defence against raiding Saxons, and no doubt for the protection of British usurpers – principally Carausius and Allectus – against re-conquest by the empire.

After the withdrawal of the Roman administration from Britain in c.409, the fort continued to shelter the community. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records that in 477 the fort was besieged and:

‘They [the Saxons] slew many Britons and drove some to flight into the wood which is called *Andredesleag*.’<sup>4</sup>

Nor was that all, for in 491 the same source tells us that

‘In this year Aelle and Cissa besieged *Andredescaster* and slew all the inhabitants; there was not even one Briton left there.’

Little is known about the fort during the subsequent Anglo- Saxon era, however.

Pevensey is also best known as the place where the Norman Conquest began, when in 1066 William the Conqueror landed and marched his army along the coast and awaited Harold’s arrival from the North.

On arrival at our destination, the Burlington Hotel, in Eastbourne – the town and area being a south coast fiefdom of our Dukes of Devonshire, hence the name of our hotel – in glorious sunshine but, looking slightly tired and elderly, our hotel stood proudly facing the sea and sand – near to the Pier built in 1866 (qv) but much renewed after a recent fire – which beckoned to our land-enclosed Derbyshire group. Our pre-dinner drinks and very enjoyable supper went down very well, and our evening concluded with a most enlightening talk called *An Introduction to Sussex*, given by David.

Janette Jackson.

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<sup>4</sup> ASC *sub anno* 491; *Andredesleag* was the primeval forest between the downs and the coast which then stretched all the way to the Solent.

*Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July*

Since we were not leaving Eastbourne as early as most days, it was suggested that this would be a good time to visit the pier (grade II\* listed and designed by Eugenius Birch, 1866-1872) which was almost directly opposite our hotel. In the distance it looked very impressive with its golden domes rivalling the Kremlin. However, at 9am in the morning it was clearing up time and everything was closed; nevertheless, the views were good.

Our first stop was the village of Alfriston. However, on the way we had an unintended treat, for the coach took the scenic route through old Eastbourne, a mile inland, followed by marvellous views over the Sussex Downs and even a glimpse of the Long Man of Wilmington – unfortunately not prehistoric but 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century. Alfriston is a gem of an English village but, like so many in Sussex, there was a constant stream of cars going through the main streets. Yet it boasts one of Sussex's two remaining market crosses but unfortunately here it has lost its cross and stands on a 17<sup>th</sup> century brick plinth. As is often the case, the oldest buildings are the church and the inns. The church of St Andrew is on a traffic free green – the Tye – built in the second half of the C14<sup>th</sup> in the transitional period between decorated and perpendicular. Beside the church is the Clergy House, probably dating from the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century or the beginning of the C15<sup>th</sup>; it was the first building acquired by the National Trust. It is a typical Wealden house but unfortunately not often open as it is currently lived in. The *Star Inn* is the oldest secular building dating to possibly 1483 with many interesting carved figures.



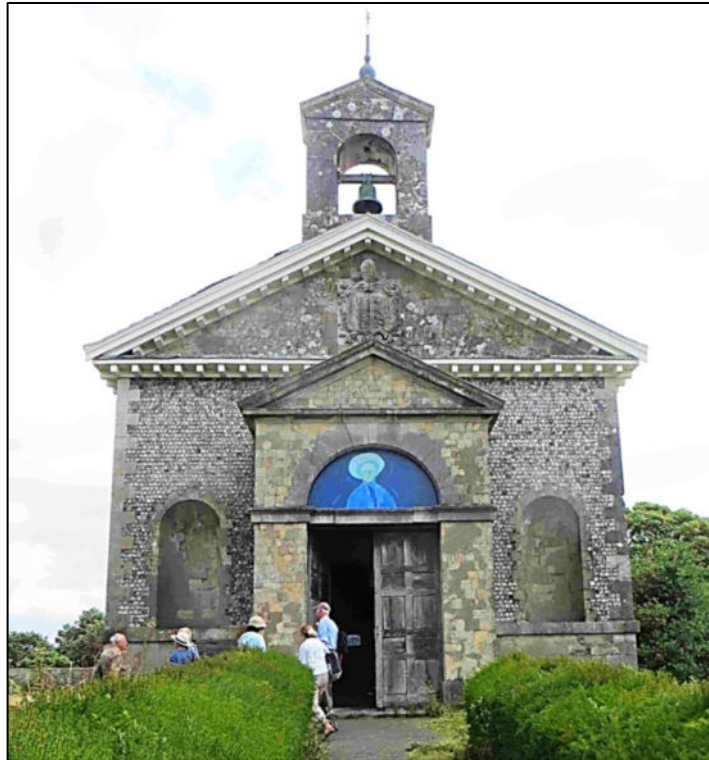
*Alfriston, The Star.*

*[Ann Jones]*

Our next stop was the church of St Mary the Virgin at Glynde, a small Georgian church rebuilt in the 1760s to the designs of the Palladian amateur, Sir Thomas Robinson, Bt. of Rokeby. Its vicar (with West Firle and Beddingham) is the flamboyant Peter Owen Jones, but he did not put in an appearance. The windows are of note being by Charles Kempe and have his wheatsheaf emblem; they also incorporate earlier Flemish panels.

*Glynde, tour members entering Sir Thomas Robinson's remarkably pretty Georgian church.*

[Ann Jones]



Our lunch stop was Lewes, the county town of East Sussex. Our first visit was the castle, originally built just after the Conquest and it is unusual in having two mottes, the stone keep being on the later one. It is owned and run by Sussex Past, part of the Sussex Archaeological



Society, beautifully kept with good information boards and signage. Many of us managed to get to the top of the keep to admire the views. Beside its Barbican Gate is Barbican House which houses the Museum of the Sussex Archaeology Society – small, but well laid out and well explained.

Some of us took the opportunity to visit the Cluniac Priory of St Pancras. The Parish Church of St John the Baptist started life as the priory hospital and has a handsome flint and stone chequerboard exterior. However, the priory church, cloisters and chapter house were mostly destroyed when a railway was built across the site. However, we were able to admire not one but two reredorters.

*Lewes Castle, the barbican* [David G. Jones]



*Lewes, Anne of Cleves' house. [David G Jones]*

Our final visit was Anne of Cleves House, also owned and run by Sussex Past. It was given to Anne of Cleves as part of her divorce settlement but she never even visited it. It is a large Wealden type house furnished in Tudor taste. The roof beams are all exposed and caused David Carder (our leader) to wax lyrical over bridle scarf joints. The garden was laid out as a Tudor garden should be and was very well maintained. A very busy day but with plenty of opportunities to just sit and enjoy.

Janette Jackson

### ***Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July, Brighton and Rottingdean***

Our party left Eastbourne at nine a.m. on the coach for the drive to the centre of Brighton, where we planned to spend most of the day. Our first visit was to the Royal Pavilion (grade I listed needless to say) which we viewed at our own pace. The building has been recently renovated and much of the interior decoration has been restored to its former magnificence. The exterior is in the Indian Moghul (often called Indo-Saracenic) style and had originally been built as a marine villa in 1787 by Henry Holland. The Prince Regent however, embarked on an enlargement of the building from 1815 to 1822 by commissioning John Nash to transform the style and add matching wings and a series of ancillary buildings for stables and offices. The latter we viewed from the outside on our way to the Pavilion itself. The interior of the building is largely in the Chinoiserie taste with stuccoed dragons and serpents looming from the cornices and pillars in the state dining room and music room. The apartments upstairs were more

restrained. There was also an interesting special exhibition with exhibits relating to the coronation of George IV. Also on view was a fine marine oil painting of two colliers unloading coal on the beach by John Constable. The dark hues of this picture contrasted much with the bright reds, yellows, blues and greens of the interior decor of the Pavilion.

Following this visit there was time for a quick lunch, following which David Carder led two groups around The Lanes and other historic sights in the town centre before we finally all met at the grade II\* listed Palace Pier, which was designed by R. St. George Moore and built 1891-1899, following the now wrecked West Pier, by Eugenius Birch, 1884. Most of us had a stroll along it and found it still very much devoted to family fun.

We continued our tour by viewing some of the Regency terraces of Brighton before arriving at the peaceful haven of Rottingdean. We principally visited the church which included some fine Burne Jones windows and Alison Haslam told us about the three McDonald sisters who were subsequently connected by marriage with the Burne Jones, Kipling and Baldwin families. We also visited Kipling's garden and admired the handsome villas of the village. Our return to Eastbourne along the coastal road allowed contrasts to be made between the ordered splendour of the Brighton Regency terraces and the uncontrolled piecemeal development of the Great War town of Peacehaven (originally, following a naming competition, called Anzac-on-Sea!)

In the evening, David Carder gave us an excellent lecture on architecturally significant buildings in East Sussex, many of which we had been unable to include in our itinerary.

Jane Heginbotham

### ***Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July, Bexhill, Battle & Bodiam***

Wednesday morning proved another fine day, and we set out in an easterly direction, only slightly delayed by one leader who had left his notes upstairs. Our first call was at Bexhill-on-Sea to view the Modernist style De la Warr Pavilion, facing the sea and the stoniest beach possible. The striking grade I listed building, of 1935 by Erich Mendelsohn and Serge Chermayeff was promoted and underwritten by the 9<sup>th</sup> Earl De la Warr GBE, PC (1900-1976).

Then we went on to spend the rest of the morning at the interesting town of Hastings. David conducted two tours of the old town, a long one and a shorter, though in practice they were much the same!

The tours concentrated on the High Street and All Saints' Street that ran up either side of a steep sided valley. We saw the exterior of St. Clement's Church, rebuilt in the 15th century after destruction by the French. Both streets have numerous timbered buildings, some being of the Wealden type. The pavement on the higher side of both roads has been raised well above the roadway owing to the steepness of the valley sides. We were intrigued by the 1871 'Wedge of Cheese', a small cottage built to fit on a triangular plot. Hastings also boasts two adjacent museums, the Fisherman's and the Shipwreck Museums, sitting together on the front amongst

the old net drying sheds, tall dark wooden structures looming between the boats pulled up on the shore.

Next, we boarded the coach to proceed to Battle, where the first priority was lunch, most of us patronising a café in front of the Abbey gate. Then into the said Abbey, where English Heritage wanted a single payment for all non-card holding visitors in the group. Once inside we went to the site of the church, now only an outline on the grass. The altar was placed on the spot where King Harold fell, by order of William I. That this was on a rather narrow ridge made the expansion of the site awkward and perhaps supports the idea that this really was where Harold died.

Following that, we went to the east range past the chapter house site and onto the dormitory, which stands as a roofless ruin. There are rooms under the dormitory of increasing height as one goes southwards down the slope of the site. The tallest room was allocated to the novices and is fitted with enormously tall columns of Sussex Marble supporting the vaulted ceiling. Outside, we were exploring the remains of the reredorter, fortunately not still in use. Finally, we explored the series of vaulted chambers under the guest wing. After that, there was still time to cross the road and visit St. Mary's Church, which exhibits all styles from Norman to Perpendicular. There are a few wall paintings but the most interest was aroused by the tomb of Sir Anthony Browne KG with alabaster effigies and armorial decoration.<sup>5</sup>

Our final visit of the day was to Bodiam Castle, built in the late 14th century by Sir Edward Dalyngrigge, and which was restored from a ruin in 1829 by John ('Mad Jack') Fuller of Brightling, MP. A buggy was available to take visitors from the car park to the castle. This presents an ideal picture of a romantic castle, with round corner towers contained within a wide moat. It is entered over a causeway, originally with a right-angled bend, drawbridges and portcullises, one of the latter being still in place. The gatehouse is vaulted with murder-holes for dropping nasty stuff on unwanted visitors. Through the gatehouse is a large grassy courtyard with the remains of buildings on each side. The kitchens have impressive fireplaces, and fine views may be had by those energetic enough to climb the towers. The lasting memory of Bodiam however must be the picture it presents, dreaming peacefully in the sun and reflected in the lake.

Wednesday evening was reserved for the Social, but there was no quiz this year. David C. showed some more pictures and took part in a question-and-answer session.

John d'Arcy

#### ***Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July, Parham***

Our final visit, on the journey home, was to Parham House in the west of the county. This Elizabethan house was built in 1577, on what had been a grange of Westminster Abbey before the Dissolution, by Sir Thomas Palmer. It is an E plan house, but with many later additions on the north side and was purchased by the Bisshopp family in 1601. It remained with them, albeit through the female side on several occasions, until 1922 when it was sold to the Pearsons, Viscounts Cowdray, whose heirs have lovingly restored both the structure and the contents.

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<sup>5</sup> Sir Anthony was ancestor, in the (natural) male line of the Archbishop of Canterbury – Ed.



Divided into two groups, we were given an extensive tour of the parts of the house not reserved for the family, by some enthusiastic and knowledgeable guides. From an entrance on the north side, we entered the great hall which is well lit by large windows facing south, has Elizabethan oak panelling, an original fireplace, a C16<sup>th</sup> pendant and a ribbed ceiling (replastered in the 1820s). The walls are hung with many portraits of Elizabethan courtiers, including the Queen herself, as well as members of the Bisshopp family. The outstanding portrait, in size and interest, is of Henry Frederick, Prince of Wales, on a horse, leading the figure of winged Time. Son of James I, Henry tragically died of typhoid in 1612. In consequence, this painting by Robert Peake from 1611 was subsequently overpainted to remove Time. The original was only revealed in 1985, after an X-ray examination, to which condition it has now been restored.



*Parham, north  
(entrance) front.  
[David G. Jones]*

Adjacent to the Hall, in the west wing, is the great parlour, remodelled to its original height by the Hon. Clive Pearson in the 1920s and containing some fine portraits of Charles I and contemporary royalty. Here, the carpets, tapestry and needlework are 17<sup>th</sup> century with a chair of that period covered in *gros* and *petit point* needlework. Also in the west wing is the saloon, said once to have a wood store, but now modelled in Regency style with fluted Roman Doric columns and displaying a Worcester dessert service decorated with the family arms.

Upstairs in this wing, during Elizabethan and Jacobean times, was the great chamber, which was remodelled in the 1920s to provide bedrooms. In the main room, the remodelling is evident from the plasterwork of the overmantel which shows the initials of Clive and Alicia Pearson surrounding an outline of the house and various emblems from their coat of arms. The dominant feature of the room is the ‘great bed’ with a Tudor frame but an embroidered canopy, backcloth and bedspread of Italian and French workmanship dating from c 1585. The headboard displays a *fleur-de-lys* and a woman’s figure said to resemble Marie de Medici, suggesting she may have commissioned it. The bed came to Parham from Wroxton Abbey in Oxfordshire.

Other rooms nearby are chiefly remarkable for portraits of Restoration associates of Charles II and his mistresses but also including several generations of Bisshopp baronets. One delightful

Lely portrait shows Sir Ralph Assheton of Whalley with his younger second wife in which he clasps a lock of her hair and has his foot firmly planted on her dress, a pointed reminder to her not to run away again. The Green Room nearby has contents centred on Sir Joseph Banks, Bt. FRS, FLS, botanist and sometime President of the Royal Society.

On the staircase leading to the top floor is a portrait of Lady Curzon with her two sons Nathaniel, later 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Scarsdale, and Assheton, later Viscount Curzon of Penn. This is an exact counterpart of the same painting by Soldi at Kedleston except there the boys have van Dyke style collars. Assheton's youngest son, Robert, married Harriett Bisshopp and became the owner of Parham, carrying out restoration work there in the 1830s.

The top floor has the Long Gallery stretching some 48m (158ft) along the length of the south front and is claimed to be the third longest in a private house in England. Evidently the original ceiling had been lost to dilapidation so the Pearsons replaced it with a coved ceiling with square panels of painted canvas glued to plaster.



*Parham, the long gallery, with its Arts-and-Crafts ceiling.*

[David G. Jones]

There are extensive grounds but with a limited time we were only able to take a brief refreshment in the sunshine before recommencing our journey to Derby, thus ending an enjoyable and interesting few days in Sussex.

David Jones

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## NEW BOOKS

**David Alexander, *A Biographical Dictionary of British and Irish Engravers 1714-1820* (Yale University Press 2021) £75.**

This biographical dictionary of engravers working on copper encompasses both those who produced fine art prints and also those who engraved book illustrations for medical, technical and literary works, all of which played a more important part than is usually realised in spreading information in the Age of Enlightenment. Some 4,000 biographical entries draw on much unpublished information, researched over four decades, notably records of apprenticeship, genealogy, insurance and bankruptcy as well as newspaper advertisements and contemporary accounts.

This is the first reference work to cover all engravers working on copper in Britain and Ireland from the death of Queen Anne to the accession of George IV. Many biographical entries describe celebrated engravers producing ‘fine art’ prints of paintings, which spread knowledge about living and dead artists. However, this book also builds up a more complex picture of the occupation of printmaking and includes engravers, many previously unresearched, who engraved ephemeral material, such as trade cards, bank notes, and satirical prints as well as the images that spread knowledge across all fields, literary, geographical, historical, topographical, medical and technical.

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**Christine Handley writes:** Ian Rotherham and I have just published a book *WW1 Airfield to City Suburb: Meadowhead, Norton, Gereenhill*, which covers the Norton/Meadowhead area of what is now Sheffield but which, before 1936 was part of Derbyshire. It is a 168 page softback which costs £10. The link to the Wildtrack bookstore, which gives information about the book, is:

[https://www.ukeconet.org/store/p825/WW1\\_Airfield\\_to\\_City\\_Suburb2C\\_Norton%2C\\_Greenhill.html](https://www.ukeconet.org/store/p825/WW1_Airfield_to_City_Suburb2C_Norton%2C_Greenhill.html)

We would be happy to give a discount to your members: [christinehandley2@outlook.com](mailto:christinehandley2@outlook.com)

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## THE SOCIETY'S WINTER PROGRAMME JANUARY to MAY 2024

Unless otherwise indicated our talks are ‘HYBRID’ events that can be attended online via Zoom or in person at St. Mary’s Church Hall, Darley Lane, Derby, DE1 3AX, starting at 7.30pm. In most cases, the speaker will be in the hall and you will get a better experience by attending in person. Members who have supplied an email address will receive the link to register to attend via Zoom a week before the meeting. Non- members are welcome to attend in person and a limited number of places to attend via Zoom can be booked via Eventbrite. Most meetings will be recorded and available to watch online for a month afterwards via a link from the Society’s website.

*Please note that where there is no full description below, the lectures are not yet finalised and may be subject to amendment or cancellation – please check on the website for any updates.*

### **Friday 5 January 2024 – Society Lecture**

#### **Living with the White Horse: excavations at three Ridgeway hillforts**

Speaker: Gary Lock – SPEAKER ON ZOOM

Within a few miles of the iconic Uffington White Horse chalk figure are three hillforts dating to the Iron Age and Roman periods. This talk will explore the similarities and differences between these sites based on a programme of excavations revealing something about the lives of the people who constructed and used the enigmatic White Horse.

Gary Lock is Emeritus Professor of Archaeology at the University of Oxford. He has taught and researched the Iron Age for many years specialising in hillforts of which he has excavated five and was Co-Director of the important Atlas of Hillforts of Britain and Ireland Project.

### **Saturday 13 January 2024 at the Strutts Centre, Derby Road, Belper DE56 1UU (no Zoom)**

#### **Library open afternoon and members' presentations**

The society library will be open from 12.30pm to 4.00pm with an exhibition and display of material from including new acquisitions. There will also be a bookstall and a series of short talks from members, every half hour from 1.30pm. The speakers and subjects will be:

Jane Ainsworth – Becoming Christian in Midland Britain AD500-1050, an introduction to work on Derbyshire parishes

Ian Mitchell - History boards for Long Eaton railway station

Keith Reedman - Davis of Derby

Tony Brookes – Littleover and its surrounding landscape: from Ice Age to Domesday – my research and book

### **Friday 26 January 2024 – Architecture Section**

#### **The trials and tribulations of building an Ecohouse**

Speaker: Derek Latham

Derek is an architect, town planner, landscape architect, conservationist and urbanist, who ran his own practice, Lathams, in Derby for 35 years. His clients ranged from community groups to royalty, charities to corporate companies, individuals to local authorities, and a range of heritage bodies. He now chairs the Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust and the Derwent Valley Trust. As a founder member, he is still active with both the Institute of Historic Buildings and the Academy of Urbanism and is Visiting Professor at the University of Derby. He is also a Director of Great Northern Classics, the proposed centre of excellence for training heritage vehicle repair skills. Fifteen years ago, he set about pushing the boundaries when building his own home, an ecohouse designed to fit its context utilising materials from site and other techniques to reduce carbon footprint both embodied and in use.

### **Friday 2 February 2024 – Society Lecture**

#### **An Eternal Sleep? Bed Burials in Early Medieval Europe**

Speaker: Emma Brownlee

One of the most unusual forms of burial found in early medieval England is the use of a bed on which the deceased is laid to rest. Several of these burials have made the news recently: the Harpole treasure excavated near Northampton in 2022, and the Trumpington bed burial, whose facial reconstruction made international headlines in June 2023. The burials found in England all belong to women, and all date to the period of Christianisation in the seventh century. Yet bed burials are not confined to England. They appear across Europe, but take quite a different form on the continent. This talk will combine information from the burials themselves with

new scientific evidence, to consider what they can tell us about connections across early medieval Europe in a time of social and religious change.

Dr Brownlee is a research fellow at Girton College, University of Cambridge, where she focuses on how grave good use and burial rites vary across Europe in 5th to 8th centuries AD.

**Friday 9 February – Archaeological Research Group**  
**The Silk Road**

Speaker: Julian Henderson

**Friday 16 February 2024 – Local History Section**  
**Historic Inn Names**

Speaker: Trevor James

Historic inn names, dating from before the eighteenth century, can provide potential clues, helpful to an understanding of the local history of any neighbourhood. They are almost a form of oral history and certainly can help us understand the priorities of the people of past times.

**Friday 23 February – Industrial Archaeology Section**  
**JCB help reconstruct the Sudbury Gasworks retort bench**

Speaker: Brice Bozier

The Victorian gasworks building for the Sudbury estate has recently been rescued and restored with the aid of a significant grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund but all the original equipment was lost. Learn how those behind the restoration of Sudbury Gasworks researched their missing gas producing retort benches and how, in 2018, they started with a team of apprentices at JCB on the journey to recreate them, using both old and cutting-edge techniques and taking trips to the North, South and West! The speaker, Brice Bozier, is a Trustee of Sudbury Gasworks who works at JCB Rocester as a controls engineer. Apprentice trained himself, Brice has a background in electrical, mechanical, electronic and software engineering, and he will be supported for the presentation by one or more of the apprentices who were involved.

**Friday 1 March – Archaeological Research Group**  
**The mystery of secret passages running beneath the landscape.**

Speaker: James Wright – speaker on Zoom

Every single hamlet, village, town and city in the British Isles has a story of secret passages running beneath the landscape. The tales speak of hidden tunnels connecting the castle and the monastery, or the hermitage and the pub, or the church and the manor house. Often these are supposed to be escape tunnels, sometimes they are connected with smuggling or treasure, on other occasions the given reasons for their existence are somewhat salacious and scandalous. The folklore of Britain's subterranean landscape is ubiquitous, but is there ever any archaeological evidence for these yarns? What are the underlying truths? Can the stories ever tell us something about how people think about their communities and heritage?

**Friday 8 March – Archaeological Research Group**  
**Repairing the river weir at Matlock**

Speaker: Sarah Howard

**Friday 15 March 2024 – Society Lecture**  
**Roman Amphitheatres in Britain: Chester and Richborough**

Speaker: Tony Wilmott

This talk will summarise the phenomenon of the Roman amphitheatre as experienced in Britain and will concentrate on contrasting the evidence from the amphitheatres of Chester and Richborough, both of which have been excavated within the last 20 years. It will cover

variations in amphitheatre construction between the legions and the civilian centres and evidence for the nature of arena events and the behaviour of spectators. Tony Wilmott is a senior archaeologist at Historic England and has worked as a professional field archaeologist for 46 years. He is particularly known for his work on Hadrian's Wall and at Richborough, and is the author of *The Roman Amphitheatre in Britain* which he is currently revising.

**Saturday 23 March 2024 – THE JOAN d'ARCY LECTURE**

**2pm at the Strutts Centre, Derby Road, Belper DE56 1UU**

**The Seizure of Church Goods in Derbyshire 1552-3: a later act of Tudor Reformation destruction**

Speaker: Dr Richard Clark

On 15 January 1553 the government of Edward VI put in place arrangements to seize the goods of churches throughout England and Wales. It had ordered these goods to be listed by each parish in the summer of 1552. The seizures in Derbyshire took place in May 1553 as Edward VI's health began to decline and concerns about the royal succession grew. The talk will be based on the records, covering large parts of Derbyshire, which were produced to enable and administer these changes.

These were edited by the speaker and published by the Derbyshire Record Society as *Church Goods in Derbyshire 1552-1553* in 2022. They complement the doctoral studies on the impact of the Reformation on the Deanery of Derby by the late Joan d'Arcy.

The Library will be open from 1.00pm and there will also be books for sale. A break for tea after the lecture will be followed by half an hour of short presentations on 'Highlights from the Derbyshire Archaeology Society's Archive'.

**Friday 5 April 2024 – Industrial Archaeology Section**

**The Riddings Oil Refinery of 1848 - 175 years ago:**

**Britain's first oil refinery - was it also the world's first?**

Speaker: Cliff Lea

It was in the 1840s that the Oakes family struck oil whilst sinking one of their coal pits at Riddings near Alfreton. Hear how the technical characteristics of this fluid – a fluid that was regarded as simply a nuisance at the time – were researched on site by a truly pioneering Scottish chemist, James Young, which led to the invention of paraffin wax candles, and the isolation and use of what we now call paraffin oil, allowing the very start of use of paraffin lamps; both inventions were so useful for revolutionising domestic lighting from the 1850s on. Following his early work in Derbyshire it was James Young who was globally the very first to take out a patent to define the oil refining process. When mineral oil was shortly afterwards to be discovered in Pennsylvania and elsewhere, the early oil pioneers in USA were to pay vast royalties to Young in those very early manic days of the rise of the world's most lucrative industry.

Cliff Lea is a chemist who had spent his career in the oil industry. He discovered only when moving to Derbyshire in 1980, that this county is perhaps the most important of all in Britain's mineral oil industry history. He has given talks on the subject at both international and national conferences on the history of the oil industry. Cliff is a founder member and currently chair of the North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society.

**Saturday 11 May 2024 - 2.00pm at Strutts in Belper (no Zoom)**

**Annual General Meeting and members' presentations**

If you would like to give to give a short presentation on a topic related to the archaeology and history of Derbyshire then please get in touch with the programme co-ordinator [webmaster@derbyshireas.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@derbyshireas.org.uk)

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**DERBYSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**  
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The Manor House at Barrow-on-Trent, south front, looking east, in the time of Revd. Henry des Voeux (d. 1872); watercolour by David Payne; sold Bamfords Ltd., Lot 501 March 2020.

Pevensey (Anderita), west (land) gate of the Saxon shore fort, October 2017, with the tower of Westham church to the right. Some crenellations and part of the wall walk just visible.

