



**DERBYSHIRE  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER**

**Issue 87**

**January 2019**



# DERBYSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

2018-2019

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# DERBYSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER 87      JANUARY 2019

### The Cover Story

I have taken over as Editor of the Newsletter from Barbara and would like to thank everyone who has helped make the transition as seamless as possible. I am not proposing to make any changes to the format of the newsletter but if members have any suggestions for a change then please let me know.

I retired in 2012 having spent over 40 years in the IT industry working for the large utility companies – gas, water, electricity and local government – in both the public and private sectors. My wife and I, both Derbyshire born and bred, decided to relocate back to Derbyshire having spent the previous 30 years in the North East of England.

I joined the Society on our return and became involved with the Butterley Gangroad project undertaking some of the research of the old mineral railway from Crich to Bullbridge. Most of the documentation produced by the project is being deposited in the Derbyshire Record Office and a subset has been

uploaded to the project website and this is accessible from the DAS homepage. More recently I have looked at the history of the A6 trunk road from Belper to Cromford given it was the 200th anniversary last year of the road being turnpiked and opened.

I have included the picture of Allestree Hall as I grew up in Allestree and my parents lived in an apartment in the hall when they were first married. My father was a railwayman for most of his working life but in 1948 he was employed by Derby Corporation working on the construction of the golf course in Allestree Park. As you will be aware the hall has been included on the Buildings at Risk register for a number of years and has recently been put on the market by Derby City Council.

I would like to thank you for your contributions to this issue of the newsletter and look forward to working with you all on future issues.

*David Bunting*

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## VISIT TO DEVON

**Monday 8th July to  
Friday 12th July 2019**

The base for our visit this year is Torquay on the south coast. We shall be staying at the Victoria Hotel which is centrally placed on Belgrave Road, Torquay, TQ2 5HL and is part of the TLF hotel group. We have reserved 40 places for a four night stay, all en-suite but with a fixed number of 20 single rooms.

We shall again be using Skills coaches, departing and returning to Derby Coach Station. David Carder will be the party leader. Places we hope to visit in addition to Torquay include Brixham, Dartmouth, Exeter and Tiverton, with Kent's Cavern, and a selection of houses from Buckland Abbey, Castle Drogo, Powderham Castle, Montacute House and Saltram House.

The estimated cost is £440, the exact figure to be made known in May 2019. This will include the cost of the coach, 4 nights en-suite accommodation in a 3\* hotel, with bed, breakfast and a three course evening meal. All entrance fees are also included apart from English Heritage and National Trust sites.

Places will be reserved in order of booking. To book, an initial non-refundable deposit of £50 per person is required, cheques



Library at Montacute House

*Photograph: IDS.photos of Tiverton*

made payable to The Derbyshire Archaeological Society, with DAS Devon visit written on the reverse. Bookings, including cheques, should be sent to Mrs Jane Heginbotham, 59 Hickton Road, Swanwick, Alfreton, DE55 1AG. A stamped addressed envelope or an email address should be included to receive confirmation of your booking and a receipt. We strongly advise that you take out personal travel and cancellation insurance.

Please NOTE the change of dates from weekend to midweek. We advise that to avoid disappointment you book as soon after reading this announcement as possible. If you have any queries please contact Jane on 01773 609629 or email to [jane.heginbotham@btinternet.com](mailto:jane.heginbotham@btinternet.com).

*Joan D'Arcy*

## NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATE

### Derbyshire Miscellany

The subscription for Derbyshire Miscellany has been £6 a year since 2007. Because printing and postage costs have gone up over the years, the subscription was increased to £8 a year for members from 1 January 2019.

If you pay your Derbyshire Archaeological Society membership and Derbyshire Miscellany subscription together by Standing Order, please could you amend your Standing Order to £26 (DAS £18 + Miscellany £8 = £26). It may be possible to do this online if you have an online banking account or by telephone. If you pay by cheque, please send a cheque for £26 payable to the Derbyshire Archaeological Society to the Hon. Treasurer, Mrs Jane Heginbotham, 59 Hickton Road, Swanwick, Alfreton, Derbyshire, DE55 1AG.

The subscription for Institutions has also been increased plus the additional postage costs for overseas members. The UK subscription (including p&p) will now be £12 per year. The USA subscription (including p&p) will now be £16 per year.

*Susan Peberdy*

## **LIBRARY NOTES**

By the time you read this newsletter the library should be ready for opening. It has been a much slower process than had been originally anticipated but at the time of writing I am pleased to report that the Library will be open for business in the New Year. The books are on the shelves and waiting to be opened and read.

For reasons of space the journal collection has had to be reduced but as much as possible has been kept in the library itself. This includes all journals pertaining to those societies bordering Derbyshire and the past 10 years' worth of all other journals, including the national journals. The exchange journals system will be continued as normal. I am so pleased to say that the majority of the remaining journals for which we have no room, have been archived and volumes will be available for loan on application.

The library continues to add to the collection and full details of the catalogue, the journal collection, opening times and loan procedures will be circulated by email and partly via the website when they are all finalised.

I would like to thank all those who have helped over the past months – it has been a somewhat protracted and dusty job. I have received offers of help for the running of the Library, for which also many thanks. I will be in touch.

These are the proposed opening times for January and February to get everything moving.

Wednesday January 16th 1.30-3.30

Saturday January 26th 10am-12 noon

Wednesday February 13th 1.30-3.30

Saturday February 23rd 10am-12 noon

If you don't know where the Library is it is at Strutts, please go to reception and they will direct you. The postcode for Strutts is DE56 1UU. There is plenty of parking and a bus stop just outside.

This is the beginning of a new chapter for the Library.

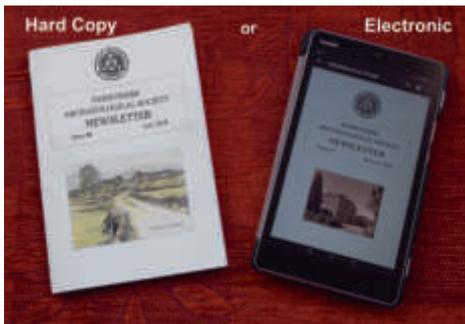
*Anne Allcock*

## **DISTRIBUTION OF DAS NEWSLETTER**

A review of the distribution of the six monthly DAS Newsletter will be undertaken in the early part of 2019. The Newsletter is compiled by the Editor following the receipt of articles from members participating in the various activities of the Society. The Newsletter is then sent electronically to a local printer for printing and finishing and the booklets are then returned to the Society for mailing. At present the Society is posting out 800 copies of the Newsletter on an annual basis in the second class post.

As a trial for this issue of the Newsletter we have contracted with a local printer to provide the full service (printing, finishing and mailing) but for cost reasons this cannot be sustained as the long term method of production and distribution. The Society is therefore investigating other methods of distributing the Newsletter to all of its members with the aim of reducing the annual production and distribution costs.

The electronic distribution of publications has increased significantly in recent years and the Society is evaluating the option for members to receive the Newsletter by email. A proportion of members do provide their email address to the membership secretary and the current electronic format of the Newsletter sent to the local printer is compatible for reading on PCs, tablets and other electronic devices. A small number of alternative electronic formats could be produced (e.g. for Kindle) if a number of members requested a specific file format.



The Society is therefore seeking the views of members as to the preferred method of distribution of the Newsletter and asking those members who have provided their email address if they would be prepared to receive the Newsletter via email. Those members opting to receive the Newsletter via email would be sent a return slip (via email) to confirm their acceptance to receive the Newsletter electronically and to indicate their preferred electronic format.

The Newsletter will continue to be produced in hard copy format on a six monthly basis but hopefully the number of printed copies required will be reduced.

Please return your views to the Editor ([davejbunting@btinternet.com](mailto:davejbunting@btinternet.com) or see other contact details on inside front cover).

*David Bunting*

## SUMMER VISIT

**Herefordshire**  
**12th – 16th July 2018**

### Thursday 12th July

Thirty eight members left Derby coach station for this year's summer visit. Once again our trusty coachman Ron Todd was at the wheel. Our first *en route* visit was to Goodrich Castle in Herefordshire where our tireless guide David Carder met us. The English Heritage site provided a convenient lunch stop, having a comfortable café undercover for those wishing to purchase refreshment and picnic tables outside for who had brought their own food. Suitably refreshed, the more energetic of the party made their way up to the castle site from where they were rewarded with splendid views over the Wye valley. The extensive ruins of the castle date largely from the 12th and 13th centuries and are in the attractive red stone. It comprises a 12th century keep and 13th century outer defence walls with towers. Some members ventured up into the keep and onto the wall walk but for those less foot sure there was the Great Hall, the Gatehouse and the Barbican with its chapel to explore. In the barbican gate the sharp-eyed can see the vertical grooves in the wall, which housed the portcullis and pulleys.

From Goodrich we drove to the village of Much Marcle. Our first visit here was to Hellens Manor. The two-storey brick building has been owned and lived in by the same family since the 15th century and although run now as a trust it retains the air of a comfortable family home. The oldest parts of the building date from the late 15th century but extensions were added on in the 16th century and again alteration took place in the 17th and 18th centuries. The delight of this tour was in the enthusiasm of the guides and their stories around the many

fascinating objects, which have accumulated in the house over the centuries. The staircase and hall fireplace panelling provided a fore taste of the following days' visits. These are attributed to John Abel who carved the screen at Abbey Dore. At the end of the tour, each member of the group was given a souvenir guide to the house and its history and after a short time to explore the charming garden we left to visit the Parish Church of St Bartholomew.

The church was constructed of local sandstone in the 13th century and the nave and chancel remain largely unaltered as a testament to the English Gothic style. The church was restored in the 19th century and gained some fine stained glass of this period to compliment the remains of some medieval glass. The main attraction in the church has to be its important monuments. The effigy of Blanche Mortimer who died in 1347 lies as if asleep on a couch beneath a canopy in the north wall of the chancel. A dog lies at her feet and the mason has lovingly carved the details of her elegant



*Effigy of Blanche Mortimer*

gown and the folds of her veil. The 13th century Kyrle chapel has a fine 14th century monument to Sir Hugh Audley and his wife, which again depicts the armour and clothing of the figures in fine detail. A fine conclusion to the day's visits. Thanks to John and Joan D'Arcy for their contribution to the organisation of this day.

After this the party continued their journey to The Three Counties Hotel in Hereford. This is a modern establishment, which has pleasant bedrooms, a restaurant, lounges and bar with an outside seating area, which was a relaxing spot after the day's exertions. After dinner Keith Ray gave us a talk on recent excavations in the area.

### **Friday 13th July – The Golden Valley and Hereford**

Dore Abbey comprises the remains of the former 12th century Cistercian abbey and the 13th Early English east end, which forms the present church. After the dissolution of the Monasteries the building fell into disrepair but this east end was restored and rebuilt in 1632-4 as a parish church by the first Viscount Scudamore. A new tower was built as part of the restoration and John Abel, whose work we had previously seen at Hellens, was responsible for the fine roof and some of the fittings. There is some remaining medieval stained glass in the ambulatory and the Hoskyns Chapel whilst the impressive east window is 17th century. Also of interest are the remains of some wall paintings, stone roof bosses and floor tile work.

Next stop on the tour was Kilpeck Church. Here we were met by our guide, Diana Thomas. The church has outstanding examples of the Herefordshire School of Romanesque Sculpture. We began at the south door. The door boasts richly carved columns to each side surmounted by a semicircular arch with chevron detail and



radiating animal and curious beasts' heads. The tympanum depicts the tree of life. Diana explained the chevron design as being symbolic of waves. This was an interesting interpretation, new to most of the party and one which led to some discussion on its reliability. The interior of the church afforded a rich cornucopia of delightful carved faces, animals foliage etc. Thanks to Diana as she was an extremely knowledgeable guide.

The day concluded with a visit to Hereford Cathedral. The visit was preceded by an 'interesting' tour of the city's one-way system with Ron at the wheel. The weather by this time was inclement to say the least and the party was grateful for the shelter afforded by this magnificent building. Some repaired to the small but pleasant café for lunch whilst others explored the delights of the cathedral including a visit to the Chain Library that houses the famous Mappa Mundi. The afternoon included the opportunity to explore parts of the city either solo or in the company of our

wonderful guide David. Lack of suitable waterproof protection was no deterrent as he led a bedraggled party around the environs of the cathedral, pointing out details in the vernacular architecture. Any would be defectors looking wistfully into teashop windows were skilfully deflected by the promise of delights not to be missed around the next corner. The rain eventually abating we were able to explore the outside of the cathedral. Thanks to Jane Heginbotham for her assistance in preparing today's visits. After dinner at the hotel David Carder gave us an excellent illustrated talk as an introduction to Herefordshire.

### **Saturday 14th July – Croft Castle and 'Black and White' trail**

We arrived in Leominster to begin our day with a visit to the Parish Church. To our dismay this was firmly barred against us. Efforts were made to contact a key holder but in the meantime the Grange Court, which is home to council offices, had opened its doors and we were able to take a tour around this. This is a timber-framed building dating from the middle of the 16th century. From an architectural point of view, the outside is more interesting than the interior, having rich carvings and inscriptions. However, inside we discovered there was a small exhibition space that was hosting a display of quite beautiful embroideries depicting the history of the town. The church being finally opened, we were able to enjoy the Norman nave and aisles with its massive stone pillars. Outside, the Norman west front and tower base is ornamented with the rich decoration reminiscent of that at the church at Kilpeck. The following town trail afforded the opportunity to view a range of timber framed buildings.

The next stage of this day's tour was to Croft Castle. Although the manor has been in existence since the 11th century it is still

lived in by descendants of the original owners. The house was largely rebuilt after the Civil War and further added to in the 18th century. The interiors are 18th century rococo and 19th century gothic. The weather being hot and sunny the majority of the party spent the time here exploring the beautiful gardens with its shady trees.

We travelled next to Pembridge. The parish church (St Mary's) contains interesting effigies from the 12th century and wall painting from the 13th and the 18th centuries. The star of the show here is the detached timber framed bell tower. We were able to inspect this from the inside and examine the construction in some detail. The temperature had by now risen to near tropical levels. Nothing daunted, David led a group around the streets to enjoy the rich tapestry of timber framed houses.

On to the small town of Weoble. The parish church (St Peter and St Paul) was the first port of call. Dating from the early 13th century through to the 15th century there were interesting architectural details to be observed in the tracery and carved decorations. The ballflower decoration

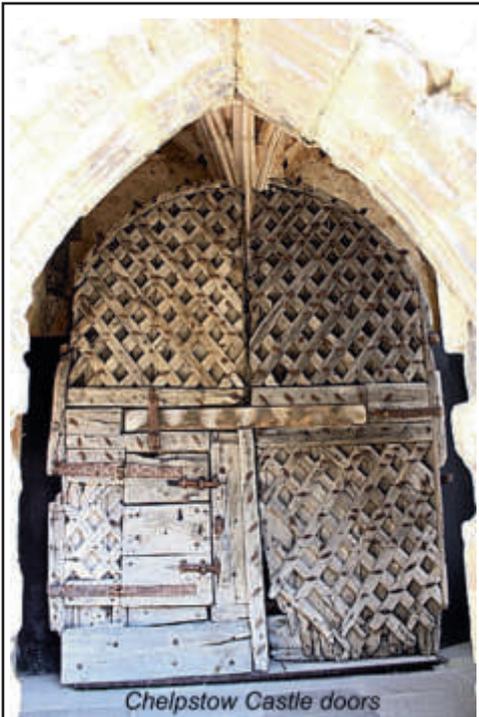


being pointed out to us by David. The town is a patchwork of timber framed buildings all vying for our attention. David's trail was dauntingly crammed with curiosities for us to seek out. The heat was too much to allow for much walking for some of the group but the less fragile were well rewarded for their exertions. This concluded the day's splendid variety of visits for which Janette Jackson earns the plaudits for her part in the organisation.

### Sunday 15th July – Monmouthshire

The day began with a visit to the romantic ruins of Tintern Abbey, nestling in the Wye Valley. This former Cistercian house was founded in 1131 for monks from France. However most of the remains date from the 13th century. The site is in the care of Cadw. There are very good panels throughout the site which help to explain the various locations. The soaring arches of the nave and transepts provided the keen photographers in the group with ample subject matter for compositions.

Next stop was Chepstow an attractive town on the river Wye. David had prepared an excellent town trail which included the 13th century town gate and Port Wall, priory church of St Mary and passed by the interesting Powis almshouses (18th century) and the 17th century Montague Almshouses. The priory church of St Mary was largely rebuilt in the 18th and 19th centuries but the remaining Norman west front made it worth a visit. At the top of the town stands the impressive castle. It is an impressive site perched on the cliffs above the Wye. It is one of the oldest surviving post Roman stone fortifications. The curtain walls incorporate round towers including the outer gatehouse towers, Marten's tower with trefoil headed lancet windows and arrow slits. The great tower houses a rectangular hall. Part of the domestic range of buildings, the Earl's chamber, has been



restored and decorated as it would have been in its heyday. The site is so large that a full day would be needed to do it real justice. One treasure not to be missed was the surviving original great wooded doors. These have been dated to no later than 1190.

Leaving Chelvestow, the group proceeded to the site of the Roman city of Caerwent. Here the party followed a self-guided trail around the extensive remains. For some this began with a walk around the walls. These are still 17ft high in some places and are in a remarkable state of preservation. A modern road bisects the whole site and some of the city's remains have to be searched for between the modern village dwellings. In spite of it being a Sunday in July there were very few people apart from us on the site. The Church contains some interesting Roman fragments. Sadly, in spite of prior arrangements having been made, the doors remained firmly locked against us.

The final visit of the day was to Raglan Castle. This is another commanding edifice set in a strategic position. It dates mainly from the 15th and 16th centuries. Although battlemented, turreted and moated it was largely built to show off the owner's status and wealth. In the 16th century a large flat area outside the moat was laid out as a pleasure garden but all that remains of this is a lawn. The grand staircase leads from the fountain court to the remains of the state apartments. The hexagonal great tower reached by a bridge over the moat, was five storeys high when built. In spite of considerable civil war damage is still very impressive. The site has excellent explanation boards throughout to aid understanding of the purpose of the various areas. Thank you to Ann and David Jones who undertook the organisation of this packed day of the tour. Dinner was followed by the usual quiz.

### **Monday 16th July – Derby via Ludlow and Redditch**

The final day of the tour. We set off at 9.30 for the Shropshire town of Ludlow. Ludlow boasts the remains of a castle begun in the 11th century to defend the Marches and was greatly enlarged in the 15th century by Roger Mortimer. It is still in private ownership and the castle green incorporates a bowling green and a 19th century house houses a busy café and a shop. Within the inner bailey there is a striking round tower, which once housed the chapel of St Mary Magdalene. The town itself is a 'Black and White' town, which profited from the 15th century wool trade but burgeoned into a fashionable Georgian town specialising in glove making. Walking around we were now able to recognise some of the variations in timber frame construction owing to the diligence of David pointing these out in other locations on the tour. Most of us were able to spot his red herring of the 1926 built NatWest Bank building as an imposter.



Ludlow Castle

The parish church of St Lawrence was yet another gem. Much of the building is 15th and 16th century perpendicular but there is a 14th century decorated porch. David pointed out the two stories of geometrical tracery, and the south transept whose windows have reticulated tracery. The ballflower ornamentation, which we had met at the beginning of our tour five days previously was also to be found. The chancel stalls have the most wonderful and fanciful misericord carvings. Other highlights include the 14th century stained glass window depicting the Tree of Jesse.

The final visit of the tour was to Forge Museum in Redditch. This is the only surviving water powered scouring mill. Time was short but this proved to be a fascinating and very different experience to the rest of the tour. The party was divided into two groups who were guided around the site by knowledgeable volunteers. The forge produced needles and the whole process of

finishing these was shown to us with some excellent demonstrations and a chance to ask questions. There was a small museum but very little time to inspect this. We were provided with welcome tea and cake to sustain us on the journey home. Thanks again to Joan for her work on this day's organisation.

*Enid Strutt*

*(Photographs: D J Jones)*

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP

**Buxton Museum  
11th August 2018**

On Saturday 11th August a very select group of DAS members visited the Buxton Museum and Art Gallery for a talk by Ros Westwood (Derbyshire Museums Manager at Buxton) on the history of the museum and its recent multi million pound refurbishment which she managed and directed. The talk was followed by an opportunity to admire the new displays and chat to Ros.

Ros told us that the museum is celebrating both a 125th and a 90th birthday. It began life in the newly built Town Hall (in 1893 one supposes), principally as an art gallery but among its early exhibits were the Roman bronzes and bones from the Deepdale Caves (articles on these excavations can be found in DAJ vols 12,13,16,17 available at [http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archive\\_s/view/daj](http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archive_s/view/daj)).

In 1928 it moved to the present building, the museum being on the ground floor, the library on the first. The building had already had a chequered career. The Peak Hydropathic Hotel, built by Samuel Hyde, a balneologist, opened in 1885 but eventually fell on hard times and in 1915 it became

part of the Canadian military hospital in Buxton. After the war it briefly became a hotel again but in 1926 was bought by the Buxton Corporation and the museum moved there in 1928.

Ros mentioned the names of some of the benefactors of the museum, including Arthur Gomersal an early benefactor whose son Oliver, also a benefactor, opened the refurbished museum earlier this year. Another was William Boyd Dawkins who opened the museum on its present site in 1928. He had carried out research on Creswell Crags and many of his finds are in Buxton Museum and his library was donated to Buxton by his widow. There is re-creation of his study in the Museum.

We were reminded that the Peak District was one of the first tourist destinations in the 18th century and 20 million now visit annually, hence the need for the refurbishment. The work began in September 2016, parts of the Museum remaining open throughout. We were told



that displaying large heavy objects together with tiny ones was a problem, another was having a display about Finn Cop when the finds were still undergoing scientific analysis but these were overcome. The museum also obtained a Heritage Lottery grant to develop an interactive website (<http://www.wondersofthepeak.org.uk/>) and an app, these give access to information on the Peak district as well as the Wonders of the Peak gallery and its contents. The talk was given in the room which housed the Collectors & Curiosities Exhibition, one of the ever changing temporary displays staged at the museum. This exhibition featured seldom seen items and paintings from the collection. I found a leather bottle in its original museum case intriguing, it had been rescued like this from a fire at Buxton Market Hall in September 1885.

We were also told of next year's exciting exhibition at the museum – Hoards from the British Museum. It will be at Buxton from Saturday 13 April to Sunday 16 June 2019 and can be seen only at Buxton and Salisbury Museums.

On the first floor of the Museum is the refurbished Wonders of the Peak Gallery, bright and uncluttered but with an amazing number of items, interactive displays and time lines; you could spend several days there. What remains in my mind particularly are the Finn Cop display with its 3D printed skull, the Liff's Low beaker – well lit and close up, and the Roman bronze jewellery from the workshop in Poole Cavern. There is a time line running the length of the

room starting with the million year old scimitar tooth cat right up to yesterdays must have, with several coin hoards in between. There is also a magnificent display of Ashford black 'marble' and one of Blue John, not forgetting the Blue John window commissioned by the museum, an inspired use of some of their collection of Blue John fragments.

*Ann Jones*

## Flag Fen, Peterborough 1st September 2018

The day was bright and pleasant as members set off for the day in East Anglia but due to heavy traffic on the A1 (Burghley Horse Trials) we had a delayed start to our visits. First stop was at Flag Fen, a Bronze Age site in Cambridgeshire, which is home to a unique ancient monument – a kilometre long wooden causeway and centre platform preserved in the wetland which is thought to be have been built and used by prehistoric people as a place of worship and ritual. It is estimated that 60,000 upright timbers and 250,000 horizontal planks are buried under the ground along with many swords and personal items given as offerings to the water. In the visitor centre's preservation hall, one section of the timbers is preserved in situ and prevented from drying out by misting with water. A fascinating sight.

The archaeologist, Francis Pryor, discovered Flag Fen in 1982 when carrying out a detailed survey of cleaned-out drainage dykes in the area. He said that he stumbled, literally, upon the site when he tripped on a piece of wood lying at the bottom of a drainage ditch. He suggests that 'settlers often vied for social status by showing they could afford to discard valuable possessions' hence the numerous articles found. Dendrochronology dating of the posts gives an estimated date for the various stages of construction as between 1365BC and 967BC.



Bronze Age log boats recently discovered at nearby Must Farm, Whittlesey, can be seen undergoing preservation in large tanks of wax.

Also on the extensive site are reconstructions of Bronze Age and Iron Age roundhouses, a section of a Roman road known as the Fen Causeway, a bog garden (where the oldest wheel in England was found), a Bronze Age droveway, a museum, a big tent for children to get 'hands on' with archaeology and much, much more. It is a very atmospheric and peaceful place with an ancient breed of sheep quietly grazing the pasture and the lake or mere home to many species of duck.

After a quick drinks break, we only had to travel five miles to Peterborough and the Cathedral. The city was very busy with shoppers and street entertainment in the shape of buskers and a troop of Morris Dancers. The origins of the Cathedral can be traced back to the first monastery founded on the site by King Peada of Mercia in AD655. This monastic settlement was destroyed by the Vikings in 870 and rebuilt as a Benedictine Abbey around 970 until it too was destroyed by an accidental fire in 1116. It was rebuilt between 1118 and 1238, became a cathedral in 1541 and is known as the Cathedral Church of St Peter, St Paul and St Andrew.

The Cathedral is adjacent to a very spacious Market Place with a delightful floral



decorated 17th century Guildhall. Passing through a gateway you are presented with the wonderful sight of the magnificent early 13th century Gothic style west front which is said to have the grandest and finest portico in Europe. There are three arches flanked by twin towers. The central arch is said to lean out slightly, perhaps due to subsidence; another suggestion, however, is that the lean was deliberate to create an optical illusion making the central arch look more imposing. It is adorned with some thirty statues representing key figures from the Bible and the Cathedral's past and stands in a pleasant grassy space with mature trees. Inside the most impressive sight is the wooden nave ceiling, tree-ring dated to around 1250 and being the only surviving wooden ceiling of this age in the country. The design is original although it was repainted in the 18th and 19th centuries and has recently been restored and conserved. The walls are quite plain with few memorials but there is one to Katharine of Aragon who was buried at the Abbey in 1536. Also marked is the burial place of Mary Queen of Scots after her execution in 1587 but her body was removed to Westminster Abbey by order of her son, James I. The Cathedral suffered dreadfully at the time of the Civil War when soldiers broke in and destroyed monuments, stained glass, organs, prayer books, panelling and carved stonework. The building was gradually restored from 1660 onwards and we now see a beautiful spacious building with its many treasures.

We were intrigued to see Tim Peake's Soyuz descent module complete with draped 25 metre parachute and spacesuit which had 'landed' in Peterborough as part of its British tour. It had certainly attracted the crowds.

Many members visited the Museum, which is located on Priestgate, an imposing mansion which was formerly the city's first hospital, the Peterborough Infirmary, from 1857 until 1928. The original operating theatre has been restored and was open for viewing. There was a small but interesting exhibition of 'Treasures' each with a significant link to the city which included the beautiful enamelled and copper gilt Casket of Thomas Becket on loan from the Ashmolean Museum and commissioned by Abbot Benedict of Peterborough after the saint's death, several ancient books including the Lindsay Psalter and the Peterborough Bestiary and the Water Newton treasure, a collection of precious silver objects from the nearby Roman town of Durobrivae on Ermine Street. There was also a splendid collection of objects made by Napoleonic prisoners-of-war at Norman Cross prison consisting of toys, model ships, dominoes sets etc. from carved wood and animal bones and lots of straw marquetry. There was a mock-up of a prisoner's cell complete with hammocks. Much more to see but too little time – worth another visit certainly.

*Anne Haywood*

## **Life and Architecture of Ralph Cromwell 5th October 2018**

Our first speaker of the season was James Wright who came to talk to us of the connection between Ralph Cromwell and Architecture. James began by telling us how the power of politics was very much in evidence during the War of the Roses. When Ralph was only seven or eight he was

in service to Thomas Duke of Clarence and joined him when his army crossed in to Normandy in 1412, Ralph wasn't a great soldier but became key diplomat to Henry V and continued fighting in France throughout his reign. Then the king dies and is succeeded by Henry VI.

Ralph served as 3rd Lord Treasurer of England from 1433-1443 and twice as Chamberlain of the Household. He inherits Tattershall Castle in Lincolnshire and decides to make the castle his home. The castle was originally built by Robert de Tateshal in 1231 and consisted of a great hall, kitchens, a gatehouse and a chapel defended by a curtain wall and surrounded by a single moat. It was built on wetland and would have been an isolated site in medieval England only accessible by boat. Ralph's marriage to Margaret, daughter of 12th Baron Deincourt, brings wealth in to the marriage, which allows him to fund his appetite for grand buildings, including the re-building of Tattershall castle on a grand scale. He builds a massive tower, which still remains today, dendrochronology dated to around 1453, with a stack of large rectangular chambers with rooms in a cloister type roof, the speaker speculates; 'European matriculation', a spiral staircase projects from the wall, with early work of brick heraldry picking out designs found in early brickwork in Poland. James paused once more to speculate, 'where is he getting



Tattershall Castle

his ideas, maybe Thornton Abbey in Lincolnshire', the royal family were using brick in the 1440s, also Eton School, was built of brick. Cromwell had spent a long time in France where a quantity of brick was being manufactured by Baldwin, a Dutchman. Brickmaking in England was not widely established until the 16th century.

James continues questioning, 'how can we view this brand new form of Architecture, Ralph is telling us about himself, his sign as treasurer'. He is a traditionalist, very conservative and all this time is allying himself to Henry VI. The state is broke, but he has money. He finances many projects including a manor at Wymondham in Norfolk, a hunting tower at Woodhall and he rebuilds South Wingfield Palace. At Tattershall, the design on the fireplace tells us how he wishes to portray himself, decorated with his coat of arms, his wish to signify power shown in many places, for example a dragon fighting a centaur, but he also shows his piety, in a carved rabbit showing meekness, and the treasurer's purse is depicted everywhere. His motto, 'Have I not the Right', is portrayed on the Gatehouse. Also at Tattershall, Cromwell builds the college, the Holy Trinity Church and two almshouses.

James concluded, Cromwell held the purse strings for eleven years, but was unable to reign in the money, and eventually lost the Chamberlainship. Cromwell died at South Wingfield and was buried at the church in Tattershall.

Tattershall was eventually purchased by Lord Curzon of Kedleston, who reinstated the fireplaces, restored the buildings and excavated the moats. When Lord Curzon died, the property was bequeathed to The National Trust according to his will.

*Janette Jackson*

## OLD ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**Peter Graystone –  
23rd November 2018**

*Wilcume* – Old English for welcome! We welcomed Peter Graystone to educate and enlighten us with a session on language from earliest times until AD1175. He explained that modern English goes back to the 18th century when dictionaries were beginning to be published. Before that, language in the 14th century is called Late Middle English and that in the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries is referred to as Early Modern English. Peter runs a study group which is held in a room on the Keele University campus where Old English texts are transcribed and discussed. New members are welcome – contact Peter by email: – [plgraystone@btinternet.com](mailto:plgraystone@btinternet.com) – if interested in joining.

Our ancestors in Anglo-Saxon times left copious writings in the vernacular, as well as in the more normal Latin. The extent of vernacular literature in England is unusual for European languages and can be traced to the encouragement of Alfred the Great in promoting learning and culture in the 9th century. There are about three thousand known separate texts and around thirty thousand separate words, so Old English is extremely well preserved.

Peter provided us with handouts and we worked our way through the alphabet with him demonstrating how the letters would have sounded – there are no silent letters, all are pronounced. Some letters are a different shape than their modern form e.g. combined ‘a’ and ‘e’ and do not appear on the keyboard. Some letters have more than one sound. V, J, K and W do not exist in the alphabet and Y is a vowel. He went on to explain how nouns, verbs and adjectives were formed and advised that Old English

had three genders (masculine, female, neuter) in the noun and adjective. He gave some examples of some conversational words e.g. *ic hatte* (my name is) and other phrases that we did find recognisable e.g. *hit is wearm* (it is warm) and *forgief me* (excuse me).

A member of Peter’s study group had translated a modern children’s story ‘*Not now Bernard*’ into Old English and we had fun looking at the translation and were amused to note that the word used for ‘television’ had been transcribed as a *metingbox*. We also looked at a piece of Old English manuscript from the Bible, the story of Noah’s ark, and had a joint effort at recognising words. Capital letters were used very rarely, people’s names were not capitalised and there was no punctuation apart from dots at the end of a phrase. It was pointed out that the word ‘and’ is represented by the shape of a ‘7’ placed directly in front of the next word, so we are all pretty confident that we shall recognise that word in the future. The Venerable Bede wanted his fellow countrymen to be able to read the word of God in their own language. It is a legend that he died on the day he completed the translation of St John’s Gospel. Unfortunately, not all the works of St Bede were preserved and most of his translations, including the Gospel, were lost.

After the Norman Conquest, English was replaced, for a time, as the language of the upper classes by Anglo-Norman, a relative of French. This is regarded as marking the end of the Old English era.

The audience much appreciated the talk, asked several questions and some may wish to learn more and join Peter’s group at Keele.

*Anne Haywood*

# ARCHITECTURAL SECTION

## Barlborough Hall 12th May 2018

After a fascinating talk about Barlborough Hall by Peter Smith in November 2017 we were able to follow it with a summer visit to the building itself, under his expert and enthusiastic guidance. The Hall is now a preparatory school for Mount St Mary's College but we were warmly welcomed during term time by the Head, Mrs Karen Keeton. For the weekend, her charges were safely away in their accommodation block, the former stables. This allowed the Society a very wide access to the Hall itself. By chance, we were also joined by two visiting American relatives of the last female member of the Rodes family that had sold the building in 1935.

Peter started the tour before the south front (see below) with a general introduction, noting that it had been built for Sir Francis Rodes, a judge in the Court of Common Pleas, who had enjoyed the patronage of the Earl of Shrewsbury. The coats of arms of Rodes, the Earl and Queen Elizabeth can be seen in ascending order above the original main entrance. The house has been dated to 1583-85 and he believes is correctly attributed to Robert Smythson (though



Mark Girouard is less convinced). The house was built in a much shorter time than Wollaton Hall, Smythson's other project about that date, which has led Peter to believe the actual construction was in the hands of local builders, leading to some of the evident anomalies.

Particular features to which Peter drew our attention were the service rooms located under the main rooms partially raising the level of the first floor, the very thick internal walls to compensate for the extensive windows and glass that make it an 'outward looking' house, and a central courtyard around which there are corridors at two levels. As we walked around the outside of the building the prominence of the projecting bays rising to towers on the north and south fronts were striking, particularly that at the North West which had a very marked but corrected structural tilt. The north front also has a centre bay with an unusual chamfered triangular projection. Both the east and west fronts showed changes to their windows, evident from resulting loss of symmetry and incongruous hood moulds. The east front had been modified in 1820 to become the main entrance, with the original scullery opened and transformed into an entrance hall and an outer porch added.

Inside, we turned right from the original front door to the Great Hall with its wooden fireplace, probably Victorian, but also a large family shield above dated to 1697 and a fireback displaying 1616. Peter explained that the Great Chamber next door, now significantly bigger, had begun to assume prominence over the Hall. The chimney piece said to be a Smythson design, has an impressive stone overmantel with the coats of arms of Sir Francis and his two wives flanked by statues of Wisdom and Justice. The small central courtyard of the house (no more than about 5m by 5m) was surrounded by corridors having external



windows towards the centre. It was modified in 1820, to include a staircase with the space above enclosed against the elements. Panelling was a feature of many rooms, and in one case to partition off a bay window.

Peter explained that there were often heating and cooling problems in Elizabethan 'glasshouses'. Another interesting feature was the stone spiral staircase up to a large octagonal shaped lantern whose transom and mullion windows on every side provide light for the stairs. Surprisingly, this rather handsome cupola is barely visible outside because of the parapet.

The detailed knowledge and enthusiasm with which Peter Smith showed us both the innovative features and the anomalies of Barlborough made this a most enjoyable and architecturally instructive visit for which we were very grateful.

*D G Jones*

## **Matlock Bank 18th August 2018**

The 18th of August proved to be a scorching day as we staggered up Matlock Bank to the Church of All Saints to meet our guide, Ian Mitchell. Ian had been the vicar here, so that his knowledge of both church and parish was extensive. The tour started in the large 19th century church which was constructed to serve the increase

in population at that time. Built in the 1880s, it was designed by T.H. and F. Bailey of Bradford and was to have a tower and spire, but funds ran short. The West end was therefore not completed until 1958 to designs of Charles Potter of Matlock; it is nevertheless an impressive building in the Early English Gothic style.

The most notable features of the interior are the stained glass windows, the East window being attributed to Burne-Jones and made by William Morris. It consists of three large lancets, capped by a hexafoil in the gable above. The lancets show Christ with a cross as the tree of life, the Virgin Mary and St John centrally with the four evangelists, Peter and Paul in the side windows. It was given in memory of the Revd. John Higgs who had donated the land for the church.

The Lady Chapel was furnished as such in the 1920s and also contains interesting windows including a modern one of 2005. There is plenty of original marble to be seen, including the pulpit and font. The reredos is of Caen stone by Thomas Ryder of Notting Hill, 1898.

We then left the church to look at the architecture of the parish, which was also of the Victorian era. The fashion for hydropathic treatment to cure anything had been fostered by William Smedley, and numerous hydros had sprung up to use the local mineral waters. We saw several of



these, though none anything like as big as Smedley's, which is now the County offices. The largest rival we saw was Rockhall Hydro; we also had a good look at Cavendish Hydro, now an educational establishment.

Other buildings noted included the old tram depot for a cable tramway, then the steepest in the world with a gradient of nearly one in five. The remains of Smedley's grandiloquent house, Riber Castle stood out in the distance on a nearby hill.

We then looked at the Smedley's vast Hydro, which lines both sides of the road with a connecting bridge. Being the County offices since the 1950s, it was open and we were able to see the grand entrance hall and wander into the impressive gardens. On the terrace is a glass tea room, dating from 1901.

*Joan D'Arcy*

### **Stonywell Cottage 16th November 2018**

Allan Tyler, a National Trust volunteer, spoke to us on 16th November 2018 about Stonywell Cottage, a small Arts and Crafts National Trust property in Ulverscroft in the high lands of Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire.

It was built in 1897-99 as a summer cottage for industrialist Sydney Gimson whose family business was the Vulcan Works in Leicester. The architect was his brother Ernest Gimson who studied architecture in London and then moved to the Cotswolds where he worked in partnership with Sidney and Ernest Barnsley. They designed and made apparently plain wooden furniture following traditional principles. The cottage was set in rocky, uneven ground. It is largely built of stones that were lying about or re-used from walls. The architect took advantage of the sloping ground to change

levels and the cottage incorporates a substantial rocky outcrop. From the outside the chimney stack is very prominent. It was thatched until a fire in 1938 but now there is a Swithland slate roof. There were other changes: one of the bedrooms was enlarged. Sanitation arrangements have been improved and there is electricity. Water need no longer be drawn by hand from the well.

Furniture from the Cotswolds partnership was used to complement the Arts and Crafts inspiration of the cottage. Not all the original furniture is still there but many of the replacement pieces are from the same workshop. Much of the timber used in construction was cut and prepared at Sapperton in Gloucestershire and transported 90 miles for assembly on site, allowing for Gimson's elaborate z-ground plan for the cottage.

The grounds (2 hectares) were wild but over several decades a large garden has developed. Close by is Stonywell Wood (4 hectares are owned by the National Trust and are also open to the public), part of the 105 hectares Ulverscroft Valley SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest).

Gimson designed four other cottages in Ulverscroft though some of them are greatly altered.

Three generations of the Gimson family owned the cottage. In 2012 it was made available for the National Trust to acquire.

Generous donations and a public appeal allowed the house, gardens and woodland to be opened to the public in February 2015: the first house in Leicestershire to be in the care of the National Trust.

*John Morrissey*

## LOCAL HISTORY SECTION

### Visit to Arbury Hall 25th July 2018

This was the Local History Section's first venture into a summer visit by coach. A 39 seater coach was booked and the Section is pleased to report that every seat was filled. A fine day was more or less guaranteed this summer and a tour round pleasant countryside to the Woodlands Garden Centre for lunch provided a good start to our visit.

We arrived on time at Arbury Hall having negotiated the entrance towers the only way a coach can – i.e. from the cross road opposite them. We all felt the need to breathe in as we went through.

The two guides Sharon and Ken very ably took us round this beautiful family home.

The house was built around the site of the original cloisters of a monastery. The House has been in the possession of the Newdigate family for nearly 450 years and has been through various styles until Sir Roger Newdigate 5th Bt. took it in hand and redesigned it in the Gothic Revival style. He started the alterations on his return from his Grand Tour in 1742 and it seems to have been completed by 1805 and the House has remained almost exactly as he left it to the present day. Each succeeding room seems to have a finer fan vaulted ceiling with more elaborate plasterwork – Grinling Gibbons was mentioned in connection with the chapel ceiling. Fine portraits of succeeding generations abound and a very fine Sir Joshua Reynolds of John the Baptist as a boy. Beautiful furniture handed carefully down through the years often with particular tales of members of the family attached to them. A fine desk used by Sir



Roger is displayed with a portrait of him sitting at that desk. The Long gallery on the first floor is very Elizabethan. The grounds are mainly park lands. In the last war it was used as a prisoner-of-war camp but is now reclaimed as agricultural land. There is a large perennial border near the house and hiding behind an ancient yew hedge a very picturesque rose garden.

We finished the visit with a very tasty cream tea in the Stables tea room.

*Susan Peberdy*

### The Life and Work of a Master Thatcher – David Wood 19th October 2018

This was a talk without a Powerpoint and delivered without 'lights out'. Instead, David brought with him the tools of his trade and a section of thatched roof, bits of which had to be swept up afterwards. Great stuff!

David is a Derbyshire man who, as a schoolboy in Cromford, saw George Mellor, a Master Thatcher working on a cottage. Smitten, he pleaded with George to take him on and from then on he spent his weekends and days bunked off school, climbing up and down ladders supplying the reeds for the six week job.

After school, a seven year apprenticeship followed by a test piece in Potter St.

Melbourne made him a Master Thatcher. There were some 900 thatchers in the trade association in the 1980s. Today there are over 1500, but there are more who don't join. It certainly isn't a dying trade. Many women make very good thatchers, and former members of the armed forces, particularly the R.A.F. have entered the trade. There's plenty of work; David currently has a three year waiting list.

Thatchers use either wheat straw or water reeds. The latter could last 50 to 60 years, straw only 20 to 25 years. Small wonder that there are only 5 straw houses in Staffordshire and only two in Derbyshire. Roofs over the years often had old straw/reed overlaid with new, resulting in roofs that could be 5ft thick. One house had a mushroom shaped roof that was over 8ft thick. After rethatching it reduced to 20in.

Straw was commonly used in the Midlands prior to the use of combining. Sickle and scythe cut straw gave long, straight material that was given free to the labouring tenants of tied cottages. Combining produces chopped, weakened lengths useless to



thatchers. Previously, Norfolk reed was used because it came from carefully managed beds. Today, Norfolk reeds are of poorer quality because of the release of nitrates from fertilisers. David now uses reeds from the River Tay beds in Scotland.

Bundles of reeds are sometimes fastened with the blackberry briars used for centuries. The thorns are stripped off by washers, then twisted to form a fibrous, incredibly strong binder. English Heritage often asks that it be used. Reed bundles are fastened down with hazel rods and metal hooks up to 12in long. Hazel is also used to make the attractive criss-cross patterns seen on so many roofs. Finally, roofs are covered in galvanised wire or netted over to stop bird or storm damage.

Many people ask for birds or animals to be placed on their roofs. David doesn't make these but a craftsman in Dorset makes up the very popular squirrels, cats and birds. One customer has an aardvark on his roof. He also does bird tables, dog kennels, gazebos and porches. I know of several thatched garages and wishing wells and I've had my forehead lacerated by a low thatched bar in a pub.

A marvellous talk, delivered in a perfect Derbyshire accent, that held us for an hour and a half (no one complained). The questions period, unfortunately curtailed, could have gone on forever.

*Mick Appleby*

### **Agricultural Changes in the Derbyshire Landscape in the 19th century – Dr Roger Dalton 9th November 2018**

This talk by Roger Dalton was geographical, interwoven with local, national and international developments and historic events. The opening slide was a surprise – a

colony of sea birds circling over rocks – ... and we were told that basically the talk was about grass.

To set the scene: the population of this country increased by over 30 million during the 19th century meaning that, not only were there more people to feed but, in turn, they wanted a diverse diet.

Various writers commented on the geology and landscape of our county – Arthur Young (1741-1820) stated it to be 'a wasted County but with good farmers' – such as Coke of Longford (later of Holkham Hall, Norfolk) and the Mundys of Markeaton. In 'Soils of Derbyshire', Thomas Brown, (1794) regarded the county as a 'land of milk and honey'. James Pilkington's 'A View of the Present State of Derbyshire' (1789) stated that 'land in tillage is diminishing'. However, Farey, in 'A General View of the Agriculture of Derbyshire' (1817) said that the 'preparation of grass land has occurred'. This was probably because strip fields (still visible now at Chelmorton) were enclosed from the mid-1700s. Farey's comments were that in Derbyshire the grassland was 'cold, rough, and unproductive'.

Land Improvement began: there was an increased use of fertilizers: nitrate; lime; guano (hence our first slide); 'Brewer's grain'; hay farming; rotation of root crops; better seed and better fed livestock. Lord Every of Egginton Heath achieved fame – he was noted for the size of his cabbages.

Robert Bakewell of Dishley Grange Farm (north of Loughborough) produced a new breed of Longhorn cattle which were 'thrifty' and grazed herbage of slightly inferior quality – better cattle needed better pasture for year round milk. Bakewell also bred the 'new Leicester' sheep which were fat animals that provided affordable meat for the working population as well as fat for candles.

Derbyshire was a 'cheese' county in the 18th century, and in the early 19th century cheese was an important food stuff. As milk production increased, farmers had several ways of using their milk, and condensed milk factories were established at Hatton and Ashbourne. There became a concentration of dairy farming towards the south of the county.

Maybe the Derbyshire countryside was even greener at the end of the 19th century than at the beginning.

Historical events during the 19th century:

1806 – Suttons Seeds opened in Reading (originally corn merchants).

1812-13 – Bryan Donkin (name still survives in Chesterfield) in association with Hall and Gamble used tinned iron containers in their canning factory in London. Firm later merged into Crosse & Blackwell.

1859 – Retail trade: Sainsbury's opened first store in London.

1865 – US civil war ended – export of cheese began.

1865/66 – Cattle plague. Government appointed John Gamgee (1831-1894), a vet, to study the problem.

1868 – Railway line from the Midlands into St Pancras completed.

1870s – Frozen meat transported by sailing ship from New Zealand and Australia.

1878 – Longhorn Cattle Society founded.

Thank you, Roger, for a most interesting and informative talk.

*Norma Consterdine*

## **INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY SECTION**

### **New Coalfields New Housing 12th October 2018**

Our speakers were, Helen Hay, a retired Planning and Urban Studies lecturer from the De Montford university and Dr. Dave Fordham whose interests include the development of the concealed coalfields of the East Midlands and South Yorkshire. They described the setting up and achievements of the Industrial Housing Association after the First World War. There was great need at the time to provide new housing in the East Midlands, South Yorkshire and South Wales to enable an expansion of the coal mining industry. Traditional housing was of very low standards with outside toilets, poor washing facilities and few services in the communities. High inflation made the costs of replacement housing high.

The Industrial Housing Association was set up by colliery companies after the war following the Tudor Walters Report on the housing situation to provide a rapid expansion. Many of the colliery companies owned brick works and transport companies and it was believed that economies of scale could enable the 'not for profit' association to supply the housing demand with high quality building.

Houses were to be built to a maximum density of 10 per acre, have at least 6 rooms and have internal toilets and washrooms. The housing developments would include communal spaces for recreation, institutes and public houses, the profits from which would go towards the building and running of a hospital. Some planned developments had been made before the war, such as at

Bolsover but the new housing all followed the Garden City approach with well-planned and built developments some involving the use of temporary light railways to deliver goods and materials to the sites.

The association was successful, constructing a total of 36 colliery villages with 12,000 homes, many of which have survived the collapse of the mining industry proving to be capable of renovation and modernisation. They stand as examples of what can be achieved when faced with an urgent housing shortage.

An excellent lecture well illustrated covering a dramatic change in living conditions and environment.

*Peter Robinson*

### **Bennerley Viaduct Talk 2nd November 2018**

Bennerley Viaduct is a 430 metre long wrought iron viaduct built in 1877 to carry the Great Northern Railway line over the Erewash Valley. It is an outstanding example of the railway architecture of its time, survives in an almost unaltered state and is one of only two wrought iron viaducts left in the UK. The components were manufactured by the Derby firm Eastwood and Swingler, and riveted together on site with half a million rivets. Following closure of the line in 1968, the tracks were taken up and embankments removed, leaving the viaduct isolated, unconnected and without use.

The viaduct was listed Grade II, but nevertheless there were demands from the owners British Rail and some local people to have it demolished. An application for listed building consent in 1980 was strongly opposed by members of DAS and the Arkwright Society. The report of the public enquiry was never published, and the



viaduct was quietly forgotten about until after railway privatisation when it became the property of Railway Paths Limited, a company linked to the charity Sustrans, which was set up to convert old railway routes into cycling and walking routes.

Our speaker became involved in 2015 when he took on the role of community engagement officer for Sustrans as they put together a multi-million pound application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to restore the viaduct and link it as a through cycle route. About the same time a 'Friends of Bennerley Viaduct' group was set up and together they raised awareness of the viaduct and its potential, as a historic landmark, a walking and cycling route and for the natural wetland environment beneath it.

Unfortunately the initial lottery application was turned down, and Sustrans decided to pull the plug on the project. However following pressure from the Friends and other local stakeholders, Railway Paths Limited have now put together a less ambitious proposal and are assembling a funding package which it is hoped will allow work to start in April 2019.

This will comprise essential repairs to the structure (which is in remarkably good condition due the quality of the ironwork), pedestrian access paths to both ends, and a walkway over the top. The Friends now plan to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation so that they can take the lead

in follow-on projects to further develop the viaduct and its surroundings.

Kiernan delivered the story with great enthusiasm, and left us with no doubt that in contrast to the 1970s, the viaduct is now much appreciated by local people, and there is now finally a chance that it will stop being 'Heritage at Risk' and find a new role for the 21st century.

*Kiernan Lee*

## **Heritage Open Days – Morley Park Blast Furnaces**

The DAS has now been the custodian of the Morley Park Blast Furnaces for over 30 years, and the IA Section committee decided it was time to publicise their existence by holding an open day as part of the national Heritage Open Days scheme.

The furnaces were built to produce cast iron using locally mined ironstone, limestone and coal. The first furnace on the site was constructed in 1780, which makes it one of the earliest to use coke instead of charcoal as the fuel. The furnaces were rebuilt in 1818-1825 retaining the 'cold blast' process, and remained in use until the 1870s.

In the 20th century the buildings around the furnaces were demolished and the area was opencast, but the stone built furnaces survived. A history of the site by Philip Riden was published in DAJ in 1988.

To prepare for the Heritage Open Day on 15 September, we arranged an additional 'tidy up' of the site in August, and persuaded the local farmer to help by cutting down the brambles that were growing up in front of the furnaces. We also prepared a handout with a brief description of the furnaces and information about DAS activities. During the 2 hours we opened

there were a steady stream of visitors, about 30 in total, and managed to sell a good number of our IA gazetteers.



The site is getting to the point where some further maintenance work will be required, and we are negotiating with Historic England about what funding they might be able to provide (the furnaces are a scheduled ancient monument). In the meantime we will fixing a date for the annual 'spring clean' when the IA Section committee meets in January – if you haven't visited the site, why not come along and help with the litter collection and weed-killing – contact Ian Mitchell [ihmitchell@cantab.net](mailto:ihmitchell@cantab.net) in the New Year to find out the date.

*Ian Mitchell*

### **Help needed to investigate an early railway**

The Belper and Morley Park Railway was an early private railway built to supply the town of Belper with coal from the Drury Lowe collieries near Denby at the south end of Morley Park.

An opportunity now exists to carry out an archaeological survey of part of the route. The survey could reveal important information about this early line.

The railway was originally planned in 1802, was partly built and described by Farey in

1815 but did not reach Belper until 1843. By then it was redundant since the mainline railway had reached the town three years earlier.

It was always horse worked and used the same type of track as the Derby Canal railway, from Little Eaton to Smithy Houses, which it later connected with. It used 'L' shaped cast iron plate rails on stone block sleepers.

The railway did not survive very long after 1843 but a short section survived until 1908 as an extension of the Derby Canal line to serve a colliery.

Despite this most of the infrastructure used by the railway can still be seen and several sections survive as footpaths. So although this railway was not significant in historical terms it was typical of other early lines that formed a regional transport network based on canals before conventional railways took over.

Permission has been given to use a window of opportunity to survey and excavate the track bed on a surviving embankment at Openwoodgate. Stone sleepers were recently discovered nearby and these are of interest since they were set diagonally rather than squarely as on earlier sections of the line. The survey could therefore discover vital information about the technology used on the short lived 1843 extension into Belper.

The plan is to carry out the survey over a couple of days in early 2019, probably in February. Anyone interested in helping should contact the newsletter editor by email.

*Trevor Griffin*

## DERBYSHIRE MISCELLANY

### Vol 21, Part 6, Autumn 2018

From King's Mead Priory to Mundy Street: the development and disintegration of an ex-monastic site and estate in Derby 1536-1825 by Richard Clark.

Infant mortality in Derby and Nottingham 1890-1911 by Denise Amos.

Diary of a Shipley farmer 1867: Part 5: September 10-14 November by Malcolm Burrows.

After 1700 towns broke out of their pre-industrial confines as they expanded considerably due to economic and population growth brought about by industrial expansion. However the changes produced in the urban landscape are so familiar that they are unremarkable, but the detailed historical processes are often elusive due to a lack of continuous runs of records over significant periods of time.

Ex-monastic sites and estates are often better recorded than most because the Dissolution of the Monasteries (1536-40) and the sale of their confiscated assets by the Crown were carefully recorded by the Court of Augmentations whose records remain in the National Archives. These lands were acquired largely by the nobility and gentry and so further traces of the estates have survived in their records. In his article, Richard Clark relates the history of the site of a small nunnery, King's Mead Priory in Derby, to illustrate these points. Its Derby estate included the meadows and flats around the priory, Nun's Mill on Markeaton Brook to the south of the priory, common land in King's Mead that later became known as Nun's Green, and strips in the fields of the borough. He explores in some detail the developments whereby this religious, rural retreat on the outskirts of a

medieval borough became part of the industrialised, heavily populated, somewhat notorious 'West End' of 19th century Derby.

After the Dissolution, King's Mead was leased by Thomas Sutton of Over Haddon, a servant of the Earls of Shrewsbury, in 1537 and later purchased by him in 1544. His family owned it until the death of Constance Sutton, the wife of Thomas's son, Thomas, in 1638. By this time, family feuds over the property, recorded in two cases in the Court of the Exchequer, had reduced the family fortunes. Constance was so poor she raised some of the money to pay her legacies by selling the Sutton estate at a nominal sum of £100 to Thomas Brudenell, her nephew, who lived in Leicestershire. Assets were sold including Nun's Mill which was sold to Francis Mundy of Markeaton in 1641. Another Exchequer case in 1675-6 provided evidence not only of what happened to the land sold by Constance Sutton to Thomas Brudenell but also to some of the properties sold before 1638.

Derby's population more than doubled from around 4,000 in c.1715 to over 8,000 in 1788, transforming it into an expanding, industrial town with a resultant shortage of building land. Some of the former estate land and the site of the nunnery bought at auction by Francis N.C. Mundy of Markeaton for £7,200 in 1773 was sold by 1825 for building development, commemorated in Mundy Street.

Earlier the Corporation sponsored an Act of Parliament to enable it to sell off part of Nun's Green as building land along Friar Gate in 1768. This was followed by another Act of Parliament in 1792 and the rest of Nun's Green was sold off for building land to raise money to pay for paving and lighting within the town.

The development of Agard St., Bridge St., Brook St. and part of Nun's St. with a mixture of housing, chapels and factories, followed, leaving only a 15th-16th century building on Nun's St., (now belongs to Derby University), and Nun's Mill (demolished in the early 20th century) as a reminder of the former Priory.

Infant mortality in Derby and Nottingham 1890-1911 by Denise Amos is based on her thesis and one by G. M. Nolan on infant mortality in Nottingham and Derby, taking a comparative view at the end of the 19th century. In 1897 Nottingham received city status and had twice the population of Derby. Both had high rates of infant mortality even though the general health of the population had improved through developments in science and preventative medicine. The causes of infant mortality, for example poverty and wealth, working class mothers and their employment, breast feeding, illegitimacy and the socio-economic conditions of a particular area, are discussed together with the steps that the new Medical Officers of Health were taking to reduce infant mortality.

Articles for inclusion in Derbyshire Miscellany should be sent to Mrs Jane Steer, 478 Duffield Road, Allestree, Derby, DE22 2DJ, e-mail: [SteerDerby@aol.com](mailto:SteerDerby@aol.com).

If you don't subscribe to Miscellany, copies of both this issue and back issues are available from Mrs Susan Peberdy, 147 Havenbault Lane, Littleover, Derby, DE23 4AF (£4.25 incl. p&p). Alternatively an annual subscription to Derbyshire Miscellany, which is published twice a year, is £8.

*Jane Steer*

## Obituaries

### Mark Sissons

It was unfortunately omitted from the last Newsletter that Mark Sissons died in February 2018. Mark had been an active member of the Industrial Archaeology Section since the 1970s when he joined the active band of Section members helping to restore the Middleton Top Winding Engine. In 2017 Mark, having retired to Pickering, assisted with the Society visit to East Yorkshire and in spite of his obviously deteriorating health, gave us a lecture on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and accompanied us on the train. Mark was Industrial Archaeology Section Treasurer for many years and helped organise the annual outing. He became a local expert on limekilns and coke ovens, writing articles in the Journal on the latter. Mark was also a Ranger with Derbyshire County Council on the High Peak Trail where he continued his association with the Middleton Top engine. On a National level, Mark was Chairman of the Association for Industrial Archaeology from 2011-14.

*Keith Reedman*



## David Mellors

Members will be saddened to know of the death on 6 December 2018 of David Mellors who until recently was Secretary of the Industrial Archaeology Section. By profession a librarian, David took a wide and well-informed interest in industrial history, his specialist subject being coastal and river shipping (a visit to Grimsby or Goole had him on home territory). Having served for two years as the Section's Chairman, David was appointed Secretary in March 1997 and served in that role with quiet efficiency for 20 years. He regularly attended Section meetings and also frequently attended EMIACs, his last being at the RCHS event at Moira in May 2016. We were then distressed to observe his impaired mobility.

David was subsequently diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease and to accommodate his declining mobility, Committee meetings were held at his house until July 2017 when he, of necessity, resigned. While his physical restrictions became more severe with the progress of the disease, his mental faculties were quite unimpaired and he could happily discuss subjects of mutual interest until the week before his death. The Society and Section will miss a valued colleague.

*Keith Reedman*

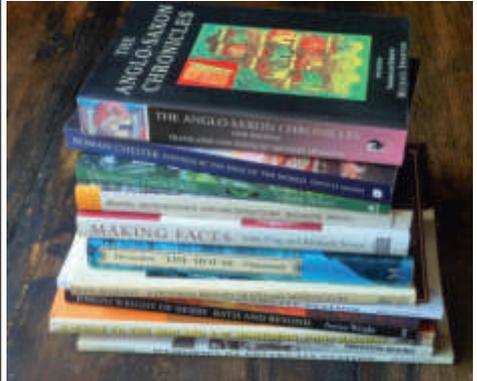
## Membership

### New members:

Mrs D. Flanagan of Stanton-by-Dale  
Mr F.S. Finch of Mickleover  
Mr D. Denison of Belper  
Mr M. Froggatt of Ripley  
Mr I. Jackson of Belper  
Mr D. Batchelor of Bolehill  
Mrs A. Newbold of Chellaston

## Small Ads

**History Book Sale**  
**Saturday 13th April 2019**  
**2.00 - 4.00 pm**  
**Chester Green Community Centre,**  
**Old Chester Road, DE1 3RQ**



The Society has received another generous large donation of books. Some have been placed in the library but the remainder have been added to our stock of books for sale.

Do come along and support the Sale and treat yourself to a drink, a chat and perhaps even another book. The stock includes books on the archaeology and history of Derby and Derbyshire and topics such as architecture, industry and communications.

If you would be willing to help with the sale, would you please contact [jdarcy@qcinternet.co.uk](mailto:jdarcy@qcinternet.co.uk).

Cash sales or cheque made out to 'Derbyshire Archaeological Society'.

Refreshments on offer.

*Joan D'Arcy*

**Railway and Canal Historical Society**



**Industrial Heritage Day**

**EMIAC 96**

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2019

To be held at the The Summit Centre

Pavilion Road, Kirby in Ashfield, NG17 7LL

**Mansfield & Pinxton Railway  
(1819)**

**Introduction**

EMIAC 96 is hosted by the East Midlands Group of the Railway & Canal Historical Society.



Kirby-in-Ashfield was once an important centre of coal mining and railways in west Nottinghamshire, with three active coal mines and several railway junctions. The former Mansfield and Pinxton Railway opened in 1819, connecting the Cromford Canal with Mansfield, passing through Kirby-in-Ashfield. The Erewash Valley line was joined here by the later Midland Railway line from Nottingham. The Great Central Railway main line passed to the south-west side of the town and had a double junction with the Great Northern Railway Leen Valley Extension line to Langwith Junction and the Mansfield Railway to Clipstone. British Rail rerouted lines in the area in 1972 to eliminate level crossings and the Robin Hood Line opened in 1993, utilising the routes of several of the earlier railways. This relatively small area thus has a rich industrial and historic past.

**RAILWAY & CANAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The Railway & Canal Historical Society was founded in 1954. Its objective is to bring together all those seriously interested in the history of transport, with particular reference to railways and waterways, although the Society also caters for those interested in roads, docks, coastal shipping and air transport.

The East Midlands Group normally meets on the first Friday evening of each month from October to April in Beccles. During the summer months tours and visits are made to places of historical interest and importance in the transport field. Full details of the R & C H S can be obtained from the EM Group Secretary: Bob Bramson, 16 Blackden Close, BELPER, DE56 0DL. Telephone (01773) 825991

Kirby in Ashfield C 1914



Name(s) Mr, Mrs, Ms, other .....

Address 1: ..... Post Code: .....

Address 2: ..... Post Code: .....

Email: .....

Telephone: .....

Society (if any): .....

Would you like to be informed about future EMIAC events by e-mail? YES/NO.

Please indicate if you require any display space:  
NO/YES Area .....m<sup>2</sup> height.....m

I am planning to travel from the Summit Centre to Portland Park in my own car;

• I can offer a lift for ..... people in my car, returning to the Summit Centre afterwards if required.

• I would like a lift to Portland Park if it can be arranged.  
YES/NO.

• Please indicate if you have any special dietary requirements:

.....  
• Please indicate if you have a disability which requires special assistance:  
.....

I wish the following items to be included on the business meeting agenda:  
.....  
.....  
.....

## Industrial Heritage Days

Industrial Heritage Days, also known as East Midlands Industrial Archaeology Conferences (EMIACs) are events that are held every six months and are open to anyone wishing to attend with an interest in the subject.

The first conference was held in 1970 with the idea and aim of enabling industrial archaeologists in the East Midlands to meet in different locations to consider and discuss topics of mutual interest.

There is no formal organisation. The affiliated societies are currently:

- Derbyshire Archaeological Society
- The East Midlands Group of the Railway and Canal Historical Society
- Northampton Industrial Archaeology Group
- Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology
- Leicestershire Industrial History Society

**Location** The morning meeting will be held at the Summit Centre, Pavilion Road, Kirkby in Ashfield, NG17 7LL.

### By car from the North

**M1** Leave the M1 at J28. On the roundabout, take the first turning on the left A38 towards Mansfield for about 3 miles. At the 6th set of the traffic lights turn right onto the B6021 for Kirkby in Ashfield. After Sutton Parkway railway station, at the end of the road turn right onto Lowmoor Road for approximately ¾ mile, then turn left onto Pavilion Road. The Summit Centre is on the left and has excellent parking capacity.

### By car from the South

**M1** Leave the M1 at J28. On the roundabout, take the fourth turning on the left A38 towards Mansfield for about 3 miles. At the 6th set of the traffic lights turn right onto the B6021 for Kirkby in Ashfield. After Sutton Parkway railway station, at the end of the road turn right onto Lowmoor Road for approximately ¾ mile, then turn left onto Pavilion Road. The Summit Centre is on the left and has excellent parking capacity.

## By Rail

There are two stations, Kirkby in Ashfield (south end) and Sutton Parkway (north end). Walking to the Summit Centre takes about 20 minutes (approx. ¾ mile) from either end.



## Programme

- 9.00 Set up
- 9.30 Registration, tea and coffee
- 9.50 Welcome and introduction by Graham Wild, Past President of the Railway and Canal Historical Society
- 10.00 'Cool Mining Link with the Mansfield and Pinxton Railway', Dr David Amos
- 10.45 Break, coffee and biscuits
- 11.15 'Josiah Jessop and Early Railway', Martyn Taylor-Cockayne
- 12.00 EMIAC Business Meeting
- 12.30 Lunch
- 14.00 Afternoon: Site visit to Portland Park

## Site Visit and History

Walk through the town to Portland Park led by speakers David Amos and Martyn Taylor-Cockayne to view the remains and location of the confluence of the various railways in the area. Afternoon tea and cakes will be available in the Wild Rabbit café after the walk. An easy return walk of 2½ miles out and back. See booking form for those requiring a lift to the park.

Portland Park was donated to the people of Kirkby by the 6th Duke of Portland as a series of gifts dating from 1910. A small area of what is now the park was leased to Kirkby Urban Council from this date and in 1914 the Duke and Duchess of Portland gifted the remainder of the land. The Council developed 'Portland Park' as a formal recreational area for local people. Features originally included formal gardens, paddling pools (now ponds) and a bowling green. The main pond known as Victoria Lake was created in 1914.

Up until the 1960's all the paths within the park crossed over or under railway bridges. The main pathway to the west of the park was originally an embankment built to carry the first railway within the district, which was one of the first pre-steam railways in the country. The railway lines were built to serve the former local coal mining industry and the majority are now disused.

## EMIAC 96 Booking form - Kirkby in Ashfield, Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

Please complete this form and return to the address below by 30<sup>th</sup> April. Please post booking form and cheque made payable to RCHS East Midlands Group to Rod Staden, RCHS EMIAC, 25 Linden Grove, Beeston, Nottingham, NG19 2AD. The cost of the event is £20 per person. If there are any queries please e-mail Bob Bramson at [bob.bramson@btinternet.com](mailto:bob.bramson@btinternet.com). We will e-mail confirmation of your booking. If you do not have e-mail or would prefer to receive a written confirmation by post, then please enclose an SAE.

# DERBYSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

## SECTION OFFICERS 2018/19

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP**

Chairman	Chris Wardle
Vice Chairman	Ann Jones
Secretary and CBA rep.	Janette Jackson
Programme Secretary	Ann Haywood
Treasurer	John d'Arcy
Fieldwork Officer	David Budge
Council Representative	Joan d'Arcy

### **ARCHITECTURAL SECTION**

Chairman	John d'Arcy (Council Rep.)
Secretary	Alison Haslam
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Programme Secretary	Elaine McCulloch

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Vice Chairman	John Arnold
Secretary	Joan Davies
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Vice Chairman	Anne Allcock
Secretary	Jane Heginbotham
Treasurer	Alastair Gilchrist
Programme Secretary	Peter Robinson (Council Rep.)

