

# Repton Village History Group - Newsletter - Spring 2014



## Programme for the remainder of 2014

April 15 <sup>th</sup>	The Archaeology of the Science Priory and more.
May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Richard Stone and AGM.
June 17 <sup>th</sup>	Archive evening - Blue Bus Archive and the Tithe Barn hunt.
July	Visit
August	Visit
September 16 <sup>th</sup>	John Hawkins - History of Findern.
October 21 <sup>st</sup>	Robert Mee - Societies for the Prosecution of Felons.
November 18 <sup>th</sup>	Wendy Freer - Black Diamonds.
December 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Social.

All meetings are at 7.30pm prompt in Repton Village Hall (Askew Grove, DE65 6GR)

Our February meeting was really well attended. Many thanks to Richard Wain for an excellent photographic trip along Repton Brook and the sites of its many mills. He included the medieval Bretby Mill which, interestingly, was fed by a small stream that ran into Repton Brook rather than using the hydraulic power of Repton Brook itself. This was probably because Repton Priory had the rights to activity on the brook. In the book "At the sign of the Bulls Head" the same theory is applied to a suspected flour mill at Hartshorne. Andy Austen's talk "A Stroll Through Repton of Yesteryear" was based on work with the Repton Friday Luncheon Club and drop-in and the 3<sup>rd</sup> talk identified old Repton place names. We plan to publish the talks as pamphlets or small books.

When Patrick Ashcroft came to our March meeting and put his bowler hat on, he became Billy - one of the Calke estate gamekeepers - complete with period costume and a stout stick. He was brought up in Norfolk and got a job on the estate about 1860, just as it was going into decline. It seems that Sir Vauncey really only had an interest in natural history and was inclined to be anti-social in the extreme, avoiding even family visits by disappearing into the woods till they had gone. Apparently, he caught his daughter smoking in the house and banned her from the place and she was not allowed back while he was there. The estate didn't have electricity until the 1960s, no cars were allowed on the estate and no mechanical aids such as a steam engine. Even cycles were frowned upon. Apart from additions to the collections of specimens, little in the house was changed and no attempt was made to develop the estate or maintain property. So, instead of generating income, it became a financial burden. That, combined with Sir Vauncey's expenditure on specimens, led to a decline in the family fortunes and a problem for his successors. Most of the staff were "let go" and the family lived in just a few rooms - the rest of the house being locked up. Which is how the National Trust found it when it passed to them. As Billy pointed out (having taken his hat off and become Patrick again) much of the house and its contents are just as they had been in 1860.

**April 15<sup>th</sup> brings a special meeting** when Matthew Hurford of Trent and Peak Archaeology will come and explain what they found under the Science Priory and its significance. We know it included evidence of Pre-historic, late Roman, early Anglo-Saxon and Medieval occupation. Time permitting it is also an opportunity to present our proposals for the community archaeology projects.

**Visits** for July and August are being planned now. We have confirmed one visit to St Mary's Church in Newton Solney with Sue Ellis - date yet to be set. As before, we will ask for a donation of £3 per person to pass onto the church. St Mary's dates back to at least the 13<sup>th</sup> century and has some very interesting tombs.

Also confirmed is a visit to Hartshorne Upper Manor on August 20<sup>th</sup> at 2.00pm. Again we will ask for a donation of £3 to pass onto them for the foodbank charity they support. There were two Manors in Domesday - Upper and Nether. Previously owned by Alfrech of Bradbourne, both had been handed to Henry de Ferrers after the Norman Conquest. The Upper Hall building, well situated between the pub and the church, dates from 1629.

## Notice of our Annual General Meeting:

The Annual General Meeting will follow Richard Stone's talk on 20<sup>th</sup> May and start at 8.50pm. The agenda and accounts will be available at the meeting. A change to the constitution will be proposed regarding the existing arrangements should the History Group ever be wound up. This change will help secure the continued maintenance of the archive and help with bids for grant funding. The proposed wording will be sent to members separately. All are welcome, but only paid-up members can vote.

## Archaeology:

Our plans for the Community Archaeology section have crystallised into two distinct projects. One is to find and hopefully, unearth, the Tithe Barn. Evidence from the Wyatt's 1762 map, Astbury's Diary and the enclosure award should enable us to pinpoint it well enough for some geophysics to locate it and test pits to prove it. We need some capable IT and software to manage the vagaries of the Wyatt's map. This, and support for the survey and digging, is the subject of a grant application to DCC. The other project is the desk-based study recommended by Trent and Peak which will update the work done by Gill Stroud from the County Archaeologists in 1999. This will form the basis of future projects that are archaeologically appropriate and manageable and is the subject of a grant application to the Heritage Lottery fund.

*If you are interested in taking part, please let Andy Austen know.(01283 702448)*

## The David Guest Archive

Lilwen and David are moving to be nearer their family in Cheshire and so are having to divest themselves of David's considerable collection of material about Repton and of his enormous library. They have very kindly donated his material to the Repton Village Archive. We are in the process of cataloguing the items and they will then be stored in the archive as the David & Lilwen Guest Collection. As he says, he will be able to come and renew his acquaintance with them whenever he visits Repton. We are very grateful for this donation. Once the material is listed and added to the archive catalogue, we will re-publish it.

## Monuments and Inscriptions updates.

In 1993 the Derbyshire Family History Society published Volume 7 of the Monuments and Inscriptions series - St Wystan's. Janine Appleby has now spent much time on her hands and knees bringing this up to date. She has also recorded and photographed the graves in the new cemetery on Monsom Lane, recorded all the commemorative plaques in the "ashes" plots at St Wystan's and recorded all the plaques in the Memorial Arboretum on Pinfold lane. Copies will be lodged in the archive but are available at a nominal cost. Try [rvhg@reptonvillage.org.uk](mailto:rvhg@reptonvillage.org.uk) or any committee member.

## Commonwealth War Graves

St Wystan's cemetery has a small area behind the vicarage where service personnel are buried. We have produced a leaflet containing information about each of these men and copies are now in the church porch. Many, but not all, were airmen from the Burnaston Aerodrome which was an initial flying training school. A fuller version is on the website. Margaret is trying to tidy up her work on the local men who died in WWI for publication this summer.

**Website** [http://www.reptonvillage.org.uk/history\\_group/history\\_group\\_homepage.htm](http://www.reptonvillage.org.uk/history_group/history_group_homepage.htm)

We are very grateful to Ewan Thompson for managing the village website - of which ours is part. Janine is our liaison with him and she has been adding further material as it is prepared. Recently she has added the fuller version of the Commonwealth War Graves material together with her researches into the service personnel who died in WWII. If there is anything you feel we could include or if you have material to offer, please contact us via [rvhg@reptonvillage.org.uk](mailto:rvhg@reptonvillage.org.uk).

## Your History Group needs you (please!)

There are lots of little jobs in keeping the history group on the straight and narrow and with the wheels turning..... finding speakers, taking minutes and managing communications, writing bits for the news letter or the parish magazine, helping with projects, opening up the village hall, distributing posters, making tea and coffee, keeping accounts, maintaining the membership list, thanking the speakers, welcoming the speakers, giving talks, maintaining the archives, booking the village hall, maintaining stocks of publications and distributing them, supporting John Ward on the walks around the village, acting as the link with the National Forest walking festival, deputising on the sound system.....

*If you think you could take on any of these, please do say so on [rvhg@reptonvillage.org.uk](mailto:rvhg@reptonvillage.org.uk) or Andy Austen on 01283 702448 or any committee member.*

## Membership Fees

These are now due (£4) for 2014/5. Please pay at the April meeting or to Glenys Shakespeare, Janine Appleby or Andy Austen. Attend 5 or more talks and you will save money!



## STOP PRESS:

1) Sadly, the last vestige of the Toll Gate from Willington Bridge suffered a final, fatal, catastrophic collapse. The last spiked roller from the barrier used to be over the gate between Repton Post Office and the Spa Shop. About 3 weeks ago, it broke up and fell to the ground. It ended up in a skip. The weather had finally taken its toll.

2) Janine and Andy have just provided a local resident with a lot of information about John Goodall (Tom Goodall's brother) who is famous for populating the Rio Grande with sea trout. Born at Ridgeway Farm in 1888 - he went to Chile in his twenties as a refrigeration Engineer, became a manager and later moved to Argentina and became British Vice Consul. He married a local lass Clarita Bridges - grand daughter of an

Anglican missionary who was Tierra del Fuego's first white settler - and they had at least 1 son - Tom. John made many trips back to England and to Repton and is commemorated by a large plaque in Chile.