

Repton Village History Group Newsletter

Spring 2015



According to the meteorologists, Spring is sprung so it must be time for our next newsletter.

Membership renewals Membership runs from April 1st (no joke!) so we will be inviting you to renew your membership at the next meeting (March 17th). John Kidd will be offering to help you do this. If you joined recently then you don't have to pay again.

The programme for the remainder of this year is below. We have now finalised the summer visits - some information is below and more will come nearer the time. We shall shortly be starting to put together next year's programme and if you have speakers or subjects to recommend, please do so.

March 17 th	Shirley Horton - "Just another one for the road" history of Pubs from Roman times.
April 21 st	Catherine Cartwright - The Gresley Pioneers.
May 19 th	Keith Blood - Jitties, Georgians and Gingerbread (Ashbourne) followed by the AGM.
June 16 th	Archive/display evening
July 15 th	Visit to Church of All Angels at Hoar Cross.
August 19 th	Visit to Stoneywell Cottage - a new NT property.
September 15 th	Members evening - a handful of short talks. Likely to include all or some of: Woodville, Historic structures on our bit of the River Trent, Repton Details (music and photographs), and Rev. Bagshaw Stevens and his friends.
October 20 th	Arnold Burston - The Mosleys and Rolleston (on Dove)
November 17 th	Richard Stone - talk to be decided
December 15 th	Social & Bob Neill's Box of bits

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

The visits are both on Wednesdays at 2.00pm. We are limited to 24 visitors for each visit.

We will have a guide at Hoar Cross and will ask everyone for a donation of £3 for the church's funds. Stoneywell is a relatively new National Trust property and we will be split into 2 groups with one group touring the gardens with a guide and the other on guided tour of the house before swapping over. Non NT members will have to pay the admission charge of £8.10p.

We will coordinate transport and look into parking and places for lunch if you want to eat out before the visit.

Papplewick pumping station and the church of St Mary and St Hardulph at Breedon On the Hill remain as options for next year. To these Glenys has added a proposal of Sinai House near Burton On Trent

Walks n Talks: We are providing 5 historical walks and talks for the Repton Village Hall rebuilding fund. They cost £6 per person and they finish with tea in the village hall provided by the Women's Institute. Because of the tea, booking is essential (01283 702702 or rvhg@reptonvillage.org.uk)

Dates (all Sundays) are: 19th April, 10th May, 7th June, 5th July, 13th September.

They start at the Arch/Lych gate at 2.00pm and, assuming the weather is fine, will include the archaeology found at the Science Priory, the Anglo-Saxon history, Monastery and Mercian Royal Palace, the Viking invasion, and the Medieval Priory and will include a visit to the church yard, church, crypt, Repton School Garth and the priory ruins.

Then we will walk up to the village hall by a route which will depend on the time available on the day. This could include a bit of Burton Rd - up to No 10 which was originally an aisled hall - and/or a walk down Brook End and back up Boot Hill - priory mill, court room, Boot Inn...

Some WIs have already visited the church and may block book one of the walks and want to go through the village instead. For these we would need some extra folk to act as guides to a small group of 5 or 6 people. A script will be provided - let us know if you are interested.

Other visitors: On 24th May at 2.00pm, John Ward will lead a walk for the National Forest Walking Festival starting in the church and including the Garth and Priory and then walking via the Pastures to the Tan Yard and back to the church.

On Thursday 2nd July at 7.00pm, Hilton and Marston History Group are visiting us for a historical walk and talk. It will follow the well established pattern.

Repton Village party (2nd May): We are planning to take part in the Village Party (fete) again. Last time we invited people to put names to faces on some of our photographs. We will do something again this year but will need a few people to help. Nothing strenuous or demanding. If you think you might be able to help for an afternoon, please let us know.

Family History enquiries. We have had a spate of enquiries recently and have researched Gibson, Thorp, Wood, Barton, Welsby and Fereday families. We were able to provide photographs of gravestones and extracts from the CE School admissions register and will continue to look for information.

Carvings. In the last issue, we mentioned that the Vicar's sharp eyes spotted what could have been some previously unnoticed carvings high up in the shadows of St Wystan's roof. Some long exposure photographs determined that they were indeed carvings and mostly interesting grotesques which included a green man.

Chris and Elaine Colbourne used a better camera and a powerful flashgun to take better photos and these have been transferred to CD with a copy for the archive and for the Vicar and the Church Wardens. They also included the stone carved heads in the church and some external features too. We plan to feature them in the June archive evening displays. If there is ever scaffolding up to the roof, then the carvings could do with cleaning as the spiders have been very busy over the last four hundred years.

The Cross: If you read the Parish Magazine you will have noticed there has been a bit of talk lately about problems with cracking of the structure of The Cross. The Parish Council approached English Heritage for advice and they responded to some photographs saying that it was possibly due to subsidence under the structure and that work was needed to maintain its integrity and thus safety. The Parish Council then discovered DCC had looked at it about 3 years ago but did nothing. Some of DCC's proposals (including grit blasting) make English Heritage nervous. English Heritage have the power to instruct DCC to do necessary work and so the Parish Council have asked them to exercise that power.

Possibly, after more than 700 years, today's traffic levels, and especially the significant number of large and heavy lorries, are causing subsidence.

If it has to be partially dismantled, it'd be really good if there were some excavation to try to find dating evidence. It is mostly described as a market cross probably from the very early 1300s, but it could also be a preaching cross and perhaps the original version goes back to the 7th or 8th century.

A new publication: At the time of writing we have just received a proof copy of a new booklet "A Stroll through Repton of Yesteryear" from the printers. At a visit to the Village Friday Luncheon Club late in 2013, we asked folk to remember all the little businesses along the road through the village. The result was an annotated map. To this, photographs from 1970 and earlier were added to make an illustrated talk and now, a year later and after many revisions, it has gone to print - our first publication with colour photos. All being well - and we are only at final proof stage - it will be available in the next month or so priced at £4.

Incidentally, the WWI booklet is still in demand. We recently had a request for 3 copies from a bookshop in Yorkshire and then found he is selling them at £6.99 each! He also bought copies of Remember the Blue Bus which he sells for £5.99. Makes our prices a bargain.

We have put 2 copies of the WWI booklet in the Swadlincote Library and one was requested for Chesterfield. The Records Office in Matlock have one and bought some further copies for Derbyshire Libraries.

Archaeological expectations:

Getting a community archaeology project going was first suggested by Trent and Peak Archaeology, but it simply hasn't been possible to make this work with them. It's a bit of a relief to find that it took TARG over a year to get going - and they knew what they were doing. However, we do have a grant to find the medieval tithe barn. Unfortunately it came through a bit late in the year to hit the archaeology weather window. This project will involve loading new and old maps into some clever software that can make them align accurately. This should enable us to get the best possible fix on its location and hopefully, we can follow up with geophysics and possibly some excavation. Derbyshire Archaeological Society have agreed to do a resistivity survey, if the site is feasible. Problems with getting advice on the spec of PC needed has held us up but is now solved and there were also issues with running the software under Windows 8. The version now available seems to work ok. We have used a slightly less capable laptop to test this. The software is complicated and although there are on-line tutorials available, we really need tuition. None of the professional archaeological organisations are able to provide courses because they use ArcGIS (commercial and expensive) not QGIS (open source and free). However Valerie and Roy Minton's daughter Nikky has a colleague who is putting together a QGIS course and Andy and Margaret Austen's son uses ArcGIS and may be able to help with QGIS. We are about to get the PC built for us by a firm in Ashby.

The Bulls Head Ghost

We recently had a phone call from Mrs Pearson in Willington. She came to Repton in 1946 when 16. Working at Repton School and related to Wilf Pearson the basket maker in the Square, she has much to pass on and we will follow up her call. For a while in the 1950s, she worked for Mr and Mrs Parry - landlords at the Bulls Head and she assured us that the staff became quite used to seeing the ghost of a lady on the stair landing. She was dressed in white and obviously going somewhere. She would sometimes smile an encouraging smile and could do the expected ghostly thing of walking through you.

And that's all for now folks, so it just remains for us to wish you a happy Easter.

For comments or more information please contact Andy Austen on rvhg@reptonvillage.org.uk or 01283 702448
We are always pleased to receive information about the locality and the people that lived and worked around here.