



Repton Village History Group Newsletter

Spring 2018 (February 20th)



This issue is not due until late March, but after our February meeting, we may not gather again until our AGM in May.

Membership Matters:

It is with sadness that we report the death of two stalwarts of the history group - David Guest and Frank Shakespeare.

David was a founder member and past chairman of the group, a driving force and a man of great charm and gentleness with a passion for Repton's history. He was architect of the centenary celebrations for the freeing of Willington Bridge and numerous other projects and we are very grateful for the material that he and Lilwen donated to the archive. He was greatly missed as he slipped slowly away from us with Alzheimer's disease.

Frank was a very gentle man with a lovely sense of humour and a host of interests. He was a long-time member of the history group and, with Glenys, looked after people coming to our meetings by taking the money on the door and organising the raffle and selling the tickets. Frank's illness made it increasingly difficult for them to come to meetings and they too are greatly missed.

Our sincere sympathies go to Glenys and Lilwen and their families.

On a happier note we offer congratulations to Cat Jarman – now Dr Cat Jarman – on being awarded her doctorate for her research using isotope analysis of bones and teeth on the remains in the Viking chanel house excavated by the Biddles in the 1970s and 80s. This resolved a dating conundrum and demonstrated that they were essentially Viking remains and from a number of Viking countries.

Membership renewals are due by the end of March. Our year matches the calendar year but with 3 months allowed for getting round to paying. £4 per person - children free.

The ongoing programme:

January saw the start of our new approach to things - with a concentration on Repton research and the village archive rather than just monthly talks of a general historical nature. We met, thanks to the licensees, in the Red Lion function room. This provided a cosy environment and a different sort of refreshments to the normal tea and biscuits. We had invited residents from the new housing estates to a talk "A Simple History of Repton" and were pleased to meet 7 new people. The plan is to have quarterly meetings (plus extras as needed) for members for chat and gossip, reporting back on project progress, planning the next 3 months and short talks on very Repton related historical topics.

We still plan on holding future meetings at 7.30pm in the Red Lion Function Room.

- February 20th: We plan a meeting which will include a talk on where we are with the priory Mill work (and explain pseudo-sections!), suggest/brainstorm projects we could be addressing, plan more test pit dates, discuss visits, and have an opportunity for a general discussion, gossip and conversation.
- May 15th: Our AGM, review of work since February, plans till September and maybe a Repton talk (or two) plus time for gossip and a chat.
- June 20th: In St Wystan's Church, a talk by Cat Jarman (and possibly others) on Bristol University's archaeological work in this and recent years.
- September 18th: Review of work since May and what we might do till Christmas and a review of how this approach is panning out and what changes we should make.
- December or January: To be decided...

The Hanson Grave: as Parish Clerk for over 60 years, Samuel Hanson holds a special place in our 19th century heritage. Born in 1784, he died in 1867, but surface flaking due to water and frost threatened his handsome memorial stone in St Wystan's Churchyard. Samuel was also a founder member of the Royal Sussex Lodge of Freemasons in Burton and their Tyler for 49 years. The Lodge treasures the memory of their founders of 200 years ago and agreed to meet the cost of the repairs. The work is now complete but we will have to wait for weathering of the repair material before it looks right again. It should now be frost-proof for many years and the inscription is saved and readable.

Derby Museum Volunteering: We are now into the penultimate phase of the listing of the small finds from the digs in the 1970s and 80s. We have just gone through all the boxes not listed in an earlier exercise and are now rechecking all boxes to resolve any queries and to re-number them for recording on the new system. The final recording should be the end of it, but we are talking about photographing a selection of the artefacts.

Errata: in the last issue, in the Graffiti Survey item, we recalled that Frank Atherley had been the “chauffeur” to Dr Cronk. In fact he was chauffeur to Dr Lindsay.

Repton Dig Documentation:

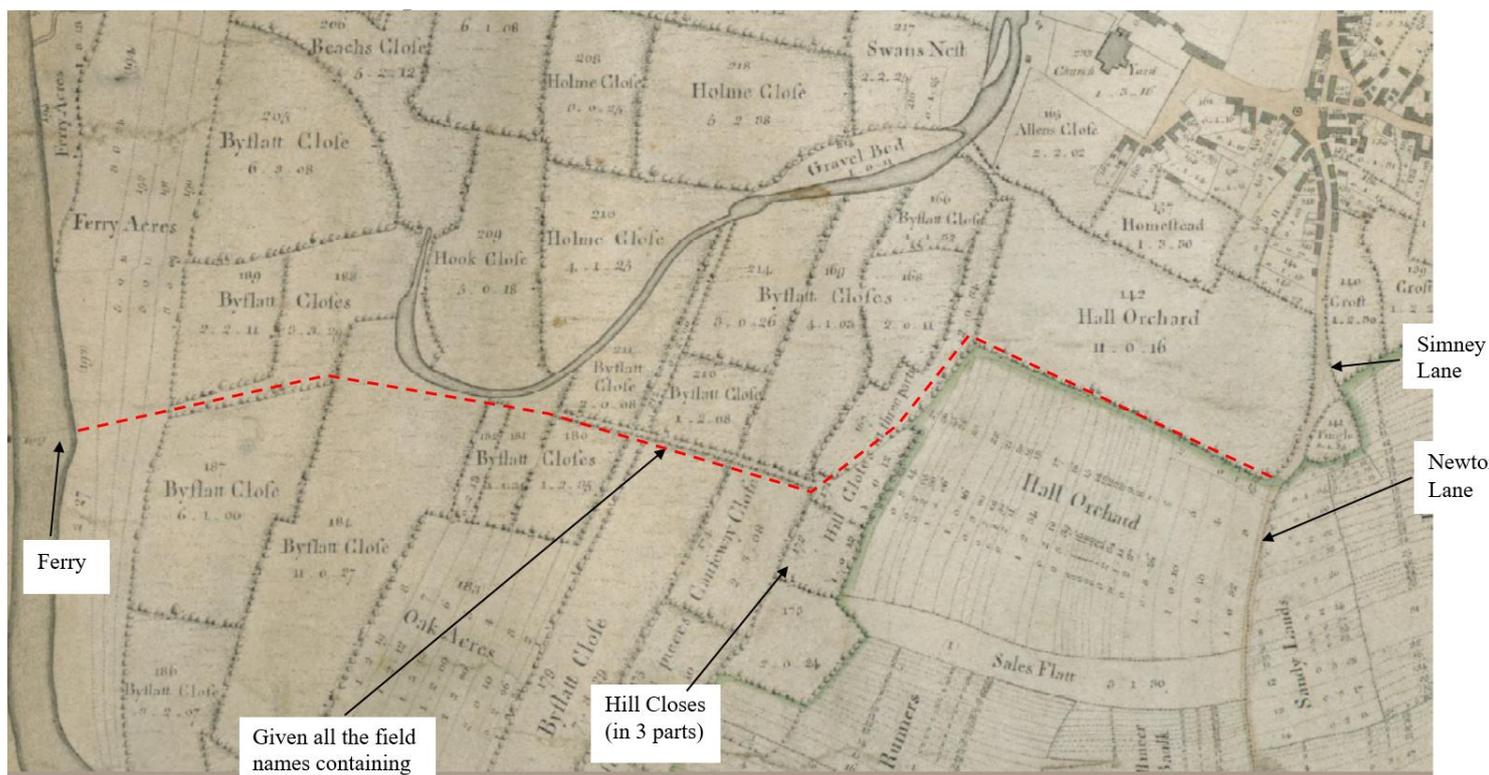
The documentation of the archaeological digs undertaken in the 1970s and 80s by Professor Martin and Birthe Biddle is to be in 3 volumes and Dr Cat Jarman has been asked to write the volume on the artefacts. She will need to acquire more funding for the work, but the History Group has now contributed the £500 we committed and this has been more than matched by private contributions to get her going.

Tanners lane footpath:

This route was mentioned in the recent consultation by the Trent Valley project and has interesting historical value. The riverside walk from Newton Solney to Repton hits difficulties when Willington Bridge is reached. One has to climb the embankment onto the causeway which is a narrow and very busy road with a very narrow pavement which changes sides. The safer route traditionally used - even after a gate was installed - is across the fields from the old ferry point (Ferry Acres) and along Tanners Lane.

In fact this was a right of way from before 1674 (when the ferry lease was up for grabs) and this is confirmed in the Enclosure Award of 1769 which says:

“...ONE other Publick Cart Carriage and Drift Road called Willington Ferry Road leading out of the said last mentioned Road at the West end of the said Lane called Simney Lane [Burton road] over the said Good Field by two Antient Inclosures of Sir Robert Burdett and the reverend William Asteley Clerk called Hall Orchard and Hill Closes on the East and North by Allotments of lands in the same Field Hereinafter made to the said Sir Robert Burdett, John Orme, the Curate of Repton aforesaid for the time being on the East and South to an Antient Enclosure called Hill Close late of Sir Harpur and now given on Exchange to the Curate of Repton aforesaid for the time being as hereinafter mentioned and through that Close and several other Antient inclosed Lands to one of the Common Meadows in Repton aforesaid called Ferry Acres and the said Ferry Acres from the North end of a Lane called By Flatt Lane in a straight direction to Willington Ferry...”



Extract of 1762 map. Original in Staffordshire Record Office.]

Given all the field names containing the word Byflatt, this must be By Flatt Lane

The Act of Parliament which enabled the toll bridge also closed the ferry and the ford and forbade crossing anywhere within a mile of the new bridge. It's not clear if the Act also closed Ferry Lane (aka Tanner's lane) but there is a press cutting which says it remained open for access to the fields.

5 Main St., Milton

We had a request for information about 5 Main St., Milton, lately home to Commander Norman Tomkins. We have found it difficult to pin the house down in the censuses so far, but have been able to provide extracts from a number of maps. We continue to look for information.

Hazeldene: We were approached for help in providing information to contribute to a booklet about this handsome house facing the Pastures. It seems to be an elegant Georgian building fronting an older structure and with the bay windows added later. So far, it seems that James Smith (retired surveyor) and his wife Priscilla lived at Hazeldene. James Smith was a Building Surveyor (for the northern half of Derbyshire) and was baptised on 22nd March 1782, and married Priscilla Newton on 15th October 1818 in Repton. His parents were Seth Smith and Ann Frances Silcock. Both good Repton names. They had a son John who was later knighted, and a daughter, also Priscilla, who married a John Twigg. The young Twigg couple are in Hazeldene in the 1851 census but James Smith and Priscilla (mum) are still head of the household although away on the night of the census. The young couple are in Wales for the 1861 census with 4 children and a servant and appear to be living off a private income. John Twigg died and so did James Smith (already a widower) and by 1871, Priscilla Twigg is back home in Hazeldene and lived there till she died in 1892. Her daughters Alice and Mary stayed on (The Misses Twigg) and are remembered by work on the Chancel and a commemorative plaque in St Wystan's. Later, Dr Hodson lived there and also Mr and Mrs Henry.



Above, the memorial plaque in the chancel and, right, the Misses Twigg outside Hazeldene.



Wrestling in Repton

We received an email from someone in Delaware in Ohio in the USA, enquiring about a famous wrestling match held in Repton in the first half of the 18th century. It seems to have been between Richard Trubshaw of the Staffordshire Architectural family (probably of Colwich) and Dick Allin Green of Hucknall. We knew nothing of this, but Sue Ellis remembered a reference in the (now long gone) Repton Library. Further checking with the DRO found sources for other references – one confirming Repton as the location. However there were possibly two fights as there are claims for winning on behalf of both combatants. This doggerel was sung a hundred years after the fight (Bunny being the Nottinghamshire seat of Sir Thomas Parkyns). (Source History of Hucknall Torkard by JH Beardmore, 1909)

Although dates and generations may be confusing things, it was a James Trubshaw (brother of a Richard Trubshaw) who designed Willington Bridge and it seems that this Richard was present at the stone laying ceremony in 1836 when they stayed in the Freemason's Lodge (almost certainly the Boot Inn). A grandson or great nephew of the wrestler perhaps. The DRO in Matlock has handwritten notes (c1713) on the wrestling style, probably taken from Sir Thomas Parkyns book on the subject "Cornish- Hug Wrestling" aka "The Inn-Play".

According to our correspondent, there would have been a wooden stage with seating around it and up to 5000 spectators! If of that scale, then it would have to be outdoors. The area between Cross and Arch is a possibility.

69 High St

We are indebted to Jane Cooper for allowing us to photograph the deeds of her house. This takes us back to before the 1911 census and so provides another datum within the enumerator's route down the street in earlier censuses. It is also an interesting fragment of our social history. The earliest reference in the deeds relates to the sale of the property on behalf of Sir Vauncey Harpur Crewe to Mr John Brown in 1909. This at a time when the estate was seeking to pay death duties. To prove Sir Vauncey's title, the documentation also includes a copy of Sir George's very complicated will and indentures that arose from it.

*"By the wrestling rules of Bunny, this famous match was made
Between Allin Green and Trubshaw, and heavy sums were laid;
When they stept into the ring, Trubshaw first did Allin lay,
Then for Trubshaw, huzza! for he'll surely win the day.*

*Said Allin Green's mistress: 'A wager I will hold
Of fifty bright guineas, in true, shining gold,
That my Richard throws his man, let him do the best he can,
For your Trubshaw's huzza, it can never win the day.'*

*The drums they did beat, and the trumpets they did sound
As the Nottinghamshire lads went heavy o'er the ground,
To see their money lost, and to have their champion lost,
Then for Trubshaw, huzza! for now he's won the day."*

This match took place in Repton. Richard Allin Green was a Hucknall man, whom Sir Thomas Parkyns kept at Bunny as a professional wrestler.

Brook End farm

Thanks to Martin Wigglesworth (who is currently doing it up), we had a tour of Bertie Warner's farm. Martin has removed the internal plaster and revealed the many phases of development of the buildings from a tiny one story cottage to a Victorian house with cowsheds, milking parlours, dairy, bottle washing facilities and milk bottling plant. Bertie's great grandfather was a builder who moved from Derby before 1881 and took the place on - rented from the Calke Estate. In 1924, the estate had a big sale to cover death duties and the Warners took the opportunity to purchase. Bertie's Grandmother gave up running the building business in the 1920s but by then they had turned to dairy farming.



We suspect that the area shown is the early part with a roof sloping back to a central ridge and an entrance in the wall running back from the road on the left. From marks on the internal walls and a number of lintels still in place, there was probably an entrance to the loft area from outside (for hay storage perhaps) and the building was originally lower than shown and later the roof was raised. Then the building was raised again using larger bricks and an extra floor put in. It was then extended to the left and rearwards to provide a good sized accommodation and a dairy, bottling plant and

bottle washing area. The outbuilding on the right was added later (it cuts across an earlier window) and a bathroom was built over a lean-to outbuilding at the back of the house. Outbuildings surrounding the yard at the back may have been materials stores and workshops in the days of their building trade, but most are still fitted out as cow byres with milk transporting pipes connecting all the buildings. We have a good selection of photographs.

Viking Lectures/ exhibitions

A few of us have attended many of the lunchtime lectures in the Djanogly Lakeside facility at Nottingham University and John Kidd took a party of 7 over to look round the Viking Exhibitions there. One pulls together artefacts and displays on the Anglo-Saxons (including the Repton Stone and an Anglo Saxon key from Repton) and the other, bigger, exhibition includes many displays and Viking artefacts. Both are excellent and the lectures have changed perspectives on the Vikings and explained much about their culture and assimilation. Strike lucky, and there is sometimes a display of beautiful facsimile items made by Adam Parsons of BlueAxe Reproductions.

WW1 survivors

In 2014 we published a booklet researched and written by Margaret Austen remembering the lives and subsequent service of those who died in the Great War. However, we rarely remember those who served but survived so she is now going through the 1911 census for the villages researching service records of those men of serving age. This is inevitably an unreliable approach, but the only one open to us. So we seek as much input as possible please from villagers and families about anyone who served in WWI.

June archaeology

Bristol University will be back in June to explore another area of the vicarage garden. A further radar survey has identified interesting areas – one of which coincides with the pits that we saw with the resistivity. However, Henry Webber (the Geophysics man) was more interested in the earth surrounding what we saw as pits. He sees these as ring formations worthy of further exploration.

There will be a talk by Cat on the dig and, hopefully, by some of the new graduates coming back to dig after their final year - if they can be persuaded to talk about their dissertations.

To make comments or for 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 near here.

The published programmes for some local history groups:

Willington History Group

- 8th March "Bess of Hardwick" By John Hawkins. How to become the most powerful woman in England (after Good Queen Bess)
- 12th April "Klondike Gold Rush" By Colin Bagshaw. Gold fever! Men make fortunes or die in misery as towns rise up and vanish.
- 10th May - "A Guided Tour of Repton" By Andy Austen, hopefully including a look at Church and School.

Ticknall Preservation and Historical Society

- Friday 23rd March Bess of Hardwick with Julie Ede. Julie tells us the life story of this fascinating local Elizabethan woman.
- Friday 26th April Herblore with Christina Smee. Re-enacting the role of the Medieval wise woman of Rouen explaining the use of herbs.
- Friday 18th May Medieval War Bow with Mark Stretton. An expert armorsmith tells us about this formidable weapon.
- Friday 29th June Visit to Donington le Heath Manor Gardens. Join Michael Arkle head gardener to see the gardens as they were in 1620.

Melbourne Civic Society

- Monday February 26th Sir Frank Brangwyn by Richard Stone. The life and work of a multi-talented artist and painter of murals.
- Monday March 26^h A.G.M. followed by The Ecclesbourne Railway by Eric Boulton. Learn about this successful working heritage railway.

Etwell and Burnaston History Group

- 20th March Bayeux Tapestry - Julia Hickey
- 17th April Darley Abbey and the Evans Family - Alan Bradwell
- 15th May AGM followed by 'The English Highwayman' - Lee Timmins

Hilton and Marston History Group

- 1st March AGM
- 5th April The blushing brides of Calke - the families of the girls who married the Baronets -Celia Sanger
- 3rd May A Grand Day out in the 1950s - Alan Hiley
- 7th June British Traditions and Customs - Paul Newsham
- 5th July Visit to Tutbury Church
- 4th October Uttoxeter Canal - Dave Marriott
- 1st November Marston on Dove Church Renovation - Piet Walton Knight
- 8th December Seasonal Social evening.

Ashby History Society

- 12th March The origins and Growth of Rolls-Royce – Roy Hirst.
- 9th April Coco Chanel – Julie Edge
- 14th May Made in Leicestershire - Brian Johnson