

Repton Village History Group Newsletter

Christmas 2014



Hopefully you will be able to join us in the Village Hall on the 2nd December at 7.30pm for our social - just a chance to chat, a few quizzes and some food. If not then this is our opportunity to offer Seasons greetings and wish you a peaceful Christmas.

The programme for next year is below. We have tried to find new speakers as well as booking some old favourites and have tried to keep talks as local as possible.

January 20 th	Brian Stone - Civil War in Derbyshire
February 17 th	Janet Spavold and Sue Brown - Ticknall Archaeological Research Group and "Pots".
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	AGM and Keith Blood - Talk to be decided
June 16 th	Archive/display
July	Visit
August	Visit
September 15 th	Members evening - a handful of short talks.
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)

We do need to plan the July and August outings and will be pleased for ideas with a strong historical interest. Hoar Cross church is one proposal.

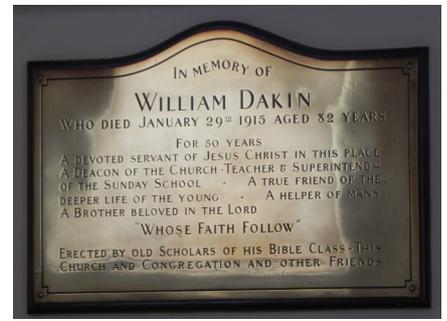
Staffordshire Hoard Exhibition.

St Wystan's church - who organised the Staffordshire Hoard Exhibition - have expressed gratitude to all those from the History Group who helped them by acting as stewards. This made a big difference to its success. Our display relating the history of the church and the hoard has also been well received and we have been asked to keep it handy for future use. There has also been a suggestion that it should be turned into a booklet. However the text of the display posters would need rewriting and expanding and the content on the later history would need adding to. We would also need approval from Derby Museum to use some of the images. If, as Prof Biddle thought, the crypt started life as a baptistery, then it could be as early as 654 which is when Peda returned to Repton from Lindisfarne with his new bride and 4 priests. They would have needed a baptistery to baptise pagan Mercians converting to Christianity. This is also the time most of the bits in the hoard were likely to be made - based on stylistic assessments. In 757 the crypt was used as a mausoleum for King Æthelbald and this is about the date some archaeologists think the hoard might have been buried. King Wiglaf had the crypt enhanced with the barley twist pillars and the stone ceiling with the stone building above - the basis of the current chancel. Canonisation of Wystan brought fame, pilgrims and wealth to the church and necessitated the cutting of the two sets of entrance steps now used. The building was extended to somewhere about the end of the first pair of arches (which were inserted later) with a portico on each side. Pieces of top class pottery, glass beakers, coloured window glass, coins, trinkets and lead were found by archaeologists. This all came to an end when, in the winter of 873 the Vikings arrived, destroyed the Mercian Monastery and presumably wreaked havoc with the local population. St Wystan's survived because it became a stone strongpoint acting as a gateway to the ditched enclosure. After their departure in the spring of 874, St Wystan's was restored and became the Minster Church for the Walecross Wapentake. Later the Medieval Augustinian Priory was built close by with its own large Priory Church but both establishments thrived. The Priory didn't survive the dissolution and most of the buildings were eventually demolished by Gilbert Thacker, but St Wystan's continued and is still a thriving church today.

W Dakin

We had a communication from a lady in Derby whose mother had inherited an oak and horn hat stand that she believed might have once been in Repton Church and which she wanted to sell. It bore the inscription W Dakin 1906. A quick investigation revealed that W Dakin had been a prominent Congregationalist and had, for many

years, been a Deacon, Sunday School teacher and Sunday School superintendent at the Congregational Church in Repton (now the URC). There is a handsome brass plaque to him in the church. He was a parish councillor and represented the area's Congregationalists in area and regional assemblies. He died in 1915 and the funeral was quite an affair with many mourners who walked through the village from the service in the Congregational Church to the burial in St Wystan's Churchyard. Also mentioned in the original communication were the Pegg family. We know that there was a place at Park End called Pegg's Well but have not been able to follow this up.



Carvings.

A short while ago, 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 and a lion's head. I'm pleased to say that Chris Colbourne is going to try to take some decent photographs with a good camera and flashgun.



Did the Staffordshire Hoard come from Repton?

In talking with the very knowledgeable Anglo-Saxons (re-enactors) who spent several days at the Hoard exhibition, an intriguing possibility emerged. The hoard contains pommels from 97 swords and hilt plates from 71. If it is true that the hoard consists of the jewelled components stripped from a defeated army between 650AD and 700AD then one possibility is that it is from King Penda's force that attacked Oswy, King of Northumbria in 655. They were much the stronger force but Oswy offered them considerable treasures not to attack - and presumably to ransom his son held hostage by Penda. There are contradictory records as to whether Penda accepted this payment, but it seems he did withdraw. His army reached Winwaed (possibly on the River Went near Doncaster) which was in flood and Oswy saw his chance and attacked with his smaller army. Bede records that more of Penda's troops were probably drowned than were killed in battle. Penda himself was killed.

Penda's troops comprised 30 war groups and, according to the re-enactors, each was led by 3 nobles who would have been equipped with fashionable shields, helmets and swords with lots of bling. So that could account for at least 90 swords - which compares quite well with the possible dates and size of the Staffordshire Hoard. Penda was the Mercian King based at Repton and it was his son Peada who briefly succeeded him. So there is just a possibility that the hoard had a much stronger link to Repton than just the dates of the crypt.

Boot Inn:

As work progressed on the current remodelling of the Boot Inn, a beam emerged bearing a neatly carved inscription: TS 1711.

Alan Gifford was consulted and he contacted us. We remembered that there is a plaque in Well Lane on the wall of what used to be the corner shop saying TS 1686. We don't know if there was a connection, but we also searched through the Enclosure Award of 1769 and found 7 people with surnames beginning with S. Of these Thomas Staid was a significant landowner with an allotment of land near Well Lane amongst other places. Another was William Sommers and the Sommers family were much later the landlords of the Boot.

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

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.