

# Repton Village History Group Newsletter

## Winter 2015



The weather forecast is for a serious chill and possibly snow next week so, even though the Winter Solstice isn't until December 22<sup>nd</sup>, it feels like time for the Winter Newsletter....

### The programme

A small error of just 1 on the chairman's part led to Richard Stone booking us for a Monday in February next year instead of Tuesday. So the previous programme has been juggled a bit as follows:

- November 17<sup>th</sup> Richard Stone - "Folk Tales & Festivities"  
December 15<sup>th</sup> Social & Bob Neill's "Box of Bits".  
January 19<sup>th</sup> Shirley Horton - "Just another one for the road - part II"  
February 16<sup>th</sup> Members 10 minute talks - Likely to include: Wooden Box II, Images of Repton II, Rev William Bagshaw Stevens plus any other offers.  
March 15<sup>th</sup> Robert Mee - "Derbyshire Castles"  
April 19<sup>th</sup> Keith Blood - St Oswald's, Ashbourne. Oswald was killed by our King Penda. Oswald's brother, King Oswy, got his own back 10 years later.  
May 17<sup>th</sup> Arnold Burston followed by our AGM.  
June 21<sup>st</sup> Archive and display evening.  
July/August Visits. Suggestions so far are Papplewick Pumping Station, Sion House (Burton) and Leicester's Richard III Centre. More suggestions please.  
September 20<sup>th</sup> Alan Hiley - History of the Trent Motor Traction company.  
October 18<sup>th</sup> Richard Stone - "The River Trent a water transport route."  
December 20<sup>th</sup> Quiz and social

Meetings take place in the Village Hall (DE65 6GR) at 7.30pm.

All are welcome. Members £2.00, Visitors £3.00. Tea, coffee and biscuits included.

**Personal:** Sadly, Alan Kimber has decided to go into a residential home - Rider House - in Stapenhill. He continues to follow RVHG activities and offer advice and information and hopes to join us for some meetings when the weather is decent. As a result, he has passed over much archival material and added more of his own. Margaret is in the process of listing it all for the archive catalogue. We wish him and June well as this new chapter opens up for them.

### Walks n Talks:

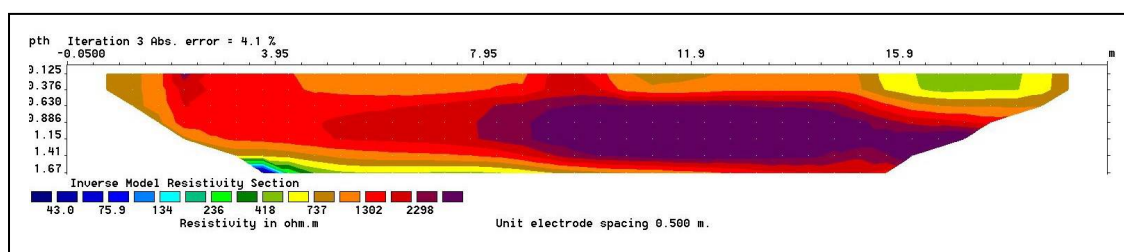
We actually completed 6 walk n talks for Village Hall funds – there was an extra one for a WI booking. A total of £850 was raised. We also did one for the Swarkestone Sailability Scheme as a raffle prize! Thank you to St Wystan's for accommodating this last event and allowing us to serve tea and cakes in the church afterwards.

**Milton Blacksmith's:** This building, known to have lastly been a stable and thought originally to have been an early cottage, has been shown to have a pit of burned material in the floor. There are plans to do an archaeological section of the pit, but this will probably have to await better weather in the spring. The rest has been cleaned up and documented.

**Family History Enquiries:** We have ongoing work looking for material to support folk researching their family trees. At the moment, we are looking for Poxon, Maddocks and Clamp/Smedley. Now that all our digital material is being moved to the RVHG PC we should be able to pick this work up again soon. We have also supplied information on the Priory and will be pursuing an enquiry about the laundry for John Payne.

**The Tithe Barn Archaeology:** A grid survey of resistance values revealed the possibility of a hard floor. We had hoped to find signs of wall foundations but recognised that the ground might have just been levelled and the stones sat on the surface. They would have been reused elsewhere later – sometime after 1843.

The pseudosections that Keith Foster recommended (see autumn issue) were carried out and confirmed a "lens" of material that might possibly be the barn's floor. Pseudosections are resistivity surveys carried out in a line rather than a grid. The probes are connected in pairs 1&2, 3&4...and the resistances recorded. Then they are connected 1&3, 2&4...



and values recorded, then 1&4, 2&5... and so on. The results are processed by some very clever software and compared with known situations.

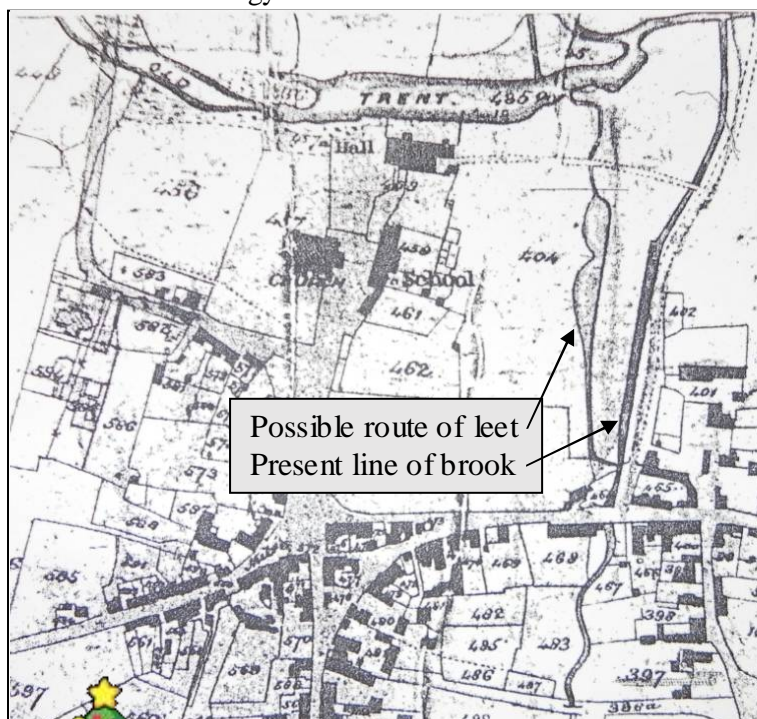
Pseudosection – the purple patch is the bit of interest.

Chris Jerram kindly gave us permission to put a 1m square test pit over the most promising spot - hoping to find the edge of a floor, and on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October, Barbara Foster came and led the excavation of the pit. Fortunately, we had a good shelter because it rained for most of the time. We had experienced diggers in Lesley and Emily Holt, Aimee Brooks, and Martin Flowerdew with able fetching and carrying by Margaret and Andy Austen. We took the turf off carefully with our newly acquired turving spade and then started careful excavation. Quite quickly we realised that heavily compacted gravel would yield best to a mattock. Then it was cleaning down to a surface with trowels, with Barbara recording it and then going down a bit further. We did encounter parts of bricks and quite a lot of heavy green glass - which was subsequently pieced together to reveal a couple of large containers with domed bases. Further work will hopefully identify a date for them. Further digging came upon a clay surface and extending the pit found edges to the clay. Wrong shape and too clean to have been a well-used floor. There are 2 pieces of documentary evidence and the 1762 map giving us confidence that we are in the right area - though we concluded that either we missed the barn or that there is no evidence in the ground.



### Priory Mill:

Tithe barn archaeology and PC technical issues have limited activity on this, but Charles Proud – an expat member (he lives in Essex) - has provided a host of references to follow up and we have found more ourselves. There is now no doubt that there was a Priory Mill and that it was on the sports field near Pears School. We do know who donated the mill – back in the 1200's - and we do know that there were two mills in 1086 (Domesday Book) so this may be one of those. If so, it would have been pretty ancient already when donated. Charles points out that the Domesday entry is for both Repton and Milton which certainly had its own mill later and maybe then. Possibly that was the other one mentioned. The Harpurs acquired land adjacent to the Priory land and built their own mill – diverting the brook to serve it – much to the annoyance of the Thackers who had inherited the Priory and Priory Mill. It is possible that the present line of the brook (outside the school (Priory?) wall) is the diverted route. The sharp bends feeding the other channel – shown on the (poor) copy of the 1829 map – would really have annoyed the Thackers if this is indeed the leet supplying the Priory Mill.



It only remains to invite you to the December meeting and to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



To comment or for more information, please contact Andy Austen on [rvhg@reptonvillage.org.uk](mailto: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.