

Repton Village History Group - Newsletter - Autumn 2014



Programme for the remainder of 2014

September 16 th	John Hawkins - History of Findern.
October 21 st	Robert Mee - Societies for the Prosecution of Felons.
November 18 th	Wendy Freer - Black Diamonds (Her last talk to us as she retires this year)
December 2 nd	Social and quiz.

Programme for 2015

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)

Thank you to David Guest and to Glenys Shakespeare.

David was a founding member of the RVHG and became our Vice President. He has now relinquished this role because he and Lilwen have moved away to Cheshire. David has passed over a huge amount of historical material relating to Repton which is being catalogued and stored in the village archive. We are grateful to both him and Lilwen for their input to the group's development and ongoing life and wish them well in their move.

Thank you too to Glenys and Frank Shakespeare. Glenys has been a committee member for many years and looked after membership records and recruitment. She and Frank have, for a long time, also manned the reception desk in the village hall. They are doing it again this month, but feel that it is time to relinquish the role. They will remain members and hope to be with us at monthly meetings. We are very grateful for all they have done.

But it means we need someone else to sit by the door taking money (please!)

John Kidd has offered to look after membership issues.

The Staffordshire Hoard The Vicar, Rev Martin Flowerdew, has organised a visit in October and November of the Staffordshire Hoard travelling exhibition to St Wystan's church. It includes stunning copies of some of the items found as well as hands on experiences and some examples of Anglo Saxon artefacts. We are contributing a small additional display of information and, possibly, photographs of some of the objects found in the Repton digs. Martin is very keen that our members are invited to help host the event by being present to welcome visitors, serve refreshments and generally help out. The exhibition is self explanatory and guidance notes will be provided. If you can give some time to this please contact Karen Perks on 01283 702392 or perkshome@aol.com.

The Summer's Visits:

In July, and thanks to Sue Ellis and others from the church, we had a delightful visit to St Mary's in the "Gentrified" village of Newton Solney. It was a lovely still, warm evening and Sue gave us a clear view of the church's history. With a Norman doorway and Saxon elements in the stonework, St Mary's was founded as an adjunct to the priory at Repton - along with 6 other chapels. The area was appropriated for the crown by William the Conqueror and given to the Earl of Chester around 1120. It passed onto the De Solneys (Soligney) by 1162 and there are some wonderful tombs and memorials for members of the family. Many of them seem to have been named Alfred and, amongst others, there is a fine, datable, Alabaster effigy of Sir Alfred De Solney the 8th in the south east corner and a lifelike semi-reclining figure in a rather dark corner under the tower at the west end of the church.



Responsibility for the church passed briefly to the De Ferrers family and they and their successors "improved" the church with the addition of features in most architectural styles. One of the last being the Victorians who increased the capacity of the building as the village grew by adding the South Aisle - and in doing so limited its listing to Grade II* rather than Grade I had it remained unchanged.

In the north wall, supporting the roof beams, are three corbel stones of unknown origin. They are of a

different colour stone and two bear faces with a very different style to those usually seen in English churches - one probably a man with a beard and the other probably being a lady with a head-dress. The Civil War left its mark outside with shallow craters from musket balls in the north wall and it is very probable that the Parliamentary forces forded the Trent here and passed the church on the way to attack Bretby Castle.

In August we were guests of Chris and Cathy Rogers (who was in period costume) at the Upper Hall in Hartshorne. This lovely half timbered building became the main house on Hartshorne Upper Manor estate which, was one of two manors in Hartshorne mentioned in the Domesday book. The other being Nether (lower) Manor somewhere to the north of the village around Brook Street. The Upper Hall was occupied by tenants for much of its life and as a result has sustained only limited changes. The timbers in the main body of the house were felled between 1618 and 1622 and that supports the understanding that the house was completed around 1629. John Benskin and his family seem to have been the chief tenants of the manorial estate. Whoever built the house was clearly wealthy because the original building was constructed in one go. It was unlikely to be built by the tenant of the estate. Commonly a family would have the resources to build a modest structure and then add to it over the years and generations. A typical farmhouse of the period would have two or three rooms downstairs with just two fireplaces matched by small unheated rooms above. This house was built with a large kitchen with two big ovens, a small room and a lobby each side of the stairs, a hall, with cellars under, a "best" parlour and a dining parlour and large heated rooms above.

The building was modified a little as construction proceeded. Uncompleted joints in the timbers reveal that the northern gable was an afterthought. The porch was added to enhance its appearance and brick cladding became fashionable. Even the Victorians had a go - adding the 'Parson's Room'.

By 1680 it had changed hands and it changed again a number of times and, at one time, became 3 cottages before being renovated from a poor condition in the 1970s by the Worthington family. It is now a delightful and comfortable home and owned by two enthusiastic and charming people.

The assembled throng:



Bits and Pieces:

We have an ongoing email correspondence with Adrian Farnsworth and Paula Whirrity regarding possible routes south across the Trent Valley from Twyford. Adrian was continuing his father's quest for Roman routes but they have found the remnants of a stone wharf near Foremark and a track leading towards the Burdett's Estate. Shelagh and Richard Wain have visited it and concluded that it might have been for use in constructing Foremark Hall. Given that the Trent was for many years a commercially navigated waterway, it might have been used by the estate for getting all sorts of goods into and out of the area. We were able to tell them how to download the LIDAR for the area (our bits didn't go that far) and provide a reference to a couple of reports on palaeochannels so that they might be able to identify old channels and interesting lumps and bumps.

New History- Repton Rink: A recent family history enquiry led Janine to research the story of this building. The following is the results of her endeavours.

Most local residents have heard of the Rink at Swadlincote, but what about Repton Rink? Roller skating has been popular in this country since 1870. The popularity of roller skating was at its height between 1908 and 1912, when it was known as ‘rinking’. Repton Rink was a single storey wooden structure, measuring 80ft by 40ft, with a wooden floor and a corrugated iron roof. It was built opposite St Wystan’s School, on the left side of the site now occupied by a row of town houses with hard standing at the front.

1911 Census, High Street, Repton

Annie Elizabeth	Turner	Head	Single	Female	62	1849	Shop Keeper China And Fancy Dealer Skating Rink Proprietress	Born: Repton Derbyshire
Arthur Henry	Turner Senior	Brother	Married	Male	52	1859	Railway Clerk	Born: Repton Derbyshire
Elizabeth Emma	Turner	Sister	Single	Female	49	1862	Tailoress Skating Rink Proprietress	Born: Repton Derbyshire
Annie Maria	Turner	Sister In Law	Married	Female	48	1863	-	Born: Rolleston , Staffs
Arthur Henry	Turner Junior	Nephew	Single	Male	15	1896	At School	Born: Repton Derbyshire

In 1911 the Turners lived in Jessamine Cottage, the first house in High Street on the same side as the Village School. This was a tied property; allocated to the person/persons who were responsible for the day-to-day running of the Rink. The shop run by Annie Turner was next door, followed by The Rink. The policeman, William Pett, lived in the house beyond the Rink. Annie, Arthur and Elizabeth were the children of Henry Turner, a tailor. The family had lived in High Street (on the opposite side of the street).

The Parish Magazine of January 1912 records, “The Social Gathering arranged for the purpose of welcoming the new Vicar and his wife . . . was a distinct success. . . . An excellent tea was arranged in the Skating Rink, kindly lent for the occasion by the Misses Turner. A large number of tickets, 341, was bought, and the hall was crowded.”

In January 1915 the Derby Daily Telegraph reported that the Rink hosted its fourth annual parish tea. About 400 people attended, including Belgian refugees. After the entertainment Miss Turner played for a dance.

At Repton Petty Sessions in 1915 Misses A E and E E Turner applied for the renewal of a cinematograph licence at Repton Rink. It was not solely used as a cinema, e.g. in 1918 a sale of work in aid of the Home and Foreign Missions, in 1921 two performances by children (the proceeds in aid of St Dunstan’s Mission Church, Derby) and in 1923 a lantern lecture on Chinese Medical Missions all took place in the building. In 1920 a Captain Frazer had been granted the cinematograph licence.

Herbert William Whitehurst, a furniture broker from Derby, applied to take over the licence in 1922. Having spent £111 on fitting out the building, the cinema re-opened in 1923. After losing 30 shillings per week for a considerable time, he was declared bankrupt in 1926. During this time the building was still being used for other purposes, e.g. a whist drive in aid of St Dunstan’s and a public meeting under the auspices of the Repton branch of the Women Citizens’ Association.

Still known as Repton Rink, the building was then used for various gatherings, e.g. church socials, St Wystan’s annual ‘Harvest Home’ and a variety of fundraising dances. The room accommodated over 100 people dancing the evening away, sometimes to the music of the Reps Dance Band, the Swastika Band or the Ideal Band. In 1927 Allen & Farquhar, Auctioneers of Derby, used the premises to sell by auction the New Inn, cottages and a croft at Park End, land known as Peasey Flatt and a house and shop in Boot Hill.

On Saturday, 19 February 1938, Mr Neale D Thomson re-opened the building as Repton Village Hall. The money to buy the building had been raised by public subscriptions, donations and fundraising. Jessamine Cottage was still a tied property.

Repton Village Hall was destroyed by fire in 1962. It was a sad end to a fascinating building that had been an integral part of the community for nearly sixty years.

Archaeology: The grant from Derbyshire County Council has come through and is banked. We now have to specify and purchase the IT equipment that will enable us to do the mapping work needed to confirm, as accurately as possible, the probable location of the Tithe barn. We have arranged with Derbyshire Archaeological Society to look at the site once confirmed and if suitable they will help us to do a resistivity survey to look for foundations of the building. On another front, Chris Pegg has put us in touch with owners of a light aircraft that will enable us to do a 3d photographic survey of our bit of the Trent Valley that can be turned into a 3d model to identify interesting features in the landscape. Now we have to re-establish contact with the archaeologist.

World War I. Margaret completed her work on the book for the History Group about the 43 men from the villages of Repton, Milton, Foremarke and Ingleby who died in WWI. We later discovered a press cutting with the names on the, now lost, Milton Memorial. We were very fortunate to find a printer who was also a supporter of the Royal British Legion and generously printed the books at a special price. It has been very well received and about 100 copies have been sold. After covering printing costs, all profits go to the Poppy Appeal. RVHG also created a display of material relating the stories of these men which was part of the exhibition put on by the Royal British Legion in August.

Your History Group still needs you (please!) But... with new committee members many jobs have been shared out. We do need someone to take over from Glenys and Frank - collecting entrance money - and there are lots of little jobs needed to keep the history group on the straight and narrow with the wheels turning
To help, contact rvhg@reptonvillage.org.uk or Andy Austen on 01283 702448

Encyclopaedia Britannica: The Parish Council were approached by Encyclopaedia Britannica and asked to review and update the Repton entry. They passed this onto the History group to do. The existing entry simply said that Repton was a village in Derbyshire with a public school founded in 1556 (wrong date!) and gave its 2011 population. So we offered them about 250 words on the village and after pruning, some clarification and some editorial changes, we now have a worthy entry:-

“**Repton**, village (parish), South Derbyshire district, administrative and historic county of Derbyshire, central England.

An ancient settlement on the south bank of the River Trent, Repton overlooks the old channel of the river and, across the meadows, a historic crossing point. Although still strongly tied to the agricultural region that surrounds it, the village is now a largely residential community. Its most significant enterprises are Zytec Engineering Ltd., which is involved in design and manufacture of automotive racing engines, and Repton School (1557), which is among the most prominent independent schools in Britain. The village is also home to Repton Primary School and St. Wystan’s Preparatory School.

There is evidence of use of the site of Repton from the late Mesolithic and Neolithic periods of the Stone Age, and traces of enclosure ditches indicate occupation during the late Roman and early Anglo-Saxon periods. The village’s recorded name changed from Hreopandune (or Hrebandune) in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle to Rapendune in the Domesday Book and then to Repingdon before becoming Repton. From the 7th to the 9th century, Repton was a principal residence of the Mercian royal family; Paeda—a son of the early Mercian king Penda—received Christian teaching and was baptized in 653 CE, and three years later the first bishop of Mercia, Diuma, introduced Christianity to the kingdom at Repton. A royally founded Anglo-Saxon abbey (actually a double monastery—for men and women) soon was established; it was destroyed by the Vikings’ “Great Heathen Army,” which wintered in Repton in 873–874. Beneath St. Wystan’s Church is a crypt (rediscovered in 1779) that was likely built in the first half of the 8th century, possibly initially as a baptistery. Later converted to a mausoleum, it became the final resting place of King Aethelbald (who was murdered in 757) and later became a place of pilgrimage when St. Wystan’s bones were placed there in the mid-9th century. The crypt is one of the oldest and most important extant examples of Anglo-Saxon architecture.

There is little recorded history of Repton again until its appearance in the Domesday Book in 1086. In 1172 Augustinian canons built the imposing priory church adjacent to St. Wystan’s. In the 15th century the magnificent 212-foot (65-metre) tower and spire of St. Wystan’s were built. In 1538 the priory of Repton (but not St. Wystan’s) fell victim to King Henry VIII’s dissolution of the monasteries. During the reign of Mary I, most of the priory buildings were demolished; however, the priory guesthouse survived and became the first home of Repton School. Pears School was built upon the remains of the priory church in 1886.

Other buildings of architectural and historical significance in Repton include Prior Overton’s Tower (a very early example of a brick building, dating from 1438), an ancient market cross, a cottage dwelling converted from an aisled hall, a classic timber-framed house from the late 16th century, the Stone House, dating from the early 17th century (probably built from stone from the demolished priory church), a number of notable houses from the 18th and 19th centuries, and Easton House (1907; designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens). The modern village core is now a conservation area. Pop. (2001) 2,707; (2011) 2,867.”

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.