

THOROTON

AT THE 96th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - - - -

Tuxford Memorial Hall was the venue for the Annual General Meeting this year on Saturday, 24th April, in keeping with the Society's policy of arranging the meetings in various parts of the County. It proved to be a pleasant location and over a hundred members attended.

The Chairman, Professor John Beckett, was able to report an improvement in the financial situation, partly due to economies made in the printing of Transactions and in the production of a smaller and cheaper Annual Report. You will be pleased to know that Council was not recommending a further increase in subscription. A suggestion was made that a new category of membership be introduced, such members not receiving Transactions. It was explained that whilst superficially attractive, the proposal would create financial difficulties since reducing the print run of Transactions would increase the cost per copy. The suggestion would, however, be kept under review.

Professor Beckett expressed the thanks of the Society to Dr. Maurice Caplan who over the next year would gradually hand over the duties of Lecture Secretary to Mrs. Jean Nicholson, and to Mrs. Hazel Salisbury who would similarly, in a phased handover be succeeded by Dr. Carol Allen as Joint Editor of Transactions.

He also referred to and thanked the long serving members of Council who were not seeking re-election, Mr. Philip Lyth and Mr. Stanley Revill.

The views of the members present were sought on the venue for the winter lecture series. At present they are held in the Y.M.C.A. which has the advantage of being central, well served by bus routes and by park and ride, though otherwise parking is very difficult. It may be possible to return to the Cathedral Hall, but that is further from the City Centre, not always warm, on bus routes from the west only and with some parking nearby. Other possible locations, all with pros and cons, were suggested, but the meeting by a large majority decided to remain at the Y.M.C.A. for the time being.

The proposed changes to the Rules of the Society, mainly to comply with the requirements of the Charity Commissioners, were approved.

After a businesslike meeting, tea was provided and then a visit was made to East Markham Church where Dr. McIntyre spoke on the building and its history, from here members moved on to Tuxford windmill with its sails recently installed and forming a spectacular addition to the Tuxford skyline. Mr. David Ostick, the owner, welcomed members and spoke about the restoration of the mill.

S I T U A T I O N S V A C A N T

At the May meeting of Council Mrs. Ann Hoskins expressed her wish to resign from the post of Distribution Secretary at the 1994 Annual General Meeting, and we are anxious to find a replacement who will be prepared to work alongside Ann for a few months with a view to taking over in April next year. Briefly, the duties involve preparing circulars for excursions etc, packing and posting. For full details please contact Ann Hoskins on Nottingham 781816.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

Our founding members were made of stern stuff when it came to excursions. No executive, air-conditioned luxury coaches for a half-day jaunt, but a train journey to Bingham then horse-drawn brakes was the order of the day on 27th July, 1897, with the 28th being mainly on foot. On the Tuesday morning the party left Bingham for Car Colston, then Screveton, Hawsworth and Thoroton with appropriate church visits and talks. What could have been a disaster at Thoroton was only a minor hiccup to our stalwarts. One of the horses became so entangled in the shafts that the brake had to be taken apart to free it. Whilst theirs was being repaired the passengers walked behind the other brakes, via Aslockton to Whatton for lunch at the Griffin. In the afternoon, on to Langar, Wiverton (received by Mrs. Chaworth-Musters) and back to Bingham for tea.

The following day in Nottingham was equally action-packed; St. Mary's and St. Peter's followed by the mediaeval remains at the Castle - all before lunch! The afternoon took them (by tram?) to Wollaton, and in the evening the whole thing was rounded off with dinner at the 'Albert Hotel' followed by not one but two speakers!

It is noticeable that support for Excursions has conspicuously declined in recent years. Why? Only a few years ago two coaches for an outing was quite usual, sometimes there was a waiting list; but recently two excursions have had to be cancelled for lack of interest.

It has been suggested that 'the recession' and 'high cost' are to blame, but other organisations with similar membership (many, in fact, the same individuals) run outings to destinations near and far, costing as much or more than ours, and regularly have to turn people away - applications are pushed through the organiser's letter box on the day after the circulars go out!

Presumably, then, it is the choice of venue which is responsible? At the 1992 A.G.M. it was suggested that we had more half-day visits, and more within Nottinghamshire, although both these requests limit the scope considerably.

The answer is in **YOUR** hands, unless Council know what you want it cannot provide it! So - don't murmur to your friends over the coffee cups but write to Neville Hoskins (address at the bottom of the last page) any comments will be welcome, constructive comments and positive suggestions even more so!

THE KEITH TRAIN AND MAURICE BARLEY LECTURES.

The Society has been involved in the organisation of two annual prestige lectures set up to mark the contribution made by two well-respected historians of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire deeply involved with both the Thoroton Society and the Nottingham Civic Society, Keith Train and Maurice Barley.

The funding and organisation of these two lectures have so far been handled in different ways, and Council decided in February to review the arrangements. In consultation with the Civic Society it has therefore been decided that in future both Societies will be connected with both lectures.

The Civic Society will take over the organisation and running of the Keith Train Lecture which will, after this year, be incorporated within their general programme of lectures. The Thoroton Society will, as at present, include the Maurice Barley Lecture in its programme.

In order to demonstrate the common bond between the two historians commemorated and to continue the friendship between the two Societies, they will jointly consult on speakers and alternately Chair each other's function. The new arrangements will commence in 1994.

Thoroton Society Library

Members will be aware that some years ago the Society had to give up its separate library. All its holdings were deposited in the East Midlands Collection of the University Library, part of the Hallward Library Building on the Highfields Campus.

Recently the East Midlands Collection Librarian, Margaret Clarke, who acted also as Honorary Librarian to the Thoroton Society, has retired. We would like to thank her for the work that she has done, and to welcome her successor, John Richards.

Members may also like to be reminded of the terms and conditions on which they may use the Society's library. You need to apply, through John Richards, for an External Borrowers' Card. This allows you to borrow any book or pamphlet from the East Midlands Collection (not just those deposited by the Society), and to use the rest of the University Library for reference. You will need a passport sized photograph for the ticket.

However, new users of the library also require some evidence of their membership of the Society. Currently we do not issue membership cards, so that until now each individual has needed a letter from the Secretary saying they are a bona fide member of the Thoroton Society. In future we shall issue new members of the Society with a letter showing that they have become a member, which they will be able to use when applying for a ticket to use the library. For existing members, those already with a ticket need do nothing more than renew it as necessary. Existing members of the Society who would like a ticket should apply to John Richards, and he will check them off against an up-to-date list of the Society's membership.

The East Midlands Collection of the University Library is open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday to Friday, except during University vacations when opening hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. On Saturdays the Collection is open between 9 a.m. and 12.30 p.m., except during August when the University library is closed on all Saturdays. The collection is staffed between 9 and 5 during the week, and between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. on alternate Wednesdays in term-time. John Richards can be contacted direct at the Library on 514562.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION.

The Association was formed in 1953 to bring together organisations and individuals interested in all aspects of Local History in the County, and the Thoroton Society, a corporate member, nominates a member for the Executive Committee.

In spring and autumn a one-day School is organised with four speakers on related topics. The next one will be held at the Dukeries Complex, Ollerton on Saturday, 6th November, 1993 under the general title "In the eye of the beholder", when the speakers will be:-

JEREMY FARRELL, Keeper of Nottingham Museum of Costume and Textile on 'Costume'.

KEN BRAND, local historian on 'The Architecture of Nottinghamshire - a personal view'.

PAULINE HEATHCOTE, on 'Victorian Photographers'.

NEIL WALKER, Keeper of Fine Arts, Nottingham Castle Museum on 'Nottinghamshire Art and Artists'.

With such an authoritative line-up, it promises to be a most interesting day. Book the date, watch out for further news, and for more information about the Association or the Day School contact Mrs. S. M. Cooke, Secretary N.L.H.A. c/o Bromley House, Angel Row, Nottingham.

SATURDAY, 11th September. The Three Counties Local History Fair to be held at Ruddington, arranged by the Framework Knitters Museum. The fair will be held as a 'traditional market' in Chapel Street, open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and refreshments will be available all day.

The Society has taken a stall, and we hope to 'show the flag' in the southern part of the County. You can help by volunteering to staff the stall for a spell - if you are interested and are able to help please ring Mrs. M. J. Booth on Nottingham 413773.

If you have any memorabilia or photographs suitable for display please contact Miss Penny Messenger who as our 'archivist' will be part of the team preparing for this event.

FRIDAY, 22nd October. The 8th Keith Train Lecture, to be held for the last time in the Arkwright Lecture Theatre of Nottingham Trent University, on Shakespeare Street will continue the architectural theme of recent years, but from a very different angle. The speaker will be Mr. Demitri Porphyrios on Tradition and the New. Members may remember that he was one of the architects short listed for the design of the Inland Revenue Building in Nottingham. His was the traditional one which was reminiscent of Oxbridge Colleges but was not selected.

Among his recent projects have been an extension to Magdalen College, Oxford, a sensitive site on the edge of the deer park, and Belvedere Farm near Ascot which he describes as a prototype village and a return to commonsense.

This promises to be a stimulating lecture.

SATURDAY, 23rd October. The Society's Annual Luncheon will again be held in the historic Great Hall of the Archbishop's Palace at Southwell Minster. This has proved a popular venue and the hall is usually filled to capacity, with members enjoying a rare chance to meet each other in a pleasant and relaxing surroundings. This year the guest speaker will be Mrs. Victoria Jarvis of Doddington Hall, near Lincoln who will talk about the house, its history and its characters.

BOOKBINDING AND BOOK RESTORATION.

Many members have old and perhaps valuable books which would benefit from a little tender loving care, if not a complete reconstruction and rebind. South Nottinghamshire College of Further Education runs a course which will teach you to do it yourself! The course will start in September, run for 30 weeks, and will teach beginners the basic principles of the craft and the processes involved in binding not only historic, but children's books, paperbacks, magazines and photograph albums. Materials are available at cost.

There is also an intermediate course where more advanced skills, such as paper repair, are taught.

For more information telephone Mr. J. J. Hickey at the School of Printing on Nottingham 212347, Extension 30. If you enrol you may well find some fellow members in the class. Senior citizens only pay half the normal fees.

THE BOOKSTALL makes a useful contribution to the Society's finances, but it is felt that a Bookstall manager could organise it in a more effective way. Any volunteers? You could help by bringing to meetings back numbers of appropriate magazines or suitable books surplus to your own library.

TOP AWARD FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ARCHIVES SERVICE.

A local history resource pack for schools compiled by the Nottinghamshire Archives Service has won a major national award. The pack of documents relating to the history of Rufford Abbey, near Ollerton, has been awarded the Phillimore Prize, being judged the 'best educational publication' produced by an archives service between 1990 and 1992. The prize was presented by local history publishers Phillimore & Co. to Principal Archivist, Adrian Henstock and Mr. John Plumb, Director of Leisure Services at the new Nottinghamshire Archives building in Nottingham on 25th June.

Published by Nottinghamshire County Council's Leisure Services, 'Rufford : From Abbey to Country House' contains copies of ancient charters, family portraits, Edwardian photographs and other archives that trace the history of Rufford from its foundation as a Cistercian Abbey to its modern function as a County Council Country Park. An accompanying booklet provides background information to each document and there are ideas for activities that can be incorporated into classroom projects or undertaken by schoolchildren when visiting the Country Park.

Principal Archivist Adrian Henstock, who compiled the pack, commented: 'We are delighted to have won this prestigious award. It highlights the educational value and importance of archives, at both local and national level.'

Judges praised the pack's wide range of contents, its robust design and competitive price. The Phillimore prize was judged by Mr. Noel Osborne, Director of Phillimore & Co., the Secretary of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts and the Chairman of the Society of Archivists.

Copies of the Rufford pack can be obtained, price £4.75 from Nottinghamshire Archives, Castle Meadow Road, Nottingham or Rufford Country Park. It is also available by post, £5.50, from Leisure Services, Libraries, Trent Bridge House, Fox Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 6BJ.

NEW PUBLICATION : ARCHIVE RESOURCE PACK

A new resource pack based on the life and work of Victorian architect Watson Fothergill was published by the County Council's Leisure Services in the Spring. The pack contains a wide selection of material from Nottinghamshire Archives and the Local Studies Library in Nottingham, including building plans, maps, photographs, newscuttings and extracts from personal papers. Each document is accompanied by a description that provides a historical context. Copies of 'Watson Fothergill : A Victorian Architect of Nottingham' can be obtained, price £5.90 from Nottinghamshire Archives, Castle Meadow Road, Nottingham or by post, £6.90, from Leisure Services, Libraries, Trent Bridge House, Fox Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 6BJ.

LUNCHTIME TALKS

A Springtime series of lunchtime talks, held in the meetings room at Nottinghamshire Archives proved a popular innovation. The talks all lasted 40 minutes, between 1.00 and 1.40 pm and each one was fully booked. The overall theme of the series was 'Discover Nottinghamshire Archives', with individual talks by John Plumb on 'Discovering Nottinghamshire Maps', Sue Wood on 'Archives Conservation', Adrian Henstock on 'Gossip and Scandal in Georgian Nottingham : the Diary of Abigail Gawthern', Roger Vaughan on 'Schooldays in Nottinghamshire' and Chris Weir on 'Quill Pens, Parchment and Archives'. another series of talks is being planned for the Autumn.

On two recent afternoons members of the Society were privileged to have a conducted tour of the Archives, including the parts the ordinary users never see - the conservation room and the air conditioned storage area. Our thanks to Adrian Henstock and Chris Weir for making this possible.

WINTER LECTURES.

You will have seen that the question of the venue for the Winter lectures was raised at the Annual General Meeting, which decided, for the present, to continue at the Y.M.C.A. on Shakespeare Street. However, the views which were expressed were only those of members attending that meeting, and Council would welcome other comments or ideas.

Among the factors which have to be taken into consideration are the hall itself, its cost, comfort, size, location, facilities and convenience of access. Both motorists and non-motorists must be considered, availability of car parking or a park and ride service, and proximity to bus services.

If you are happy with the Y.M.C.A., would prefer a return to the Cathedral Hall or if you could suggest somewhere different, please drop a line to the Honorary Secretary.

The 1993 Autumn Lectures are as follows:

Saturday, 9th October, 1993:

Digging and Delving into the Past : The Yorkshire Dales, a lecture by Mr. Robin Minnitt.

Saturday, 13th November, 1993:

The Nottinghamshire History Lecture.

The Dukeries Estates, a lecture by Dr. Susan Seymour

Saturday, 4th December, 1993:

Neolithic Settlements with special reference to Lismore Fields, Buxton, a lecture by Miss Daryl Garton, B.A.

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THESE LECTURES WILL BE CIRCULATED LATER.

One of the long-serving members of Council who did not seek re-election was a recognised authority in the field of Agricultural History.

On retiring as Principal of Brackenhurst in 1974 he undertook lectures for the University Adult Education Department and for Trent Polytechnic. He also became a presenter for the weekly Farming Programme on Radio Nottingham.

PHILIP LYTH came to Nottinghamshire in 1949 from County Durham, to start the Farm Institute at Brackenhurst, which became the Nottinghamshire College of Agriculture. He acquired an early interest in Agricultural History at Reading University where he was a contemporary of Maurice Barley. When they renewed acquaintance in Nottinghamshire Maurice introduced him to the Thoroton Society which he joined in 1964 and was later elected to Council. Philip was also a founder member of the Local History Council and hosted the early residential conferences at Brackenhurst.

His abiding interest has been in Agricultural History and Natural History which he saw as basic components of Local History. This combination bore fruit in papers he contributed to Transactions on the 956 AD Charter boundaries of Southwell and the Archbishop's Deer Parks.

Together with Norman Summers and Richard Beaumont he was instrumental in starting the Southwell Local History Society and has written on the Farms and Fields of Southwell, Life in Georgian Southwell (with R. E. Hardstaff) and contributed to the Society's recent History of Southwell and its People.

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS PUBLICATION ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE SOCIETY NOR ITS COUNCIL. CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME, ~~AS ARE~~ COMMENTS ON THE EXCURSIONS OR ON THIS NEWSLETTER.

PLEASE WRITE TO: F. N. HOSKINS, 12 FOREST ROAD EAST, NOTTINGHAM NG1 4HH