

THOROTON

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Launch of Nottinghamshire Bibliography



One of the first events held in the newly refurbished Thoroton Room at Bromley House was the launch on 18 September of 'A Nottinghamshire Bibliography: Publications on Nottinghamshire History before 1998', compiled by Michael Brook. The book, which has been many years in the making, is the latest volume in the Record Series, and is a joint project between the Thoroton Society and Nottingham Civic Society.

Left: Mr Michael Brook

The book was officially launched by Sir Andrew Buchanan, Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, who was paying his first visit to Bromley House. Sir Andrew noted that the volume contained over 8,700 publications arranged by subject or place, and with indexes of authors, places and subjects. Guests were welcomed by Neville Hoskins, President of the Thoroton Society, and in a brief speech the Chairman of the Council, Professor John Beckett, thanked Michael Brook for his dedicated work, Barbara Andrews for preparing the text, Paul Roper on behalf of Technical Print Services for producing the volume, and Julia Wilson of Bromley House for hosting the event.

After an excellent buffet lunch, Lady Belinda Buchanan planted a tree in the garden of Bromley House as both a celebration of the Queen's Golden Jubilee, and to symbolise the long and happy relationship between the Society and the Library. Thoroton Council will be planning future events at Bromley House to make full use of the Thoroton Room.

Right: Sir Andrew Buchanan



Saturday 2 November: Annual Luncheon - see details enclosed

~ The Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire ~
~ The County's Principal Historical Society ~
Visit the Thoroton Website at: www.thorotonsociety.org.uk

FORTHCOMING LECTURES

The 2002 Keith Train Memorial Lecture, *Improving Nottingham's Design and Quality*, will be given by Piers Gough of CZWG Architects, on Tuesday 8 October at 7.30pm, at The Friends' Meeting House, Clarendon Street. NB This event is not on the programme card.

Piers Gough is well known as the architect of Janet-Street Porter's house, and a number of buildings in London's Dockland. Last year he presented a series of architecture programmes on Channel 4.

Saturday 12 October: *The East Midlands Earthworks Project*: Dr Sarah Speight

Sarah Speight is Lecturer in Archaeology and Medieval History within the School of Continuing Education at the University. Castle studies has been a major strand of her research for several years and she has recently enlisted the help of a team of students to progress this work. The East Midlands Earthworks Project is hoping to eventually produce an up-to-date, academically sound but publicly accessible account of the castles of the east midland counties. This will take several years but preliminary work is well underway on several sites. The lecture will introduce the project, outline some of the themes of study, and describe the directions of current castle studies. Interested Thoroton members would be welcome to join the team.

Saturday 9 November: The Nottinghamshire History Lecture: *The Good Old Days: The Victorian Working Class Diet in Nottingham*: Dr Denise Amos

Denise Amos is part-time tutor in the Department of History at Nottingham University. This lecture will examine the problems that faced the less well off in Nottingham, of where the food was sourced, what could be afforded and the problems of adulteration. Whilst considering the problems the Victorians had to contend with Dr Amos has also drawn in modern day concerns about food, but will show that we in the 21st century enjoy significant advantages in terms of choice and quality.

Saturday 14 December: *Family Names and Local History*: Professor David Hey

Every county in England still has its distinctive surnames. Lancashire has its Birtwhistles, Faircloughs, Fazackerleys and Ramsbottoms, Derbyshire its Bagshawes, Greatorexes, Heathcotes and Ollerenshaws, and Nottinghamshire its Boots, Footits and Dafts. Such names had single-family origins and for centuries were confined to the districts where they originated in the Middle Ages.

Local and family historians are often able to identify the places where surnames began. By mapping the present and past distributions of surnames and by using genealogical methods they can challenge the interpretations of surnames that are offered in the dictionaries and show how families remained rooted in their neighbourhoods or 'countries'.

David Hey taught at the University of Sheffield for many years and has written numerous books on local and family history.

STOP PRESS: Dr Margaret Gelling will lecture at the University of Nottingham on 11 December to launch the Institute of Name Studies. Further details will be given at forthcoming lectures.

Members of the Thoroton Society are invited to a lecture at the Friends' Meeting House, Clarendon Street at 7.30pm on Tuesday 12 November, when Professor Les Sparkes, CABE and English Heritage Commissioner, and Adviser to Nottingham City Council, will speak on *Improving Nottingham's Design and Quality*.

Bridge Street Methodist Church, Mansfield

Michael Jackson, the author of *A Shining Light, A History of Bridge Street Methodist Church, Mansfield*, is no stranger to Thoroton Society members having led a number of excursions in North Nottinghamshire over the years. His carefully researched and very readable book examining the contribution that the church has made to the spiritual and social life of Mansfield continues the style that has made him popular as an excursion leader. Price £3.50 available from Trevor Johnson, 29 Baums Lane, Mansfield, Notts. NG18 2RA. Keith Goodman

REPORTS OF EXCURSIONS

North Nottinghamshire Churches - Saturday 8 June. Leaders: Jean Nicholson and Michael Jackson



It was strawberries for tea when Jean Nicholson and Michael Jackson led the expedition to five churches in North Nottinghamshire. Our first visit was to Babworth. Here the Rev Richard Clyfton preached from 1586 - he inspired the movement that eventually led to the Pilgrim Fathers and the United States of America. We were particularly privileged to be shown the chalice from 1569 that had been buried under the chancel floor for 350 years and which had been used by Clyfton - also the breeches bible. From there we went to Sutton cum Lound with the exuberant tracery of its west window and its fine bench ends. St Michael at West Retford was our stop before lunch with a quick glance at Trinity Hospital en route. After lunch we visited St Swithun's at East Retford. Our final visit was to Mattersey: little of the priory now remains but we visited the church of All Saints in the village and were able to examine its most important treasures - the two stone carved panels dating from the early part of the 14th century and believed to have come from the Priory. The picture shows Michael Jackson and June and Peter Burton at St Swithun's, East Retford.

Keith Goodman

Northamptonshire – Saturday 6 July. Leader: Steph Mastoris

The familiar journey into Northamptonshire via Melton Mowbray and Oakham was greatly enhanced by Steph Mastoris who acted as guide to the area. At Lyveden New Bield we had coffee and biscuits before being given a fascinating tour of the gardens. These are slowly being restored to their Elizabethan glory as planned by Sir Thomas Tresham, who never lived to see his plans completed. The custodian brought to life the beauty of the area and left us all longing to return to see the result of all the hard work.

Lunch at Oundle followed, then it was on to Fotheringhay to see the remains of the castle with the memorials to Richard III and Mary Queen of Scots, the castle motte having been planted with thistles to commemorate the latter. The county historian gave a fascinating insight into the history and landscaping of the site. Some of the party then wandered round the church while others were taken to see an ancient warren. An excellent day was brought to a close with a superb tea provided by the ladies of Cottersock at the village fête. Many thanks to Steph Mastoris and Sue Groves for their organisation and enthusiasm.

P A Messenger

Nottinghamshire Gardens – Thursday 8 August. Leader: Philip Jones

I don't know when Philip Jones planted the idea of visiting Thoresby and Clumber, but it came most happily to fruition for our visit, and, paraphrasing one of the Liverpool poets: the sky decided that the rain had been out long enough so he took it back for the day.

Thoresby is now a Warner Holidays Hotel (with English Heritage involvement). Andy Malam, Head Gardener with a Rufford background, enjoys both problems and satisfactions connected with returning the formal gardens to the 'mirror' effect of two similar halves. He works with, not against, the rabbit, the fox and the deer who have a penchant for the roses in his developing Victorian Rose Garden and

he's delighted at discovering original woodland drain holes and pipes as clean as a whistle.

Clumber's walled kitchen garden was full of marvellous colours. In the greenhouses the protective furry skin on peaches means they can tolerate the intense heat of the glassed side; it would kill the smooth skinned nectarines which need to be grown against the inner wall. The Nottingham Medlar (planted recently in a Bulwell Community Scheme) is Victorian. The list of fines on the wall shows how strict life was for a gardener. "Gathering fruit with dirty hands-4d." Neil Porteous, Head gardener, and Jez took us around. Our thanks to everyone involved.

Claire Wells

Reports of Excursions: Continued

Nottinghamshire Churches – Saturday 7 September. Leader: Barbara Cast

The final excursion of the 2002 season formed part of the series of visits to our county churches. On this occasion we visited All Saints, Hawton, the charming church of St Giles at Holme, All Saints and St John the Baptist at Collingham, the little church of St Cecilia at Girton and St Helen's at South Scarle.

Pevsner found that "The chancel [at All Saints, Hawton] is one of the most exciting pieces of architecture in the country." And those who visited on 7th September could not agree more. The beauty of the tracery executed by master craftsmen of the 14th century was enhanced by the erudite explanation and interpretation of the present incumbent, the Rev JB Quarrell, whose research and ideas on the purpose of the so called Easter sepulchre should, by general agreement of those on the excursion, be published. St Giles at Holme is exceptional for being almost all of Tudor work, the creation of John Barton, a wealthy wool merchant who proclaimed his thanks for his sheep-created prosperity by virtually rebuilding this little church and making it one of the most interesting to visit of any in the county. John Barton built a splendid tomb for himself and his wife – but does he lie there? Collingham can boast two splendid

mediaeval churches, testifying to the former importance of this elegant village. Standing out from the other interesting features are the fine arcades in both churches, 13th century of varying styles in All Saints and the north one at St John the Baptist of highly decorated Norman work. Girton's delightful tiny church is dedicated to St Cecilia. A feature which caught the eye of many members was the cross carved on a stone now incorporated into the porch, believed to be a remnant of the earlier Saxon Christian tradition on this site. Finally to St Helen at South Scarle – another surprise in its splendid Norman arcade which bears a similarity to its neighbour in South Collingham. Another item that captured the visitors' eye was the vamping horn found during building work and now displayed on the north wall. This was another very enjoyable and informative excursion to our county churches – many thanks to those who welcomed us and spoke with such enthusiasm of these amazing spiritual buildings - works of art cherished by dedicated people in very small communities, working against the odds to obtain the funding needed to keep these national treasures in good order.
Barbara Cast

New BBC2 series needs your help!

A new BBC2 series featuring Britain's heritage buildings, highlighting the plight of our wonderful but neglected buildings at risk, is in its planning stages. The production team want suggestions of particular buildings from any era – cottages, churches, follies, barns, cinemas, country houses, railway stations, theatres – you name it! Of the featured buildings, one will eventually be restored. Details on Notts. Civic Trust's website www.civictrust.org.uk - suggestions must be a building, have confirmed public ownership, and public support for restoration.

The team wants to hear also about demolitions of, or changes of use to, buildings considered controversial which have left a hole in the heritage of the area. Please make suggestions as soon as possible to ensure your favourite urgent cases make it onto the list: tel. 0208 222 4863 or e-mail information to charlotte.fitzpatrick@endemoluk.com; or tel. 0208 222 4184, e-mail susanne.curran@endemoluk.com.
Ken Brand

Opening of the Thoroton Room, Bromley House Library

The opening of the Thoroton Room took place on 24 July, when the restored room in all its splendour was officially opened by Library President, Fay Weldon. Neville Hoskins explained the longstanding relationship between the Society and the Library, whose Committee voted to subscribe to the Thoroton Society two weeks before the inaugural meeting in 1897! The Society's own library was housed in this room and Council met in it from 1924-81.

After the formalities, in an event marking the 250th anniversary of the building, the play 'An Architect

Returns', especially written for the occasion by Michael Eaton, was performed by actor Patrick Wildgust. He played the part of Sir Robert Taylor, reputed architect of Bromley House, who was paying a return visit to Nottingham after 250 years. 'Sir Robert' concluded by leading a tour around part of the library.

To round off the occasion Fay Weldon made a lighthearted speech, before cutting a cake depicting the 18th century front of the library.

Neville Hoskins/Julia Wilson

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