

THOROTON NEWSLETTER



No 49: Autumn 2007

AUTUMN LECTURE PROGRAMME

Tuesday 9 October: The Keith Train Lecture, in association with the Nottingham Civic Society (Cathedral Hall, 7.30pm)
***'Nottingham in the 1990s: The Legacy of a Conservation and Design Approach to Regeneration'* - Jerry Spencer**

Jerry is a town planner and urban designer who has specialized in helping to improve the public face of the built environment in towns and cities throughout Britain over the past 25 years. His talk will commence with a retrospective view on the built evidence of his team's work with Nottingham City Council from 1992-99. It will examine new and conserved buildings and the spaces created between them, to assess how they have fared over the past decade and how well they have stood the test of changing tastes and opinions. Jerry will also consider some of the city's more recent new buildings, and will ask whether it might be time for a return to the contextual approach promoted by his team in the 1990s, or whether the city has moved on with a new confidence, to become an altogether more forward-looking modern city.

Saturday 13 October: *"It's been raining in Nottinghamshire!"*
***Two Centuries of Observers and Recorders of Weather in Nottinghamshire'* - John Wilson**



John is a pharmacist by profession and also an amateur meteorologist. He has been a member of the Thoroton Society for a number of years, and this year has taken over from Keith Goodman as Treasurer. His interests in history are wide-ranging. Professionally, he has been interested in the effects of weather on health, and has several publications in the field, notably an annual report on Weather and Health for the International Journal of Meteorology. He has carried out research into the effect of thunderstorms on asthma (Wilson JV and Pyatt FB, 1996, 'Thunderstorms and asthma - a review of current research progress', *United Kingdom Journal*

of Meteorology 21, 121-5). The lecture will cover a variety of weather observers in Nottinghamshire since 1800. [Picture: *The Warnall Weather Centre in the 1960s. Copyright John Kettley*]

ANNUAL LUNCHEON 2007 With this Newsletter you will find details of booking arrangements for this year's Annual Luncheon, which is being held at Lakeside, the former Bestwood Pumping Station on the A60 Mansfield Road (just north of Arnold). Thomas Hawksley, the man who pioneered running water in nineteenth-century Nottingham, and who then went on to a national and indeed international career in water engineering, was born in Arnold in July 1807. Our lunch will be at one of the pumping stations closely associated with Hawksley, and there will be a short talk about his life and work.

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

**Saturday 10 November: The Nottinghamshire History Lecture
'The Medieval Stained Glass of Nottinghamshire - Society,
Patronage, Liturgy and Iconography' - Allan Barton**

Allan Barton gained his PhD at the University of York on the stained glass of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire 1400-1550. He is currently a researcher for the British Academy's Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi project; he has been commissioned to write a catalogue of the medieval stained glass of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and he is training for the Anglican priesthood. The lecture will focus on the extant medieval glass of Nottinghamshire and the evidence of lost glass in manuscripts. It will examine the ways in which these provide evidence of social networking, of social mobility, patronal display and personal piety, the use of space (both public and private) in late medieval church buildings, and how glass functioned within a liturgical context. *[Picture - The east window at Holme by Newark, Nottinghamshire contains glass removed from other churches. This panel, originally from a quatrefoil tracery light at the ruined church of Annesley, formed part of a Coronation of the Virgin. Our Lady is seated on a throne having been crowned by her son. Copyright Alan Barton]*



Until his retirement in 2003, John Worthen was Professor of DH Lawrence Studies at the University of Nottingham, and is the author of *DH Lawrence: The Early Years 1885-1912* and *DH Lawrence: The Life of an Outsider*. His lecture will ask whether it is possible to distinguish the reality of what actually occurred, as Lawrence grew up in Eastwood and Nottingham, from the various myths which have grown up around the subject of his childhood and youth - the most significant of them fostered and perpetuated by Lawrence himself? This lecture will look in particular at the stress Lawrence himself placed on his ordinariness as a working-class child. *[Picture - The young DH Lawrence. Reproduced by kind permission of Manuscripts and Special Collections, University of Nottingham]*

Saturday 8 December: 'Young Lawrence'- John Worthen



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION invites you to **"Peers and Pitmen": The Transformation of the Dukeries**, on **Saturday 27 October, from 10am-4.15pm, at Thoresby Miners' Welfare, Fourth Avenue, Edwinstowe. Cost is £6.50 to NLHA members, £7.50 non-members.** The day will consist of four lectures, lunch, and a short guided walk around Edwinstowe. Contact Derek Walker on 01623 870515 for more information or to book a place (or just turn up on the day).

[Picture - The young DH Lawrence. Reproduced by kind permission of Manuscripts and Special Collections, University of Nottingham]

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REPORTS OF EXCURSIONS

Saturday 12 May: Nottingham Arboretum

In fine weather, trees that have both generous and benevolent canopies allow us 'to stand and stare' and to pinpoint a particular tree. Who can forget the Amur Maple from the river of that name, or another Russian species Mr Parrot's, Persian Ironwood; fair exchange for what the Russians got in the shape of the architects Rastrelli and Campbell? On the first of the two visits to the Arboretum it was umbrellas that provided canopies; very forbearing members huddling

together to accept that 'over there' was a Turkey Oak or an Indian Chestnut. One of our members provided information about her family's involvement in the manufacture of the cannons for the Chinese Bell Monument. Information on Friends of the Arboretum and a revised tree trail can be obtained from Woodthorpe Grange, tel 0115 9155555; fax 0115 9152766. Shire Publications' *Public Parks* by Hazel Conway is highly recommended. **Claire Wells**

Saturday 9 June: Peterborough Cathedral and Flag Fen Bronze Age Site

In early June Thoroton Members visited Peterborough Cathedral and Flag Fen, the Bronze Age site a mile or so away. Alas, when the cathedral came into view - disappointment: the great west front was covered with screened scaffolding. This demonstrated the last stage of a programme of about ten year's restoration, interior and exterior. There was no disappointment, however, in the wonderful interior and its beautiful and unique painted medieval ceiling. From the west door there is a stunning, uninterrupted view of the whole length from nave to choir, presbytery and apse. We were divided into parties and taken around by Cathedral Guides; the parties gave high praise to the guides for their expertise. We felt an enormous amount had been learned, our very varied questions excellently dealt with and a great many quite complicated architectural sequences in the building made plain - and all with a human touch. Our thanks go to all of them.



We then moved on to Flag Fen, the site excavated for many years by the well-know archaeologists Francis Pryor and Maisie Taylor. This site was built in the fenny countryside by people living 3000 years ago: it is a vast timber platform with massive associated palisades built at enormous human effort. Although its purpose is not entirely clear, it indicates some possible domestic use and also the ubiquitous ritual activity. Interesting artefacts have been excavated from watery preservation and can be seen in the

museum at the site, as well as part of the timber structures kept in perpetual dampness, and also reconstructed bronze and iron age houses. Rosalys was particularly taken by the prehistoric Windsor chair! The whole day was excellent and varied, ending with a Thoroton tea served in the Flag Fen visitor centre before the return journey to Nottingham. *[Picture: Iron Age Roundhouse, Flag Fen]*

Rosalys Coope and Barbara Cast

CONGRATULATIONS to Dr David Crook on being awarded the OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours, following his retirement in May 2007 from The National Archives (perhaps better known as the Public Record Office). David spent his whole career at the PRO, but he lived in and commuted from Grantham. Consequently he retained and retains his interests in the East Midlands and was for some years general editor of the Thoroton Record Series. In retirement, Dr Crook has kindly accepted an offer to be co-opted onto the Society's Council.

REPTON SCHOOL AND CHURCH, AND WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CHURCHES

Friday 13 July was a day of heavy rain, which seemed ominous to all those who had booked to go on this excursion. However, the following day dawned fair, and as the day progressed the sun shone more and more brightly. Our first stop was Repton, capital of the Kingdom of Mercia, and one of the earliest Christian sites in the Midlands dating from AD653, when the king's son returned with a Christian bride.

The description of the history and items of interest of Repton Church [pictured right] was given by a local historian, Mr David Guest. The descent into the crypt, where once the bones of Saint Wystan were venerated by pilgrims, provided a real experience of moving into one of the mysterious places of England's early religious history. After a tour of the outside of the building we enjoyed a real bonus - entry to part of the Old Priory which now houses a section of Repton school.



After lunch we travelled to Trowell [pictured left] where we were welcomed by three officers of this ancient church, and enjoyed the evidence of this Saxon building in the chancel, with its piscine and sedilia and credence shelf. The remains of the previous week's flower festival, together with the loving care that the building clearly enjoys, together with a welcome cup of tea, all enhanced the enjoyment of this short visit.

Our third church visit on this excursion was to Wollaton, another very old foundation, but with evidence of significantly more additions and alterations over the centuries. Despite having to compete with a peal of bells being rung by a visiting team of American bell-ringers, Mr Colin Shock gave us a very detailed survey of the history of the building, together with an outline of some planned extensions to make a more effective use of the site for the demands of the twenty-first century. A splendid tea in the

new Wollaton Community Hall completed a very happy day.

Alan Langton

NOTTINGHAM AND SOUTHWELL DAC CHURCH HISTORY PROJECT CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

We need volunteers for several important churches which are currently not being researched under the above project. These are: BALDERTON ST GILES, CLUMBER PARK ST MARY, CROPWELL BISHOP ST GILES, EAST MARKHAM ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, HAWTON ALL SAINTS, KINGSTON ON SOAR ST WINIFRED, MANSFIELD ST PETER & ST PAUL, WEST BRIDGFORD ST GILES, WEST STOCKWITH ST MARY, and WORKSOP PRIORY ST MARY & ST CUTHBERT. There are other, arguably equally important village churches that are not yet being researched; but those listed above are the key outstanding churches that we wish to concentrate on. Anyone wishing to know more, please contact Jonathan Pickett at Nottingham & Southwell DAC (email jonathan-dac@southwell.anglican.org), who will send you a copy of our current briefing document; this gives extensive guidance on how to research a church or church site for the project, which is due to conclude in 2010.

Please email contributions for Newsletter No 50 by 1 November 2007 to Janice Avery at: janaver1@vahoo.co.uk. The views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Society or its Council