

THOROTON NEWSLETTER



No 52: Summer 2008

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2008 AT NORWELL



Once again we were lucky with the weather, when over eighty members of the Society got together for the Society's AGM, with the sun shining upon us. Norwell was our location this year, and we met in the new, attractive village hall. It is surprising how many of us had not visited this not-so-remote corner of our county, just a short drive from Southwell and about a mile from the A1. Norwell is a quiet, peaceful and attractive village with a fine church.

The AGM was relatively swift and painless. All the officers were re-elected, and Dr Richard Gaunt was elected as the new History editor of *Transactions*; he will work with Adrian Henstock for the next year. Adrian will remain as Record Series Editor, and members were informed of the progress of the Senior Map project, which sounds extremely exciting. Steph Mastoris returned to Nottinghamshire from Wales to provide more details – we were very pleased to see him again.



Ken Brand, Penny Messenger and Peter Reddish were re-elected to the Council, and David Crook was elected for the first time, having been co-opted last year. The President, Dr Rosalys Coope welcomed members, the Chairman conducted the business, and John Wilson gave his first report as the Society's Treasurer. John Hamilton introduced members to the

new membership leaflet, which will be part of a recruitment campaign this year.

[Pictures: top, Norwell church; above right: Dr Elizabeth Jones; above: Ken Brand and David Hoskins]

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



After the business of the AGM, Michael and Elizabeth Jones gave a joint presentation on the history of Norwell, emphasizing the importance of the village's links to Southwell, which was one reason there were no real gentry influences locally. We then walked to the Church of St Lawrence, where Michael [pictured left] gave a full description of its interesting features, including fine effigies, a green man in the transept ceiling, and a rood stair. If you have never been to this delightful church, it is well worth a visit. Members were given a copy of the Norwell Heritage Trail, prepared by the local heritage group, and funded by the HLF, so that on the way from the church to the village hall it was possible to study some of the buildings, including the three vicarages and the mill. We would especially like to thank

Elizabeth and Michael Jones for hosting the event and for giving so much information about their lovely village. Thanks must, of course, go to the Ladies of Norwell for the splendid tea, and for making us so welcome. And thanks also to all those who helped to make this an enjoyable AGM in so many ways.

Barbara Cast and John Beckett

THOROTON SOCIETY LUNCHEON 2008

Southwell Minster is 900 years old this year, and so we are returning to Southwell for our Annual Luncheon. This year it will be held at the Saracen's Head, which was the venue a few years ago and where we received a very good lunch. The date is 1 November, and you will receive details and a booking form in the summer mailing.

Thoroton Response Group

A sub-group of the Thoroton Society Standing Committee, titled the Thoroton Response Group, has been established. This is a new initiative for the Society, aimed at strengthening our activities in supporting the preservation of our county's historic settlements, buildings, monuments and landscapes. The group consists of Howard

Fisher, who is the County and CBA planning representative; Ken Brand, who keeps a wether eye on City planning matters; Pete Smith, one of our Council members with considerable heritage experience; and Barbara Cast. It is our intention to co-ordinate responses relating to or affecting Nottinghamshire on:-

- Planning applications on listed buildings, those in conservation areas or any other considered of historic or archaeological interest.
- Draft conservation area plans or appraisals of or amendments to existing conservation areas.
- Government, local government or other policy documents relating to the built, historic or archaeological environment, or any policies or plans which might affect these or to any part of such areas in Nottinghamshire.

We will also ensure that we provide feedback via the Newsletter on activities to keep members informed and, where considered necessary, seek publicity on issues of planning concern and sites or buildings in danger.

We hope members will support the group by letting us know of their local concerns about planning applications, changes in land management, threats to local landmarks etc. We will then try to investigate and comment to the appropriate authority if we feel that would assist. In the first instance please contact Barbara Cast, Honorary Secretary, if possible by email at bandpcast@btinternet.com, or at the usual address.

Delving into the Society's Archives

In December 1949 the following was written as an introduction to the first edition of the *Journal of the Nottingham Archaeological Society*: 'There are many who cannot take an active part in field archaeology, and cannot attend all the meetings of the Society, and yet are keenly interested in the work. Hence this small quarterly volume, which it is hoped will fill to some extent, a long felt want.'

The articles in this 'new venture' included one on Admiral Howe of Langar who, after renowned service in the Royal Navy, became First Lord of the Admiralty in 1783 and who was made Baron Howe of Langar on 17

August 1788. He lies in Langar Church, the 'Cathedral of the Vale' where also, we are told, is found 'a magnificent cloth of rich Italian embroidery in gold thread on a purple ground, embossed with pictures in many colours, discovered in one of the men o' war captured on the Glorious First of June', a sea battle which, the Journal tells us, was 'the Admiral's crowning achievement'.

More snippets from the Society's veteran journals in further issues, but one other comment – amongst the contributors is one B W Beilby, with an article on medieval sanitation.

Barbara Cast

The Nottingham Review 1808-1870

Terry Fry (*pictured right*) writes: It is 200 years since the *Nottingham Review* was first published. Founded in 1808 by Charles Sutton, it was the first truly radical newspaper. He favoured free trade in corn and also attacked the Government's participation in the Napoleonic Wars. He was sentenced to a year in gaol for libel, but continued to publish the paper from prison.

The *Review* was published each Saturday, initially from Bridlesmith Gate. By the late 1830s it had a circulation of c.3,000 and always sold more copies than the *Nottingham Journal*. The *Review* editors were not particularly interested in local affairs; it was not sold as a purely Nottingham newspaper, and had a readership extending into the county and to Leicestershire and Derbyshire.

The paper passed to Sutton's son Richard in 1828, who strongly promoted the Reform Bill and insisted that further reforms should include universal suffrage, annual parliaments and voting by ballot. Naturally he supported the Chartists, and invited Feargus O'Connor to stand as MP for Nottingham. O'Connor described the *Review* as 'the best supporter of our cause of all the provincial newspapers'. Nottingham, said the *Review*, was tired of 'do-nothing, kid-glove reformers'. Sutton also supported Robert Peel in the campaign to abolish the Corn Laws, finally achieved in 1846.

Richard's son John joined the *Review* and was especially concerned with promoting enclosure. His editorials were influential in achieving the Enclosure Act of 1845, which was also welcomed by the Tory newspaper, the *Nottingham Journal*. The Whigs were usually in power in Nottingham during the *Review's* life, making it relatively easy for the Suttons to support radical measures.

When on 30 December 1870 the *Nottingham Review* was published for the last time, the only reference to its passing was a notice on page 4 informing subscribers that it would 'cease as a separate newspaper, and in future be incorporated with the *Nottingham & Midland Counties Daily Express*'. So ended a short but influential life, although 'its radicalism had for long been of the most moderate and constitutional character'. Its presentation was said to be the most 'pleasing and enterprising' of the local newspapers. AC Wood in *Transactions of the Thoroton Society*, 1955, Vol 59, added: 'Here is an invaluable source of material for the study of civic life and development in the 19th century, still hardly touched by the local historian'. **Terry Fry**



The Dovecote at Thoroton

It was described some year's ago as 'sprucely thatched'. However, the medieval stone dovecote in the village of Thoroton, the home village of Dr Robert Thoroton, is now sadly not so sprucely thatched. Thoroton's dovecote belongs to the Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust which is trying to raise funds for much needed repairs, including the thatch. This Society is unable to contribute as it is a charity but members who are interested in the dovecote and its associations with our eponymous inspiration may wish to do so. If so, Marian Edwards, the NBPT secretary, would be pleased to hear from you. Contact her (tel 01636 819555), or send a cheque to NBPT, Minster Chambers, Southwell, NG25 0HD.

REPORT OF LECTURE: SATURDAY 8 MARCH, MAURICE BARLEY LECTURE



Dr Malcolm Hislop [pictured left] and Michael Lobb [right] from Birmingham Archaeology spoke on the use of laser scanning in the archaeological recording of historic buildings. They began by referring to the influence of Maurice Barley on their careers. Their lecture was illustrated throughout which made clear how laser scanning equipment operates, the recording that can be done with it and the reconstructions which can be made. Ten or more years ago the camera was used to give a detailed record, the equipment constantly



moved so that the image was taken at 90 degrees. Laser scanning does this now but with no need to move the equipment after the initial position in relation to the subject is established. I have vague memories of trigonometry in my school days to understand how these things can be. We live in exciting times when new instruments give new research that can be carried out and new information obtained about the past.

Leslie Cram

Research Agenda for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands

The project, funded by English Heritage as a component of its Historic Environment Enabling Programme, began at Leicester University with a book published in 2006, *The Archaeology of the East Midlands, An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (ed by Nicholas J Cooper). Further information is available at: <http://www.le.ac.uk/archaeology/research/projects/eastmidsw/>

Nottingham University then took on responsibility. On 7 May David Knight (Director of Trent & Peak Archaeology, now part of Nottingham University), and Carol Allen (Archaeological Consultant) coordinated a public seminar on the Research Agenda for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands on the main Nottingham University Campus. Some 130 people attended, described as representing the Historic Environment Community, from the six counties of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland. Presentations were given by staff from the Universities of Birmingham, Kent, Leicester, Northampton and Nottingham.

The research questions were outlined for each archaeological period (see website at <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/tpa/research/project3/index.htm>) from the Palaeolithic to modern followed by open discussion. How different some of the periods were from others, but also how there were connections, the flint for tool making in post-glacial times in Nottinghamshire, for instance, coming from the movement of the glaciers in the Palaeolithic.

The East Midlands is more a modern political area than an area delineated by archaeologists within which to follow particular research questions. It straddles the classic division of Britain by Sir Cyril Fox into the Highland and the Lowland Zones. It was interesting to hear the questions coming from some speakers applying to the whole of Britain, while other speakers presented questions restricted to the East Midlands. Following the seminar David Knight and Carol Allen will generate a five-year prioritised action plan to be launched in September 2009. We are already talking with them over when they might have time to lecture to us on what will emerge of special relevance for Nottinghamshire.

Leslie Cram

OBITUARY – MICHAEL BROOK (1926-2008)



Michael Frederick Cecil Brook, formerly Special Collections Librarian at Nottingham University, died on 27 March 2008. Born in Bristol, he attended Abingdon School and Pembroke College Oxford, where he read Modern History, before taking up a career in university libraries. He worked at Bristol and Sheffield (where he developed an abiding love for the West Riding), and became an ALA in 1953, before moving to Southampton.

In 1962 Michael lived in the United States and spent ten years in Minnesota Historical Society's library, where he developed skills as a bibliographer and reference expert, publishing his valuable *Reference Guide to Minnesota History* in 1974, with a supplement in 1983. He also found a special interest in the Swedish and other Scandinavian immigrant communities in Minnesota, and notably their

labour history. He contributed to a number of scholarly works on these topics (he had learned Swedish in order to study the field) even after he left Minnesota.

Michael returned to England in 1972 to take up the new post of Special Collections Librarian at Nottingham University Library (now the Hallward Library). He had responsibility for developing and organizing the East Midlands Collection, in addition to the other printed special collections, and added considerably to its strength. He also formed links with his colleagues in the County Library's equally strong Local Studies Library and the County Archives, as well as with the Thoroton Society, which deposited its own library in the University under his care. He produced a number of reports on recent publications for the *Bulletin of Local History: East Midlands*, and joined Sue Robinson for an *Introductory Bibliography of the Hosiery and Lace Industries in Nottingham*. He was responsible for the Nottinghamshire volume of the British Library's *Bibliography of British Newspapers* (1987), the definitive listing of the county's newspapers since 1710. His most important work appeared in 1988, after early retirement. He continued to compile what has become the standard reference work for local historians, *A Nottinghamshire Bibliography: Publications on Nottinghamshire History Before 1998*, published in 2002 by the Thoroton Society.

Michael was well known and well liked in the active local history world of his adopted city and county. He was also noted as an expert on ecclesiastical buildings and the 19th-century architecture of Nottingham, serving both the Victorian Society and the Chapels Society as a knowledgeable and enthusiastic guide (both on paper and in the flesh). By the time of his death he had been in poor health for some time, and had recently moved to an Abbeyfield home following a fall. His enthusiasm and gentle concern for the world about him will be greatly missed by his many friends and former colleagues, including those able to attend his funeral at the Russian Orthodox Church of the Holy Transfiguration in Carlton: typically, an unusual but moving ceremony. **Peter Hoare, University Librarian, University of Nottingham 1978-1993**

CALL FOR A NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Janice Avery, who has edited the Newsletter for a number of years, will be stepping down from the role this year, and a new Editor is being sought. Is anyone interested in taking this on? You will need to be computer literate (word processing) and able to receive email with attachments (Word and pdf or jpeg files) from contributors. The work involves carrying out some minor editing of contributions submitted, and putting it together into Newsletter format. This is then sent via email to our printers, and after a final proof-read from the Editor, the printers produce, photocopy and send it on to David Bagley, who organizes distribution to members. The Editor's work takes up a few hours four times a year, and Janice will be happy to talk through the role with anyone interested, and give any initial help that might be needed. If you think this is something you would like to do, please ring 0115 9430346 any evening.

BOOK REVIEWS

Howard Fisher, Bob Hammond and Nigel Morley, *Tollerton: An Airfield for Nottingham, 1929-2007* (Keyworth and District Local History Society, 2008)

One of Nottinghamshire's best kept secrets, Tollerton, or Nottingham airport as it is sometimes known, is only three miles from the City Centre, an unpretentious location with a varied history. In this excellent study, the three authors examine its different phases: Howard Fisher on the pre-war years 1929-39, Nigel Morley on the war time years, and Bob Hammond on the period 1945-2007. Fully illustrated, the book tells the story from 1929 when Nottingham Corporation bought land at Tollerton for a civil aerodrome when it had grand ideas about a city airport, to its current position where Nottingham City Airport PLC is looking to develop the airport for future use.

John Beckett

Hinrich Siefken and Stuart Mason (editors), *Faith, Hope and Love: 120 Years of Methodism in West Bridgford* (West Bridgford Methodist Church, 2008)

This is not so much a history as a collection of essays which look both at Methodism generally in West Bridgford, and more specifically at Musters Road Methodist Church. There are sections on Methodism in Nottingham, on the founding of the Musters Road Wesleyan Chapel in 1888, with its formal opening a decade later, Trent Boulevard Wesleyan Church (1901), choral traditions, the impact of war, Sunday Schools and so on. There are short sections on Bridgeway Hall, the Gordon Road Primitive church, and references to all sorts of activities over time. Inevitably it will appeal mainly to West Bridgfordians, but it is a good read, and an excellent commemorative volume for the ongoing Methodist movement south of the River Trent.

John Beckett

This volume is available price £6 (incl £1 p&hp), payable to The Methodist Church West Bridgford, from Professor Hinrich Siefken, 6 Mountsorrel Drive, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 6LJ.

APETHORPE HALL

Apethorpe Hall, near Oundle in Northamptonshire, is a major country house presently in the possession of English Heritage. It dates back to the fifteenth century. Its state apartment suite was rebuilt in 1622-4 to receive James I, and still has one of the finest sets of Jacobean interiors of the period, with decorative plaster ceilings, fireplaces and panelling. The Thoroton Society has never visited, and Council Member Pete Smith tells us it might pass into private hands later this year and become unavailable to the public. Thoroton members might wish to make their own arrangements to visit while the opportunity is still available – on Wednesdays and Saturdays during July and August this year. Visiting details are at www.english-heritage.org.uk/traveltrade and Apethorpe.Hall@english-heritage.org.uk

Please send contributions for Newsletter No 53 by 1 August 2008 to Janice Avery, email: janaver1@yahoo.co.uk (text in Word files, pictures in pdf or jpeg files).

The views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Society or its Council