

THE THOROTON SOCIETY

Nottinghamshire's History and Archaeology Society



NEWSLETTER Issue 59 SPRING 2010

PICTURES FROM 2009 AS A TASTER FOR 2010 EVENTS

Right: The village shop at Brant Broughton



Left: Detail from window in St. Botolph's, Boston

Right: Detail from St. Helen's, Brant Broughton



Left: The Annual Luncheon allowed a view of this award winning apartment development

JOHN BLOW, SON OF NEWARK

Members will recall the excellent presentation given to the Society in December 2008 by Emeritus Professor John Morehen. The talk was introduced by Trevor Foulds whose subsequent report was severely shortened due to space problems in subsequent issues. The following is Trevor's report in full.

As Baroque music is a passion with me, it was my great personal pleasure to chair the lecture given to the Society by Professor Emeritus John Morehen, sometime Professor of Music at Nottingham University. His lecture was unusual in that Professor Morehen is not an historian but a renowned musician and acclaimed musicologist who specialises in Tudor and Jacobean music and Italian renaissance organ music.

His subject was John Blow (1648-1708). Blow was a local lad baptised at Newark on 23 February 1648 and he probably received his early music training at the Thomas Magnus School in Newark. He must have shown exceptional musical abilities early on as he was 'kidnapped' for his singing voice in 1661 by Henry Cooke, master of the Children of the Chapel Royal, to be trained as a chorister in the Chapel Royal where he received a very thorough musical education.

Blow was highly regarded during his lifetime and beyond. He held all the important musical posts in the Capital along with court appointments. Illustrated by musical examples, Professor Morehen succinctly analysed for us Blow's substantial musical output, regrettably, even today, much of it not available in modern editions or performed.

Blow was a gifted, intelligent and innovative composer but he had largely to conform to a conservative English musical tradition that was some forty years behind the developments of the *nuovo musiche* (new music) then the standard musical language of the modern European centres of culture such as Venice and Paris. This was very apparent in much of his vocal and organ music for the church. Nevertheless, Professor Morehen showed that Blow was well aware of and had absorbed many modern trends and ideas, particularly those coming out of France. For instance, his opening music example,

the overture in the French style of Blow's small-scale opera 'Venus and Adonis (1681), which is the earliest English opera, showed that Blow fully understood the form and nuances of the French overture. Similarly in Blow's church music. In style and form much of it harked back to English church music of the early 17th century, yet Blow was capable of writing stunning compositions in the new-style church music, unfamiliar in England at the time, which were called 'symphony anthems' heavily influenced by the *Grand Motet* then much in favour at the French court. The 'symphony anthem' opened with an instrumental French overture, followed by alternating and combined sections for a small group of soloists and the chorus, the *petit choeur* and *grand choeur of the Grand Motet*.

Thoroton members were surprised and excited by Blow's 'symphony anthem' 'I was glad' (Psalm 122); indeed members afterwards demanded to hear the entire anthem.

Professor Morehen, with calm assurance and authority, expertly and effortlessly guided us through unfamiliar territory. It was a fitting celebration of John Blow's tercentenary and much appreciated by members.

Professor Morehen and I could not answer three questions put by the audience. I can report that John Blow left a will proved 14 October 1708 (TNA, PROB 11/504). Blow married (4 September 1674) Elizabeth, daughter of Edward Braddock, master of the choristers of Westminster Abbey where Blow was the organist and they had five children, but only two daughters survived him. When Blow went with William III to Holland in 1691 he was wearing livery as a royal servant but I am as yet uncertain as to what form this livery took.

APOLOGY

The Winter issue of the Newsletter carried a report on the lecture given to us by Dr. Barrie Crook on *Gold in the Wars of the Roses*.

The excellent report of the lecture was incorrectly attributed to Dr. Trevor Foulds. Trevor was not even at the lecture and the report was, of course, written by Philip Jones who also chaired that meeting. Philip is so very well equipped to write the report as he is a lifetime resident of Ravenshead (the Fishpool of the hoard) and has studied the history of the area through the ages.

My sincere apologies to both Trevor and Philip for this error.

Editor

DR. THOROTON ONLINE!

I can't help thinking that our Society's mentor might turn in his grave at this item, but he is now online! Volume 1 of his *Antiquities* can be read at www.bhol.ac.uk. Just type 'Thoroton's History of Nottinghamshire' into the subject search line. At present only Volume 1 is available, but by using my influence (!) I have persuaded the British History Online web manager to bring forward the upload of Volumes 2 and 3. Both should be available from mid-February in the Throsby revision of the 1790s

John Beckett

MEETING REVIEWS

THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE HISTORY LECTURE

14 NOVEMBER 2009

STEVENSON REVISITED: A FRESH LOOK AT NOTTINGHAM'S BOROUGH RECORDS, 1400-1600. JUDITH MILLS



Judith Mills is a mature student at the University of Nottingham, and she is shortly to submit her Ph.D thesis on 'Continuity and Change: the town, people and administration of Nottingham, c1400-c1600'.

Thorotonians were given a taster of her findings in the context of a discussion which focussed on the work of the Victorian scholar, W. H. Stevenson, who edited the first four published volumes of the *Records of the Borough of Nottingham*. Judith has delved deeply into Stevenson's work, and her lecture teased out some of his priorities in selecting and editing records. In particular she noted his emphasis on legal matters.

In her work, Judith has compiled a database of 6,700 Nottingham people during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. She knows very little about some of them beyond their names, but for a few she can almost write a biography. We learnt about the litigious Bartholomew Chettle - no relation to any members of our Society! And we learnt about the conflicts between the corporation and the Mickleton Jury, all of which were tied up with issues of town governance. In the wake of Trevor Fould's earlier work on the Borough Court Rolls, Judith showed us just how rich the written record is for medieval Nottingham, and the lively question time at the end of the lecture revealed just how interesting members found her work. An extended text will appear in the next *Transactions*, and we wished her well with submitting her thesis.

John Beckett

THE CHRISTMAS LECTURE

12 DECEMBER 2009

ANIMATED PHOTOGRAPHS AND LIVING PICTURES: THE BEGINNINGS OF CINEMA IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE. BOB MASSEY

Bob Massey is a professional member of the Association of Lighting Designers and of the Association of British Theatre Technicians. He is Technical Manager of the Bonington Theatre in Arnold, has his own theatre consultancy business and is a founder member of the Arnold Local History Group. He has a great interest in the history of Arnold as well as matters theatrical and is an avid collector of early films. Bob was, therefore, very well qualified to introduce the room full of members and guests to the joys of moving film at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries.

Bob explained that the earliest moving picture shows were given in mobile units owned and

operated by the showmen who travelled the country's fairgrounds with large shows and exhibitions. Moving film, known at that time as animated photographs, was initially a small part of the entertainment provided by such showmen as William Randall, Pat Collins, George Green, President Keen, William Haggart, George Biddell, Jack Proctor and the Chipperfields, most of whom were millionaires from their show activities.

The films were shown in mobile units called Bioscopes, pulled by horses until the appearance of the traction engine whose power allowed for larger and longer units. The units were very elaborate on the frontage and grew even more elaborate as their

size increased and the popularity of film shows grew. The Bioscopes had a platform at the front where an employee sought to encourage people to enter and enjoy the entertainment. Eventually, up to 1,000 people at a time could be seated. They paid two old pence to see a 10 minute film show; the shows were given from 9 am to midnight, so it is easy to understand the amount of money being made by the showmen. The Bioscopes had organs built into them and the films were accompanied by music and a Chairman who explained to the audience what was going on, much as in Old Tyme Music Hall.



Goose Fair, Nottingham, was the largest such fair in the UK at the time and was the first place in the country to show animated film (movies). The first occasion was in 1897 when Randall Williams, who was known as the 'King of Showmen, showed a movie. Williams had bought the necessary equipment after seeing it displayed at the Royal Agricultural Hall fairground show in 1896 and had recognised that it would be an addition to the entertainment which he was then presenting at fairgrounds. His lead was soon followed by others.

Movies were a great novelty to the public and even seeing a film of the sea was popular since most people had never visited the seaside. An early film, which Bob showed us, was of about one minute's length and showed Queen Victoria walking. The

quality of the film was poor, and the action jerky, but proved highly popular with the people of the day, it being a great novelty to be able to see the Queen. Newspapers of the time were sparsely illustrated so to see a picture of the Queen, let alone her walking, was most novel.

We were shown other very early films, *Anabelle's Serpentine Dance* was short, as they all were, but shown in colour with every frame having been carefully hand-tinted. We also saw a film about Christ's Ascension which was apparently shown in 16 parts, each of short duration, so that people had to pay 16 times to see it all; that cost being substantial when one considers the level of weekly earnings of the ordinary worker at the time.

An amusing clip shown to us was the chase and apprehension of two poachers and this was followed by a clip from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Films of the general public were made at the venues visited by the showmen and the public was keen to pay to see film of themselves.

Fires were not uncommon due to the film stock being highly flammable and people being allowed to smoke in the Bioscopes. In 1901 regulations were introduced to bring some safety procedures into being. As films became longer and more popular, purpose built permanent cinemas were erected. The first one in Arnold opened in 1911. This movement to permanently sited cinemas lead to the demise of the showground Bioscope which had ceased to operate by 1913.

There was much more that Bob could have explained to us given more time so, perhaps, we shall invite him back at a future date. It was fascinating to see such early movies, to learn about how they were shown by the showmen of the time and to learn that Goose Fair in Nottingham's Market Place was where they were first seen by the public in this country. Bob's talk was an excellent one for our Christmas Lecture and greatly enjoyed by the 80 or so members present.

Howard Fisher

THE NORA WITHAM LECTURE - 9 JANUARY 2010 CONSERVATION AND DECORATION IN THE NATIONAL TRUST. ANDREW BARBER

Our Lecture in January should have had a special emphasis on recent work at Hardwick Hall and Belton House. However, the snowy weather somewhat altered what had been planned because Clumber Park was inaccessible, which was where our speaker's office containing the presentation is situated.

The audience, large for such a wintry day, was not disappointed in the replacement lecture, for Andrew Barber, Curator for the National Trust in the East Midlands, gave an excellent illustrated talk on

Hardwick Hall and its first fifty years in the care of the National Trust.

Andrew has worked for the NT since 1984, twenty of those years in the East Midlands, and during that time has been involved in the care and presentation of the great estates and their collections, gardens and parks. He is especially interested in how estates worked in their heydays, in the way they were decorated and the tricky area of how best to undertake repairs to buildings and items.

Andrew explained how Hardwick was handed over to the Treasury by the Duke of Devonshire in 1956, which duly passed it on to the National Trust in 1959 although the contents continued to be administered by the V&A until the 1980s. The builder of Hardwick, Elizabeth Countess of Shrewsbury, achieved unprecedented success in her times, being the most powerful and richest woman in England except for Queen Elizabeth herself. As such she was a target for the criticism of men of the time, but how many of them could boast of establishing three ducal lines as well as being an incredible builder of beautiful houses?

After Bess's death, Hardwick Hall became a secondary house for the Dukes of Devonshire and, as such, Andrew told us that it did not suffer a great deal of change like most other great houses. As well as being much as Bess left it, the house also contains the best collection of 16th century state furniture in the country, much of it noted in Bess's inventory of 1601. He also explained the difficulties in keeping the house in good repair, not new to our times but

constant throughout its history. Problems included the presence of six collieries within five miles, so pollution has been an issue and Andrew pointed out that the corner towers apparently had a constant desire to head outwards.

We also heard how pictures had been hung over those precious Gideon tapestries in the Long Gallery since at least the mid 18th century, that the Hall is abundant in at least five or six mason's marks and that replacement antlers on the roof line had to be sourced from young stags because modern deer are bigger than those of Tudor times. Andrew also drew our attention to the quality of the original window glass and called the replacement of original glass in old buildings a tragedy as its quality and the play of light across facades such as Hardwick's is lost forever.

It was a fascinating talk and Andrew promised that he would come back again at a future date to give his scheduled talk.

Barbara Cast

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUST HARRY JOHNSON AWARD 2010

Nominations are invited for best new building or restoration of a building within a Nottinghamshire setting. Nominations can be from individuals, architects, builders and, especially, parish councils.

The prestigious Harry Johnson Award, sponsored jointly by the Campaign to Protect Rural England and the Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust, is given every two years to acknowledge the best restoration of a building, or the best new building, within a village setting. The Trust says that an increased number of entries were submitted in 2008.

Nominations should be made and delivered to the Secretary, The Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust, The Minster Chambers, Church

Street, Southwell, Nottinghamshire, NG25 0HD, to arrive not later than 1 May 2010. There is a nomination fee of £12.00.

Buildings should have been completed within the last three years. The judges will be looking for smaller buildings, especially new-build or restoration of existing structures, and individual effort. It is helpful if before and after photographs can be supplied, together with a brief description of the building and its history.

Further information and nomination forms can be obtained from the Trust at the above address, tel: 01636-819555, email: nbpt@btclick.com. Web site: www.nbpt.co.uk

THE THIRD TRENT VALLEY GEO ARCHAEOLOGY CONFERENCE

This conference was entitled 'The Trent Valley: advancing the research strategy', and held at the British Geological Survey in Keyworth on 18 November 2009.

There were 101 individuals on the list of attendees. The business of the day was conducted through 12 lectures in the big Kingsley Dunham lecture hall, starting at 10 am and finishing at 4.30 pm. There were periods for questions and discussions between papers. The speakers came predominantly from the universities in the study area, Birmingham, Leicester and Nottingham. The papers all included excellent PowerPoint visual presentations but the day would have improved with greater use of microphones. We had half hour tea/coffee breaks morning and

afternoon with an hour for an excellent buffet lunch provided in the overall conference fee of £20.

Much of the day was in our Thoroton Society comfort zone of Nottinghamshire but the papers of course included the Trent upstream into Derbyshire and the water catchment area for the Trent, rather than concentrating on the flood plain and river itself. A number of lecturers presented the latest techniques of archaeological surveying. The time periods covered ranged from flint implements of the Upper Palaeolithic in the ice ages to medieval pottery.

The value of the conference was this range of presentations given at the professional level where we were all challenged beyond our particular areas of knowledge.

Leslie Cram

THE OLD MILL, BESTWOOD VILLAGE

By Howard Fisher

There are benefits to being the Nottinghamshire and Thoroton Society representative to the Council of British Archaeology relating to listed buildings. Not least is that I visit properties to which the general public has no access. This short article relates to one such building which I know from conversations is of interest to several members.

The Old Mill, Moor Lane, Bestwood Village is one of several mills built along the River Leen, initially using the river as motive power for the mill machinery. This mill possesses a large millpond, fed by the river and controlled by sluices and which is, nowadays, maintained by an angling club.

Old Mill was built by the Robinson family about 1783 in the same complex as Forge Mill which was working as an iron foundry in the C17th century. Originally built as a cotton mill Old Mill's subsequent use was as a corn mill and, latterly, as a store. Its last production was of pigeon feed and there are still some sacks of feed remaining in the building. It suffered badly from a fire in 1838 when the interior was gutted and the roof and northern gable severely damaged. Its present form dates from the rebuild after the fire.

It is a relatively simple structure of four stories with stone rubble filled walls and queen-post trussed roof. The upper floors are timber supported on substantial oak beams which are propped at mid-span by, mainly, wrought-iron columns. At both gable ends are two storey, butt-jointed lean-to additions of later date than the mill rebuild.

A re-roof was carried out using modern material, possible in the 1960s or 1970s, and some evidence of re-pointing is apparent.

The basement contains a mill-race which exits under the mill wall and adjacent Mill Lane to become an open culvert through a modern housing development and eventually joining the Leen. The water wheel was outside the main building and there remain the drive shafts and mechanisms for the mill machinery. Every floor has remnants of machinery,

hoists and hoppers which provide an excellent insight into the mill's operations.

The mill was served by a short spur leading off what is now the Robin Hood railway and NET tram lines. There was a turn-table whose position is marked in the paving at the end of the mill, where the path to the mill-pond is accessed. I understand the turn-table was sent to an industrial museum but where this was is unknown to me at present.

Bayles & Wyllie bought the mill in 1935 and it remained in use by them until the late 1970s. They still own it and, to their credit, provide basic maintenance and supervision.

Access is dangerous, there is no lighting and the ground floor has collapsed in several areas, particularly in the entrance area. Sadly, and in spite of being well boarded-up, there has been a lot of vandalism and theft of fixtures and fittings. The roof has at least two holes in it and the upper floors are extensively used by pigeons as a roost.

The mill is grade II listed and on the county list of buildings at risk. Applications have been made to convert it for residential purposes. There is no likelihood of future industrial use and, to date, the residential applications have all been withdrawn.

I consider it most important that this very historic building in the context of the River Leen industry has a suitable use found for it. A use that will see it well maintained and cared for. However, there is a dilemma, as with many old mills, relating to the machinery it contains. This machinery is part of the history of the mill and, whilst not unique in a UK-wide context, is important to this particular mill. It would be good if some way of preserving machinery within any development could be found. This is particularly true of the basement where the sluice mechanism is accessed and the drive shafts for the mill belts are still extant.

The photographs on the back page will provide a snapshot of the mill as it now stands and my hope is that this brief summary is of help and interest.

A MAN MOVED BY A CHILD'S CURIOSITY

This article is derived from one of the same title which appeared in the Newsletter of Keyworth & District Local History Society and which your Editor felt was of wider interest. It is reproduced by kind permission of that Society's Editor, Alan Spooner, who was the compiler of the article.

2009 was the 90th anniversary of the founding of a publication by a Stapleford man which, at its height, sold 500,000 copies a week and ran for 46 years - over 2,400 issues.

Arthur Mee was born in Stapleford, the second of ten children in a working class family. His father,

Henry, was a mechanical engineer and a deacon in the Baptist Chapel which the family attended. Arthur's Christian upbringing remained a strong influence on his work throughout his life.

Arthur's formal education ended when he was 14 and his first job was to work in the proof-reading room

of the *Nottingham Evening Post*. He showed some flair for journalism and a couple of years later he became indentured as a reporter on the *Nottingham Daily Express*. He was successful and at the age of 20 took over the running of the paper. In 1896 he moved to London where he worked on various publications including *Tit Bits* and the *Daily Mail*.

Arthur married Amy Fratson and in 1901 they had a daughter, Marjorie. According to Mee's own account, it was her constant childish questioning that turned his thoughts towards publishing for children:

'... As the [child's] questions came, when the mother had thought and thought, and answered this and answered that until she could answer no more, she cried out for a book: 'Oh for a book that will answer all the questions.'

So, inspired by his little girl's curiosity, Arthur Mee's famous *Children's Encyclopaedia* came into being, launched in 1908 and published in parts over two years.

As a writer Mee disliked the use of technical terms, and would try to convey concepts in everyday language - so that, for example, *diameter* was expressed as *width*, and *circumference* as *so many feet or yards round*. If a technical term was not familiar to him, he argued, then it might be unfamiliar to thousands of others. As well as striving to make knowledge accessible to the young, Mee also wanted his publications to reflect his Christian beliefs. (It is interesting to note as we emerge from a year which

has celebrated the work of Charles Darwin, that Mee believed firmly in evolution, seeing it as a wonderful discovery whereby people could see how God had created the world). His writings also reflected his patriotism and his optimism that the world was getting better.

One outcome of his patriotic love of his country was his editing of the forty books, county by county, of the famous 'King's England' series. He produced many other books conforming to his fundamental principles, including biographies, a Children's Bible, and a Children's Shakespeare. He died in May 1943.

The *Children's Newspaper* was launched in 1919, the very first issue dated 22 March 1919 was priced at three halfpence. It was tabloid in format with four columns of small type and Mee's earnest educational intention is tempered with a clear desire to engage young children with material which would appeal to and entertain them.

For half of its 46 year life, *The Children's Newspaper* had Arthur Mee at its helm. After his death the editorship fell to Mee's deputy, Hugo Tyerman, who continued to pursue the founder's principles. However, from the 1950s as circulation dropped to around 200,000, Sydney Warner, Tyerman's successor, found it hard to continue with Mee's high ideals in a changing social climate, more and more dominated by TV, popular culture and fashion.

In 1965, *The Children's Newspaper* was taken over by a new, colourful magazine, *Look and Learn*.

REVIEWS



Jack Bakewell, *Jack The 'Nottingham' Lad*, Trilby Books.

On a recent visit to Bromley House Library I picked up this book on the 'new acquisitions' table, read the blurb and thought that it might be interesting. The label inside the cover indicates that it was donated to the Library by the author on 15 January 2010. The book is hard-backed and quite short at 101 pages and is the auto-biography of Jack Bakewell.

Jack was born on 14 January 1927 in Cremorne Street, Nottingham. His father was employed in the engineering works of John Jardine & Son Ltd., makers of lace machines and small platen printing machines.

Some readers will have empathy with the descriptions of a boy growing up in the Meadows area and the living conditions of no bathrooms and outside toilets.

The author failed the examinations to go to Grammar School but, after gaining several 'top of the class' awards which his father's employers gave to children of their workers, Jack was interviewed by Sir Ernest Jardine who then paid for him to go to the Mundella School at age 13.

On leaving school Jack entered the printing industry and descriptions of his war service as a signaller monitoring Czech Morse messages in Austria and Italy and his family life, are interspersed with comments on the printing trade in Nottingham.

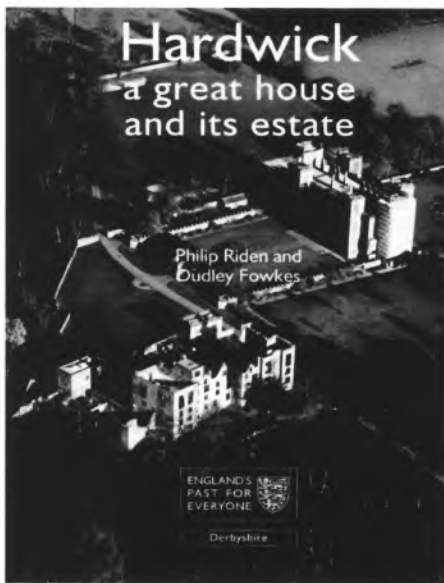
Eventually joining John Brown (Printers) Ltd. we follow the author's career in the company which he eventually came to own and which his son Jonathon still owns.

The book is written in an easily read, light and entertaining style. It was written at the instigation of Jack's son and as well as being a social history of

growing up in Nottingham, we are given insights into the business world. The book is a model of, perhaps, how many of us could write a resume of our own lives, not necessarily for general publication, but for our children and grand-children's understanding.

There is no indication of price or whether the book is on general sale but, if a copy can be found, it is highly recommended as an interesting story of a local man who, in the words of his son Jon, has a 'Rags To - well comfortable' story.

Howard Fisher



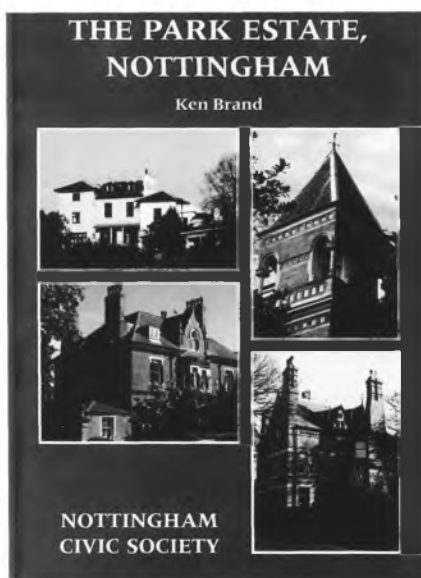
Philip Riden and Dudley Fowkes, *Hardwick: a great house and its estate*, Phillimore, 2009
ISBN 978-1-86077-544-4

Hardwick Hall may not quite be in Nottinghamshire, but it is a much loved house among our membership, and our Hon. Secretary is now a volunteer there. This

book tells you a lot about the house, and, inevitably, Bess and her doings, but it is concerned primarily with the estate and where the house and family fit into the wider picture. Using material from the Chatsworth archive, supplemented by local research and by an excellent building survey undertaken by Trent and Peak Archaeology, the book carries the Hardwick story from Bess and her buildings in the sixteenth century, through the increasing neglect of the house (at least in usage terms) down to the transfer to the National Trust in 1959. Along the way it takes in the farmsteads, the growth of coal mining in the nineteenth century, and even the impact on the landscape of the M1. It is not always a story of success; indeed, the book carries the story to the present day, with the decline of the coal industry and the relating mining villages, and the changing use of local farmhouses which are now often occupied by people who do not work on the land.

The present Duke of Devonshire has written the foreword to the book, and both our President (Rosalys Coope) and Hon. Secretary attended the book's launch at Hardwick in December.

John Beckett



Ken Brand, *The Park Estate, Nottingham Civic Society*, 2009
ISBN 978-1-902443-11-9

Over many years, Ken Brand has done a great deal to enlighten us on Nottingham's architectural past, and although this is an update of his earlier book on The Park, it is well worth acquiring. Half as long again as the first edition, in an A4 rather than A5 format, and with far more pictures, many of them in colour by Martine Hamilton-Knight, *The Park Estate* has also benefited from research undertaken over the past two decades, and includes apt quotations from the 4th Duke of Newcastle's diaries, published in the Thoroton Record Series.

Ken's remarkable knowledge of The Park also comes over in the picture captions, and in the references to current houses on the estate. It is a shame that virtually nothing is said about the sources and research behind this book, but even if you have a copy of the first edition do buy this one, enjoy the read, be surprised by many of the details captured in the pictures, and next time you visit take a copy of the book with you!

John Beckett

VISIT TO WARWICKSHIRE -10 SEPTEMBER 2009

On September 10, 2009, we enjoyed a visit to the village of Mancetter and to Arbury Hall, the home of Viscount Daventry.

Our first stop was at St .Peter's church in Mancetter where we were given a warm welcome and enjoyed an excellent cup of coffee and biscuits. One of the Church Wardens gave us a fascinating talk, not only about the history of the church, its chained books and its unique protestant Martyr's memorials, but also on the present life of the Church and its parishioners.

From Mancetter we drove a short distance to Dobbie's Garden Centre for lunch, and then in the afternoon on to Arbury Hall.

The Hall is the family home of Lord and Lady Daventry and is only open to the general public on Bank Holiday weekends.

We were welcomed by Mrs. Brenda Newell, the agent of the estate. Her 19th century predecessor in this role was the father of the novelist, George Eliot

who portrayed Arbury in several of her novels, especially, *Scenes of Clerical Life*.

We were divided into two groups and given a tour of the house, a Tudor building whose rooms were beautifully gothicised in the 18th century. The rooms are filled with family portraits from the 16th century to the present day to give, despite the elegant architecture, a true feel of a family home.

During a splendid 'Thoroton' tea in the estate tea room we were given an interesting talk by Adrian Henstock on the Newdigate family and their connection with Nottingham and of the Evans (George Eliot's family) and their connection with his own. I should like to thank him for giving his time and this talk was thoroughly enjoyed by us all.

We had the additional bonus of the day being a lovely, warm, late summer's day with bright sunshine throughout.

Penny Messenger

CORRECTION

In the introduction to *Ducal Estate Management in Georgian Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire: the Diary of William Gould 1783-1788* I note that the agent was retained by Lord George Augustus Henry Cavendish to manage his estates in the two counties. Whilst William Gould had dealings with Lord Cavendish, it was the famous scientist, the Hon. Henry Cavendish, who employed Gould as his steward. I apologise for this mistake. Lord Charles Cavendish passed his estates to his son Henry in

1782. Henry's first actions were to appoint Gould as his agent and to fire his father's agent, Thomas Revill whose attitude had for 20 years been 'a mix of servility and arrogance', mitigated by a problem with Revill's throat which meant he could hardly speak. The Duke of Devonshire's agent, John Heaton recommended Gould to Henry Cavendish, citing his 'integrity and judgement on country business.

Michael Hanson

THOROTON EXCURSIONS

As most of you will know, each year the Society enjoys four excursions during the summer months of May, June, July and September.

This short notice is asking for volunteers from any of you who would be prepared to offer any helpful ideas or suggestions about new possible venues, or even some assistance with organising an outing. I am sure that there must be one or two members of the Society who say 'Why don't we have a trip to?', or 'I would love to arrange a trip to'

Please have a word with me (at meetings or by telephone 0115-926-9090 or by email a.langton18@btinternet.com) with any suggestions for possible venues, or even offers of organising an outinn

The Society has been well served by members who have volunteered in the past to be involved, and indeed who are still involved, and we would like to open the possibility to others too. The involvement with excursions is certainly not a closed shop just for members of the Society's Council.

If you have a useful idea but are daunted by the prospect of organising, I am quite prepared to assist and help with the practical details to ensure that we continue to have a programme of interesting and varied excursions. Again, if you would like to know more about what might be involved please have a word with me.

Alan Langton (Excursions Secretary)

LANDSCAPE HISTORY OF SHERWOOD FOREST AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Look out for details of this day conference to be by the Society for Landscape Studies in conjunction held in September and which is being organised with The Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire.

SUMMER EXCURSIONS 2010

SUNDAY 23 MAY GRIMSTHORPE CASTLE AND HARLAXTON MANOR

Please note that this is a Sunday visit and not the usual Saturday one.

Leaders: Pete Smith and Alan Langton

It is unusual for Thoroton to have an outing on a Sunday, but for this particular excursion, entry to the properties makes it necessary. It will be interesting to see how popular Sunday is for members.

Our planned tour of the 700 year old Grimsthorpe Castle will give members the opportunity of seeing painting, furniture and tapestries which have belonged to the ancient Lincolnshire family who have lived here since 1516. Henry VIII visited Grimsthorpe in 1541.

Soup and sandwiches will be served after the tour of the castle and members will have a chance to see the gardens.

In the afternoon, after a short journey to Harlaxton, we will be given a tour of the state rooms of the Manor, followed by tea and scones. Again, the gardens will be available for members to view.

SATURDAY 26 JUNE WORKSOP AND BLYTH PRIORIES AND CARLTON-IN-LINDRICK CHURCH

Leader: Alan Langton

Worksop Priory dates from the 12th century; but its 140 foot long Norman nave is now all that remains of the original monastery. Our guide will describe the history of the Priory and show us the south porch with its original oak door together with the modern additions to the east end of the church. We shall also see the battered alabaster tombs of Lord and Lady Furnival and Sir Thomas Neville.

En route to Blyth we will stop to see the splendid Saxon church of Carlton-in-Lindrick with its collection of very old artefacts. After time for lunch in one of the several public houses in Blyth, we will go into the Priory church and have a talk about its history and rare Norman remains. Significant items include the 13th century vaulted roof of the nave and the 15th century oak screen.

Tea will be served at Ossington Village Hall.

SATURDAY 10 JULY WINKBURN HALL AND CHURCH (AFTERNOON ONLY)

Leader: John Hamilton

This has been described as 'one of the most interesting houses in Nottinghamshire' and one former owner said 'The house enjoys a seclusion as complete as it is charming ... The pretty village over which it predominates is as quiet as an empty church and great trees surround its venerable walls.'

The house was built around 1695 with virtually nothing remaining of the original manor house. An upper storey was added in 1840. Inside there are some fine Adam fireplaces and carved panelling.

The church has a splendid set of box pews and was given to the Knights Hospitallers in the 12th century. After their suppression in 1540 the whole estate was acquired by William Burnell and his wife Constance and it remains with their descendants to this day.

The present owner, Richard Craven-Milnes, a member of Thoroton, has kindly agreed to be our guide.

There is no Thoroton tea on this occasion.

THURSDAY 9 SEPTEMBER UPTON HOROLOGICAL INSTITUTE (MORNING)

Leaders: Margaret Trueman and Penny Messenger

This visit will commence at 10.30 a.m. at the Institute building in Upton. It is not proposed to hire a coach for this outing and it is hoped that members can share cars for those who need a lift: arrangements for this will be made nearer to the date. There is car parking in the grounds of the Institute.

We will be given a talk on the history of the hall and the collection of time-pieces (together with some details of resident ghosts too!) before being taken on a tour of the building.

Members may well wish to have some refreshments before the drive home; there is a tea-room attached to the hall and there is a public house over the road in Upton, together with other eating places in nearby Southwell

WANTED

A leader for a proposed excursion to Stamford in 2011. If you are able to do this please contact Alan Langton, the excursions organiser.

MAURICE CAPLAN

It is with great sadness that we note the death of Maurice. An obituary will appear in the Summer issue.

NEW MEMBERS

A very warm welcome to the following who have joined us since the previous Newsletter.

Mrs. L. Crofts Mrs. C. Knight Mr. P. Owen Miss V. Seagrave Mrs. S. Simmonds
Mr. J. Sutton Miss S. Taylor Mrs. S. Wallwork

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES COACH VISITS

Sue Clayton and the Flintham Museum are again running trips to The National Archives at Kew during 2010.

The dates are:- 2 March, 8 April, 8 June, 26 August

The cost is £20 per trip and further details about time and pick-up points can be obtained from Sue at flintham.museum@googlemail.com

NEWSLETTER - SUMMER ISSUE

The next issue will contain the usual seasonal reports but there will also be space for items submitted by members. Any contribution will be much appreciated by the editor.

There was no response to the Editor's appeal for 'correspondents' from members living in the northern sector of the County, this appeal stands and members in the area are encouraged to volunteer!

FARNDON BOOK FAIR 2010

Members may be interested to know about the Farndon Bookfair which will be held this year on Sundays 7 March and 10 October. The fair is now under new management and will feature about thirty stalls with booksellers from this county and from Leicestershire, Yorkshire, Northamptonshire, Warwickshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Derbyshire.

It is the only independent book fair offering second-hand and antiquarian books in the region. A number of the dealers carry a stock of Nottinghamshire and neighbouring counties topography and history books. Some dealers also offer maps and ephemera while others specialise in such things as military books, children's literature or illustrated volumes.

The fair is held in Farndon Village Hall and runs from 10 am to 4 pm. Refreshments are available at the venue. Further information is to be had by calling the organisers, Jim and Jan Rayner on 01522-869597.

THOROTON BOOKSTALL NEWS

One of our members, Ralph Hawthorn has drawn a plan of the Market Square as it was in 1920 including the stall-holders' names.

The plan is available at £3.00.

Page 1 is an overall view, pages 2-4 are enlargements to enable the names to be easily read. Available in hard copy or in CD form as JPEG images from the Thoroton bookstall at our meetings.

Also available in CD format as JPEG files is *Nottinghamshire* by H. H. Swinnerton at a cost of £1.50

The deadlines for items for issues of the Newsletter are 1 February, 1 May, 1 August and 1 November of each year.

Copy should be sent to the Editor, Howard Fisher, 21, Brockwood Crescent, Keyworth, Nottingham, NG12 5HQ or by email to [hf773@btinternet.com](mailto:h773@btinternet.com). Items can be handwritten, typed or by attachment in Word file format. Pictures are particularly welcome to illustrate an item.

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Any views expressed in the Newsletter are those of the author and are not necessarily shared by the Thoroton Society, its Officers or Council members.

THE OLD MILL, BESTWOOD IN PICTURES

