

Friends of the Centre for English Local History

NEWSLETTER

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Friends of the Centre for English Local History - Public Benefit Statement

Our objectives are to provide financial and other support to the Centre for English Local History at the University of Leicester, and to its students, and to support the study of local history more generally.

Membership of the Friends is open to anyone with an interest in local history – no qualifications are needed, and there is no need to have been a student of the Centre for English Local History, or of the University of Leicester. Members receive a number of benefits. These include an invitation to local history seminars and an annual lecture, which are free of charge, and free use of the research library at the Centre. The Friends of the Centre for English Local History also organises a programme of study days, weekends, conferences and outings, which are open to members and non-members alike. The annual lecture is also open to non-members, upon payment of a small entrance fee. These events aim to increase people's knowledge about local history.

The Centre for English Local History at the University of Leicester is widely respected because it helped to found local history as an academic discipline, and because it continues to be a source of high quality research and fresh ideas. It remains unique because it is devoted to the study of local history everywhere in England and Wales. The Friends of the Centre for English Local History provides bursaries and financial support to MA and PhD students who wish to pursue courses or research within the Centre, including payment of, or towards, course fees, the cost of field courses and research-related travel expenses. This helps students in financial need from any part of the world and all walks of life to pursue their interest in English and Welsh local history at the highest level.

The Friends of the Centre for English Local History also assists the Centre by providing volumes for its library, which students and members of the Friends may use for their research, and by assisting both financially and with practical help in the organisation of academic conferences, which further the spread of knowledge and are open to everyone with an interest in the subject. A small publication programme also makes high quality research available to anyone.

The cover picture: Castle Ashby, Northamptonshire Picture taken by R Neil Marshman 12 March 2005 (c), licensed by Wikimedia Commons.

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EDITORIAL

I must begin with an apology for the tardy appearance of the Newsletter this year. My husband became ill this time last year and died in the spring. I am afraid that I have taken some time to get back on top of things. I have found myself quoting, rather defensively, the words of Douglas Adams - 'I love deadlines. I love the whooshing noise they make as they go by.' (The Salmon of Doubt), though, in truth, I hate to be behind with things. I will also take this opportunity to apologise to anyone who has sent in any information for inclusion in the Newsletter which I might inadvertently have omitted. I hope I have not missed anything, but in my less-than-organised state of late, I may have done. Thanks go to Ann Workman for proof-reading and helping me keep on track.

As ever, I am very grateful to everyone who has written reports of seminars, outings and conferences and who has sent in news of their publications and activities. I would encourage members of the Friends to send items for inclusion to me throughout the year at smp38@le.ac.uk. As well as the reports and 'news', I would welcome photographs of our events and also photographs for consideration for the cover picture. If you come across any interesting or amusing snippets about history that would make good 'fillers' for blank spaces, I should be glad of those, too.

The past year has been a challenging one for the University, the Centre and for the Friends, in our efforts to support the Centre's staff and students. Despite anxieties about budgets, the relocation of administrative staff and the retirement of Prof. Pete King, members of staff have continued to research and publish on a wide range of topics as well as embracing modern methods of communication through radio, television and the internet. All of these are reported on fully in the following report by Keith Snell. The subjects being studied by research students reflects this wide-ranging approach, as the 'local history' aspect permeates ever more areas of 'history' generally.

The Friends have had a successful 25th year and full reports of our activities appear on the following pages.
Sylvia Pinches

THE CENTRE REPORT

It has been an interesting period for the Centre lately. We come to the end of the current Vice-Chancellor's period of office, and await his successor. A periodic phase of organisational change and cost-cutting are in the air across the University, gearing up to new markets and to shifts in the structure of university fees, along with major building projects and much innovative activity. Significant changes are affecting almost everybody, and our administrative staff are being moved from 5 Salisbury Road to the Attenborough Tower, in a move to centralise and streamline administration in the School of History. There should be a number of benefits in this for us, though it will alter some of the atmosphere in Salisbury Road. Our building will become more like those at numbers 1, 6 and 7 Salisbury Road, although replacement administrative personnel will be here when events and other matters require this. In effect, enquiries will be more directed to the central locus for administration, rather than to our building, and we will see how this new administrative model works in the near future. Extra space will also become available here for ELH Library expansion, computer terminals and new related infrastructure and resources.

A welcome recent donation to the Centre has been the inauguration of the Margaret Spufford Prize. Professor Peter Spufford, of Queen's College Cambridge, has kindly set up this Prize for our English Local History students, in honour of Margaret Spufford, FBA, who of course was associated with the Department of English Local History for many years, and whose famous book, *Contrasting Communities*, was written here. Margaret sadly died recently. A sum of £3000 has been invested to produce the Prize for the best performance every year by an MA student reading English Local History, if a suitable candidate presents her/himself. This idea and donation has been warmly welcomed here. The first winner of the Prize has been Jay Emery, for his outstanding and publishable MA dissertation on the post-1945 mining communities of Nottinghamshire.

Another recent bequest to the Centre has been of a substantial number of books to augment our Library from Margery Tranter, who worked here for a long period as a research fellow, and whose publications on Derbyshire religion and related

themes will be known to many readers. Margery has particular interests in the history of Derbyshire, and its border with Leicestershire, and her books and maps relate especially to this area. We are most grateful to her for donating so many books and other items to the Centre.

Readers of this publication will be aware of the retirement of Professor Peter King, as from August 2014. Many of us will have heard him speaking on radio programmes and on Time Team recently. We all wish him well for a productive retirement. Pete has kindly agreed to continue supervising some of our English Local History PhD students and (like Chris Dyer and Charles Phythian-Adams) will become an Emeritus Professor here, with office space in our building. He has been a key figure in the Centre, acting as Director during 2012-13, researching over the past two years a collective project on the social history of the criminal corpse, and teaching on our MA programme. He has also taught some very popular undergraduate modules, including a third year special subject on 'Murder in the Metropolis', underscoring the importance of local history to London historical studies, and finally bringing Jack the Ripper within the remit of English Local History. W.G. Hoskins' provincial suspicions about events in metropolitan history have thus been confirmed. It is indeed noteworthy how Pete has, during his time with us, imported the history of crime and the criminal justice system into our MA course and associated teaching, and how he has drawn to the Centre a large number of scholars and students with criminal justice interests. We now know much more about regional homicide rates, and the laudably pacific tendency of the Welsh not to hang criminals. Argument continues as to why this was the case, though my argument for the on-going influence of the Laws of Hywel Dda and Welsh religious Nonconformity is probably the most convincing. This has expanded the scholarly remit of English local history into areas going beyond many established fields of study for which the Centre is well known. Pete and his wife Leigh plan to move from Pitsford (Northamptonshire) to renovate a large farmhouse in Cornwall, a county for which they have a special affection, where they will always be welcoming to English Local History students, staff and Friends of the Centre, especially those with skills in vernacular architecture and literary perspectives on *Jamaica Inn*. We all wish them well with their plans and

projects there, which will include a great deal of further research into the local history of that county. It may well be possible in the future to have extensions of the MA Devon field course encompassing their area and hospitality. We will of course be seeking a replacement post for the Centre in due course.

A range of projects are underway, far too numerous to list if one includes our many postgraduate research projects, for as always we have large numbers of students, especially PhD students. Indeed, student demand to research PhDs in our Centre has never been higher than at present. Of our staff, Andrew Hopper and a number of associates are working in innovative ways on war widows and orphans in mid seventeenth-century England. He is about to publish his co-edited book, *'England's Fortress': New Perspectives on Thomas, 3rd Lord Fairfax* (2014). This is the revised proceedings from the Fairfax 400 Conference held at the Centre in June 2012. Another publication by him has been 'The reluctant regicide: Thomas Wayte and the civil wars in Rutland', *Midland History*, 39:1 (2014). He has done a number of important public engagements and conference papers on themes relating to seventeenth-century war widows and military care and welfare in seventeenth-century England, an initiative that also links us to current American scholarship, where Andrew has been developing further connections.

Richard Jones has been extremely active in working towards an important re-development of Hoskins' Shell County Guides as a major web-based resource, with potentially very large levels of external funding, and this is an enterprise which we all watch with enthusiasm and interest. This will provide another outlet for materials which have been produced for the exciting partnership forged this year between Google and the university (with ELH taking the lead). Google's Fieldtrip app is a must for local history lovers who now have Smart 'phones. With over 60 entries produced by staff and students in ELH, our presence is already strong and will continue to grow, taking the name of the Centre to new audiences across the globe. We would welcome more entries from the ELH constituency, so please contact Richard for more details. As we explore the possibilities of new digital and social media for the dissemination of local history, two other initiatives might be noted: ELH on Twitter

(@elhleicester), and a new platform for creating satellite-based treasure hunts (particularly seductive to the younger generation), which allows us to communicate local history 'under the radar' as it were

(<http://pastquest.wordpress.com/>). Richard's work on Southwell, on medieval place-names, on agricultural practices such as manuring in the past, the subject of an important recent book by him, and many other fields continue strongly. These extend to his work on the Leverhulme-funded 'Diasporas and the Making of Britain' project, where he is currently doing battle with French bureaucracy to get permission to sample DNA from the modern population of the Cotentin peninsula in Normandy to look for Viking signatures. The geographical focus of this study has been established on the basis of high densities of 'Scandinavian' place-names. The target individuals include those with long-established 'Scandinavian' surnames, or individuals who reside within a 50km radius of the birthplace of their grandparents. This DNA-led approach has proven exceedingly profitable in England and in this Norman initiative Richard is taking some of the principles of English Local History *outré-manche*. Richard has recently submitted an application to the Leverhulme Trust for funding for a project entitled 'Sites in the Landscape'. This is led by the Portable Antiquities Scheme staff based in the British Museum, with Leicester archaeology and ELH acting as co-investigators. Our idea is to interrogate the million plus artefacts now recorded from metal detectorist finds to explore changing settlement patterns from the Bronze Age through to the end of the Middle Ages. Richard is also completing another application for money to study 'watery' place-names in England and Wales. This is a project which seeks to examine whether early medieval place-names are finding new relevance for today's generation that faces higher precipitation and more regular flood events. Another recent development in July was a University Honorary Degree for Mick Aston, founder of Time Team, who was much associated with our Centre, and Richard was responsible for bringing about such a fitting tribute to the famous late TV presenter and archaeologist.

Keith Snell continues with work on 'loneliness in history', and has written a large ESRC grant application on this topic that is about to be submitted. This is potentially a new subject for

English Local History, overlapping also with medical history, yet one that is highly topical given modern political, media and public concerns. It relates to many local history subjects with its interests in 'solitaries' in the census and pre-1821 listings of inhabitants, regionalities of living alone, landscapes of loneliness and isolation, poor law, welfare and asylum studies, literary regionality, modernism and associated fields. His paper 'Loneliness in history: exploring 'solitaries' or 'singletons'' will shortly be delivered to the 50th Anniversary Conference of the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure. His book *Spirits of Community: English Senses of Belonging and Loss, 1750-2000*, will be published soon. He is also currently researching the important East Anglian writer and poet Ronald Blythe.

The future thus looks bright and changeable, one of adaption and response to some striking changes of our times, and with the use of new technologies to spread the influence of 'The Leicester Approach'. Applications here for postgraduate studies are strong, notably for PhD research, grant-aided research is highly innovative and 'impact' directed, and student enthusiasm remains at the heights that we all associate with this Centre.

Keith Snell,
Director: Centre for English Local History.

Retirement of Professor Peter King

Professor Peter King retires as from August this year, and we all wish him the very best for a happy and productive retirement. This is a regrettable loss, though Pete has very kindly agreed to continue supervising some of our English Local History PhD students and will become an Emeritus Professor here, with office space in our building, to which he will make periodic visits. He has been a mainstay of the Centre, acting as Director during the 2012-13 academic year, pursuing his collective project on the social history of the criminal corpse, teaching on our MA programme, and he has also taught some very popular undergraduate modules including a third year special subject. It is notable how, during his time with us, he has imported the history of crime and the criminal justice system into our MA course and related teaching, and how

he has drawn to the Centre a large number of scholars and students with interests in that field. This has done much to expand the remit of English local history into areas of social history which go beyond many established fields of study for which the Centre is well known. He and his wife will shortly be moving from Pitsford in Northamptonshire to Cornwall, a county for which they have a special affection, where they will always be welcoming to English Local History students, staff and Friends of the Centre. We all wish them well with their plans and projects there, which will no doubt include a great deal of further research into the local history of that county.

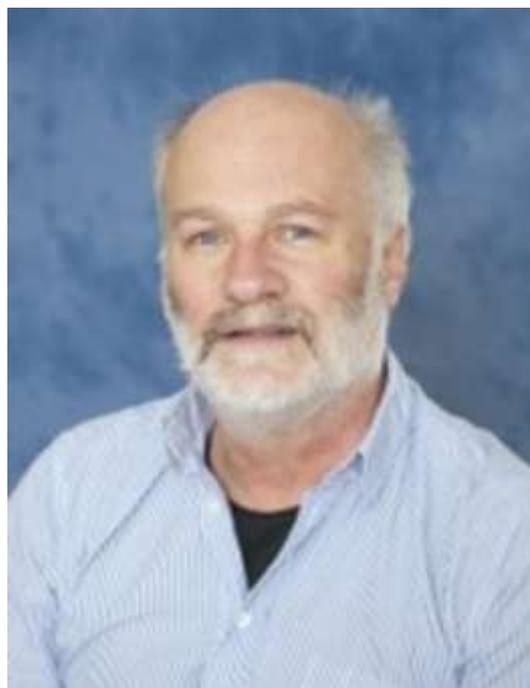
Keith Snell

Thoughts on Leaving

I have greatly enjoyed my four years at The Centre for English Local History. For two years I have been working on the big Wellcome-funded project that we got large amounts of funding for during my first year and therefore I have done less teaching for the Centre than I would have liked. Having being replaced by some excellent young scholars such as Simon Sandall, David Churchill and Richard Ward I hope the students gained by this but it was slightly sad for me. Highlights of my four years include both some excellent ELH seminars, the fun of supervising some fascinating MA dissertations, the MA class I taught this year which was one of the most enjoyable groups I have taught in 35 years of higher education teaching, the 10 PhD students I have supervised on diverse topics from pauper inventories to Scottish executions. Another major bonus has been working with Andy, Richard and Keith and working in the supportive atmosphere created by the Centre, the secretaries and the Friends. I have never had such a large office, or such a friendly place to make coffee and meet so many different types of researchers. I have regrets too. The arrogance of one particular speaker at the seminar pressed the wrong buttons and my response was too aggressive - something for which I must apologise. I believe audience responses to seminars should always be challenging but also always be essentially supportive and I did too much of the former on that occasion. Overall however, this has been a very, very positive experience and I wish the Centre well. The university and external environment are

presenting many challenges and problems, not least of which is the likelihood I will not be replaced, initially at least. I hope the Centre will find ways to weather the storms and will move forward in spite of them. I will still be around sometimes as an Emeritus and may even be given a desk as I am seeing some of the PhD students who are near finishing through to completion as well as finishing a book. In any case I would like to thank you again for a great four years.

Pete King



Professor Pete King

Seminar programme 2013-2014

Dr Katrina Navickas (University of Hertfordshire), ‘Contesting place in popular politics in the industrial north of England, 1789 - 1848’. 10 October 2013.

Dr Navickas began by describing a lively vestry meeting in Dukinfield in 1838, when Joseph Rayner Stephens, a leading Chartist radical, challenged the vestrymen for holding the meeting of ‘ley [rate] payers’ at 1.00 p.m., a time when working people could not be expected to attend. She described this engagement with local politics as a form of ‘municipal Chartism’, which she argued was an integral part of the Chartist movement and more effective, ultimately, than the Great Charter campaign. She then went on to place her study in the broader perspective of ‘the politics of place’, saying that she felt amongst friends at CELH, where the significance of place is understood. She wants to rescue the word ‘parochial’ from its negative connotations of narrowness and insignificance. Parochial politics *were* important, and were the arena in which people mostly operated.

Dr Navickas has explored these issues in the industrial north of England, particularly Manchester, over the unusually long period of 1789 – 1848. Most historians have concentrated on either the potentially-revolutionary 1790s - 1830 or the period of reform agitation of 1832 - 48. By taking this longer time-frame, she has been able to highlight changing aspects of political life. She has a database of 600 political meetings in Manchester in the period 1789 – 1848 and has plotted these and processions onto maps, comparing different groups and different periods. In the earlier period, civic processions became loyalised, as Tories emphasised commitment to church and crown. These processions focussed on the medieval heart of Manchester and out towards the new commercial town around St Anne’s Square. During this time, 192 innkeepers signed an agreement banning radical groups from meeting at their premises. Plotting the radical processions and meetings of the period produced a different geography, with the majority of instances being in the areas of working class population around Ancoats and George Leigh

Street and southwards towards the open ground of St Peter’s Field, which was to become the sacred ground of radicalism after the Peterloo massacre in 1819. In the period 1832 – 48 the map of radical meetings was different; the meetings were much larger, needing bigger spaces on the periphery of the town. The year 1832 had been a turning point, after which Tory Anglican control of local government began to dissipate. The reforms of the 1830s redefined administrative boundaries and created many new institutions on which radicals sought representation. In a mood of suspicion of centralisation and despotism some strange alliances were made between radicals and Tories against the Liberals. Dr Navickas gave examples of the bitter political struggles of the period, concluding that the real legacy was the continued vitality of local government through the Victorian era. The vitality of the paper was attested to by the number and range of the questions asked at the end.

Erin Bell, (University of Lincoln), ‘“Kindly Entertained by Dear Friends in Newcastle” The benefits and limitations of regional approaches to Anglo-Norwegian religious history’. 24 October.

This enigmatic heading was revealed as a discourse on the efforts of the religious Society of Friends (Quakers) to spread beliefs particularly in South West Norway. The title relates to an entry in the diary of a follower who was entertained in Newcastle-upon-Tyne pending a visit to Norway to spread the word.

The Society of Friends, known more usually as the Quakers, was founded in the mid-17C. by George Fox (1624-1690), born in Leicestershire into a strict puritan family. He became increasingly obsessed with the idea of a simple life without luxury and a simpler approach to God which obviated all ceremony. He travelled widely, ranging from London to remote parts of Westmorland, and had a particularly strong following in the North East. By the time of his death groups of believers were established which began to institute their own places of worship known as Meeting Houses, often in remote villages since they were a persecuted sect who did not want to attract attention to themselves. In particular they attracted much vilification for their refusal to bear arms and pay tithes.

Late in the 17thC., the desire to spread the word more widely led to missionaries travelling mainly to Europe and particularly to the Low Countries. The North East of England naturally had a close trading relationship with Norway and a great deal of activity was centred here. One noteworthy event was the arrival in England in 1678 of one Kris Meidel formerly chaplain to Prince Georg of Denmark who joined the Quakers in 1700 and returned to Norway as a missionary in 1702. After imprisonment in Norway he returned to England and achieved some success in preaching in Cornwall. Much contact continued in the 18thC., but it is from the 1800s, after the Napoleonic Wars, that we have a better record of activity as the broader economic and trading relationship with Scandinavia was strengthened. Unexpectedly, there is record of a Norwegian sailor captured by the Royal Navy in 1790 who embraced the Quaker faith as a result of missionary activity and of converts being sought among Norwegian and Dutch prisoners on prison hulks at Chatham.

There are numerous letters recording the interchange of information between Norway and the United Kingdom. In particular, one George Richards had correspondence with a number of contacts in Norway, especially with Asbjorn Kloster, whom he encouraged to translate English texts into Norwegian for the benefit of the local population. To another correspondent, Endhe Dahl, he commented on the practice of imprisonment for those practising the Quaker religion or avoiding military service. By the mid-1800s the letters recorded the translation of English tracts into Norwegian and the opening of a Friends Meeting House in the vicinity of Stavanger in South West Norway.

Ross Macfarlane (Wellcome Trust, London), 'The Wellcome Library: research sources for English Local History and Medical Humanities'. 5 December 2013.

Stormy weather with roads tree-blocked and railways in chaos prevented many Friends from attending Ross Macfarlane's fascinating seminar. As Research Engagement Officer at the Wellcome Library, Ross Macfarlane is well placed to give an overview of the library's resources that could be useful to English Local History students. One might assume that the Wellcome Library would be of interest primarily to Medical Humanities

studies only, and with a strong London bias, but Ross showed us a range of examples to tempt us to investigate the Wellcome Library resources for imaginative avenues of English Local History research. For instance, the Voluntary Euthanasia Society met first in Leicester during the 1920s and 1930s, led by the Medical Officer of Health for Leicester. By the mid-1930s the Society held its inaugural public meeting, in London, before becoming a national organisation.

Sir Henry Wellcome collected medical-associated documents, books and ephemera from the 1890s to the 1930s. His archive continues to be added to and updated. Twentieth-century material comes from sources such as the Family Planning Association, the National Childbirth Trust, the Society for Medical Officers of Health, and oral testimonies gathered from GPs during the 1990s. These diverse records allow insights into such areas as degrees of malnutrition in English towns and regions, hygiene, maternity, tuberculosis, and how the NHS has changed and evolved.

The library has an ongoing programme of digitizing its records and putting them on line for researchers to use freely (www.wellcomelibrary.org). Themes on the website include 'London's Pulse: Medical Officer of Health Reports 1848-1972', an online research resource for the history of public health; and 'Codebreakers: Makers of Modern Genetics', an online research resource for the history of genetics. Such subjects may appear strange to traditional English Local Historians but the massive and rapid changes in scientific and medical research during the twentieth century especially have resulted in far reaching changes in people's lives, including social attitudes, standards of living, life expectancy and disease, and forensic investigations.

Collections of family papers indicate changes in attitudes over time, such as in the Yorkshire Carr family, medical practitioners for three generations. The library also holds the family papers of Joseph Banks, Edward Jenner and John Hodgkin's correspondence with his Quaker friends. The library has a collection of more than seventy seventeenth- and eighteenth-century domestic remedy and food recipe manuscripts, including the first known English recipe for ice cream, noted in Lady Anne Fanshawe's collection at the time of the English Civil Wars. There are

also many rare books, images, objects, and a variety of ephemera, relevant to ELH studies, ranging from books of Thomas Bewick woodcuts to material from the late nineteenth century hydropathy establishment in Wharfedale. A lively discussion followed.

Fiona Reynolds, (Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge; formerly Director of the National Trust; Director of the Women's Unit in the Cabinet Office; Director of the Council for the Protection of Rural England), 'Hoskins's legacy – why landscape matters today'. 16 January 2014.

This talk was in three sections: the 'spirit of place', the development of the landscape protection movement and the importance of the palimpsest of the English landscape. Each section was richly illustrated with photographs.

The speaker explained that she had fallen in love with Hoskins's work when she was a student at Cambridge, because it made sense to her. England's diverse geology encouraged the development of a diverse man-made landscape, where it is still possible to discern Bronze Age ploughing in Gloucestershire and trace the development of nucleated villages in Devon. The English landscape is modest, lacking drama, yet evokes an emotional response, which has changed over time. In the eighteenth century Stowe and Stourhead were designed and constructed to be beautiful. Elsewhere the countryside was seen as functional, and even experienced as frightening. This was how Defoe described the Lake District, but in the 1760s it was promoted as picturesque and tourism developed there, further encouraged by Wordsworth's Lake District guide in 1810.

Industrialisation stimulated fears for the future of the Lake District, resulting in 1927 in an agreement to protect the lakes. Other countryside protection measures followed at a national level, including the Planning Act in 1947, the National Parks Act in 1949 and the designation of the green belt. Like Hoskins we are conscious of losses and bemoan them, but is this mere sentimentality?

It is important to recognise the palimpsest of the English countryside, and to see the depth of history in it. We need to avoid twenty-first-century nothingness, with forests of road signs

and uniform development that detracts from the uniqueness of each place. We must learn to build beautifully, looking at the landscape as Hoskins did to understand its history, which should be the foundation for new development.

The presentation stimulated extensive debate. The speaker agreed with one questioner that there is a danger of creating too rigid a divide between "urban" and "rural". She said other countries manage urban space better, e.g. Scandinavia. Further questions prompted her agreement that landscape does not simply need to be 'conserved', and a new language is required to facilitate change. We need to retain the qualities we value in each place without trying to freeze any particular point in time.

Joseph Harley (Leicester University), 'Material life in the workhouse before the New Poor Law: a Dorset case study'. 30 January 2014.

Joe Harley, a postgraduate researcher at Leicester, presented an interesting paper on the evidence which can be found relating to the material lives of paupers in the final decades before the introduction of the New Poor Law in 1834, using the town of Beaminster in Dorset as a case-study.

An examination of the demographics of the workhouse population showed that females were much more likely to be housed there, as were the very young and the very old. Although the number of residents gradually grew, from an average of around 50 in the early 1810s, this was subject to extremely wide fluctuations, particularly in 1822, when the population increased to almost 120. The years of highest workhouse population also showed a greater number of men of working age, and families, entering the premises; the average family included four children.

Beaminster workhouse included the facility for the storage of paupers' belongings while they were resident, and 23 inventories for property stored have survived. Joe has compared the entries in these storage inventories with the 11 pauper inventories from the wider county, to enable analysis of the material wealth of those who were admitted to the workhouse compared to those who received out-relief. Whilst many of the figures were similar across the two groups (for

example, the figures for possession of seating and tables were virtually identical), differences in other types of property might be taken to indicate that those entering the workhouse were in significantly deeper poverty than those relieved at home. For example, only nine per cent of the storage inventories mention any form of cupboard, while 45 per cent of the wider inventories include this. An examination of cooking implements recorded also supported this argument, with considerably fewer workhouse inmates storing cooking pots or fire-place related items, suggesting that such items will have been previously sold in an attempt to raise funds to stay out of the workhouse.

The storage inventories can also be used to illustrate the turnover of residents; the average user of the storage facilities used the workhouse for just 204 days before removing their property. Indeed, the fact that the parish provided storage illustrates that entry into the workhouse was not regarded as a permanent move, and that poverty, particularly for the able-bodied, was seen as probably temporary in nature.

The presentation also looked on the life within the workhouse. Uniforms were worn, and strict rules imposed. The residents worked when able, but were comparatively well-fed, and the occupancy levels of rooms were not excessive by the standards of the day. Joe finished the presentation with some excellent case-studies of individual people who had used the workhouse on more than one occasion, enabling comparisons to be made of changes to their material wealth between visits.

The question session at the end of the seminar included discussion of the movability of large furniture and the possible impact of this on the storage inventories, the dangers of viewing the issue of uniform and workhouse rules with 'modern eyes', and the links between workhouse admission and the lack of local kinship. There was also some lively banter between two distinguished poor-law historians on the benefit, or otherwise, of 'pinko' interpretations of poor law administration!

Nicola Whyte (University of Exeter), 'The place of the dead in the early modern landscape'.

13 February 2014

Dr Whyte is currently researching the relationship between landscape, place memory and identity, and in this paper concentrated specifically on the presence of the dead in the landscape.

Her introduction included reference to place names including 'gallows' and 'gibbets', along with examples where specific names of the dead have been incorporated into places. These, together with the burial-places of suicide victims, are frequently to be found at crossroads and on the boundaries of settlements in early modern times; she showed an example of an early manorial map at Causton Common in Norfolk, showing 'Deadman's Grave' on the edge of the manor. Dr Whyte is investigating the role that specific incidents may have played in collective memory and local identity. She stressed that the people of the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries were as concerned with old sites as they were with more recent incidents, and that with stories of the past it was probably not important whether the stories were considered fact or fable. These locations, particularly of the 'deviant dead' were used to integrate the landscape into jurisdictional boundaries and customary practices, and she argued that there was a strong association between the dead and the organisation of the physical landscape. Local collective memory would be reinforced during, for example, Rogationtide perambulations.

She then went on to give a number of case studies, showing the perceived importance of specific burial places. At Llanuwchllyn, Merioneth, for example, a riot in 1609 led to the forcible exhumation of two bodies belonging to an impoverished land-owning family from a grave inside the church, the bodies being taken to an 'unknown location', and then being replaced by another body, to the disruption of services. A court case, from Wigan, in 1683 hinged on the importance of knowing who was buried where in the church, with two families claiming a particular grave as belonging to their family, which impacted on the pattern of pews within the church.

Her paper then examined cross-parish removals of bodies. In a case at Swatham Prior, in 1519, the

route that the body of Mistress Jane was taken to burial provided evidence relating to the parish boundary. In another case, when a body was to be moved from Rackheath to Little Plumstead in Norfolk, the latter parish refused to accept the corpse unless it was taken to the 'correct' boundary. Dr Whyte argued that boundaries can be seen as both inclusionary (i.e. receiving bodies back into the parish from which they originated) and exclusionary (as in the burial of suicides).

Questions at the end of the paper covered the logistics of transferring bodies across parish boundaries, the use of existing graves to create boundaries in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and, linked with those who might desire anonymity, the modern concept of physically inscribing names onto the landscape, as in memorial benches, etc.

Mark Smith ((University of Oxford), 'The four journeys of Joseph Stanley, a Manchester man'. 21 November 2013.

Maureen Jurkowski (The National Archives), 'Books and Reading in Coventry's Lollard Community, 1381-1522'. 27 February 2014.

Bill Sheils (University of York), 'Religious diversity in the local community, 1500-1700'. 13 March 2014.

The Editor apologises for the lack of a report of these three seminars. Volunteers for writing reports of seminars and other events are needed!

Centre publications 2012-13

Staff

Peter King
(Professor of English Local History)

Articles in journals

"Left to the Mercy of the Mob"; Ducking, Popular Justice and the Magistrates in Britain 1750-1890.' (with David Churchill) in A. Delivre and E. Berger (eds) *Popular Justice in Europe 18th and 19th Centuries* (Bologna, 2014)

'Black People and the Criminal Justice System: Prejudice and Practice in Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth-Century London' (with John Carter Wood) *Historical Research* (forthcoming and already available for reading online under 'Early view' - Publication most likely in November 2014 edition.)

'Rethinking the Bloody Code in Eighteenth-Century Britain: Capital Punishment at the Centre and on the Periphery' (with Richard Ward joint-author) has been accepted by *Past and Present*.

Keith Snell
(Professor of Rural and Cultural History)

Co-edited journal

Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture, 24:2 (October, 2013), 123 pp.

Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture, 24:2 (April, 2014), 132 pp.

Articles in journals

'The Sunday-School Movement in England and Wales: Child Labour, Denominational Control and Working Class Culture', re-published by *Past and Present* as a free access article in a collection to commemorate the anniversary of E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*. <http://past.oxfordjournals.org/content/164/1/122.citation>

Books

Spirits of Community: English Senses of Belonging and Loss, 1750-2000 has just been submitted to Cambridge University Press.

Andrew Hopper
(Senior Lecturer in English Local History)

Books

Turncoats and Renegadoes: Changing Sides in the English Civil Wars (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). Published in paperback, May 2014.

Articles in edited volume

'The Armies', in Michael Braddick (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the English Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

'John Secker (1716-1795) mariner and navigator', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

Articles in journals

'The reluctant regicide? Thomas Wayte and the civil wars in Rutland', *Midland History*, 39:1 (2014), pp. 36-52.

'Pamphlets and propaganda: parliament versus the king in the 1640s', *West Midlands History*, 1:3 (2013), pp. 15-17

Richard Jones
(Senior Lecturer in Landscape History)

Articles in edited volumes

'Manure and Fertilizers', *The Archaeology of Food: an Encyclopaedia* (Alta Mira Press, 2014).

Christopher Dyer
(Emeritus Professor of Regional and Local History)

Articles in edited volumes

(with M. Tompkins and M. Yates) 'Documents and the town: place and people in medieval Wallingford's court rolls', in N. Christie and O. Creighton (eds.) *Transforming Townscapes* (Oxford, 2013), 294-300.

'Conclusions', in F. Aparisi and V. Royo (eds.), *Beyond Lords and Peasants. Rural Elites and Economic Differentiation in Pre-Modern Europe* (Valencia, 2014), 247-56.

Articles in journals

'Joan Thirsk', *Guardian* obituary, 19 Oct. 2013

'Mick Aston and his contribution to settlement studies', *Medieval Settlement Research*, 28 (2013), 65-7

'L'industrie rurale en Angleterre des années 1200 a 1550: géographie, sociologie et organisation de la production et des marchés', in J.-M. Minovez, C. Verna and L. Hilaire-Perez (eds.), *Les Industries Rurales dans l'Europe Médiévale et Moderne* (Toulouse : Journées d'Histoire de Flaran, 33, 2013), 43-61.

'Living in peasant houses in late medieval England', *Vernacular Architecture*, 44 (2013), 19-27.

'Richard Britnell', *Guardian* obituary, 13 Feb. 2014

'A landscape for pleasure: Fullbrook, Warwickshire, and John, duke of Bedford in the fifteenth century', *Warwickshire History*, 15, no. 6 (Winter 2013-14), 239-50.

'Medieval settlement at Goldicote: Documentary evidence', pp. 74-7, in P. Thompson and S.C. Palmer, 'Iron-Age, Romano-British and medieval settlements excavated on the Transco Newbold Pacey to Honeybourne gas pipeline', *Transactions of the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society*, 116 (2012), 1-139

'Jacques Le Goff', *Guardian* obituary, 30 April 2014

Obituary. Mick Aston, *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 131 (2013), 318-19.

'The material world of English peasants, 1200-1540: archaeological perspectives on rural economy and welfare', *Agricultural History Review*, 62 (2014), 1-22.

Book reviews

J. Aberth, *An Environmental History of the Middle Ages*, in *Agricultural History Review*, 61 (2013), 169-70

S. Raban (ed.), *Accounts of Godfrey of Crowland, Abbot of Peterborough, 1299-1321*, in *Agricultural History Review*, 61 (2013), 171-2

H. Kitsikopoulos (ed.), *Agrarian Change and Crisis in Europe*, in *English Historical Review* 128 (2013), 1201-2

T. Williamson, *Environment, Society and Landscape in Early Medieval England*, in *Rural History*, 24 (2013), 223-4.

M. Aston, *Winscombe: Contrasting Communities in the Somerset Landscape*, in *Medieval Settlement Research*, 28 (2013), 102-3.

Victoria County History of Oxfordshire, vol. 17, in *Oxoniensia*, 78 (2013), 233-4

A. Rogers, *William Browne (1410-1489) and Stamford in the Fifteenth Century*, in *Midland History*, 39 (2014), 146-7.

Honorary Visiting Fellows

Mark Page

Books

Victoria County History of Northamptonshire, VII, Corby and Great Oakley (Woodbridge, 2013) (with Matthew Bristow and Cynthia Brown).

The Hampshire Tax List of 1327 (Hampshire Record Series 20, 2014) (with Patrick Mitchell-Fox).

Articles in journals

‘Manor Courts and the Retirement of Customary Tenants on the Bishop of Winchester’s Estate before the Black Death’, *Southern History*, 35 (2013), pp. 23-43.

Book Reviews

Bridget Wells-Furby, *The Berkeley Estate 1281-1417: Its Economy and Development* (Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, 2012), in *Southern History*, 35 (2013), pp. 134-6.

The Register of John de Stratford, Bishop of Winchester, 1323-1333, ed. Roy Martin Haines (Surrey Record Society, 42 & 43, 2010-11), in

Surrey Archaeological Collections, 97 (2013), pp. 241-2.

Medieval Property Transactions in Rutland: Abstracts of Feet of Fines 1197-1509, ed. Bridget Wells-Furby (Rutland Local History & Record Society, Occasional Publications 10, 2013), in *Midland History*, 39.1 (2014), p. 144.

Sylvia Pinches

Edited journal

Newsletter of the Friends of English Local History (2013), 48 pp.

Articles in edited volumes

‘An Imperial Visitor to Leamington Spa in 1838’, in *Unreliable Evidence*, exhibition catalogue, Mead Gallery, University of Warwick, 2014, p. 9.

Kate Tiller

Books

Parsonages: their history and architecture (Shire Books, forthcoming)

Articles in edited volumes

‘Dorchester Abbey’, in D. Dyas (ed.), *English Cathedrals and Monasteries Through the Centuries* (Interactive DVD-ROM, Centre for Christianity and Culture, University of York, 2013)

‘A Local Historian Apprenticeship’, in B. Beatty and C. Kammen (eds), *Zen and the Art of Local History* (AASLH and Alta Mira Press, USA 2014)

Articles in journals

‘Local History and the First World War’, in *Past and Future*, 15 (Institute of Historical research, Spring/Summer 2014)

Book Reviews

Victoria County History of Wiltshire, Vol. XVIII, Cricklade and Environs, ed. V. Bainbridge (Institute of Historical Research, 2011), in *Archives* (2012, published 2013)

S. Wittering, *Ecology and Enclosure. The effect of enclosure on society, farming and environment in south Cambridgeshire, 1798-1850* (Windgather Press, 2013), in *International Journal of Local and Regional History* (2014)

Papers presented at seminars, conferences etc.

Staff

Peter King

Media appearances include on TV - Time Team 'Lincoln Castle' 2014 and 'Secrets from the Clink' August 2014; Radio programmes on Radio 4 Stories from the Old Bailey August and early September 2014.

Keith Snell

Keynote lecture: 'Thomas Hardy and community: from the village 'quire' to Jude's obscurity', to Conference on 'Uneasy Neighbours? Rural-Urban Relationships in the Nineteenth Century', University of Southampton, 20 Sept. 2013.

'Loneliness in history: exploring 'solitaries' or 'singletons'', 50th Anniversary Conference of the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, Cambridge Sept. 2014.

Richard Jones

'Place-names and the local historian', University of Nottingham Local History Seminar, 12 October 2013

'Landscape history and the unmaking of the English landscape', The Friends of Rutland County Museum and Oakham Castle, and The Rutland Local History and Record Society, 20 Nov. 2013

'The battle of Charnwood Forest: how public protest moved the M1 motorway', Spotlight on the Centre, 15 February 2014

'History, conservation and planning for the future', Langham Village History Group and Neighbourhood Plan Group, 21 May 2014.

Andrew Hopper

'"The great blow": riot and urban governance in civil war Norwich', Godly Governance, International Conference, University of York, 27-28 June 2014

'The Career of Adam Eyre', The Early Modern Career Conference, University of Birmingham, 2 May 2014

'Turncoats and Treachery in the Civil Wars', Hinchingsbrooke School, 30 April 2014

'The Reluctant Regicide: Thomas Wayte and the Civil Wars in Rutland', Beaumanor History Fair, 23 March 2014, and Spotlight on the Centre Day, University of Leicester, 15 February 2014

'Rethinking the Experiences of Civil War Armies', The Seventeenth-Century Military experience Conference, University of Worcester, 30 October 2013

'Changing Perceptions of Cromwell in the Classroom', United Learning's Teaching and Learning Conference, London, 4 October 2013

Chris Dyer

'John Heritage, a wool merchant and his world 1495-1520', Friends of the Worcestershire Archives, The Hive, Worcester, October 2013

'Burmington in the middle ages'. Day School of the Burmington History Weekend, October 2013

'Industry in the countryside', the Marc Fitch lecture, for the Victoria County History for Northamptonshire, at the Cube, Corby, October 2013

'Diets of the poor in late medieval England', Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Ohio State University, November 2013

'Filth and the Common Good', conference on the medieval urban environment, Rewley House, Oxford, February 2014

'Late medieval methods of poor relief'. Voluntary History seminar, Institute of Historical Research, London, March 2014

'Recent work on village origins', Surrey Archaeological Society, Woking, March 2014

'What have medieval peasants done for us?' Stoke on Trent Archaeological Society, Stoke Museum, March 2014

‘The urbanization and de-urbanization of industrial production in England, 900-1500’, L’Archeologia della produzione a Roma secoli V-XV, Rome, March 2014

‘Did the Black Death cause a housing boom?’, St Albans Archaeological Society, April 2014

‘Merchants and peasants, 1200-1550’, dayschool on medieval merchants, Rewley House, Oxford, May 2014

‘Tithes as evidence for medieval diet’, Diet Group, Oxford, May 2014

‘A town in its country: Alcester in the fifteenth century’, Town and country, people and consumers’, University of Reading, May 2014

‘Who made the medieval English landscape?’, Hoskins lecture, Friends of the Centre for English Local History, University of Leicester, June 2014

‘Why open fields? The social history of medieval field systems’, CORN symposium on open fields, Ghent, June 2014

‘Who made the medieval English landscape?’ Fellows’ lecture, Institute of Historical Research, London, July 2014.

‘Using borough court rolls to define hinterlands’, Workshop on medieval borough court records, University of Nottingham, July 2014

Honorary Visiting Fellows

Mark Page

‘Settlement, Landscape and People in Chalgrove, Oxfordshire’, Oct 2013 to Chalgrove Local History Group.

Sylvia Pinches

‘From Doles to donations: the development of charities and their role in Anglesey life’, keynote lecture, Anglesey Antiquarian Society Day School ‘The Rich and the Poor: Charity in Anglesey’, Beaumaris, 8th February 2014

Kate Tiller

‘Remembrance and Community: war memorials and local history’, at Wessex Centre for History and Archaeology Research Seminar, University of Winchester; version of this paper also presented to Historical Association, Oxford branch

‘Locating war memorials’, at Anglo-American Conference of Historians, Institute of Historical Research

‘Home Front Studies: a shared Anglo-American agenda?’ at the same conference

‘Places of Remembrance: war memorials in their setting’, Oxfordshire Gardens Trust

‘War memorials in church buildings: a hidden heritage’, at Conservation and Commemoration conference of SPAB, Church Care and War Memorials Trust, London

‘Doing Local History’, at Young Historians Training Day for ‘Capturing Histories of Our Elders in East Oxford’ project, Faculty of History, Oxford

BBC Radio 4 Open Country; contribution on the history of Wychwood Forest landscapes, broadcast 30 January 2014

‘Down and Vale: an historical introduction to White Horse Country’, at British Agricultural History Society spring conference, 2014

‘Chapel and Community: Methodism in Oxfordshire’, Twentieth Anniversary lecture of Iffley Historical Society; also presented to Oxfordshire Family History Society



‘Old friends are best. King James used to call for his old shoes; they were easiest for his feet.’

John Selden (1584 – 1654)

Prizes, Awards and Grants

The late Harold Fox's book, *Dartmoor's Alluring Uplands: Transhumance and Pastoral Management in the Middle Ages*, published in 2012 by Exeter University Press, has been given the annual award by the Devon History Society for the best book about Devon published last year. It has been receiving approving reviews in Devon publications and in national journals.

John Nichols Prize

John Nichols Prize 2013 was won by Ann Stones for her dissertation, 'Estate mentalities: Changing sense of a place on a Leicester Council Estate 1947-2012'.

The John Nichols Prize is awarded annually. The value of the prize is £100. The rules are:

Essays must be submitted on or before 31 December. They must be typewritten, on one side of the paper only, with double spacing for the text, and single or double spacing for the footnotes. They must not exceed 20000 words in length, excluding footnotes. References should be given at the foot of the page, and preferably in the forms adopted as standard in the publications of the Centre. Communications should be addressed to John Nichols Prize, Centre for English Local History, University of Leicester, Marc Fitch Historical Institute, 5, Salisbury Road, Leicester, LE1 7QR. A stamped, addressed envelope should accompany the typescript.

Readers currently on the MA course or who have just finished their dissertations should note that unrevised dissertations may be submitted provided that they have achieved a distinction.

McKinley Prize for the best Dissertation

Jay Emery was awarded the McKinley Prize for Best Dissertation ('"The future beckons bright": senses of place and placelessness in the Newark and Sherwood coalfield c. 1960s to present'). He was also awarded the Spufford Prize for Best Overall Performance.

Grants

Dr Richard Jones

Dr Andrew Hopper has received £950 from the Aurelius Trust towards the publication in Oct 2014 of A. Hopper and P. Major (eds), *England's Fortress: New Perspectives on Thomas, 3rd Lord Fairfax* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

The AHRC award mentioned in the last *Newsletter* has been taken up by Stewart Beale to research the experience of war widows and orphans in midland England during the mid-seventeenth century.



Devon Field Course April 2014

A mix of part-time and full-time students made the trip to Exeter in a minibus ably driven by Richard. After stopping for an excellent lunch at Bredon near Tewksbury we arrived in the late afternoon and met up with two of our colleagues who had travelled down separately by train. The cherry trees on campus were in full bloom and those of us who had not visited the university before found it a very impressive place. Likewise the standard of accommodation in the hall of residence was excellent. Food was plentiful, although some of the combinations of dishes were a little quirky and there were some 'interesting' vegetarian inventions. However any nutritional deficiencies were quickly remedied by the various lunch stops made during the week and the evenings spent in local pubs sampling real ale.

Any report would be incomplete without a mention of the weather. After the first two days it was suggested that a grey square would be a fitting description of the conditions but we battled gamely against the rain on the Sunday and Monday even managing to time our visit to the fish and chip restaurant at Appledore just at the point of another downpour. The recent storm damage suffered in the region was evident,

particularly at Torcross, although some of the older properties facing the sea appeared to have fared better than the more modern ones. Later in the week we all became train spotters as we watched the trains running along the newly-restored track at Dawlish. However Dawlish will always be remembered as the scene of the great ice cream mugging when one of our party had her newly-purchased ice cream attacked and demolished by a giant seagull!

This was the first visit to Devon for some of us and the trip provided a wonderful opportunity to put into practice some of the skills we had gained from the Medieval Landscape module. Going beyond the typical tourist trail and seeing the Devon of W.G. Hoskins and Harold Fox was amazing whether it was scrambling down muddy paths to find the old well at Stoke, the village that is not a village, or trying (and retrying in some cases) to find the path to the hidden chapel at Lidwell. A tourist heading for the coast would be unlikely to encounter any of this.

It was fascinating to discover the rich history of Dartmoor and to learn that it has not always been as isolated it appears today. For instance the deserted settlement at Hound Tor showed that there had been farming at a higher level than that carried out today. Then there was the industrial history of Dartmoor which proved to be a subject in itself - from the granite quarry at Haytor, financed by capital from Madras and sending granite along the specially constructed Estover canal and tramway to the coast to the slightly later stone quarrying at Merrivale, identifiable by its distinctive 'clitter' debris. Particularly interesting were the way-marking stones dotted across the moor. We spent some time figuring out what the letters on the stones signified before realising that they marked the way for eighteenth-century travellers between Tavistock and Ashburton. However, the most dramatic incident of the trip occurred on Dartmoor when we experienced our own 'Picnic at Hanging Rock' moment. Having left one of our group sitting on a rock in the sunshine

admiring the view we returned to find no sign of her. After much shouting and double and triple checking inside the minibus (although why she would be inside a locked minibus remains a mystery), she was eventually spotted in the distance having gone to sit down somewhere else, unaware of the mayhem going on around her!

One of the most impressive locations we visited has to have been Brent Tor with the amazing St Michael's Church perched on top of the Tor.



Indeed Devon churches proved a constant source of surprise mainly because of their large number of surviving rood-screens. We discovered that unlike the Midlands, you have a good chance of finding an original rood-screen in almost any village church in Devon. Best of all was the fragment of oak sculpture from the screen at St Andrew's church at Cullompton. Called the Golgotha it used to stand on the top of the rood-screen. Now the skulls stare out at you and, more than anything else, transport you straight back to the way people worshipped before the Reformation and how they lived with and were confronted by death at almost every turn.

The towns and villages in Devon also provided lots of hidden surprises. At first glance Bideford does not appear to be particularly interesting being full of the usual mix of high-street shops and offices but once you look beyond the modern shop fronts and the main streets, a commercial history of the cod and tobacco trade is revealed in the alley ways and eighteenth-century warehousing at the backs of the houses.

Similarly, Appledore hides its narrow cobbled streets of colourful fishermen's houses tucked away behind the main street. Meanwhile, the village of Lustleigh left us with lots of puzzling questions. What, for example, were we to make of the orchard with its strange May Queen throne and granite stone inscribed with all the names of the May Queens since the 1950s?

Elsewhere there were plenty of smart towns like Totnes, Tavistock and Tiverton, the last two displaying the paternal attitudes of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century landowners who built model housing estates for their workers. Tiverton's nineteenth-century wrought-iron pannier market was intriguing primarily because the term 'pannier market' was unfamiliar to many of us yet seemingly much used in Devon. But what was the circular pattern on its floor? What was it used to measure? Best of all though were the sixteenth-century alms houses at Tiverton and the fantastic stone carvings of ships and waves at the Greenway chapel at St. Peter's Church which provided stunning examples of how wealthy people at that time chose to spend their money and how they wanted to be remembered by posterity. Finally there was Topsham with its marvellous late seventeenth-century street of Flemish-style merchant housing built with Dutch bricks brought back in ships as ballast.

Some places were a lot smaller than some of us had initially imagined. Widecombe-in-the-Moor was really quite tiny despite its claim to fame. However it provided a memorable opportunity for us all to sit outside a cafe and have lunch together. What the waitress made of our lively group isn't recorded - maybe she thought that we were a large family party, albeit a strange one in which everyone paid for their own food. Yet the mix of the young and the not so young and the differing opinions and thoughts that go with that particular combination of people sometimes made it seem like being part of a large family group. All in all this was a fascinating trip which I don't think any of us would have missed. Above all we learned a lot and took away lots of questions to think about which is surely what the best field trips are all about.

Pam Hargreaves and Jane Evans



Recently completed theses

Bertie Dockerill PhD

‘Local Government Reform, Urban Expansion and Identity: Nottingham and Derby, 1945-1968’

This study examines changes in the governance of Nottingham and Derby in the period 1945-1968 from a local and national perspective. In so doing it foreshadows the changes wrought by the Local Government Act 1972, which usually receives greater academic attention. Post-war, local authorities became the nation’s principal landlords, while utilities, such as electricity and gas, were nationalised. In fulfilling their new responsibilities, urban authorities were forced to build estates on the periphery of, or outside, their boundaries. The relocation of residents resulted in an exportation of urban identity and greater urban-ness, but was not accompanied by a corresponding redrawing of administrative boundaries.

Nevertheless, when urban authorities sought boundary extensions they were fiercely contested by county authorities, local associations, and residents’ groups. Such associations and groups claimed to possess characteristics distinct from the authorities that wished to incorporate them. There was also a fear that democratic accountability would be lost in the creation of larger units of governance. The local feelings aroused by boundary extension proposals demonstrate that local government is more than merely an agent of central government. It is a living organism: changes to it affect not only services, but also the identity of that place.

The expansion proposals of the county boroughs of Nottingham and Derby differed markedly. Uniquely amongst county boroughs nationwide, Nottingham sought no expansion under the review initiated by the Local Government Act 1958. The thesis assesses the political motivations behind this and the wider reactions to reconfiguration proposals for both county boroughs. The role of conurbations is considered in terms of local governance, including the extent to which Nottingham and Derby could be classified as one. The thesis concludes that the maintenance of existing party political strengths outweighed local sentiment, and that only those proposals for reform which benefited the former were enacted.

Susan Kilby PhD

‘Encountering the Environment: Rural Communities in England, 1086-1348’

Our current understanding of the medieval local environment is largely based on scholarly writings focusing on the policies towards the landscape pursued by the social elite. This presents us with some obvious problems if we want to understand local places through the eyes of the lower orders. But that is exactly what this study aims to do. By re-examining a variety of sources this research seeks to reconstruct the physical—and in some respects, metaphorical—environment of three contrasting English villages, using this as the basis for determining how peasants perceived their natural surroundings, and how this led to the development of the local economic strategies and social structures that can be pieced together from the records of the medieval manor. Since the emphasis here is largely on attitudes toward local environment, the intellectual approach moves beyond more traditional English historical spheres regarding the peasantry to consider mentalities. This has rarely been a consideration for historians concerned with English medieval peasants. Indeed, one might ask just how we can hope to uncover the thoughts of those who left little documentary evidence behind? Reconsidering the records that survive, it is clear that peasants left a great quantity of material waiting to be uncovered. Hidden within seigneurial documents can be found direct peasant testimony, notably their personal names, and those they bestowed upon the landscape. Through these documents—alongside the physical environment—we find further signposts indicating how they felt, thought about, and commemorated their local landscape. This study reveals that some peasants used the landscape to set themselves apart from their neighbours. It shows that, although uneducated in the formal sense, some nevertheless had a strong grasp of contemporary scientific thought. It outlines the means through which locally important folk stories were embedded within the landscape itself. And it sees beyond the officially endorsed local village landscape, with its authorized roads and footpaths, to reclaim the real environment inhabited and traversed by English people over 700 years ago.

Geoffrey Hooker PhD

‘Llandilofawr Poor Law Union 1836–1886: ’The most difficult union in Wales’

This study approaches the workings of Poor Law unions in a new way, using journals, diaries and official records to reveal what happened from 1836 onwards when twelve hitherto independent parishes in Carmarthenshire had to combine management of pauper welfare under New Poor Law arrangements. Llandilofawr union’s elected guardians are central to this account: they provided benign administration under which paupers’ treatment was similar to that received under the Old Poor Law. Ninety-five percent of paupers never entered the workhouse, so here it was not the dreaded symbol of oppression which many historians associate with the New Poor Law. Previous studies have suggested that the post of guardian was unpopular, but this was not so in Llandilofawr: farmers sought board seats avidly, the same individuals being elected repeatedly. One key individual was guardian for 47 years, and he, in tandem with the clerk and selected friends, ran the union ‘from below’, while in another departure from the standard model local gentry and aristocrats chose to remain uninvolved. Key to guardians’ approach was the careful deployment of local ‘connections, and the study uncovers the role of a powerful local élite consisting of families with deep local roots. Steeped in the local culture, they applied the letter of the law but never embraced its spirit, so the union did not become an entity with which local people identified. Local peoples’ horizons remained firmly at parish level, and this manifested itself during the appointment process for medical officers when prolonged and bitter inter-parish rivalries were publicly played out, guardians making extraordinary allegations about each other’s morality and drinking habits. This caused the central authorities to intervene whereupon parishes abandoned strife, and closed ranks to keep such outsiders at bay. Thus, control of union affairs remained firmly in local hands. This is a piece of social, cultural, and local history, using the New Poor Law to show how a vibrant community maintained its identity, outwitting central authorities’ attempts to impose a national norm. It is the first time a Welsh example of pauper care has been treated in such depth, and reveals hitherto unknown aspects of

New Poor Law implementation at local level, raising the tantalising prospect that there were similar outcomes in other unions.

Sylvia A. Ray MPhil

‘Anglo-Welsh Border Welfare: Atcham Union and Forden Incorporation 1790 – 1930’

Poor law Workhouses throughout England and Wales provided indoor relief for thousands of the unfortunate poor. These institutions and their controlling boards were central to local provision of relief. Much has been written on poor law unions, but there is a paucity of published works relating to a comparative study of Marcher border unions of Montgomeryshire and Shropshire. No previous comparative study of Atcham and Forden unions has been undertaken. This thesis examines these two poor law institutions, Atcham in Shropshire and Montgomery and Pool in Montgomeryshire and attempts a comparative analysis of how each administered relief to their parish poor.

It considers what factors united or separated these two poor law unions in their general operations. It argues that there were significant differences in their attitude, competence and ability in their administrative application, as well as an unwillingness by one union to embrace the requirements of the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act. It reveals that there were underpinning reasons for such differences, from the building of their respective workhouses, their fiscal policy, the arrangements for putting the poor to work, to the day to day management of the relief of the pauper classes in its various forms.

Analysis of guardians’ minute books, poor law correspondence and reports reveals the differences in poor law policy adopted in these two poor unions. While one union was successful due to its effective style of management and application of discipline, the other had a less effective command of its operation, mainly due to the restrictions of its local Act. This was the key influence in the different pattern of the management of both indoor and outdoor relief which affected the operation at Montgomery and Pool. This was in total contrast to the managerial application at Atcham.

M A Dissertations 2012-13

Jennifer Gardiner

‘A Canal in Context: The Development and Impact of the Cromford Canal 1788 – 1852’

The Cromford Canal received its Act of Parliament in 1789 and opened in 1794. From a junction with the Erewash Canal on the Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire border, at Langley Mill, it extended to Cromford in the heart of the Derwent Valley, bringing about a revolution in the way that bulk goods could be transported in the locality and beyond.

This study recognizes the valuable work of historians in assessing the significance of the development of the national canal network and in exploring specific themes such as canal engineering or the lives of boat people, but proposes that a more neglected area of research is the extent to which a canal impacted on the locality. Therefore it seeks to address the effect of the Cromford Canal on the communities along its route through an evaluation of the economic, social and landscape impact of the navigation. Using census data, minutes and accounts of the canal company, navigation certificates and contemporary letters and maps, the study explores changes and developments brought about by the canal. It shows how the canal created physical connections or separations in the landscape and also shaped the invisible connections of innovation, community and influence, producing long term changes in occupational structures, local perspectives of the landscape and the economic base of communities.

In showing the type and extent of the impact of a single canal, the study aims to contribute some greater understanding of the criteria to be applied in assessing the effects of a civil engineering project, whether historical or modern.

Awarded in 2013 and omitted from the *Newsletter* by mistake.

M A Dissertations 2013-14

Emily Wilbur Alley

‘A humble petition: Lancashire war widows 1642-1679’

This paper addresses the Lancashire war widows of the English Civil Wars, Interregnum and Restoration. Three main questions are addressed: First, who were the war widows of Lancashire? Second, what were local, county and national attitudes regarding military dependents? And finally, how did military widowhood impact the lives of mid-seventeenth century Lancastrian women? The unprecedented laws passed by Parliament in 1642 and continued by the Crown until 1679 promised relief to poor widows and orphans; but the unequal implementation of this program suggests relief was not provided because widows merited it for their sacrifices to the state but instead suggests widows were puppets in an incentive program to enlist soldiers and later as a means of social control amidst financial disruptions in the provinces. These attitudes were mirrored in county and local administrations where support was rare and often insufficient. Poverty and persecution from neighbours and family were common among these young mothers who found themselves labelled among the indigent instead of ‘deserving’ poor. However, like other war widows around the country, Lancashire war widows were not just passive recipients of government charity. They adopted petitioning tactics and were persistent and politic in their requests while staying within the confines of socially accepted feminine behaviour. Using primarily quarter sessions and state petitions, this paper is contrasted heavily with the works of historians Geoffrey Hudson (1994) and David Appleby (2001), who have studied similar petitions from other English counties, affording both a local and national perspective on the seventeenth-century war widow experience.

Jay Emery

“‘The future beckons bright’”: senses of place and placelessness in the Newark and Sherwood coalfield c. 1960s to present’

‘Mining communities’ have held a special place in academic literature across a range of

disciplines. However, a 'spatial turn' in the humanities has clear implications for how these places and people have previously been theorised. This synchronic study employs an interdisciplinary approach, both theoretically and methodologically, to interpret how notions of space and place were constructed within five Nottinghamshire mining localities from the 1960s to present. It is interpreted from analysis of a multifarious sourcebase that representations of space within a spatially bounded landscape, the central positioning within national politico-economic processes and the effective syncretism of outside culture resulted in a national-local future-oriented perception of community. It follows that these communities were significantly impacted by the 'critical junctures' of the Miners' Strike of 1984 and the closure of the collieries to which they owed their existence. The split in support of the Miners' Strike instigated internal fissures within the previously solidaristic social relations fundamentally devaluing collective senses of place and representations of space. These altering perceptions of place were compounded by the deindustrialisation of the coalfield and have severely undermined abilities to produce a unified and collective discourse to insulate against changing socio-spatial realities at the local level. This study contributes to the existing literature of 'local' communities by examining the experience of the largely neglected twentieth-century Nottinghamshire coalfield.

John Fagg

'Occupation, Migration and the Elderly: Aspects of Life in Three Worcestershire Parishes, 1871-1901'

Using the census enumerators' books, parish registers and the ability of software to trace individuals across decades, this study investigates three facets of change in Bishampton, Naunton Beauchamp and Peopleton. The three parishes lie on the edge of the Vale of Evesham, and were used for arable rotations prior to the Great Depression in agriculture. Each formed an occupational community heavily based on one sector of the economy - farming - a dependence that increased with the decline of the gloving industry after 1871. One parish (Peopleton) diversified into fruit growing, and the others took on more stock, but outmigration became an

important facet of village life. Some men searched for opportunities in other rural parishes nearby, but these losses were partially offset by in-migrants. The principal conduit of regional change was therefore long-distance migration to urban areas, particularly to Birmingham and the industrial towns of Staffordshire. Here men took on jobs related to skills acquired on the farm, many working with horses. Women also migrated, most moving short distances to take up jobs as general servants with local farmers or trades people. Those who aspired to posts as cooks or ladies' maids were usually found in Worcester, Birmingham or even London. The elderly were also facing financial pressures from overseers keen to cut payments under the Poor Law. But elderly people in their sixties and seventies continued to act as carers rather than be cared for. Many provided a home for their unmarried children, especially males, and often took in their grandchildren, nieces and nephews too. As these dependents became adults the nature of the relationship no doubt changed but, while single people - the majority being males - assumed a supportive role, married children were notable by their absence (both before and after reductions in Poor Law expenditure).

Nicholas Harold Gibson

'Comparing poor relief in the Parishes of Wallsend and Longbenton 1750 - 1850'

The aim of this dissertation is to highlight a number of issues relating to regional perspectives of Poor Law scholarship. The North-East has been relatively neglected, despite having valuable source material covering both the Old Poor Law and New Poor Law. Therefore, through a case study approach unsubstantiated claims will be banished regarding the North-East; claims which have plagued the historiography of the Poor Law for some one hundred years. By having a deeper understanding of the area, as well as the statistical details of poor relief, one would be able to finally analyse the North-East in some detail. Although a micro-history approach has been taken here, it is by no means entirely representative of the North-East as a whole. Rather, it should serve as a catalyst for further research into this area and begin to be used as a comparative to other parishes in England and Wales. Some areas which will be explored are: monetary relief, relief in kind and the effects of industrialisation on the

local economy, thus changes to work opportunities and accommodation.

Robert Mee

‘Leaden Heels, but Iron Hands’: Prosecution Associations in Derbyshire, 1703 to 2013’

Associations for the prosecution of felons were widespread during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; collectives of mainly ‘middling sorts’ who helped track down and prosecute certain offenders. This system effectively provided an insurance-based approach to the high expenses involved in private prosecutions. Crime historians mention prosecution associations as a form of ‘self-help’ in the days before the modern police force, but there has been little systematic investigation of them.

This paper extends the scope of the few studies which have previously been made, principally by David Philips and Peter King. It uses Derbyshire as a single-county case study, to examine the growth and spread of associations from the start of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century, showing that practically every parish in county was covered by at least one association. It examines their day-to-day business, including the nature of rewards offered, their advertising tactics, their membership and proactive work. It has generally been assumed that associations ceased to carry out any worthwhile work after the introduction of the modern police service. However, a final chapter examines the period after 1857; in some places, a complex and quasi-judicial role developed for surviving associations, which dealt with petty offences without involving the police or courts. New associations were formed with a significantly different membership base, and the relationship between these groups and the police is examined.

The paper makes greater use of digital technology than earlier studies in this and other counties, and this reveals a much wider coverage by associations, and a greater longevity of these groups than previously thought. Six associations within the historic county still survive, as purely social societies, and access to their privately-held archives has also been utilised throughout.

Diana Musgrave

‘The River Soar and Leicester: A Neglected Relationship’

Rivers have played an important part in shaping England, but even the major ones are not often the subject of serious historical investigation. This study takes the unusual approach of considering a modest river at one location, the Soar at Leicester, exploring continuity and change over a long chronology. A range of archaeological, cartographic and printed sources is drawn on, particularly the Records of the Borough of Leicester. The aim is always to seek out the role of the river, which is often shadowy but can be pieced together from small fragments.

Braudel’s watery metaphor of time is employed, particularly his emphasis on time’s slow-moving depths, the *longue durée*, but also his intermediate level conjunctures and surface ripples of ‘ordinary’ historical events. Three themes are taken for detailed consideration: the changing physical relationship between the town and the river, the role of the river in the religious landscape, and conflict over the river as a resource.

The study concludes that Braudel’s concept of the *longue durée* is valuable in exploring river-history. It shows that the Soar has played an essential part in shaping Leicester and has been shaped by it for a variety of purposes, despite not being navigable until the late eighteenth century; but that the town has gradually ‘turned its back’ on the river, and that historians of Leicester have tended to neglect the Soar’s significance. Comparison with rivers at other towns is inhibited by the lack of similar studies elsewhere, and it is suggested that such investigation would be of value.

William Poulton

‘The Parish of West Langton in the Age of Improvement: A study based on a ‘Book of Accounts and Memorandums’ for 1819-1822 written by William Price – farmer and grazier of West Langton, Leicestershire.’

‘The most revealing source is that which was written with no thought for posterity’. William

Price's 'Book of Accounts and Memorandums' exemplifies this statement by John Tosh. It is a miscellaneous record of farming accounts, weather observations, local law-breaking and national unrest between the years 1819 and 1822. This study uses the events detailed in the diary to shine a light on three years of life in the rural parish of West Langton during the age of improvement. What was the effect of parliamentary enclosure on farming and work in the area? How were social relationships influenced, and how much was parish identity affected, by national movements and the rising power of central government?

Exploring these questions has been like peeking through the keyhole of William Price's parlour door. The room is lit and he is writing at his desk but the rest of the room is out of view. The content of his diary is clear and is by far the most valuable dissertation source but in recreating the wider picture the documents kept at the Leicestershire Record Office have been invaluable. These include the vestry minutes for West Langton and the neighbouring parish of Great Bowden with their churchwardens', constables', and overseers' accounts; the enclosure awards for the two parishes; and the Leicestershire Quarter Sessions records. Using these sources in conjunction with the secondary works of J. Archer, Pete King, J. M. Neeson, Keith Snell, and Tom Williamson in particular, it has been possible to glimpse the room beyond the keyhole image. The picture that emerges is of a traditional parish with its lord of the manor, its middle group of farmers with parochial responsibilities, and the labouring 'poorer sort'. Within this scene harbingers of social change, including rural unrest, judicial inflexibility, and diminishing parish responsibility, can be detected which herald the age of improvement.

Congratulations are due to all the students graduating this year – it has been a bumper crop. Five gained a distinction, and the other two have merits. It might have been a small year-group, but statistically it must have been one of the best!

English Local History leading the way

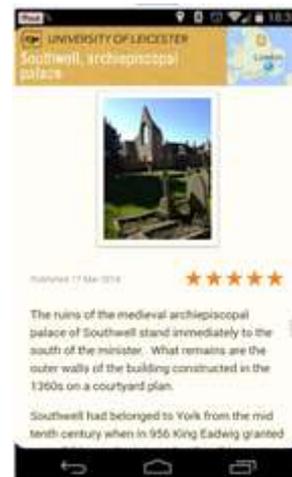
The University is to enter into a partnership with Google's Niantic Labs to develop content for the exciting global mobile app Field Trip - contributing vital information on historical places and events.

Developed by Google's Niantic Labs, Field Trip alerts users about the interesting, hidden and unique things in the world around them, including historical information about city sites, public art, and interesting architecture.

The University project is being led by Dr Richard Jones in the Centre for English Local History with support from Clare Hudson, Business Development Manager for the College of Arts, Humanities, and Law.

Field Trip presents users with exciting new information in the form of a card, which presents images of the location coupled with a description, including interesting information and opportunities. Users can choose what kind of information they receive, from architectural descriptions of buildings, to museum and art venues, to guides to restaurants and other food outlets – and even music gigs.

Field Trip is available as a free download on Android, iOS, and Google Glass.



An uploaded entry to Field Trip

First posted by ap507 at Mar 31, 2014 01:36 PM on www.le.ac.uk

THE FRIENDS

Publications by Friends

Hubertus Drobner

Monograph:

‘Augustinus von Hippo, Predigten zu den alttestamentlichen Propheten (Sermones 42-50). Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung und Anmerkungen (*Patrologia* 29), Frankfurt: Peter Lang Verlag 2013. 615 pp.

Articles:

Zwei plus drei ist nicht gleich drei plus zwei. Die Fehlkalkulationen des Bologna-Prozesses, *Theologie und Glaube*, 103 (2013), pp. 450-458.

‘Daily Life in the Preaching of Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine of Hippo’, *Scrinium*, 9 (2013), pp. 105-119.

T. Gadd

‘Conflict and conciliation in the parish of St George, Gloucestershire, 1750–1850’, *Midland History*, 39 (2014), pp.69-89.

Kenneth Hillier

"Lest We Forget": In Memory of the Fallen in the Great War: North West Leicestershire (Ashby de la Zouch Museum, 2014) 362 pp.

Terry Sheppard

Church Planting in Charnwood Forest (Rothley Heritage Trust, 2013)

Richard Stone,

‘Memorial monuments as a source’, *Local History Magazine*, 145, Mar/Apr 2014.

If you are a Friend and publish a book or an article during the year and would like it listed here, please send the details to the Editor:

Dr Sylvia Pinches
CELH, 5 Salisbury Road, Leicester, LE1 7QR.
Email: smp38@le.ac.uk

Friends' Occasional Papers

Enquiries to: Publications, Friends of ELH, 5 Salisbury Rd., Leicester, LE1 7QR.

Still in print: all at £4.00 inc. p&p.

No. 4, Marion Aldis and Pam Inder, *John Sneyd's Census of Ipstones in 1839*.

No. 7, Geoff Wolfe, *Keeping the Peace: Warwickshire, 1630-1700*.

No. 8, Pam Fisher, *An Object of Ambition? The Office and Role of the Coroner in Two Midland Counties, 1751-1888*.

No. 9, S. Pinches, M. Whalley & D. Postles (eds), *The Market Place and the Place of the Market*.

No. 10, Derryan Paul, *Why so Few? Rebuilding Country Churches in Herefordshire, 1662-1762*.

No. 11, M. Tedd, *Naming in Anstey 1850-1950: a Mirror of Social Structure*, £6 inc. p&p.

Bibliographies

Pam Fisher, Alan Fox, Mike Thompson: ‘English Local History at Leicester: A Bibliography and History, 1999-2008’. Published as a free download from the Friends section of CELH website: <http://www.le.ac.uk/elh/> or as a CD for £2.00. Paper copies on request.

Margery Tranter, Ken Hawker, John Rowley and Mike Thompson (eds), *English Local History: The Leicester Approach. A Departmental Bibliography and History, 1948-1998*. £4.00 inc. p&p

Explorations in Local History Series

Vol. 1 H. Fox, *The Evolution of the Fishing Village: landscape and society along the South Devon coast, 1086-1550*. £7 inc. p&p.

Helping the Friends

The committee works very hard to put on events for the Friends, to raise money to support students, to do a myriad of things to help and promote the Centre for English Local History. This work can only be successful if -supported by the wider membership of the Friends.



Outgoing-chairman Frank Galbraith trapped in the finger stocks in the church at Ashby-de-la-Zouche. Being on the committee is not that bad!

Things that *you* can do to help:

Make sure that your membership is up-to-date.

When did you last come to an event? Could you help at Hoskins' Day or conferences?

Do you live in an interesting area – could you help organise a day visit to your town or district? Could you help organise one of our Study Weekends?

Could you write reports of seminars, conferences or outings for the *Newsletter*? Please send any items of news (publications, awards, obituaries) for consideration for the *Newsletter*.

You do not have to be on the committee to do any of the above. However, a committee always needs new blood. Please do consider joining us.

Calke Abbey Outing, September 2013

Rarely has a group of local historians (or, indeed, of anybody else) had the opportunity on a single day both to behold a miracle and to gaze upon a priceless jewel. On Saturday 7 September 2013, seventeen Friends, friends and partners enjoyed such a privilege in the form of the 'Absolute Miracle' of Calke Abbey (as passionately described by Marilyn, the impressively knowledgeable National Trust volunteer in her welcoming address), and the 'Jewel' of the Great Tower of Ashby-de-la-Zouche castle, as championed by flame-haired Charlotte from English Heritage.

But, first things first. The mountains of biscuits, macaroons, shortbreads and flapjacks begging to be consumed when the group assembled at about 10a.m. in the restaurant at Calke Abbey for coffee provided more than a hint of the culinary delights that were later to follow in the form of lunch. The weather was gorgeous too, super blue skies with wispy clouds and a cooling breeze (although it did tail off somewhat as the day progressed). Marilyn's introduction proceeded methodically and fascinatingly along the Abbey's time-line, from the early-medieval origins and destruction of the original priory, through the construction of a Tudor mansion on its site, the well-considered marriage of a late-seventeenth-century Harpur (the fourth baronet of that ilk) to the dowry-rich Catherine Crewe (hence the ensuing and enduring moniker, Harpur-Crewe), the construction between 1701 and 1704 of the Baroque marvel that stands to this day and its envelopment of the Tudor building that remains within it, and the death of the tenth (and last) baronet in 1924.

Marilyn related how the house was then mothballed with minimal maintenance, no improvement or change, possessions hoarded, successive occupants living like hermits waist deep in clutter, until finally the money ran out. Characteristically, but with a charming naivety, Charles Harpur-Crewe died in 1981 having made no provision for death duties which came in at a cool £8 million, with interest accruing at £1,500 per day. Cue (after much procrastination) the intervention of the National Trust, the enlightened decision of Chancellor Nigel Lawson to stump up £4.5 million of my money and yours, and the rescue of the house and park. Hence, the

‘miracle’: uniquely, the Trust decided not to restore its acquisition to a subjective perception of its former (eighteenth-century) glory, nor even to make things look better than when it took over, but to stabilise Calke as a time capsule, a first-hand record of a great country house and estate in the final stages of terminal decline, as unstately a home as can be imagined. Absolutely miraculous!



Thence to Ashby de la Zouch, by coach via leafy lanes, to view the savage beauty of its castle. Expertly guided by Charlotte, the Friends learned the secrets of the Great Hall (apparently the oldest surviving building in the town), buttery, chapel, inner court and finally the ‘Jewel’ itself: the Great Tower constructed in 1474. During the brief interlude before the coach returned to Calke for lunch, the choice was offered either to remain on level ground, or to go below it and explore the medieval cellar, or to scale the Great Tower. Just three intrepids went upwards, laughing in the face of the ominous warning at the foot of the Tower that ‘The climb to the top of the tower is strenuous and includes 98 steps’. So it was and so it did, but what a view.

Come 2.30pm, with the house, park and gardens now open, back to work and the freedom to wander at will. On entering the Abbey’s Entrance Hall and on the subsequent progress via the Principal Stairs through the magnificent state rooms, the Dining Room, Breakfast Room, Saloon, Drawing Room, and various grand bedrooms (including the one containing the

spectacularly wonderful State Bed with its pristine hangings), all seemed normal (no miracles). But on penetrating further and more deeply into those inner recesses of the house that had been abandoned and ignored for decades prior to the rescue of 1984, the historic decline of Calke was revealed. Peeling wallpaper, grotty furnishings and terminal decay have been meticulously and discreetly stabilised and preserved by the Trust, so that visitors like us from another age, can scratch the surface of understanding the twentieth-century decline of the great country house.



And into the gardens. Those who wished cadged a lift on a buggy. Through a gate and into a walled flower garden which must surely be the nearest thing in England to Heaven on Earth. Planted out in Victorian style, it exuded tranquillity and peace, colour and good order. A kitchen garden, orangery, physic garden, and the remnants of an orchard dating back into the 1770s were sublime. So sorry when the time came to depart.

Very many thanks to the organisers of this rather special trip, and to Phil Batman in particular for negotiating such a deal for the Friends. Very good!

Noel Tornbohm

Annual General 18 November 2013

The quorate meeting accepted the minutes of the previous AGM (8 November 2012). There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report

Since the last AGM (8 November 2012) we can look back on a successful year of activity starting with the Spotlight on the Centre Conference with the theme 'Uses and Abuses of the Landscape' on 17 November which packed the seminar room at No.1 Salisbury Road and was enthusiastically received.

In April this year we had a well-attended visit to the Cotswolds with comfortable accommodation at the Royal Agricultural College (which after our visit became the Royal Agricultural University), which is housed in a splendid reconstruction of a medieval fortified manor house; the food and service were excellent. We enjoyed two very interesting speakers and went on to visit places of interest that ranged from a prehistoric burial mound, to an impressive Roman Villa, excellent examples of Cotswold 'wool' churches and of course a tour of the historic town of Cirencester.

This was followed in July by the customary Hoskins Lecture given by Dr Richard Gaunt of Nottingham University on the subject of 'Patrician Landscapes of Nottinghamshire' – the grand estates of the Dukeries. Here we had one disappointment in that book sales were down - disappointing since these sales make a valuable contribution to supporting our expenditure on bursaries - as does any surplus made on our activities.

As it happens we had fewer applications for bursaries than usual – being asked only for two contributions towards expenses for the Devon field trip.

A visit in September to Ashby de la Zouche castle and church together with Calke Abbey completed our outdoor activities.

Any ideas on how to improve our book sales will be welcome as will any ideas on

either activities or projects to benefit members of the Friends. One idea that has already been mooted is the question of contact with members by e-mail on which there are divided opinions. Members' views on this and other subjects will be sought.

As with any organisation of this size our activities can only come about as a result of a great deal of behind the scenes work by all Committee members and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the whole Committee for their efforts and support over the past year. Also I would like to thank all those members who have been able to support our activities.

Frank Galbraith

Chairman

18 November 2013

Treasurer's Report

See following page.

Appointment of the Independent Examiner: Dr Pam Fisher was appointed.

Election of Officers and Committee

The following were elected to serve for the following year:

Chairman	Frank Galbraith
Secretary	Noel Tornbohm
Treasurer	Ann Schmidt
Programme Secretary	Philip Batman
Membership Secretary	Ann Schmidt
Newsletter Editor	Sylvia Pinches
IT Coordinator	Andrew Wager
Committee Member	Amanda de Belin
Committee Member	Sarah Gilpin
Committee Member	Robert Mee

Pam Hargreaves and Ann Stones became the student representatives and Andy Hopper continues to represent the staff.

ACCOUNTS for year ending 30 Sept. 2013

Receipts and Payments Account for the year to 30th September 2013			
General		2012	
Fund			
Receipts			
Subscriptions	£1,877.00		£2,123.00
Donations	£264.30		£252.00
Book Sales	£291.17		£476.79
Cirencester trip chqs		£5,265.00	
Bewdley Trip	£690.00		£16.50
Publications	£276.00		£83.00
Other events-Calke		£413.00	
Dividends/Interest	£489.64		£309.41
Refund of Gift Aid tax	£480.88		£501.88
Hoskins Day 2013 door & raffle	£70.50		£60.00
Landscape conference fees	£1,040.00		£884.00
Total Receipts	£11,157.49		£4,706.58
Payments			
Student Support	£1,979.50		£3,000.00
Hoskins Lecture	£56.99		£141.09
Newsletter	£363.19		£330.74
Subscription to BALH	£65.00		£58.00
CAF bank charges		£0.50	
Bewdley - SVR	£233.45		£15.00
Printing & Publications	£181.61		£719.11
Stationery & postage	£56.43		£80.37
Loss on sale investments		£98.51	
Events & trips	£5,306.46		£868.71
Total Payments	£8,242.63		£5,312.03
Deficit/surplus of income over expenditure for the year	£2,914.86		-£605.45
Opening Funds at 1st October 2012	£22,019.84		£22,625.29
Excess of expenditure over income	£2,914.86		-£605.45
Closing Funds at 30th September 2013	£24,934.70		£22,019.84
Comprising			
Bank Balances			
CAF Bank - Gold Account	£756.47		£510.77
Natwest Bank	£15,719.28	£3,050.12	DIFF =
NatWest Investment Account	£0.00	£10,000.00	£0.00
£16,475.75		£13,560.89	
Investment Assets at cost			
FP CAF UK Equity Fund B Income	4,278.61		4,278.61
FP CAF Fixed Interest Fund B Income	4,180.34		4,180.34
24,934.70		22,019.84	
Market value of investments			
FP CAF UK Equity Fund B Income	£5,437.17		4,419.94
FP CAF Fixed Interest Fund B Income	£4,161.51		4,232.51
£9,598.68		£8,652.45	

Spotlight on the Centre Conference – 15 February 2014.

A well-attended conference, held in the Attenborough Building due to the ongoing problems of using the rooms at Salisbury Road, was rewarded with an excellent collection of papers from staff and students of the Centre.

In his introduction, **Keith Snell** gave an overview of the types of topic being carried out by the 38 PhD researchers currently within the centre. At present, the emphasis is on the modern era, and the most prevalent subject areas are ‘community history’ and ‘farming history’, with the study of crime also being a growth area. As well as supervising these researchers, the staff are also involved in supervising a further 12 PhDs in other centres and departments.

The first paper was given by **Richard Jones**, who, though an ardent medievalist, looked at ‘The Battle of Charnwood Forest – how Public Protest moved the M1 Motorway’. This might appear an unusual topic for Dr Jones, but the impact of this ‘new line in the landscape’ is still firmly in keeping with his role as a landscape-historian. In fact, Richard explained that the research arose from ‘a speculative and frankly ridiculous funding application to explore the landscape history of Leicester Forest East Service Station that should not have been successful but was’. Anyway, that said, Richard has gone on to examine the nature of a significant, and successful, protest, led by the Ramblers’ Association and the Leicester Evening Mail, in the late 1950s. Whilst not involving the direct action methods of today’s eco-warriors, a 30,000 signature petition handed to ministers in 1958 was an enormous local achievement, and caused the government and council to alter the M1’s planned route through several key sites within Charnwood Forest.

Julie Attard then explained the role of the ‘Charnwood Roots’ project, ‘Making

History together’. As one of the projects of the Leicestershire Victoria County History, which had been revived in 2008 after a break of 44 years, the project, which relies heavily on volunteers from within the community, covers a total of 35 towns and villages north of the city. The project has a number of objectives, including the production of two new volumes, training at least 400 volunteers, and using creative methods to share the results with the public, and so increase public understanding of the value of Charnwood’s history. The work carried out to date has been immensely varied, from detailed archival study in California, to field-walking and oral history on Charnwood’s war.

‘Post execution Punishment and the Criminal Corpse in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain’ was the rather gruesome title of the paper given by **Richard Ward**. The 1752 Murder Act had added dissection and hanging in chains after execution to the list of sentencing options available to the courts in murder trials. Richard explained the aim of introducing more terror by these extreme forms of execution – the prospect of dissection, especially, exploited the concept that the corpse would receive no peaceful burial place. But the practice, introduced primarily because of concerns over crime in London, was not carried out uniformly across the country. For example, a third of those sentenced to death in Norfolk were ordered to hang in chains after the execution, while none were so condemned in Cornwall, where a sentence of dissection might also only result in a symbolic cut after death.

Jane Rowling’s research on ‘Trust and the Local Auction Mart in Twentieth-Century Wharfedale’ is primarily based on oral history, and concerns the cultural aspects of the auction mart between 1914 and 1951. Before the 1870s, livestock had been sold in the street, but these sales were then formalised into weekly markets, which impacted on a much wider area than just the market-town itself. As well as the formal rules, there were complex unwritten standards of behaviour, and the

concept of ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ was fundamental to the running of business. (Jane believes that she is only able to carry out this research today because she is regarded as an ‘insider’, and people will therefore talk to her.) One of the several local rules examined by Jane was the role of ‘luck money’, a small amount given by the vendor to the buyer as a sign that you had nothing to hide. The concept of trust within the mart was pivotal, and whilst insider status was hard to win, it carried significant benefits.

After a lunch provided by the Friends back at Salisbury Road (nothing like a walk across Victoria Park to whet the appetite!), the afternoon session began with **Trixie Gadd** examining ‘Conflict and Conciliation in the Parish of St George, Gloucestershire, 1750 – 1850’. This parish, now part of eastern Bristol, had no clear centre, with the majority of the population being towards its boundaries. Significantly, it contained Kingswood Chase, an area notorious for its ‘lawless miners’, and was classed as ungovernable by outsiders. Trixie examined a protest of 1795 over transport costs on turnpike roads, and food shortages, during which some 600 colliers met and burned an effigy; the militia were assembled in Bath, in case of violence, but a local magistrate, Joseph Small, acted as a mediator between the land-owners and miners. The paper further considered the internal and external perspectives towards the parish; whilst outsiders viewed the colliers entirely negatively, insiders held an opposite view. Trixie also looked at the role of the local prosecution association set up in Kingswood.

Natasha Coveney presented a paper on ‘Moated Sites in Medieval England: a Re-evaluation’. Her research studies the period of increased moat building, excluding castle sites, in the later medieval period. Over 8500 such sites have been identified, around locations as varied as bishops’ palaces and manor houses to simple farms. Their distribution is uneven, though – whilst Norfolk boasts 900 moated sites, there are low densities in the Pennines and Cotswolds, due to the

difficulty in cutting out ditches of this nature. Natasha considered the reason for the digging of moats – whilst the recognised view is that they had a defensive or status purpose, there is also evidence that they were simply used as fishponds. One case she has found is of a poacher in Worcestershire who dug a moat in order to store fish he had stolen from the King’s fishponds!

For the final paper of the day, we returned to a staff member, **Andrew Hopper**, who spoke on ‘The Reluctant Regicide: Thomas Wayte and the Civil Wars in Rutland’. Wayte had been governor of Rutland, and was one of the king’s judges in 1649, a role which, on the restoration in 1660, he testified that he had been forced to take. Andy’s paper examined Thomas Wayte as a military commander, and also considered his defence at his 1660 trial for regicide. Although later reactionary accounts described Wayte as ‘of low-birth’, his father had been a gentleman, and he was aligned with the Earl of Stamford and Thomas Lord Grey of Groby. We learned that during the trial of Charles I, Wayte had been mainly absent from parliament, but his was the 56th signature on the king’s death warrant. In the interregnum he prospered, acquiring former Royalist land, but deserted parliament in 1660 as the idea of a Stuart restoration grew. At his later trial, he claimed that he was forced to sign the death warrant on the final day, having been assured shortly before that the king would not die. Wayte was sentenced to be hanged, drawn and quartered, but since he had surrendered voluntarily, this could not happen without an authorising Act of Parliament, which gave him the opportunity for a further hearing – he was relieved, and imprisoned on Jersey, where he died four years later. Dr Hopper’s conclusion was that Wayte was not a stereotypical commander; he was a young and ambitious man to whom parliament owed much; whilst he might have withdrawn from the king’s trial, he probably signed the death warrant simply because he thought this action was the safest choice for him.

Hoskins' Day 7 June 2014

This year's Hoskins lecture saw a record turnout, which is perhaps not surprising as Professor Chris Dyer was the guest lecturer. Chris's subject was an appropriate one for an occasion where we remember W.G. Hoskins and his work: 'Who made the medieval landscape?'

Chris used recent, and as yet largely unpublished research, to address the question of agency in the formation of the landscape. Was the layout of town, hamlet and field the result of lordly planning? Or did settlements evolve to meet the needs of their less grand inhabitants? Chris characterised the discussion as one of 'top down' development versus 'bottom up'.

In investigating this question, Professor Dyer was intent on following what he described as Hoskins's greatest achievement: the use of the modern landscape as first class historical evidence. Chris made the point that Hoskins himself had a very balanced view of this question, and commended his non-dogmatic willingness to attribute the making of the landscape to many groups. Since Hoskins's time the 'top down' views had gained credibility, however. The ninth and tenth centuries have been seen as periods of wholesale replanning, with the castle then being the 'powerhouse' that moulded the landscape, and elsewhere much credit being given to Cistercian monks. Chris contended that the time had come to give attention to the 'bottom up' view of the forces making the landscape. In doing this, Chris looked first at urban settlements, and then at villages and their fields.

Stratford-on-Avon was presented as a town whose planned nature was evident from the grid system of the streets. This was supported by documentary evidence from 1196. But even here some 'bottom-up' development was evident from the growth of Bridgetown, a settlement on the far side of the bridge that had grown up to service the needs of travellers crossing the bridge. After the initial planning of the town, the growth of Stratford-on-Avon was driven by the inhabitants of the town.

Chris also made the point that the town's grid system was not orthogonal, but rather followed the patterns of the plough strips of the earlier landscape, so even here the agency was not quite as clear-cut as might first be assumed.

Elsewhere, Chris found evidence of commercial development of towns driven from below. Bibury in Gloucestershire was in many ways a typical Cotswold village, but its village plan revealed that it had a market square at its centre, even though there was no documentary trace of a market charter being granted, or of any other form of lordly planning. The commercial centre of the township seems to have been the result of the actions of its residents. Kings Norton in Worcestershire (now part of Birmingham) was another example of a settlement with a square, but no official market. Again, commercial development seems to have happened through the initiative of the local population (in this instance, many of whom were wool traders). The landscape thus gives evidence of a mobile, informal, shifting pattern of trading; one that was outside lordly control.

Chris also produced an example of a planned settlement that had failed in the form of Bretford in North Warwickshire. It had been a project of the Verdon family, who diverted the Fosse Way in an attempt to take traffic into their new town. Evidence from an earthworks survey, fieldworking, aerial photography, a lidar survey and documents show that there were some twenty families in the 1220s and some twenty-three burgage plots. There is also lidar evidence that they had a settlement across the bridge (like Stratford) to catch traffic on the Fosse way. But the Bretford today is no more than a hamlet. All that remains of its previous incarnation is a fine fifteenth-century house on a burgage plot (the house belongs to centre student – beware, Maureen, 'Friends' might start appearing on your doorstep in search of a cup of tea and a tour of your burgage-plot garden). Chris suggested that, while the plan showed the power of the lords, the town failed because the ordinary people were

reluctant to settle there; they could not see the potential of a town so near to Coventry, situated on what was not a major route. There was nothing to promise that a good living could be made there, and so Bretford shrank back to a hamlet once more.

Chris next turned his attention to an example of a lord remoulding the landscape for his own pleasure. In 1421 John, Duke of Bedford (the third son of Henry IV) saw the potential of Fulbrook, situated between Stratford and Warwick, as a pleasure ground. The lidar survey shows a conventional Warwickshire felden village: a manor house with a moat, a village street, a pond with a mill, and everywhere else ploughed fields. The duke removed the village and built a great park with associated grand residence in the form of a hill-top brick castle. Fulbrook was something of a 'holiday home' for John, as his main residence remained Rouen. Although the village virtually died (only four villagers remained in 1428), there was an area of common pasture still in use in the 1430s. There was intercommoning among the surrounding villages, and even the Duke of Bedford had to accept their rights.

Fulbrook was, in many ways, a very untypical park, being carved from the felden rather than the arden. More typical of this type of development was Northfield (now a housing estate in Birmingham). The evidence here shows two distinct landscapes developing side by side: one the result of 'top down' management, the other the result of 'bottom up'. The original manor house had been next to the church, but in the 12th century it was moved to a northern position, in the form of a castle surrounded by a 1000 acre park, with a compact block of demesne land. Villagers were dispossessed in the formation of this lordly estate, but

TALKING TO FRIENDS:

As we have, unfortunately, two long obituaries in this edition of the *Newsletter*, the article 'Talking to Friends' has been omitted.

elsewhere in the parish there was dispersed settlement where inhabitants continued to farm in small enclosures or small open field systems, which were a survival of the pre-conquest period. The lord was content to ignore this peasant landscape.

From his evidence, Chris concluded that the 'top down' versus 'bottom up' controversy was a false opposition. Both models of development operated side by side. He did not want to suggest that lords and peasants were particularly 'friends' or 'in it together', but rather suggested that they demonstrated a capacity for compromise and negotiation.

Chris provided more examples of settlements that illustrated this duality of formation. Matt Tomkins found documents in Worcester cathedral identifying Bickley as a late example of planning. The lord, worried about his falling rent roll in 1337, was trying to kick-start development by handing out plots of land 'as measured by the lord and the village'. The now-deserted Westcote (Tysoe, Warks) looks from the evidence to have been a regular planned village, but this village had four manors raising the question of how this was accomplished. Was it an example of planning by committee?

These examples illustrate how villages were created by a complicated process. Lords had an interest, but a great deal depended on those who lived in the village. The answer to the question 'who made the landscape' seems to be that everyone was likely to have a hand in it.

As is customary, the lecture was followed by the consumption of tea and cake, accompanied by stimulating conversation and frenzied book buying.

Obituaries

We extend our sincere sympathy to the families of Friends recently deceased:

Joan Thirsk (1922 - 2013)



Joan completed a degree in modern languages at London University. Her knowledge of German took her into the Intelligence Corps at the code breaking centre at Bletchley Park, where she met her husband Jimmy, a librarian, and became a convert to History. In 1945 she went to LSE to work on a PhD under R.H. Tawney.

At Leicester W.G. Hoskins had obtained funds to employ a research fellow, and in 1951 she embarked on a study of Lincolnshire agrarian history, from which came publications on fenland farming (an Occasional Paper of the Department of English Local History), on the Isle of Axholme, and on English Peasant Farming in 1957. An important part of the research was to define the various local agrarian economies in Lincolnshire by systematic analysis of probate inventories, which recorded the crops and animals of those making wills. She then turned to the volume of the *Agrarian History of England and Wales* on the period 1500 to 1640, with Alan Everitt as her assistant. In this she again defined regional differences through an ambitious sample of inventories. This book, the first of the 8 volumes of the *Agrarian History* to appear, was published in 1967. Joan recently showed her regard for Local History at

Leicester by depositing her research notes for the *Agrarian History* volume 4 (essentially transcripts of hundreds of probate inventories) to the University Library.

By then W.G. Hoskins had left his readership in Oxford to return to Leicester and she moved into that post in 1965. Her period at Leicester was a very fruitful one in the development of the Department of English Local History, and in particular she contributed to the analysis of regional differences which was developed by Everitt into the concept of the pays and by Charles Phythian-Adams into the idea of cultural provinces. Many of the ideas that figure in her many publications after 1965 must have first come into her mind during her 14 years at Leicester: rural industries and their growth in pastoral regions; the projects such as woad and tobacco cultivation that were responding to new consumer demands; 'alternative agriculture' when farmers experimented with new crops and animals especially in times of depression in mainstream agriculture.

She was interested in rural society, and ensured that people always figured prominently in her analysis and writing. She also edited a book on *English Rural Landscapes*, and co-authored a book on her adopted home village of Hadlow in the weald of Kent (in 2007). She occupied many offices, including editor of the *Agricultural History Review*, general editor of the *Agrarian History*, and the editorial board of *Past and Present*. She was honoured with a CBE, Fellowship of the British Academy, and eight honorary doctorates. She was well respected through Europe and beyond.

Professor Chris Dyer, Centre of English Local History

This appreciation of the life and work of Joan Thirsk was first published on the CELH website on 9 October 2013.

**Margaret Spufford née Clark, MA
with distinction 1963, PhD 1970,**
10th December 1935 - 6th March 2014



After failing to complete her undergraduate degree in Cambridge through illness, Margaret Clark put in for the John Nichols Prize in English Local History. She came second to a book on the lost rivers of London, but so impressed the then Professor of English Local History, Herbert Finberg, that he proposed her for a Research Studentship at Leicester, which had only become a full university three years earlier. The then Vice Chancellor, Charles Wilson, used his dispensing power to give her the studentship, despite her lack of a first degree, for three years, 1960-63. It was this action that made her whole career possible. In 1962 she completed an MA thesis, which the external examiner, Professor Maurice Beresford of Leeds, said was good enough for a PhD! Out of it came articles and a Leicester Occasional Paper, *A Cambridgeshire Community, Chippenham from Settlement to Enclosure*, 1965. However the research for her PhD was severely interrupted by further illness, early onset osteoporosis. She was not able to submit her PhD until 1970.

After Leicester, she was elected to a Research Fellowship at another new

institution, Lucy Cavendish College, Cambridge, which she used for greatly amplifying her Leicester doctorate into *Contrasting Communities*, which came out in 1974. She was then appointed to an Honorary Lectureship at Keele, followed in 1980 by a teaching Fellowship at Newnham College, Cambridge.

Her reputation was made by a series of pioneering books and articles. Her *Contrasting Communities*, changed the way that historians looked at local communities in early modern England. At Leicester William Hoskins had already moved community history onwards from the manorial pattern of the *Victoria County Histories* by adding an economic dimension. Margaret moved it on further by adding a social dimension and wrote about the religious beliefs and education of her rural people, as well as their economy. She also made it important to place any individual community in its geographical context, to know how typical or atypical it was. All following histories of local communities, have built on this work, like Keith Wrightson's study of Wickham, a mining community on the Tyne. Her next landmark book, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories*, 1981, brought to the attention of historians of English literature, the immense quantity of ephemeral literature that underpinned the literary cannon. Her next landmark book, *The Great Reclothing of Rural England*, 1984, brought the attention of historians to the chapmen who toured rural England before the proliferation of shops, carrying with them the essential linens for clothing and a range of haberdashery and other small objects, including her small books. This has produced similar studies in other parts of Europe. Her next book, *The World of Rural Dissenters*, 1995, was an attempt, with a number of her research students, to look at the continuity and social range of dissent in rural England from the Lollards to the early 18th century. She herself contributed an influential introductory chapter, a small book in itself, summarising her particular views on the importance of religion in the 16th and 17th centuries. Her *Poverty Portrayed* tied together documents about

rural poverty with paintings by the two Egbert Van Heemskerks, father and son, portraying rural society in Holland and England. In 2000 many of her more influential articles were republished in *Figures in the Landscape Rural Society in England 1500-1700*. When she became too ill to complete it, she had nearly finished the *Clothing of the Common Sort*, which will be another landmark volume, and is being prepared for publication by her last research student.

Her reputation brought her research students from Canada, California, Australia and Japan, as well as those with first degrees from British universities, some of whom were using the Leicester methods of studying English local history. In the 1980s she had a group which was larger than that of any professor of history in Cambridge except the Regius. Her Cambridge research students called themselves 'The Spuffordians'.

She told one of her Cambridge doctoral students, Motoyashu Takahashi, that when he returned to Japan, he should apply what he had learned of the Leicester methods of undertaking local history, to a study of a local community back in Japan. He assembled a group of archivists and university lecturers (some others now, like himself, have become Professors) to work on the village of Kami Shiojiri in Nagano province. It was at the south-western end of the silk weaving region of Japan. The village specialised in the breeding and sale of silk worm eggs and did not itself make much silk. The prodigious quantity of documents from this village, mean that it is not a 'one man' enterprise, but needed a whole team of people, and will result in a multi-volume work in Japanese, of which the first has already come out, eventually to be followed by a single volume in English. So Margaret has been responsible for transferring her Leicester skills to Japanese universities.

After Newnham she went to the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study for a year as a visiting Fellow and extended her work on literacy to a European level, demonstrating that it was

business that was the prime driver, rather than religion as had previously been thought. When she returned to England, she was appointed, in 1994, as the first professor at the Roehampton Institute, then part of the University of London, and now Roehampton University. While she was there, she began the British Academy Hearth Tax Project, which launched a series of edited texts, with critical introductions, of the hearth tax records of late 17th century England. Eight large county volumes had been published by the time of her death, and a two volume edition for the hearth tax of London and Middlesex, was in the press. They provide extraordinary snapshots of English society in the 1660s and 1670s.

The quality of her work was recognised by the conferment of the higher doctorate for the humanities, the Litt. D., by the University of Cambridge in 1986, by Fellowship of the British Academy in 1995, by an O.B.E. in 1996 and Honorary Doctorates from the Open University and the University of Keele.

Quite another side of her life is represented by her book *Celebration*, 1989, which dealt with the problem of pain and religious belief, based not only on her own experience of a lifetime of illness, but also on that of her daughter, Bridget, who died at the age of 22, a week before *Celebration* came out. It has had an enormous influence on people, like hospital Chaplains and others, in quite different fields from her historical readers. She was an Oblate of the Anglican Benedictine Nunnery at West Malling in Kent for most of her adult life. She is survived by her husband Peter, Emeritus Professor of European History in the University of Cambridge, and her son Francis, the famous contemporary author.

Peter Spufford

Paula Casson

Died in March 2014

Our sympathies go to her husband Dennis.

FRIENDS OF FRIENDS

Leicestershire VCH – an update

It's been a very productive year for Leics VCH, both within our flagship project, *Charnwood Roots* (of which more below), and 'rest of county', and thank you to all who have helped in any way. Although 'rest of county' does not have the financial muscle to match *Charnwood Roots*, a full parish history is now online for Kirby Bellars, Leire will follow online shortly, and in 2015 we shall be publishing our first book (in the new 'VCH Shorts' series), a 35,000 word history of Castle Donington. There is far more to Donington than a castle mound, an airport and Donington Park, as the book will reveal. There can be few places in Leicestershire where a manorial jury climbed the church steeple to inspect the re-pointing, or where a group of people stood up to a vicar who wanted to see the church school closed down.

We have also received funding for a parish history of Buckminster and Sewstern, where research is now underway with a new group of volunteers. For those unfamiliar with north-east Leicestershire, Buckminster looks like the archetypal estate village, and indeed every inch of soil is now owned by Buckminster Estates, but before the 1820s there were many freeholders. Of course the VCH covers more than just the last 200 years. Moving (well) back in time, can we identify the minster territory? Or even the location of the lost medieval church at Sewstern? Very little research has been done on these villages, and we are giving local people of all ages an opportunity to explore their heritage. We also have groups keen to progress with histories of Lutterworth, Queniborough and a number of other villages, but struggle to support them financially. If you would be willing to provide any kind of practical (or financial!) help, please contact Pam Fisher, either by email to pjf7@le.ac.uk or by telephoning 0116 252 5722.

Charnwood Roots has been up and running for a little under a year. The

project, which is being funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, aims to research the history of 35 towns and villages around Charnwood Forest and Loughborough. So far, we have trained and involved more than 250 volunteers in a whole range of research activities from fieldwalking and oral history projects to documentary research and community digs and more than 5,000 people, including school children and families, through our educational outreach programmes and roadshows.

New research for the Leicestershire Victoria County History series remains our primary objective, but it is particularly satisfying to see the many and varied ways that our research can have an impact beyond the big red books. For example, a landscape survey project that we conducted in the spring using a remote sensing technique called LiDAR, brought to light hundreds of new archaeological features. This has added substantially to our understanding of Charnwood's landscape history and will inform future land management of the Forest, helping to ensure a greater level of protection for the heritage that we are studying. At the other end of the scale, a professional development scheme and educational resources for primary school teachers is allowing the significance of Charnwood's heritage to be shared with the next generation.

If you would like to hear more about Charnwood Roots or get involved with any of the research activities, please contact Dr Julie Attard at charnwoodroots@le.ac.uk or (0116) 252 5946 or visit our website: www.charnwoodroots.org

Pam Fisher





Volunteers working on a test-pit during our first community dig in Anstey
©VCH Leicestershire

**FRIENDS OF ALL SAINTS CHURCH, BRIXWORTH
UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER**

3rd BRIXWORTH LECTURE

**A SEALED BOOK: INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE IN THE
ANGLO-SAXON CHURCH**

Dr Jennifer O'Reilly PhD, MRIA, FSA, School of History, University College Cork

Dr O'Reilly is an expert on the art and texts of the Age of Bede. She will be talking to us in the late eighth-century church at Brixworth on the topic of 'A sealed book: interpreting Scripture in the Anglo-Saxon Church'.

Saturday 1st November 2014 at 5.00 pm in the Church

The tea will be served in the Heritage Centre at 4.00p.m. before the lecture

Tickets £5.00, which includes buffet tea, can be obtained by emailing:

Contact: Jo Story js73@le.ac.uk

For more information about the Friends and the Church:

<http://www.friendsofbrixworthchurch.org.uk>

Friends' Diary Dates 2014 – 15

Conference: 'The Local History of the Family' Saturday 22nd November 2014

The **Annual General Meeting** of the Friends will take place on **Thursday, 27th November** at **1.00 p.m.** before the seminar.

York Weekend 10 – 12 April 2015 at Askham Bryan Agricultural College

Hoskins' Lecture 2015: To be announced.

Seminar Programme 2014-15

All seminars are on **Thursdays** at **2.15pm** in the **Seminar Room** of **No 1 Salisbury Road**. Please phone **0116-252-2762** to reserve a place. You are invited to tea in the **Common Room** afterwards.

2014

- Thurs 16 October **Eric E. Gruber von Arni**,
'Was there any?' - Military hospital care, nursing and welfare during the Civil Wars of the 17th Century.
- Thurs 30 October **Ian Waites** (University of Lincoln),
Middlefield: Some Historical Interpretations of a 1960s Lincolnshire Council Estate.
- Thurs 13 November **David Crook** (The National Archives),
Robin Hood and Criminality.
- Thurs 27 November **Gary Crossley** (University of Oxford),
Kinship and strategies for family survival on Bodmin Moor during the long nineteenth century.

2015

- Thurs 15 January **Matthew Ward** (University of Nottingham),
'A coler of the kynge lyverey': Livery Collars, Church Monuments and the Expression of Identity in Derbyshire, 1450 to 1500.
- Thurs 29 January **Matthew Champion** (Norfolk Medieval Graffiti Survey),
Medieval Graffiti: the hidden history of the parish church.
- Thurs 12 February **Matthew Beamish** (University of Leicester Archaeological Services),
The analysis of aerial LiDAR: New possibilities for prehistoric and historic landscape interpretations in Leicestershire.
- Thurs 12 March **Ismini Pells** (Cambridge University),
The seventeenth-century London Trained Bands and the Artillery Company.
- Thursday 16th April **Matthew Johnson**, (Northwestern University, USA). *Bodiam Castle: Landscape, lived experience and political ecology*

USEFUL CONTACTS

Reservations for seminars:

Lucy Byrne, Marc Fitch House, 5 Salisbury Road, Leicester, LE1 7QR;
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Contributions to Newsletter:

Please address to The Editor, Marc Fitch House or leave messages or contributions in Friends' pigeonhole at Marc Fitch House.
For preference, please email smp38@le.ac.uk

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To: Ann Schmidt, e-mail: anschmidt1@hotmail.com

Purchase of Friends' Papers:

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