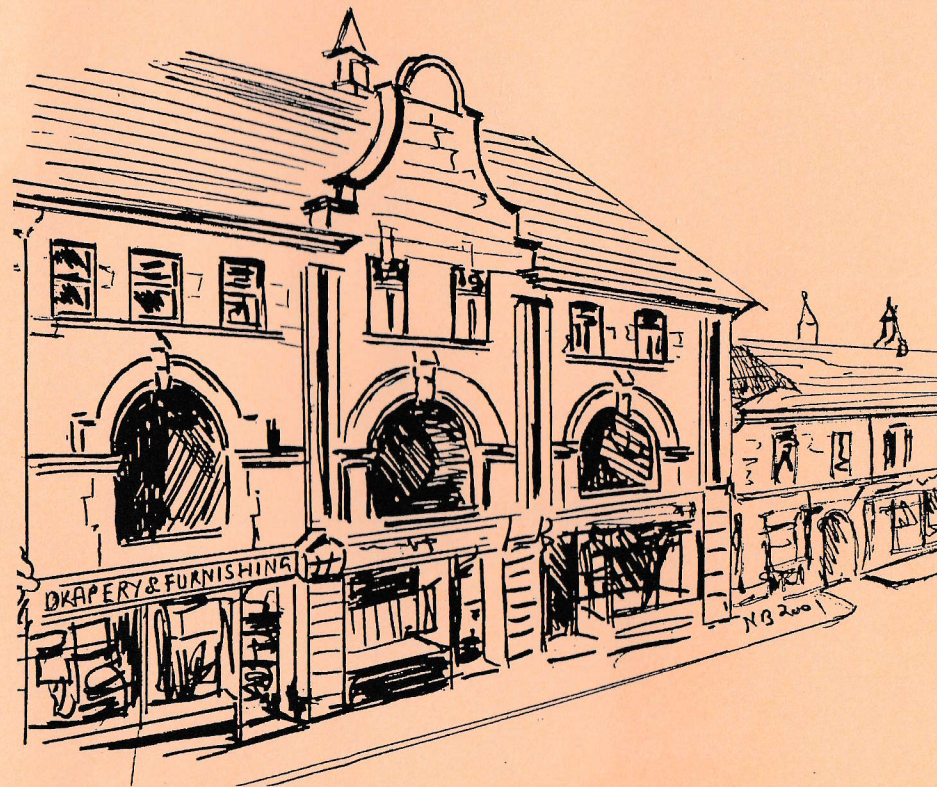


Stapleford and District Local History Society



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Free to Members

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MEETING REPORTS

11 May 2011

Seaside, Skeggy and Hand-knitted Bathing Costumes by William Allen

The long spell of warm, dry, sunny weather had put people in the mood to hear a talk about holidays by the sea. William Allen introduced his talk with a number of jokes, including a threat to wake us up with a tent peg if we dozed off!

We were reminded of the journey to Skeggy from Nottingham Victoria Station or Derby Friargate; the smell of the smoke in those steam engine days; the carriages brightened by lithographs of destinations across Britain; the rush at Sleaford for the toilets (there were none on the trains); the arrival at Skegness, which seemed so clean and colourfully decorated with flowers, and no rain. Then came the visit to the town's Bed and Breakfast bureau, to collect addresses, which were then visited until a suitable one was found. Some landladies showed dragon like qualities: all breakages paid for: doors locked at 9.00pm: no facilities for drying swimming costumes: no alcohol: children to behave.

Once ensconced in a satisfactory lodging the beach would be inspected, the Allen family's favourite being the south shore, near the sand dunes. A pitch was chosen and then Mother would dig deep to erect the wind break. The tricky task of changing into bathing costumes in a modest manner was undertaken. Then the bathing costumes were revealed in all their glory. William Allen showed us two, knitted by his wife. They looked very fine, but many of us remembered their ability to stretch and stretch and the ungainly walk up the beach trying to preserve decency. Sometimes the opposite happened. William's mother's costume shrank! The ladies, to accompany the swim suit, wore a bathing hat. Made of rubber, these fitted tightly, with straps under the chin. In addition, some ladies wore a lining to protect their perms, but the water still seeped in!

The bathing experience included finding silt up to your knees, kelp sloshing round your feet and sand stinging your legs as it was lifted by the tide.

Then there was the picnic to devour. Sometimes this included improvisation as some vital piece of equipment had been left behind at the lodgings. So it was on one occasion that the cake had to be divided up with

a Swiss army knife. If there were problems with picnics, fish and chips were readily available to satisfy hungry appetites.

On return home, after a pleasant time together, Mum had to face the piles of washing, with only the basic equipment available before the advent of the washing machine.

Throughout the talk there were murmurs of recollection as many people remembered those golden seaside holidays of their youth.

Meg Oliver

8 June 2011

RADIO TIMES – THE BBC FROM 1930 TO 1965

by Tony Horton

Tony began by describing his earliest memories of his radio at home – glowing valves that you could warm your hands on: a curly wire aerial extending from the apple tree down the garden and then splitting into aerial and ‘earth’: watering the earth wire when reception was bad.

He had started listening in the 1930s. His dad was an avid listener, so he remembers the radio being on all the time and wonders what life was like pre-radio.

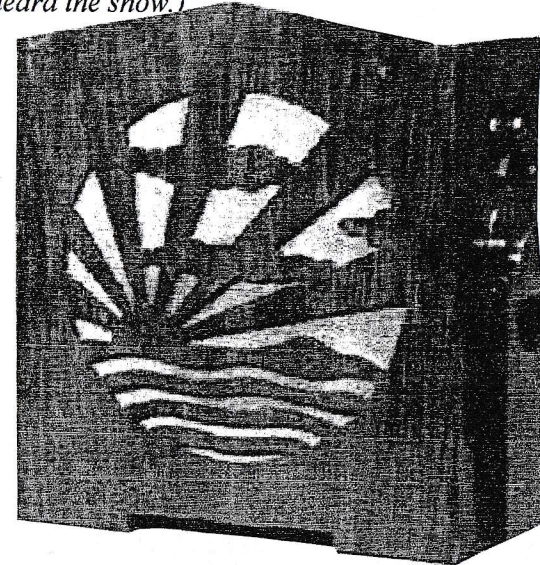
The examples that Tony played to us he had recorded himself on his own tape recorder. Tape recorders came out in the 1950s, but luckily there had been a 25th BBC anniversary programme which played some of the thirties’ programmes and this allowed him to tape them.

The British Broadcasting Company had started life in 1922 (changed to British Broadcasting Corporation in 1927). The General Manager was John Reith, whose mission was to ‘inform, educate and entertain’. In Tony’s opinion this was actually a statement of priorities. Entertainment was not very high on the list of goals, especially in the early days. The nearest John Reith got to comedy was something he called ‘whimsy’ – a slightly amusing monologue. Tony played us an example.

The first real comedy on the BBC was *Bandwagon*, starring Arthur Askey and Richard Murdoch. This started in 1938 and included a *Chestnut Corner* where old jokes were recited.

In 1939 Tommy Handley was the star of a new programme called *ITMA (It's That Man Again)*. The programme lasted until 1949 and so was a major feature of wartime England. Tony said that he was not impressed with it as comedy. *(Personal note: Although this was before my time, my*

dad would use many of the catchphrases during my childhood. I almost feel as though I heard the show.)



Another wartime comedy was born in 1940, *Life with the Lyons*, starring Ben Lyons, Bebe Daniels and Vic Oliver. This was a slightly more original comedy, according to Tony, and this was illustrated by his example.

Wartime Propoaganda

Tony remembers hearing the Declaration of War on the radio on 3 September 1939 and being surprised that nothing seemed to happen. This was the period of the ‘phoney war’. He illustrated this period with a recording of ‘We’re Going to Hang out the Washing on the Siegfried Line’. The actual Siegfried Line turned out to be totally useless.

Once the war started properly, the radio was used for propaganda. We all remember the name Lord Hawhaw, but Tony mentioned two other interesting instances of propaganda.

The first was the fact that Germany formed a swing big band (despite the obvious relationship with black music) and played music with lyrics that praised Germany and criticised England. The plan was to use popular music as a means to attract listeners and then provide propaganda messages. Tony played us a version of ‘You’re the Tops’ sung in English, but with all the words changed, glorifying the Third Reich

The second example was even more surprising. It was music that Glenn Miller and his band, augmented by a huge string section, played –

music specially made to broadcast into Germany. We heard recordings of Glenn trying to talk in German to introduce his tunes, and of his interpreter (Glenn's German was not really very good) and of his vocalist, Johnny Desmond, singing in German. We also heard 'In the Mood'.



Glenn Miller, who gave up a most successful dance band and joined the American Army



Lord John Reith looking grim

In 1940 the BBC broadcasting unit split into two. There was still the *Home Service* and a new *Forces Programme*.

On the *Forces programme* there was room for more music and comedians. We heard recordings of Robb Wilton, Jack Warner, Gert and Daisy, George Formby, Gracie Fields and even Max Miller (there was strict regulation of the subjects allowed on the BBC, so he had to use a separate joke book, his Music Hall material being too rude).

We were played two very amusing comedy wartime songs, both almost meaningless:

Mairzy doats and dozy doats and liddle lamzy divey
A kiddley divey too, wooden shoe?

And

Ashby de la Zouche by the Sea
Ashby de la Zouche Castle Abbey
It's a little bit of heaven to me
Girls have pretty curls
And the boys have pretty girls
In Ashby de la Zouche by the sea.

After the War

Tony played the well known theme tunes to the programmes *Housewives Choice* and *Forces Favourites*.

Radio comedy began to take off with *Take It From Here* and we heard the wonderful *Glums* (Jimmy Edwards, June Whitfield and Dick Bentley). The programme was written by Frank Muir and Dennis Norden. We then heard excerpts from *The Navy Lark* (Jon Pertwee, Leslie Phil[ips], Stephen Murray and very early Ronnie Barker) and *The Goons* (Harry Secombe et al).

Tony pointed out how relaxed the BBC was now becoming about the content of its programmes by playing a Jules and Sandy clip from the brilliant *Round the Horne*. This featured obviously gay people and gay humour, even though homosexuality was still illegal in 1965. As Tony remarked 'It's amazing that they got away with it'.

We have come a long way since John Reith.

Tony closed the evening with the immediately recognisable theme tune from *Dick Barton, Special Agent*.

It was a really enjoyable and informative evening. The radio has played such an important part in all our lives. I think for a certain generation the radio has always been more important than television. The music and comedy was instantly nostalgic and we were given some fascinating information. Despite some minor acoustic problems, I am sure the evening was enjoyed by all.

John Shaw

13 July 2011

THE MAKING OF ARTHUR MEE **By Francis Luckcock**

It's always a good sign when we have to put out extra chairs as we did for this talk. Obviously there were a lot of people interested in Arthur Mee.

Francis started the talk by welcoming seven members of the Mee family and we felt very honoured by their presence.

Francis then played a recording of the hymn 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' and asked about its significance. He gave the answer that it was played at Arthur's funeral in 1943 and, in many ways, characterised Arthur's attitude to life. His three main loves were:

- 1 The Scriptures
- 2 His country
- 3 The British Empire

This was an unusual talk for our society in that Francis said he did not really intend to be informative or entertaining, but instead his aim was to detail the research needed for Arthur Mee to be able to assume his rightful place in history. He would not tell us all the stuff that could be found easily elsewhere, but would approach the subject in a more academic manner. He also said that he was looking for research partners.

His intention was to discover just how important Arthur was as an historic figure. In order to do this he said we had to approach all the evidence we had about Arthur and ask many, many questions. Some of these were:-

1 Where did Arthur get most of his influences from? Francis mentioned Henry Mee (Arthur's dad), George Byford (Arthur's headmaster) and Henry Mellows (a Stapleford baker), as probably the three most important in his young life. What sort of people were they, and how did they affect Arthur's character and beliefs?

2 What were the religious influences on Arthur? There were many Methodist churches around, each slightly different in their practices and beliefs.

3 What were the political influences on Arthur, and how did they compare with the political views of that era?

These types of questions would need to be asked of the two parts of Arthur's life as described by Francis, both the Nottingham based part (1875 - 1895) and the Kent/London part (1895 - 1943).

He mentioned that some answers could be found in the book *Child of Wonder: An Intimate Biography of Arthur Mee* by Sir John Hammerton, but that other evidence was available (the family would be very important in this) and must be gathered and assessed. In order to calculate how innovative Arthur was, we need to have a thorough knowledge of the times that he lived in and the ideas and trends that surrounded him.

One interesting example of the sort of research needed was to ask why Arthur produced so many books for children. These books were very popular. Arthur married Amelia Fratson in 1897 and in 1901 they had a daughter, Marjorie. Arthur claimed that Marjorie's questions prompted him to produce *The Children's Encyclopedia*. Were there no other children's books around? Did he corner the market? How did his interests of 'scripture, country and empire' guide the way these books were written?

There have been criticisms of Arthur's work that it was too anodyne, that its approach was too religious and even a little 'Pollyanna-ish'. These may seem reasonable criticisms now, but the books must also be looked at in the context of their day.

Having listed some of the many questions that needed to be asked, Francis reiterated that his intention was to 'rehabilitate' Arthur Mee and afford him his proper place in history. He asked for the help of the Society in this effort.

He had five suggestions for keeping Arthur's memory going. These were:-

- 1 Arrange appropriate events to celebrate Arthur Mee eg his 140th birthday in 2015
- 2 Create Arthur Mee education packs for local schools
- 3 An information board in the Arthur Mee Centre
- 4 More ambitiously, a statue of a boy and girl in early 20th century dress looking at a copy of *The Children's Newspaper*
- 5 Mention his name on Stapleford road signs

During his talk Francis made many mentions of the new blue plaque on the Arthur Mee Centre wall. He said how important this was and how pleased he had been to see it and take part in the unveiling. This was a useful start to the rehabilitation process.

Francis closed the talk with 'Rule Britannia', which he explained also summed up Arthur Mee's life and viewpoint.

Along with the talk there was an exhibition of photographs and books. The books were from Francis's own collection and the photos belonged to the Society. These were very interesting and it was good to be able to talk about the photos with members of the family.

This was, perhaps, not the talk we expected, but it was intriguing and stimulating, nevertheless.

A complete transcript of the talk is available from officers of the Society.

John Shaw

10 August 2011

FROM PIGEONS TO PARACHUTES

by Maureen Jones

Maureen said that on a previous occasion, when giving this talk, some members of the audience had admitted that they did not know what a dovecote was, so she now starts this talk with an explanation.

Dovecotes were brought to England by the Normans after their conquest of 1066. Earlier, people in England would catch and eat any birds that settled or built nests on ledges or in holes in walls. Such birds were usually pigeons – very popular as they were large and had plenty of meat on them. People would create hollows in the walls of their wattle and daub buildings to attract the birds, or scoop out holes in sandstone rocks. Some can still be seen in the rocky cliffs near Castle Boulevard in Nottingham, now partly obscured by newly built blocks of flats.

The Normans brought the idea of constructing special dovecotes or pigeon houses. Early ones were round, being easy to build and a ladder could be used to collect eggs or birds from the shelf-like roosts or perches. Later, square dovecotes were built, such as the mud shed example at Flintham, which still retains three of its walls, though the roof and door have gone.

The great thing about pigeons was that every bit of them could be used. Pigeon meat was very good, with young birds, known as squabs, being particularly tender and delicious. The birds' bones were used for fertiliser, their feathers filled mattresses, quill pens were made from large feathers, one pigeon egg was equivalent to three hen's eggs and the nitrate in pigeon droppings was used to make gunpowder.

At the time of the Spanish Armada Queen Elizabeth issued an edict urging people to build more dovecotes as the country needed the droppings! However, these could only be built by the better off, such as lords of the manor, monasteries or the clergy, as they had to purchase a licence to do so.

The dovecote at Wollaton was built before Wollaton Hall itself. Another was known at Clifton and many National Trust properties can boast a dovecote or the remains of one on their land.

The overriding reason why these were so important was that there was not enough meat available. People could provide food over the winter for animals needed for breeding, but not enough to feed other animals for fresh meat. Hence animals were slaughtered in late autumn and salted

down for use over the winter. By spring the meat had run out. Dovecotes enabled food to be better organised.

However, by the 18th century crop production had improved and dovecotes were not as important. By the 19th century they had fallen into disuse or were turned into stables.

In 1929 the Middleton family sold Wollaton Hall and its huge estate to Nottingham Corporation. The dovecote was used as a stable, stairs were installed and the upstairs room was used as a hay loft. The land eventually came into the hands of a speculative builder who divided it into plots, one of which included the dovecote. Following a petition, Nottingham Corporation bought the dovecote and obtained Grade II listing for the building. However, no-one knew what to do with it, so it was used as a shed.

In 1980, City architect John Severn organised a Youth Training Scheme initiative to restore old buildings in the city, including the dovecote at Wollaton, Wilford steps and Nottingham Low Level Railway Station

The city asked Nottingham Civic Society to suggest a use for the dovecote. Wollaton Village Conservation Society was formed and the dovecote, now a four roomed cottage, with electricity, but no running water, was the society's headquarters.

An appeal was launched for information and memories about Wollaton, the material was organised and displayed and the dovecote opened to the public.

Later, another appeal for material about World War II produced a huge response. Information came to light about troops stationed at Wollaton Park and the Prisoner of War camp there, personal stories about local Air Force squadrons, the Women's Land Army, de-coders at Bletchley Park, prison life in the German Stalags, naval exploits, the dropping of the atomic bomb and eventually the celebrating of the peace in 1945. There was so much information about D Day that a commemorative exhibition was mounted.

Maureen finished her talk by announcing that the Dovecote Museum would be open to the public on the following Sunday afternoon and inviting us to go and see the dovecote and its exhibition for ourselves.

Barbara Brooke

LOST COUNTRY HOUSES OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

by Philip E Jones

The truth is – you had to be there! Philip Jones showed us wonderful slides of some of the great houses of Nottinghamshire that have disappeared. He mentioned in his introduction that he had been asked by Nottinghamshire County Council to do a 'Lost Houses' survey, resulting in a list of about 100. He had produced an illustrated book describing about 60 of them.

He said that Britain had lost some 600 country houses since 1945, about 40 of which were in Nottinghamshire.

He went on to detail some of the main reasons for the losses which were:

- 1) Accidental fire – a very high percentage suffered fires, in which some were destroyed completely.
- 2) Many houses were 'improved', sometimes to the extent of obliterating the original.
- 3) A financial crisis in the 1870s caused problems for many country estate owners.
- 4) Death duties were introduced in 1894.
- 5) After 1914 the supply of cheap servants disappeared.
- 6) In 1944 the Town & Country Planning Act had a major influence.
- 7) Many houses disappeared in the social upheavals of the 1960s.
- 8) In 1968 the T&CPA created 'listed buildings', which discouraged some owners.

Philip then showed a series of slides of three major Nottinghamshire houses:

1) **Clumber House** was built in 1760. In 1772 it was owned by the Duke of Newcastle. In March 1879 it suffered a major fire. In 1928 taxation problems caused the building to be demolished.

2) **Workshop Manor** was originally an Elizabethan building (with 500 rooms) built in 1580. There was a major fire in 1761. A new house was built in 1763. In 1838 it was sold to the Duke of Newcastle, BUT he only wanted the land, not the building, so the house was demolished.

3) **Rufford Abbey** was originally built on the site of a Cistercian monastery and belonged to the Earl of Shrewsbury. In 1628 Saville of Yorkshire extended the building northwards. Demolition started in 1956

but was stopped by a public outcry, so a good deal of the house remains. (Many houses in Ravenshead were built from Rufford stone.) There was an extra slide of Rufford showing a visit by King Edward VII, who was staying there for the Doncaster Races. Included in the group photograph was the King's mistress, Alice Keppel.

In the second part of the talk Philip mentioned other lost houses and showed one image of each.

Bramcote Hall - Built in the 1830s, a school from 1920. Part of Nottingham University in 1965, but burnt down the same year.

Broxtowe Hall - Built about 1700. Demolished in 1937 and Broxtowe housing estate built on the site.

Bulwell Hall - Built in 1720. The grounds are now a golf course. The house was vandalised in 1957 and demolished in 1958 to be replaced by a car park. The stables remain.

Bulwell Wood Hall - Built about 1630. Vandalised and gutted by fire in 1937. Demolished in 1953.

Kelham Hall - An old hall was burnt down in 1857. A new house was started the next year, but never finished.

Ossington Hall - Built 1729. Demolished 1959 - too expensive to maintain.

Owthorpe Hall - Built after the Civil War. Demolished after 1825.

Sherwood Lodge - Built 1791. Demolished in 1973 and replaced by a Clasp building, housing the Fire Brigade HQ.

Sneinton Manor - Built in 1898. Demolished and replaced by Manor Street.

Thorney Hall - site of a house since 1480, rebuilt in 1750. Sold in 1963 and demolished soon after.

Thurland Hall, Pelham Street, Nottingham - Built 1458. Demolished in 1830 and the Corn Exchange erected on the site.

Watnall Hall - From about 1620 to 1941 owned by the Rolleston family. Demolished in 1962. A private housing estate was built on site in 1972.

Whatton Manor - Built 1838 - 1841. Demolished 1964.

This was a very interesting talk but the illustrations were the major part of it. As I said at the beginning 'You had to be there' to fully appreciate the wonderful buildings that we have lost.

Philip's book is well worth buying or borrowing from the Society's library.

John Shaw

14 April 2011

A VISIT TO RIPLEY CASTLE AND KNARESBOROUGH

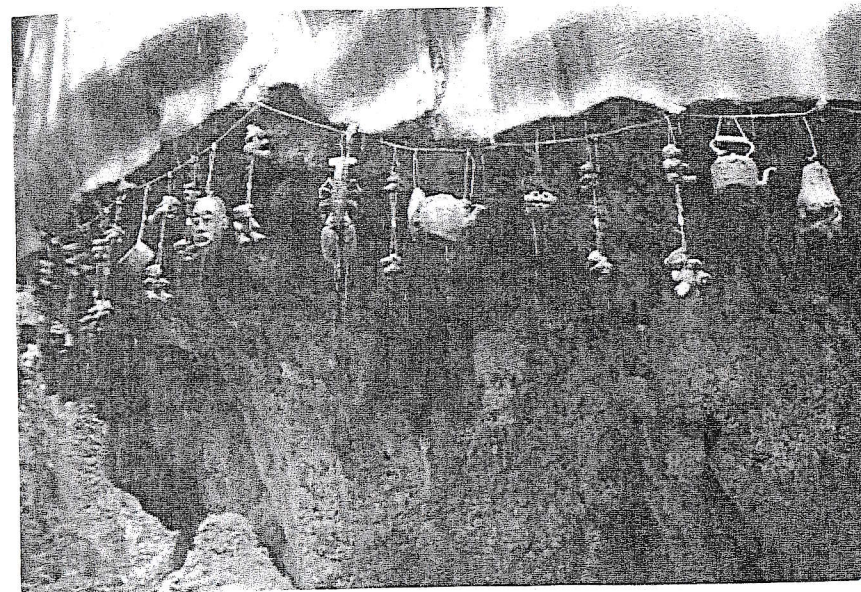
We travelled to Yorkshire by Lavender coach to visit Ripley Castle, home of the Ingilby family for twenty six generations. In 2009 the family celebrated seven hundred years at the castle, one of the longest periods of residence in the country.

The castle has changed over the years and little of the original remains. However, it is a very interesting place to visit. During a guided tour we were shown many things, including a priest's hole, so well concealed that it remained undiscovered for four hundred years. It is said that Oliver Cromwell stayed here after the Battle of Marston Moor in 1644, watched throughout the night by Lady Jane Ingilby, a staunch royalist, at pistol point in the library. The foundation charter of Mount Grace Priory can be seen there, along with many other important historical documents. Outside there are delightful gardens, a lake, woodland and a deer park.

From Ripley we travelled to Knaresborough, firstly visiting Mother Shipton's Cave, where that well known prophetess of yesteryear was born. She lived some five hundred years ago in the time of Henry VIII. As she grew older, her prophetic visions became known and feared throughout England. She foretold the coming of the motor car and steel ships, as well as important events, such as the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. In Samuel Pepys's Diary he records how she forewarned the coming of the Great Fire of London. Next to the cave are petrifying wells where objects are hung up, to be gradually turned into stone by the minerals in the water.

Knaresborough is a pleasant town with its jumble of buildings that lie in irregular terraces above the River Nidd. The town's castle is in a ruinous state now. It was built in the 12th century in the reign of Henry I. The murderers of Thomas a Becket hid there for three years and Richard II was imprisoned there on his way to his death at Pontefract. After the Civil War, when it had been a royalist stronghold, Cromwell ordered it to be dismantled and oversaw the process personally.

John Metcalf, better known as 'Blind Jack of Knaresborough', was a builder and improver of roads and turnpikes in the 18th century and many of his roads can still be seen in the Peak District today, remarkable considering he was almost completely blind.



A line of items hanging at the petrifying well

While spending free time in the town, some of our party were able to enjoy refreshments above 'The Oldest Chemist's Shop in England', dating back to the 1720s.

Then it was time to board the coach for our journey home. Thank you, Alan, for another enjoyable and interesting day.

Colin Rowland

7 June 2011

A VISIT TO SANDRINGHAM AND KING'S LYNN

After a pleasant drive through sunny countryside and a short break at the wayside Farm Cafe, we reached the Queen's country estate at Sandringham.

The original, fairly modest, house was bought by Queen Victoria for her son, the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, and his wife Princess Alexandra, in 1863. The present, much larger, residence, is the result of partial demolition, then rebuilding, followed by a number of extensions.

We looked around the ground floor rooms, which had a 'lived in', comfortable family feeling, despite some grand touches like tapestries on the wall, and are regularly used by members of the Royal Family when in residence.

In the ballroom, to celebrate Prince Philip's 90th birthday this year, there was an extensive display of photographs covering his connection with the Royal Navy and sailing. This was enhanced by particularly interesting and relevant captions and other information.

The museum in the stable block housed a number of royal motor vehicles as well as a motorised Humber tricycle, purchased by Edward VII for his own use, from the then Beeston Humber company.

After a bite of lunch in the Stable Tearoom, we wandered around the sixty acres of lovely, informal grounds, with copses, streams and lakes and young families of ducks and other wildfowl.



Statue of Captain George Vancouver in King's Lynn

Sandringham church, regularly attended by the family when in residence, houses a magnificent silver altar and pulpit and a splendidly decorated chancel ceiling.

It was now time to leave for the market town of King's Lynn, a short drive away.

By the 13th century, King's Lynn, situated on the River Great Ouse, near to its mouth in The Wash, was one of England's most important ports with European trade with Germany and the Baltic, as well as with other English coastal ports.

The town's many cobbled streets and unusual buildings offered much to explore, but there was only time for a short taster. We visited Lynn Museum, which houses a life sized replica of the Bronze Age timber circle, Seahenge, recently found on a nearby beach, having survived for more than 4,000 years.

Next we visited True's Yard Fisherfolk Museum, featuring all that survives of King's Lynn's old fishing community. Two adjoining cottages, with their yard and smokehouse, tell the story of the harsh, cramped and often dangerous lives endured by the fishing families.

The splendid Custom House, situated on the Purfleet Quay, the original harbour front of the town, houses displays about the merchants, customs men and smugglers of the past. Nearby stands a statue of Captain George Vancouver, the famous explorer and navigator, who was born in King's Lynn in 1751.

Now it was time to board the coach for our homeward journey, many of us vowing to return to such an interesting town.

Thank you, Alan, for a great day.

Barbara Brooke

3 August 2011

AN OUTING TO WOOTTON BASSETT AND SWINDON

It was a rather hot summer's day when forty six intrepid day trippers went on Alan Clayton's thirty fifth organised day outing.

We firstly visited a small town all too often in the news, being associated with the repatriation of service men killed in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, now known as 'Royal' Wootton Bassett. On a more cheerful

note, Wootton Bassett, meaning 'settlement in the wood', is a delightful town with a population of 11,000. Its first charter was granted in 681 to Malmesbury Abbey in the reign of King Ethelred. The name Bassett in the town's name comes from one of the great families of the land, the Bassetts of Wycombe. Alan Bassett was one of the signatories of the Magna Carta.

We first visited the museum, housed in the former town hall. Built in the 17th century on fifteen stone pillars, it was a gift from the Earl of Clarendon. Underneath there were once store rooms and a lock-up where drunkards were detained overnight. We were welcomed by the town crier who gave us a tour of the museum, explaining the history of the objects on view. We saw the original town ducking stool, apparently used quite often, as well as the stocks and whipping post. Also in the museum are the two oldest maces in England. The town crier kindly opened the church, enabling us to look around, before walking along the High Street where a number of Georgian buildings have been turned into shops.



Wootton Bassett Museum

Our next destination was 'Steam', the museum of the Great Western Railway at Swindon. The museum, in part of the Swindon railway works, tells the story of the men and women who built and operated the GWR, affectionately known as 'God's Wonderful Railway', a product of the genius of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, and widely regarded as the most advanced railway in the world. Operating from 1843 to 1986, covering 300 acres, the works could turn out three locomotives a week. The museum is full of railway displays and memorabilia, from the offices to the works and general stores, that could keep the GWR supplied with everything from a pen nib to railway sleepers. In the works, films give the visitor a sense of the heat and grime and activity of the foundry, while the noise of riveting in the boiler shop could send a worker deaf by the age of thirty.

Also on display can be seen a replica of the 1837 locomotive *North Star*, built for the broad gauge rails that Brunel preferred. One of the locomotives that pulled the fastest scheduled steam train in the world can also be seen. Built in 1923, the *Caerphilly Castle*, No 4073, pulled the *Cheltenham Flyer* between Paddington and Swindon at an average speed of over 70 miles an hour.

Next door to the museum is the Swindon Designer Outlet, where you can purchase anything or everything for the house and garden, plus clothes galore.

Next to the design centre is the headquarters of the National Trust and, nearby, English Heritage also has its HQ.

I am sure everyone had an interesting day out, so once again, thank you Alan.

Colin Rowland

23 September 2011

A VISIT TO JODRELL BANK AND BRAMALL HALL

On a bright, sunny morning our Lavender coach reached Jodrell Bank in Cheshire before the gates officially opened for the day, giving us plenty of time to see all the attractions on site.

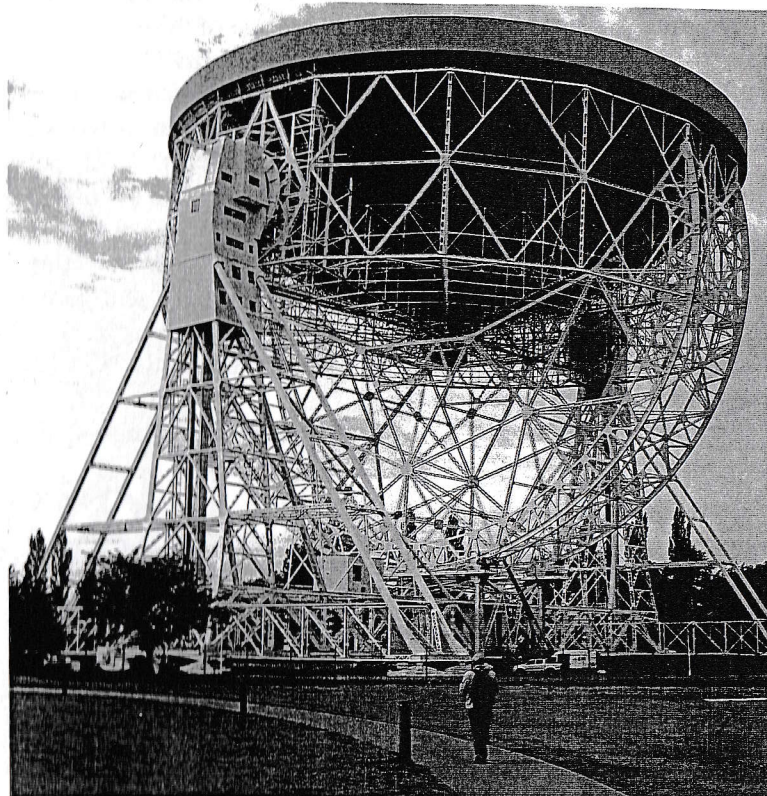
After a brief introduction, we were given maps and official wrist bands, then we were free to explore as we wished.

Following the path around the giant Lovell telescope, notice boards gave us some facts and figures about it. It is a Grade 1 listed building that carries out world leading scientific research. Sir Bernard Lovell, who had

worked on radar in World War Two, came to Jodrell Bank in 1945 and, after some early experiments, proposed building a huge steerable radio telescope to study the heavens. When it was completed in 1957 the dish, at 76 metres across, was the largest radio telescope in the world. The surface of the dish is covered with 336 separate galvanised steel panels, which are painted white to reflect the heat of the sun and prevent any warping.

It was set up in time to track the first Russian sputnik in October 1957 and has tracked all human activities in space ever since.

The telescope is as high as 21 double decker buses and 168 such buses would fit inside its dish.



Jodrell Bank Radio Telescope

Nowadays the Lovell telescope and the second telescope on site make a network with five other telescopes across the UK to form a 217 km dish that gives very sharp signals from far off in space.

Inside the Space Pavilion there are interactive exhibits explaining the workings of the telescope and films showing the astronomers at work. The Planets Pavilion houses an orrery, a large model of the solar system with the planets spinning around the sun.

In the 35 acres of grounds, there are more than two thousand trees, as well as a picnic area and playground, and a Galaxy Garden, newly created by Chris Beardshaw, of TV Gardening fame.

After lunch we boarded the coach to travel a short distance to Bramall Hall, owned and operated by Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council. The hall is a very imposing black and white timber framed manor house, built in local Cheshire style. During the 800 years following William the Conqueror's invasion only three families owned the estate – the Masseys, the de Bromales and the Davenports.

The oldest parts of the present building, including the Great Hall, date from the 14th century and the following centuries witnessed much change and development.

In the 19th century most of the estate was sold for housing, leaving the 70 acres of parkland that surround the hall today. The new owner of the hall, Charles Nevill, restored and rebuilt Bramall Hall, ensuring the survival of the building we can see today.

The rooms contain features from different centuries, added to and altered to suit the taste of different owners. The Ball Room has a splendid 15th century open timbered roof with magnificent wall paintings completed 200 years later. The Withdrawing Room boasts fine inlaid wood panelling, a spectacular plaster work ceiling with pendants and 15 commemorative marriage shields in a frieze around the room.

Each room brought fresh interests and delights, not least the fully furnished servants' quarters and the spacious kitchen and store rooms.

After a visit to the cafe and a pleasant sunny wander by the lakes, it was time to leave for our scenic journey home via The Peak National Park, Stoney Middleton and Baslow to Chesterfield and the M1.

Thanks, Alan, for a varied and interesting day, the last of the 2011 Beeston Society outings.

Barbara Brooke

This is the second article by Keith Goodman, based on his research about the history of Stapleford, for the Victoria County History project.

WHAT HAPPENED TWENTY ONE YEARS AGO?

by Keith Goodman

Do you remember what happened twenty one years ago? This might seem a demanding question to those of us who have difficulty remembering what we had for breakfast and in these days, when everything is written down, a good memory is not so essential. It was not always so!

In 1066 the local theigns in Stapleford were Ulci, Staplewin, Gladwin and Godwin. Stapleford was not a very big pool but these four were the big fish. In 1066 they were on the losing side. We do not know whether they actually fought with King Harold but, when the time came for William the Conqueror to distribute the spoils of war to his knights, Ulci and his friends were told, rather forcibly, to pack their bags.

Stapleford, along with about fifty other manors, was given to William Peverel. This apparent generosity to a little known knight would no doubt remind those with long memories of the rumours circulating at the time of William Peverel's birth. Could King William and William Peverel's mother, Maud Ingrelco, have been in the same place nine months before? Certainly the rumour persisted. But perhaps this maligns the young knight. King William also appointed him to construct a castle in Nottingham and the king would certainly not allow his paternal instincts to overrule his military acumen. William Peverel was clearly both capable and competent.

King William also rewarded those who had fought with him. Stapleford came into the hands of the de Heriz family and it is their name that is associated with the manor for the next 250 years.

What the King gives the King can also take away. In 1115 Henry II stripped William Peverel's son of the Honour and it reverted to the Crown. (William had been accused of poisoning the Earl of Chester – also of supporting Stephen.) It does not appear to have affected the de Heriz family who continued to live in Stapleford, enjoying the fruits of others' labours. The fact that the Honour reverted to the Crown did mean that they were now tenants-in-chief and that the King now kept a close watch on their affairs.

It was considered that all land belonged to the King. He granted it to a particular person for his enjoyment and when that person died the King

had the final say as to whom it would be granted next. In most cases, after the fee or fine had been paid, approval would be given for it to pass to the deceased's heir. However, if the heir was under age, it was more complicated. In such cases the heir would be appointed a ward of the King and his lands would be administered by someone appointed by the Crown. When the heir became 21 he could claim back his lands and an enquiry would be held by the King's official to confirm that he had, in fact, reached full age.

A number of us are involved in working on the Victoria County History for Nottinghamshire and some of the documents that I have been looking at are accounts of the Inquisitions Post Mortem. These are records of the examinations that took place when a person died. Richard de Heriz's father, also a Richard, had died some years ago and Richard the younger, as a minor, had been placed in the wardship of John de Mounteneye. He had now reached 21 and he requested that his father's lands be handed back to him. In 1329, the King's escheator, summoned 12 men to give proof that Richard de Heriz, son of Richard, had reached full age and that his lands should be restored to him. The statements of the 12 men, in their own words, give us a fascinating insight into what life was like nearly 700 years ago.

John of Broxtowe says that Richard was born in the manor house in the large stone chamber by the hall and baptised in St Helen's church there, and that Sir Richard, then Prior of Newstead, and William de Cobbelewe, then chaplain of the parish, lifted him from the font, and he knows this because it was the time when Edward II was crowned.

Geoffrey of Brinsley knows it because he was in London attending the marriage of the King and Isabella and he passed the night before the celebration of the nuptials in the Tower of London.

Roger of Mamcestre knows it because in that same year in Stapleford Robert Hare slew Robert Daubene.

John of Burton knows it because about then he became clerk to the Rector of Trowell and served him for 7 years before he married his wife Joan and they have been married 14 years.

John of Strelley knows it because at that time he was bailiff at the manor of Shipley and robbers came by night and whilst he was defending the manor he was struck in the middle of the arm by an arrow.

Hugh Abbot knows it because on the Sunday after Richard was born he had a son Robert who was born, baptised and died on the same day.

William Torcard knows it because his mother Marjorie died on the St Swithun's day next.

William Estwheit knows it because round about that time his daughter Alice married Robert of Bilborough.

Geoffrey son of Richard knows it because his son celebrated his first mass on the day he was baptised.

John Gerveys of Chilwell knows it because his wife Cecily was engaged as a nurse for the nourishment of the said Richard but the stay did not please her and after 4 days she came home to her husband.

Robert, son of Thomas of Bramcote, knows it because he had a son born round about that time and he, too, is 21.

Stephen Paule knows it because at that time he was made bailiff of the Honour of Peverel.

Strangely enough the person to whom he had been made ward, John de Mounteneye, did not turn up, even though he had been warned, nor did he send a representative.

If a group of us were asked the same question we would probably give similar answers – sad memories, joyful memories. 'I started my first job.' 'He is the same age as my son.' Nothing much changes in 682 years! You can read these documents for yourself. Find them on the genealogy portal at www.knol.google.com. I have abbreviated and paraphrased. They read much better in the original. Send me an email for the reference if you can't find it - keith@keithgoodman.com It is too long to give here.

PROGRAMME

9 November Comic Postcards: saucy but fun Nigel Brooks

14 December Christmas Social Evening

Commemorating Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren.

The fourth blue plaque to commemorate the life and work of a renowned local individual was unveiled at a special ceremony in Stapleford on May 18.

A crowd gathered at the Walter Parker VC Memorial Square just before 11am, ready to watch the Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, Colonel Timothy S Richmond, unveil a blue plaque to commemorate the life of Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren.

Stapleford 1753

John Borlase Warren was born at Stapleford Hall in 1753. He spent his childhood there, and first entered the navy as an able seaman in 1771. He became a midshipman and, in 1777, began a career as a naval officer after spending some time studying at Cambridge, gaining an MA in 1776. He rose through the officer ranks by giving years of distinguished service: a Lieutenant in 1778 (serving as First Lieutenant under Sir Charles Hardy on HMS Victory in 1779) becoming a Captain in 1781 and an Admiral of the White in 1810.

Much of his time at sea was spent fighting the French, including the defeat of a French fleet off the coast of southern Ireland in 1798, thwarting its plans to invade Ireland.

Amongst the many ships at one time under the command of Borlase Warren was the Temeraire, later to be immortalised in the painting by Turner.

Away from the navy, Borlase Warren married Caroline in 1780 and had five children, two of whom died in infancy. He was MP for Great Marlow, Nottingham and Buckingham at various times and, appointed to the diplomatic service, became British Ambassador to the Russian Court at St Petersburg between 1802 and 1804. In earlier years, he had been a Justice of the Peace for Nottingham.

Sir John went on to be awarded an Honorary DCL (Oxford) in 1814 and the Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath (GCM) in 1815.

Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren died in 1822.

Stapleford 2011 The Reverend Peter Huxtable, Vicar of Stapleford, led the unveiling ceremony on May 18 with prayer.

Barbara Brooke, Chairman of the Stapleford and District Local History Society, welcomed the visitors and guests before inviting the Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, Colonel Timothy S Richmond, to unveil the plaque.

Invited guests included Cllr Tom Pettengell, past Chairman of Nottinghamshire County Council, and the Mayors and Mayors-elect of both Broxtowe and Stapleford. Organiser Barbara Brooke said afterwards: "I don't think the unveiling ceremony could have been better. Even the threatening rain held off.

"When the Vice Lord-Lieutenant stepped from the dais after making his speech to lift the white ensign covering the bronze plaque, it was the culmination of months of effort on the part of so many people. As the ceremony proceeded, the seven military standards, the naval pipes, the ex-Bugle Major of the Royal Marines, the parade marshal and a large contingent of ex-servicemen all played their parts in a fitting commemoration of a great man of Nottinghamshire".

"Members of the blue plaques working group, the promoting societies and the large crowd of members of the public, as well as the wide-eyed youngsters representing local schools, all felt that they had been part of a very special occasion".

Guests were invited to enjoy light refreshments provided by Stapleford Town Council at the Carnegie Centre on Warren Avenue after the unveiling ceremony.

Blue plaques

Three local societies: the Stapleford and District Local History Society, the Beeston and District Local History Society and the Beeston and District Civic Society have formed a working group to design and commission commemorative blue plaques to recognise the lives and work of renowned local people and places of historic interest in southern Broxtowe.

Plaques have already been unveiled to TH Barton (Beeston); Arthur Mee (Stapleford) and Arthur Cossons (Beeston). A fourth can be found marking the site of Beeston's medieval village cross, re-discovered by Arthur Cossons.

The Beeston Express would like to thank the Chilwell historian, Alan Clayton, for allowing us to quote from his extensive research into the life and times of Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren.

Article from the Beeston Express Friday 27th May 2011.



News from Australia.
Bert and Norma Jarvis.

Thanks for the newsletter, it is always nice to hear from you and both of us enjoy reading the articles. I was particularly interested in the article about Stanton Iron works and reminded me when on nights and making a point at the top of Moorbridge Lane, the works were alive with light and noise, more so at midnight on New Years Eve when the cacophony of sound from there and Toton Sidings made sure nobody was asleep. Norma was also interested on the article about Arthur Mee, she being a pupil at the Arthur Mee School at the end of the war.

Norma and I spend a fair amount of time reminiscing as long back as we can remember which is well over 70 years now, the places we have been and lived in and the changes that have taken place. Sometimes we think 'did that really happen or did I or we really do that?' They are showing repeats of Heartbeat which reminds me of my time as Sergeant in charge at Warsop in the late 60's and early 70's. Bert.

Stanton Iron Works reminds me of the snowy day when we kids were sledging down the tow path at the side of the signal box near the ironworks – my brother, maybe eight years old went into the canal! My dad had made the sledge with blacksmiths made runners and fortunately it stood on end in the mud so he didn't drown. The signalman fished him out with a shunting pole. They took him in, wrapped him up in front of the fire and gave him a mars bar which made us very jealous; they were still very rare objects in the winter of 46/47. Norma.

From the Ilkeston Advertiser of Friday 17th July 1936.

LAST WOMAN MINER IS 88.
Coal Getting at 1/6 a day.

The days when women worked below ground in the mines of Lancashire were recalled on Monday, by Mrs Elizabeth Melling of Sandy Lane, Orrell, near Wigan, who has just celebrated her 88th birthday.

She is probably the only woman alive today who has worked underground.

"I was twelve years of age", she told the interviewer, "when I went to work at the old Barsley Collieries at Holland Moor, Upholland. I went to work for my Uncle George, who was a contractor at the pit. Another girl and I acted as drawers to him, but there were times when I set to with a pick and got the coal out myself. It was a good mine."

"The pit had no cage, as we know it today. They used to lower us down the shaft in a big basket which worked on a pulley. It was frightening at first, but I got used to it. There were no tubs then. We girls used to fill the coal into baskets and take it to the shaft bottom. We started at 7 am and worked until noon. Then we came to the surface and went back at 1 o'clock. We worked till four and then finished. I never worked the night shift. There were three other women working down the pit at the time".

"What did we earn? Oh, about 1s. 6d. a day. I worked below ground for over twelve months. Then I was given a job on the surface.

Before working in the pit, Mrs Melling was a bobbin carrier in a Wigan mill. She earned 10d a week and had to walk nearly five miles to and from work daily. When she was 42, her husband was killed in the pit and left her with nine children to bring up.

Mrs Melling who is still active, enjoys a pipe of thin twist. "I have smoked thin twist for over 40 years". She said.

Extract from the diary of Maud Tompkin

1940.

Monday 1/1/1940 Home on 9.30am bus with Alex after lovely Christmas holiday in Nottingham. Everywhere looks so beautiful with a white mantle of frost all glittering. Pipes all frozen at home. Busy time thawing out. Bed 11pm.

Tuesday 2/1/1940 Overflow running all night. Everywhere this ice as a result. 1/2 inch thick on the door even. Marvellous icicles. Had plumbers in 11am – 3pm. Simply stuck all day. Margaret took Patricia for a walk in AM in her pram.

Sunday 7/1/1940 Alex to morning school at Moorbridge Lane. Met him out of school in PM with Patricia and went to Church (3pm service) very foggy. Albert Chalmers stayed for tea. Pleasant evening doing nothing.

Monday 8/1/1940 Washday – nothing dried but finished things off and didn't trouble. Patricia slept 2 hrs in the morning in the garden. Read and knitted in the evening.

Tuesday 9/1/1940 Colder. Took P.A. a good walk in the afternoon. Met Miss Kind. Fetched ration books from butchers. Alex went to teachers prep at night and I did ironing. To bed 11.15pm

Wednesday 10/1/1940 Very frosty. Sand at Wesley Place anniversary. Rather 'coldy'. Miss kind + Millie + Albert stayed for tea. Jolly crowd. Turned out a terrible fog at night. Just read 'China Post' bed 10pm.

Thursday 11/1/1940 What a beautiful world. The trees look like fairy things and even the clothes post is pretty with frost on it. Took P. + A. Fetched first rations of sugar, butter and bacon.

Friday 12/1/1940 Did flues and cleaned kitchen as usual. Windows frosted so a job less. Freezing hard all day. Took P + A a walk in the afternoon.

Saturday 13/1/1940 Still a frozen world but so lovely.

Monday 15/1/1940 Some washday. Wash-house frozen up. Noting exiting happened. Ironed and did mending in evening.

Tuesday 16/1/1940 I wish I had pages and pages to write on because it is snowing and everywhere is so lovely. In the garden are two Robins, a blackbird, a Thrush, chaffinches and dozens of sparrows and starlings, all feeding on the bird table. A solitary gull has just flown over. What a beautiful world.

Thursday 18/1/1940 Early morning lovely. Still severe frost and everywhere frozen up. Divi day.

Sunday 28/1/1940 Snow now two feet thick, and it has not ceased snowing since Friday, snowed all day and at night. Millie came to tea. Went to Church with her. 6.30pm Glorious snow. Jack came round. Jawed till nearly 10pm.

Monday 29/1/1940 Still it snowed, and did do all night. Did washing and ironing with new iron that Alex bought me today, beauty. Stopped snowing about 2pm.

Tuesday 30/1/1940 Slippery and cold. Icicles around are simply marvellous. Over our roof they are three feet long, and there are nearly a hundred. Helped them in bank 2.15 – 5pm.

Thursday 1/2/1940 Cleaned upstairs. Began to snow about 3pm. Went to News Team but nobody there. Bought some chips on my way home, a real blizzard. Wrote to mother.

Saturday 3/2/1940 Terrible rush to start the day. In bank from 10 till 5pm. Went to Coopers for tea and played 'Buccaneer' afterwards, home 8.30pm after a most enjoyable time. Happy.

Monday 5/2/1940 Washday but did not do much. Very thawy and sloshy. Roads in a terrible state. Couldn't decide who was to go to social so both stayed home. To bed fairly early.

Tuesday 6/2/1940 Milk late arriving so no pancakes today. Meeting at Wesley Place cancelled. Went to Bramcote for Miss Kind. Slosh and water above the boots. Awful, played games at night. Miss Kind went home 10pm.

Monday 12/2/1940 Washday again, went walk in pm. Very cold wind and a little snow. Mr Baggs called also Mr Starkes and Mr Dixon and Miss Gee. Took film to be developed.

Tuesday 27/2/1940 Today the last of the snow vanished. Sunny and spring-like. Ironed all night.

Wednesday 28/2/1940 Into Nottingham. Home 7.30pm bus. Very black blackout tonight.

Tuesday 5/3/1940 Wake up with pain in back and shoulder, but a good rub with embrocation helped. Washed a few things which dried splendidly in the wind and sun. Ironed in the afternoon.

Wednesday 13/3/1940 Today the war between Finland and Russia came to an end. Showery. Took Pat to Long Eaton to have her hair trimmed. Fish for tea, late meal. Ida's mother passed away.

Thursday 14/3/1940 Sweep arrived 7.30am instead of tomorrow. Scuttled round. Spring cleaned. Kitchen afterwards. Snowed till 10am. Cold nasty day. Fay took P.A. a walk in afternoon. Went to concert. Not much, but enjoyed own fun with Miss Kind, Dolly, Minnie, Elsie, Mary and Mrs Calladine. Home 10.30pm. Jack with Alex for evening till 11pm.

Thursday 21/3/1940 Up a little earlier, cleaned through the whole house and got on splendidly. Fay took Patricia out in the afternoon. I was enrolled in the Mother's Union, along with two others. Lovely service. Rev Newenham preached.

Tuesday 26/3/1940 Alex to work in morning. To Arthur's wedding to Mary at 2.30pm and reception afterwards. Most enjoyable. P.A. splendidly behaved. Spent afternoon at Norman and Muriel's.

Tuesday 9/4/1940 Germany invaded Denmark and Norway. Denmark did not resist but Norwegians are fighting back and Allies are giving aid.

Wednesday 10/4/1940 Up at 8am. Father played with P.A. in the garden, and we went a good walk in the afternoon through the fields. Alex went to bed and got up for tea. Played clock golf in evening.

Tuesday 16/4/1940 Up earlier than usual. Miss Kind took Patricia Ann a walk – snowed but didn't settle. Sang at Men's meeting and led in prayer. Had some primroses – lovely ones.

Friday 3/5/1940 Saw a swallow sitting on the telegraph wires at Bramcote. Lovely. Scurried around and managed a good walk over the fields at 3.30pm. Going through one, yellow with dandelions, Patricia commented "what a lovely garden" and I agreed.

Sunday 5/5/1940 Heard the cuckoo. A warm sunny day. Put P.A. out in a cotton dress and white shoes. Soloed at Brookhill in pm. To Brown's for tea with Alex and P.A. Alex spoke in church at children's service. Soloed again at night.

Thursday 9/4/1940 The swallows came, and the martins took up residence again under the eaves in the nests they left last year. Went to Mother's Union, play and tea.

Friday 10/5/1940 Up earlier than usual. Cleaned through everywhere thoroughly and finished at 3pm. Tired but happy. Germany invaded Holland and Belgium.

Saturday 11/5/1940 Lovely hot day. News grave re war. Rita and Jessie came, bringing forget-me-nots.

Monday 13/5/1940 Bank holiday cancelled by government because of serious war situation. Alex finished at 1pm. Played croquet. Tea outside plus Mrs Cooper, Margaret and Miss Kind. Happy days.

Wednesday 15/5/1940 Another half day for Alex – three in succession, did a spot of gardening.

Thursday 23/5/1940 Did little in the way of housework. Headache. Gave message and soloed 'God's sunshine', and 'He Satisfies me so' at Church Street. Mrs Cooper took P.A. out. Storm at 6 o'clock.

Friday 24/5/1940 Empire Day. Hurrah for England. Usual dirty old Friday. Very warm day. Joan took Patricia out from 11am till 5pm. The King gave a splendid message at 9 o'clock.

Sunday 26/5/1940 National Day of Prayer. To Nottingham at 2.45pm. Tea at No9. Went to St Saviour's with dearest leaving P.A. with Grandma and Granddad. Very happy.

Monday 27/5/1940 Yesterday did me much good. Happy and feel more sure of our victory. God is on our side. So what matters? Washed, and ironed in afternoon. Grand day sun and wind.

Tuesday 28/5/1940 King Leopold of Belgium capitulated.

And a lovely sunny day.

Wednesday 29/5/1940 Things look very difficult for the Allies now. Heavy thunderstorm in afternoon preventing our intended visit to Mrs Bailey's. Miss Kind came and stayed till 10pm. Alex went to Mrs B's after tea for croquet.

Wednesday 5/6/1940 Went to Nottingham on the 11am bus and stayed till 8 o'clock. Alex arrived 1pm. Called to see Norman and Gladys and their newly erected air raid shelter.

Friday 7/6/1940 Had an air raid warning at 2am lasting 40 minutes. Wrote a letter to mother. Cleaned through. Very hot day.

Saturday 8/5/1940 Shopped in the morning. Hotter than ever. Walked up to see Miss Kind after tea. We have evacuated Narvic (Norway).

Monday 10/6/1940 Italy declares war on Allies from midnight tonight. They seem to have no reason. Hot and sunny. Big washday including two blankets. Not too well as result.

Friday 14/6/1940 Cleaned thro' well and did not finish till 4 o'clock. Headache. Miss Kind called in evening. Bath and bed about 11.30pm. France seem to be seeking Armistice.

Monday 17/6/1940 Washed. Hot and sunny. Mrs Allen called. Ironed in evening. Arthur Bailey called. His first furlough since he was called up before Christmas.

Saturday 21/6/1940 Wednesday. Went to shops and called to see Daily's in afternoon between showers. Alex registered for military service.

Monday 24/6/1940 Air raid warnings for 4 hrs during the night, did not wake us.

Thursday 4/7/1940 Albert Dobson called up today. Patricia had her stitches out. Thank goodness it is over now.

Wednesday 17/7/1940 Our wedding anniversary.

Thursday 18/7/1940 Not very energetic but managed to put a bit of time in painting. Alex went for medical exam for military service – passed A1.

Monday 5/8/1940 Hot and sunny. Did not go far but enjoyed the day. Raid at night – 1am – but had warning.

Sunday 11/8/1940 Holidays – at home.

Monday 26/8/1940 Wash day. Done in good time. Ironed at night. Warning at 11.15pm lasting all night. Headache.

Tuesday 27/8/1940 To Bramcote for practice. Home 9.15pm. Warning at 10.30pm till 4 o'clock. What a life!

Wednesday 28/8/1940 Mr and Mrs Vice came after dinner and stayed till 8pm, good fun. Played croquet in afternoon.

Air raid warning 10.20pm till 4.30am. Bombs near.

Thursday 29/8/1940 Warning 10.30pm till 4.30s over most of the time but not much bombing, thank goodness.

Friday 30/8/1940 Shoulder very painful and neck worse. Managed as much housework as I could. Kenneth to tea also Margaret. To see Dianna Durbin at 7.30pm. Raid warning 9.20 till 4.30. Awful. The worst yet. Much bombing and gunfire.

Saturday 31/8/1940 Not too good especially after our run home last night. Ken Broomhead's last day. Miss Field gave us a key to her A.R. Shelter.

Wednesday 4/9/1940 Caught noon bus to Nottingham. Dinner at Grandma's. Alex came about 4.45pm. Home early before blackout. Bombs dropped about 4.15am at Ilkeston.

Friday 6/9/1940 Miss Daly called and brought some apples. Cleaned through thoroughly. Did not finish till 4 o'clock. Bee stung my left arm when in garden.

Saturday 7/9/1940 Arm painful so bathed it. London raided heavily.

Sunday 15/9/1940 To Bramcote 1.45pm with Mrs Clark and P.A. Soloed in service of song 'The Guiding Light'. Tea with Mr and Mrs Ward; plus Alex. Soloed 'Rest a white', and 'Is He Satisfied'. Speaker Mrs Brown.

Monday 16/9/1940 Wet. Dried clothes by fire and ironed in evening. Norman goes in the Army today.

Wednesday 18/9/1940 To Nottingham with Alex and Elsie. Took P.A. to see the German bomber and then to Edna's. Happy day.

Friday 20/9/1940 Ida, Jean came for umbrella they left on Tuesday. P.A. out all morning with Joan. Finished all through by 2.15. Hoover man called and took machine in pieces. Alex worked

6 – 7pm.

Thursday 26/9/1940 Cleaned flu's. Took Patricia a walk in afternoon and called at Welfare re milk. Miss Kind and Nancy came, went to prayer meeting. Enjoyed it tremendously. Made Damson pickle – 6lbs. To bed midnight.

Sunday 29/9/1940 Had a daylight raid by single plane at 5.20pm. Caught 8.30 bus to Gallows Inn. Soloed as at Moorbridge on 8th. Alex went to Rev Coleman's to meet Miss Ford of India.

Friday 4/10/1940 Mrs Florence Foster came to help me, 10 – 1pm, 2/6d. Very good worker, age 21, baby boy 1 year younger than P.A.

Saturday 5/10/1940 Opened Missionary service at Zion Church, Long Eaton 3pm. Miss Kind took P.A. for a walk. Went to 'sausage and mash' supper at St Andrew's after putting P.A. to bed. Frank Holmes conjured. Happy evening. Home 9 ish. Not one A. raid warning for a whole week!! Lovely!

Monday 7/10/1940 Clowes Methodist Women's Own, Sandiacre, solo. Cable from Eve – New York. 'Our home is yours, God bless you all. Keep your chins up. There'll always be an England'. Enjoyed meeting at Sandiacre. Mrs Cooper brought Pat on for tea. Walked home.

Tuesday 8/10/1940 Just shopped and called on Mrs Hallam for tea. Bombs heard 2.30pm. Lois's Charlie joined the Air Force.

Wednesday 9/10/1940 More bombs in distance 10am. To Nottingham 12 noon. Lunch at No9. Bought P.A. new legginette set and shoes. Home 5.30pm. Very windy day.

Tuesday 29/10/1940 Washed and ironed. Lovely cold sunny day. Dried splendidly. Bombs dropped in distance 3.30am. Mrs Cooper not well.

Wednesday 30/10/1940 Went to Nottingham 12 noon bus, P.A. wore her new siren suit. Lunch at Grandma's. Alex to manager's meeting. Home 5.30pm bus. Large bombs dropped 8.55pm.

Thursday 31/10/1940 Teemed with rain most of the day. A bomber dropped five at Bramcote. Plenty of A.A. fire. Alex to fellowship at night. Stan Johnson's birthday.

Friday 1/11/1940 A barrage balloon moored above me. Mrs Forster's day. Rained all afternoon. Alex went to club at St Andrew's.

Thursday 14/11/1940 Spoke at Abbey St Bright Hour, and soloed, 'Satisfied and Touch of His Hand'. Cold day. Happy. Mrs Cooper had P.A. Letter from Marjorie.

Monday 18/11/1940 Posted letters to Mrs Goyler, Bob, Mrs Smith, Carrie, and aunt Pollic. Only washed a few things. Wet morning. Spoke and soloed at Chapel the Bridge bright hour. Rained. Gun fire most of the night.

Tuesday 19/11/1940 Alex in bank 8.30am. Foggy. Mrs Flinders called with Tommy. Helped A. in bank 7pm – 9.30pm when gunfire sent us in. Mrs Fisher dashed home about midnight. Dreadful night of guns and planes all the night.

Friday 22/11/1940 Warnings 8am – 8.35am. Wild morning. Sweep came 8.15am. Brenda came in Florence's place.

Warnings 4pm – 4.25pm
7.35pm – 9.30pm
11.35pm – 12.25am.

Wednesday 4/12/1940 Bought new grey coat and hat. Alex went to Bible study at Long Eaton. Warning 7pm till about 9.30pm. Fetched P.A. downstairs because of planes.

Saturday 7/12/1940 Up early to get shopping done in goodtime. Warning 11.50am – 12.10pm. Queer planes around. Took P.A. to Mrs Kind (jumble sale). To YLR rally with Clara. Soloed 'Is He Satisfied'? Prepared for morning.

Sunday 15/12/1940 Today Alex preached at Bramcote Chapel. How glad I feel about it. Heavy gunfire all the evening and night. Terrible.

Friday 20/12/1940 H.M.S. Acheron sunk. Today John PITT, Joan's fiancée – gave his life for England.

Bought and decorated Christmas tree and trimmed the house.

Wednesday 25/12/1940 Misty and cold. A quiet day at home on our own. Love everywhere. So happy.

Thursday 26/12/1940 The raid-less days and nights continue. Grand peace! Mr Tompkin and Gladys came in morning. To Nancy Martin's party 3.30pm – 1.30am. A lovely Christmas altogether.

Friday 27/12/1940 Overslept. Warning at lunchtime. Cleaned through as usual. P.A. has a cold. Card from New York via "Clipper".

Tuesday 31/12/1940 Did not sit up for New Year – the first time I can remember. To Miss Kind's for tea and evening. Most enjoyable. Home 9.30pm. Cold.

Alex is Maud Tompkin's husband, P.A. is Patricia Ann, her daughter.

John Pitts was Leading Seaman P/JX143136 John Cornelius PITTS who lost his life when HMS Acheron hit a mine off the Isle of White on 17/12/1940 when on sea trials after having had repairs and refit.

The extract from the 1940 diary of Maud Tompkin is published with the kind permission of her daughter, Patricia Ann Whitehead.

Editor.

PRICE LIST of items for sale at Society Meetings
At any other time please apply to the Chairman

Stapleford Town Trail £1.00

Stapleford Tea Towels £2.95

Leather bookmarks £0.80

Local views – framed priced individually

Local views – cards with envelopes £1.00

Pen & ink drawings by Jack Vernon £1.00

Full colour illustrated maps of Stapleford + Borlase Warren
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NEWSLETTER EDITOR – Malcolm Jarvis - 0115-932 3457
CHAIRMAN/SECRETARY – Barbara Brooke 0115-939 4979
TREASURER – Pat Hodgkiss – 0115-939 5273

**The deadline for submission of items for the next Spring
2012 issue of the Newsletter is 31 March 2012.
Material can be given to any of the above named.
This is YOUR newsletter! We'd love to hear from you!**

Front cover by Nigel Brooks
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