



Repton Village History Group Newsletter

Winter 2018/19



The ongoing programme:

We decided to move back from quarterly meetings to monthly meetings because for most of last year we ended up with a meeting most months. Wherever possible we will stick to our old date of the 3rd Tuesday in the month at 7.00pm

February 19 th	May 21 st - AGM.	Aug 20 th - visit (ideas needed)	Nov 19 th
March 19 th	June 18 th	Sept 17 th	December 17 th
April 16 th	July 16 th - visit (ideas needed)	October 15 th	

As long as we can, we will meet in the Red Lion but due to space constraints, these meetings are limited to members.

At the January meeting we decided to undertake a number of projects:

- 1) Re-do the medieval graffiti survey of St Wystan's because the original work done with the Involve Heritage CIC does not seem to be available to us.
- 2) Bringing the record of Foremark monuments and inscriptions up to date
- 3) Create a churchyard trail for St Wystan's
- 4) Reorganise the documentary archive
- 5) Record more memories from older villagers
- 6) Take part in the village party (fête)
- 7) Carry out resistivity surveys in 6 or 7 interesting locations.
- 8) Proceed with our test pit survey and possibly on the tanyard and parson's Fields site
- 9) Complete the photographing of the original Village Hall records.

Plus answering queries on Repton's ancient and recent past and supporting family history researchers.

Helping with enquiries:

We have had some challenging family history enquiries:

There was an enquiry seeking a Rev (William?) Fox who a family believe was based in Repton around 1870 but who committed suicide. The nearest we could get was a marriage of Maria Earp to Adam Fox (registered in Burton) and her death in 1868 with a burial in Repton. Turns out it was the enquirer's great great grandmother. Seems Fox might have been the wrong surname so we sent a list of vicars and they are continuing to explore the mystery.

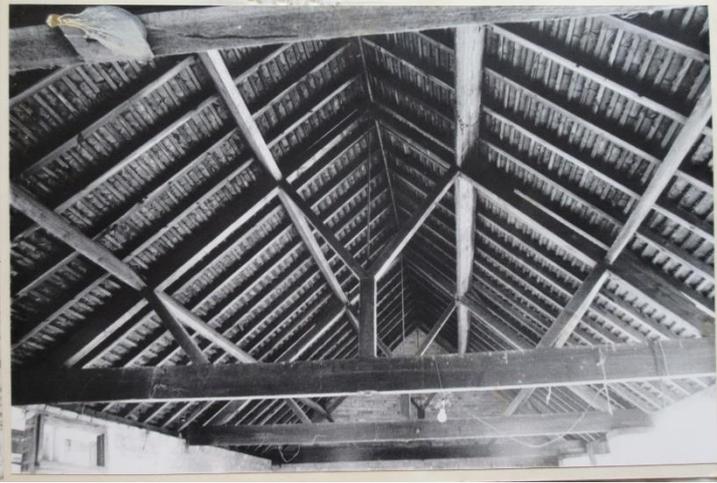
In another case, the enquirer was hunting for Thomas Sutton born to Thomas and Hannah in Repton and baptised on 26th July 1838. We could not find this chap in the Repton records, but did find a Thomas Sutton, parents Thomas and Hannah, baptised 30 years later in 1868. A lot of research through about 5 generations finally revealed there was no connection with his family. However we did eventually find a Thomas Sutton born in Barton in 1838 who married Elizabeth and then when she died he married Marian who was born in Repton. We were able to trace this family through 4 generations and it all tied up with the current family in the end.

Then there was an enquiry about Alice Bamford. We remembered Miss Francis Bamford but it turned out that there were several branches to the Bamford family. Alice was born to Sarah and John Bamford in Repton in August 1875 and baptised the following April in St Wystan's. Her father died when she was six and her mother remarried to Henry Fletcher and they lived at Mill Hill, Repton with Alice, an older sister (Harriett) and two older brothers. 4 years later in 1885 her mother Sarah died leaving Henry with 4 step children. In 1886, Harriett had a baby girl baptised in Repton but no father named. By the 1891 census they are on Long Street - probably in Dale Cottages - now the site of the split level houses just before Bank House Farm on Main St. Alice is aged 15 and keeping house for the family. By 1901 oldest brother William is back, Harriett has moved out, Alice is housekeeper and there are 3 more children Arthur, Maud Ethel and Harry. There had been a 4th child, George, who died aged 7 months. It turned out that these are Alice's children and no father is named on the baptismal records. In December 1901, Alice has Herbert - no father named - and in 1904 Alice had Alice Mary. Here the parental entry is Alice Bamford and Henry Fletcher but his name is crossed out.

Henry died in 1907, definitely in Dale Cottages, and on the 1911 census the family, headed by Alice is still there. She takes in washing and daughter Maud Ethel is working in the steam laundry. Brother William is a farm worker and the others are at the village school. In 1939 Alice aged 64 is still in Dale Cottages keeping house for Harry and Herbert and herself. She seems to have died in 1965 aged 89. She was not buried in Repton, but may well have been cremated. We lost track of Harriett but her daughter, Sarah Ann, married Arthur Calverley in St Thomas' Church Derby in 1910 and her deceased father is named as Henry Bamford. It seems she died in 1970 probably in Kegworth.

Tea rooms

Sadly the Repton tea rooms have shut. Opened 29 years ago by Sue Goodwin and more recently run by Kathy Grogan, the lease with the Church Commissioners has made it uneconomical. Sue was farming at Brook Farm and this was an outbuilding which housed farm equipment before it was converted. Beside the Brook, with ample parking, a good garden, the Gander Guards (geese) and local ladies prepared to help by baking cakes, it was a popular venue serving everything from sandwiches and classic cream teas to cooked meals and breakfasts. Kathy has now taken on the tea rooms at Betty's farm.



These photos are thanks to Sue and Kathy. We also have photos of the Tea Rooms as they were when they shut - for the archive.

ACID – and a Curious Tale: Andy Austen puzzles over a recent article on Repton

In January each year, Derbyshire County Council and the Peak District National Park issue 'ACID' - an excellent (and free) annual journal: 'Archaeology and Conservation in Derbyshire and the Peak District'. This year, Repton features four times – on both covers, an article outlining what Dr Cat Jarman has told us in her talks over recent years and an article entitled 'Re-framing Viking Repton'.

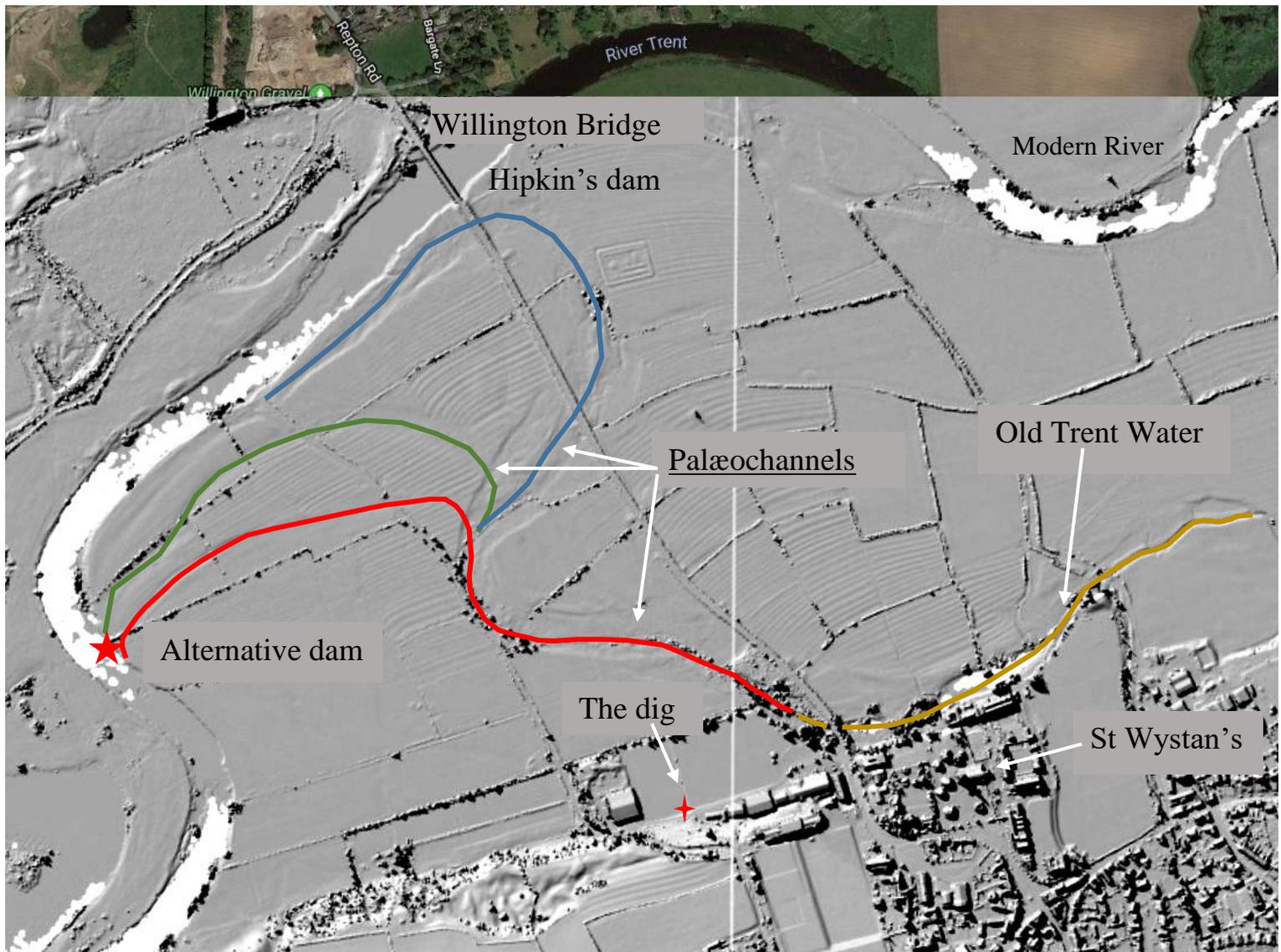
This latter article is causing me serious concern.

The discovery by Prof. Martin Biddle and Birthe Kjølbbye-Biddle of the defensive Viking position at Repton makes enormous sense. It was a D shaped ditch and embankment incorporating the church as a strong point with the Old Trent forming the remaining side of the enclosure. The river would have provided ready access by water from their previous winter camp at Torksey to the wealthy royal monastery and settlement at Repton.

This article in ACID argues that a palæochannel (old river channel) recently found during building work at the foot of the cliff at the sports complex on the Tanyard, silted up in the Bronze Age and was completely filled in by the time the Anglo-Saxons arrived. It goes on to suggest that since it had very probably once flowed into what we now know as the Old Trent Water, then the Old Trent would not have been navigable by the time the Vikings came in 873/4 and implies that Repton may not have been the site of the Winter Camp. However the LIDAR image in the article clearly shows at least three old channels flowing back to the Old Trent Water so it is likely that this Tanyard channel silted up when the river meandered a bit and the river found another route to the Old Trent Water - or maybe there were always multiple channels which linked to the Old Trent.

In recorded time, there were at least two channels to the river and at least one island between Repton and Willington. An Act of Parliament enabling navigation was passed in 1699, and it seems that the Willington channel was less circuitous than via Repton so the Repton channel was deliberately blocked. However, antiquarians record that the Old Trent at Repton was navigable to Twyford until 1777 (Hipkin 1892 pg. 3) and for pleasure boats till 1816 (Biggsby 1854 pg. 114). Hipkin (1899 pg. 2) locates the forking of the river as near the ferry and the dam that restricted the Repton channel as near the bridge. Another credible location is marked below and is based on stone still in situ. A paper 'Historical channel-floodplain dynamics along the River Trent' by A Large and G Petts (1996 Applied Geography Vol 16 No 3 pg 199) identifies 1705 as the date when the Repton Channel ceased to be the main channel.

So it is curious to suppose that the Vikings would not have been able to use the main channel of the river at Repton in 873/4.



From lidarfinder.com

A modern day walk and ancient routes. Martin Flowerdew writes about a curious bridleway and the Road to Oxford...

Returning from a trip to Nottingham and looking for a 'different' place to walk my dog, I stopped off half-way between Stanton by Bridge and Ticknall on the A514. A sign post indicated a bridleway and curiosity led me towards some woods (Robin Wood). On the right hand side of the track, not 100yds from the road is a plaque erected by South Derbyshire District Council in 2001. The wording reads:

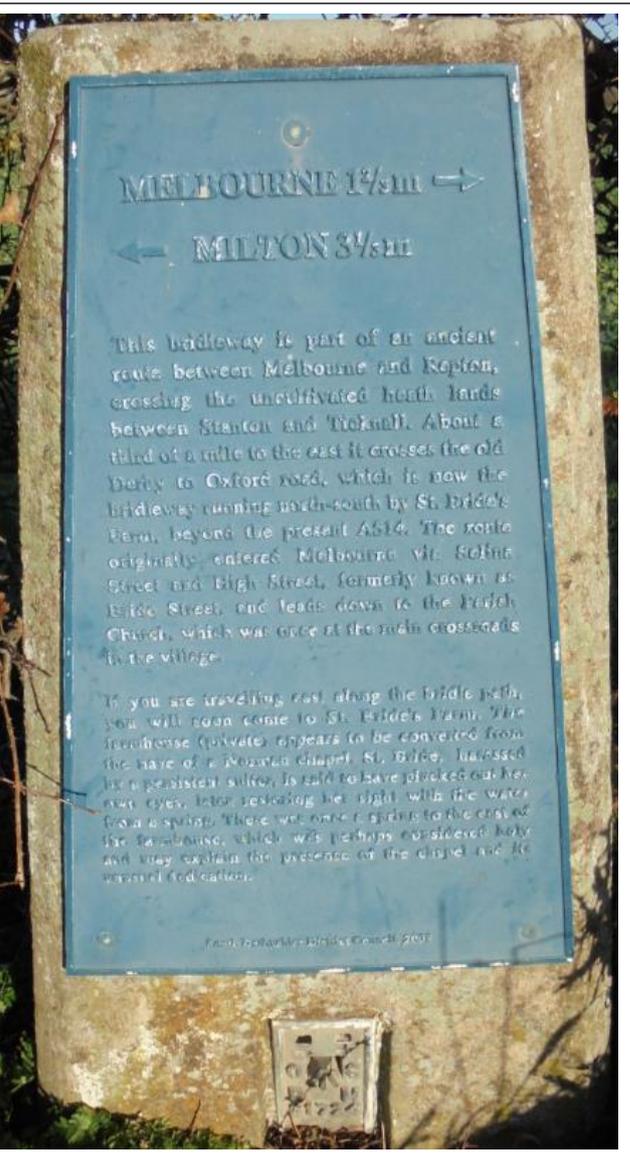
MELBOURNE 1½m →
← MILTON 3¼m

This bridleway is part of an ancient route between Melbourne and Repton crossing the uncultivated heath lands between Stanton and Ticknall. About a third of a mile to the east it crossed the old Derby to Oxford road, which is now the bridleway running north-south by St Bride's Farm, beyond the present A514. The route originally entered Melbourne via Selina Street and High Street, formerly known as Bride Street, and leads down to the Parish Church, which was once at the main crossroads in the village.

If you are travelling east along the bridle path you will soon come to St Bride's Farm. The farmhouse (private) appears to be converted from the nave of a Norman chapel. St. Bride, harassed by a persistent suitor, is said to have plucked out her own eyes, later, restoring her sight with the water from a spring. There was once a spring to the east of the farmhouse, which was perhaps considered holy and may explain the presence of the chapel and its unusual dedication.

The two routes mentioned, Derby to Oxford and Melbourne to Repton challenged me to find out more. Researching the first led to a book published in 1822 by Edward Mogg, titled 'Paterson's Roads'. This is a listing of 'Direct and Principal Crossroads' in England and Wales. You can access this on-line. Try:

https://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Paterson_s_roads_by_E_Mogg.html?id=6AgHAAAQAAI



Scroll down to the table of contents and choose The Cross Roads (section 6). Page up to page 546 and you will find a route from Oxford to Derby with a number of alternative endings. Following the listing leads one cross-country along this route:

Derby, Swarkston (Bridge over the Trent), Pistern Hill, Ashby de la Zouch, Atherstone, Manchester, Nuneaton, Coventry, Whitley Bridge, Willenhall, Finford Bridge, Princethorpe, Marton, Long Itchington, Southam, Ladbroke, Mollington, Little Bourton, Banbury, Weeping Cross, Adderbury, Deddington, Hopcroft's Hole, Kidlington Green, Oxford
While it has not been possible to trace a bridleway along the whole of that route (some of which may well lie beneath modern roads), the listing of places outlined in 'Paterson's Roads' could well be the ancient route referred to on the plaque. If you know of a different route then please get in touch on thevicarofrepton@gmail.com or with Andy Austen.

In addition, 'Paterson's Roads' lists two other routes into Derby after the traveller had reached Atherstone, via Burton-on-Trent or Castle Donington.

The other route, Melbourne to Repton (or should it be Repton to Melbourne!) is not entirely clear. Studying local maps it is possible to get from Melbourne to Milton and from there to Repton by a variety of routes. What is the most likely 'ancient route' referred to on the plaque? Working from the Repton end could it be:

via Mount Pleasant, to Milton (on the present road), across Main Street and passed the old saw mill, following the track towards Ticknall, passed Bendall's Clump and then turning left to the east end of Heath Wood, continuing to Seven Spouts, around the southern edge of Coppy Hill, into Robin Wood and then off to St Bride's and eventually to Melbourne.

That would seem quite logical. However, ancient trackways may not have followed the most logical route and again I would be interested if you consider another route to be more likely, again do contact myself - Martin Flowerdew, thevicarofrepton@gmail.com or Andy Austen.



- Sawmill
- Heath Wood
- Seven Spouts
- Knowle Hill
- Coppy Hill
- Robin Wood
- St Brides
- Selina Street
- High Street

All the routes mentioned are, today, bridleways and so could well be ancient routes. There is a more direct route through Foremarke School but it isn't a bridleway and the gamekeepers might have chased you off in earlier days.

Repton Casuals Football Team

Sadly, Roger Dennis who had been collecting an Archive for the Repton Casuals has died. A trustee, enthusiastic supporter and hard worker for the Casuals, he had suggested we should put the Casual's collection in the Village Archive that we maintain. This may still be suggested and if so we will need help indexing the material.

There is a suggestion that the team's name was proposed by Morgan Maddox Morgan-Owen who gained his Blue at Oxford playing football, was a Welsh International and, from leaving School in 1896, played 170 matches as centre half for the Corinthian Casuals. For much of this time he was their captain. He taught at Repton School and survived WWI – was wounded twice and gained the DSO. By the time he had retired he and his wife were living at The Hall in Willington.

Archaeological artefacts

More of the artefacts found during Professor and Birthe Kjølbye-Biddle's digs in the 70s and 80s.



Fragments of window glass



Coffin fitting – one of hundreds



Knife with evidence of sheath and buckle



Two views of an iron bell



Silver gilt toiletry utensil with spoon at one end

Just how big was the "Great Heathen" Viking Army?

The size of the Great Heathen Army is much debated. In the 1960s there was a view that it was measured in hundreds of men and that the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles exaggerated the size of Viking fleets to save face. However, the large size of the recently researched site at Torksey where the Vikings spent the winter before coming to Repton, leads to a growing view that the army was several thousand strong. If they all came to Repton then they could not all have fitted into the fortified enclosure and may also have been billeted in the monastic buildings or camped on the high ground along the river. The group that came to Repton may have been just a raiding party, but there were four leaders and they split and went in two directions when they left. So for each to be an effective fighting force, the combined numbers must have been fairly large. There have been suggestions that some may have been on the island. However, even with extensive modern flood prevention measures downstream, the island is still often flooded. The army had 4 leaders and consisted of men from a number of different Scandinavian origins with potentially different cultures. So they may have camped in groups and one group may have been around Foremark. In Domesday it is recorded as Fornewerche which is a Norse word implying existing earlier buildings or fortifications. This site is between Repton and Heath Wood where a number of Viking cremation burials were found (Repton having "normal" burials) and this could reflect cultural differences. There are two possibilities for the name. One is that once the Danelaw was established in 886, Vikings came back to Foremark, the old camp, and settled there as seems to have happened at Repton. The other is that when the Vikings originally came in 873, they found some stone structures at Foremark that they could use as the basis of their defences - just as at Repton. Who knows? But it's an interesting thought.

To make comments or for more information, please contact Andy Austen on rvhg@reptonvillage.org.uk or 01283 702448
We are always pleased to receive information about the locality and the people that lived and worked near here.

We no longer offer a programme of monthly talks, so here are the published programmes for some other Local History Groups:

Willington History Group (7.30pm, The Old School Willington)
Thursday 14th February Muses, Models and Mistresses – Richard Stone.
Thursday 14th March Lace-makers- Women on the Canals – Kate Hession
Thursday 11th April A Victorian Governess` Life – Liz Keeley
Thursday 9th May Guided walk around Ashby -£2 per head, provided through auspices of Ashby Museum.

Ticknall Preservation and Historical Society (7.30pm, Ticknall Village Hall, 01530 810266/01283 762064/
01332 862116)
Friday 22nd February Ancient Coal Mining with Stewart Warburton. Stewart will be revealing details of 14th century coal mining discovered locally at Lount.
Friday 29th March The Life of Edith Piaf with Julie Ede. Julie returns to talk about the fascinating life of this French Singer from the Paris streets to international stardom.
Friday 26th April The History of Palitoy with Bob Brechin
Bob, an ex-design engineer, at Palitoy talks about the company history and the 60 years of Action Man.
Friday 31st May The Ecclesbourne Railway with Eric Boulby. Eric will be giving a talk on the history and restoration of the Ecclesbourne Railway.
Friday 28th June Outside visit - Come ride on the restored Ecclesbourne line from Duffield to Wirksworth.

Melbourne Civic Society (7.30pm, Assembly Rooms High St Melbourne, 01332 865760, Guests always welcome.
Members £1, non-members £2. pamadams56@yahoo.co.uk)
Monday February 25th: Hippos, Hares & Horseshoes: Derbyshire Mammals, Past, Present & Future by Debbie Alston
Monday March 25th: A.G.M followed by the History of Melbourne Wood by Philip Heath. A local historian shares his detailed knowledge of the area.

Etwall and Burnaston History Group (7.30pm, Chapel School Room, 01283 730287)
Tuesday 19th February Pestilence, Intrigue and Murder - Ian Morgan
Tuesday 19th March The Real Dad`s Army - Jed Jaggard
Tuesday 16th April Derbyshire Adventurers and Explorers (Part 2) - Shirley Horton
Tuesday 21st May AGM followed by `History of Slavery` - John Cumpstone

Unless otherwise stated, meeting are held in the Methodist Chapel Schoolroom, Willington Road, Etwall DE65 6HX and commence at 7.30 pm. Visitors welcome at all meetings (admission £3.00) **Further details:**
www.etwallhistory.org or Pam Kerby (01283 730287) sandypits.kerby@btinternet.com

Hilton and Marston History Group (hiltonhistory@gmail.com, Methodist chapel, Main St. Hilton DE65 5FF 7.30pm £3.00)
Thursday 7th February Friargate Bridge, Peter Mosley
Thursday 7th March AGM
Thursday 4th April Mary Queen of Scots. The captive Queen in England 1568-84, David Templeman

Aston on Trent Local History Group (astonontrenthistory@gmail.com £2 over 18s. Children free)
February 26th Mike Kelly: The Story of the Cromford Canal
March 26th John Lear: John Wesley - Man, Mission , Means
April 23rd Bert Willow: Interesting Stories about Wine
May 28th Steven Flinders : Stanton Ironworks: Gone but not forgotten
June 25th Peter Liddle: Abbeys and Priors
July 23rd John Whitfield: Remembering the 1950s
August: NO MEETING
September 24th Tony Luke: Church & State from the Black Death to the Reformation
October 22nd The History Group: Finding Photographs
November 26th Peter Castle: Derbyshire Songs and Stories
December: NO MEETING