

LOCAL HISTORY 2012 - 2013

OCTOBER 2012

At the first meeting we discovered that we all know something about Carlton & Gedling's past, ranging from a little to quite a lot, but we'd all like to know more. Suggestions were put forward about subjects to explore. To focus our minds a bit on how to proceed, our next meeting will be in the local history section at Carlton Library, Manor Road on Tuesday 20 November at 2.00 pm. A member of the library staff will give us a brief introduction to the stock the library holds.

NOVEMBER 2012

We had a good look at the resources in the local history section at Carlton Library. We discussed what and how we would like to research into the area's history. Some of us have knowledge of the last few decades so we agreed that we would focus initially on the post-war period, 1945 to the present day. As we have different topics we'd like to look at, we can utilise the resources in the library to follow up our interests, comparing notes & pooling knowledge as we go along. By the way, did you know that J.R.R. Tolkien (The Hobbit, Lord of the Rings) began his writings while staying with his aunt at her farm in Gedling, or that his uncle and 2 famous cricketers are buried in Gedling?

DECEMBER 2012

We began the last meeting with a general exchange of news on re- search any of us had been following. Local news articles were passed around and we continued to update each other on information we already knew or had learned. Invariably we stroll "down memory lane" as we piece together the history of Carlton & Gedling from 1945 onwards.

One topic was the history of St James' Church in Mapperley, which began as a barn church, and its links with the Nottingham church of the same name, pulled down to make way for the General Hospital. There are links there with the Hospital chapel and the chapel at Mapperley Hospital. Every piece of information reveals a path to more!

The library resources are very useful and we continue our own research, coming together to exchange facts and ideas. If you would like to see what the area looked like before and during all the developments of the last century, a useful website is picturethepast.org - a library resource with plenty of photographs.

FEBRUARY 2013

As the January meeting had to be cancelled due to the bad weather, we used our February session to catch up with what we had all been researching and compared notes. We also agreed that, as we learn more, we will perhaps give a short talk to other members about our findings. Graeme (also our U3A webmaster) gave the first presentation, of the photos and history based on a walk around Gedling. Check out the website to take a "virtual" walk! We also, as usual, passed around articles that we had come across and we welcomed a couple of new members.

MARCH 2013

We had an interesting session, welcoming new members, exchanging information and continuing our research. We spent some time examining the collection of old maps that the library holds - a fascinating journey back in time. Calling up our collective knowledge helps us trace the developments in the area.

Many of you will have visited the Workhouse at Southwell, but did you know that there was once a workhouse in our area? It stood at the corner of Stoke Lane and Burton Road. Established in the 1790s as a 'parish poor house', able-bodied men were 'farmed out' to work as agricultural labourers. Although the last of the workhouses existed until the 1940s, the one in Carlton & Gedling was pulled down in 1896.

APRIL 2013

At the last meeting, members reported back on personal research, leading to a wide-ranging discussion. Topics included the Nottingham Arboretum with fond childhood memories of visits - not so fond for Allan whose head became stuck in the railings round the pond and who had to be prised free! Also the 1941 World War II night of bombing when Christine's father was on fire watch at Shire Hall and Ian's journey on the last No. 39 trolleybus.

Remember the trolleybuses and how the driver had to get out with a pole when the bus came off the overhead wires? As usual, members passed around articles, books, etc as we shared our local knowledge. Summer sessions will focus on "Walking through our History".

MAY 2013

The May meeting consisted of us putting our heads together to plan a walk through Carlton's history. The library resources proved useful and informative once again in opening the window to our past. They also show us how our perspectives have changed over the years. For instance, a series of local authority publications in the early 1970s describe the 'splendid new Town Hall offices in Carlton Square' which we now regard as a monstrosity that ripped the heart out of old Carlton. Sadly true of much of Nottingham city, too.

Between us we came up with a list of noteworthy sites to research further, but as usual our discussions raised more questions. Anyone else out there remember the Russia fields?

JUNE 2013: GEDLING TRAIL

This month we walked the Gedling Village Trail. We were lucky in having a perfect sunny day to stroll through the village looking at various local landmarks & learning more about the history of the area. It's fascinating to think that a hundred years ago Gedling was just a cluster of cottages close to the church and surrounded by farms and orchards. The railway was just opening up the area to commuters and the colliery, opened in 1899, was still operating on a very small scale, yet to reach its heyday mid-century and ultimately its demise in 1992.

As we walked along, some of us were literally strolling down 'Memory Lane', swapping stories about the adventures of our younger selves. We paused at various points, including to look at the gravestones of the famous cricketers interred in the churchyard of All Hallows. No time to look inside the church - that will have to wait for another day. Many thanks to Graeme for leading the walk.

To see a detailed description and photos of the walk click on the link:

[Local History Trail: Gedling](#)

JULY 2013: CARLTON TRAIL

In July we walked through Carlton. We started at St. Paul's Church. When it was built in 1885, in the style of a Roman Basilica, it stood at the heart of old Carlton, which at that time had become a hub of activity principally around the booming hosiery trade. Many local people were cottage industry framework knitters until industrialization led to the new trams carrying them into the city factories.

After a tour of the church (thanks to Steve & Phil for organising this) we set off to look at the cluster of churches at the foot of Carlton Hill and the old Police Station. Looking at old photos and comparing notes and memories we walked on through Carlton, passing the sites of St. Paul's School, and hearing about the spooky goings on at the old cemetery, now Tesco's!

Passing other sites, including the forge, the bakery and the old Board School we made our way to see the Watson Fothergill building, originally a laundry and now converted to apartments. Although much has been lost, including Park House and its sister building, our shared memories help to keep it alive. Many thanks to all members for their research and contributions to the walk.

To see a detailed description and photos of the walk click on the link:

[Local History Trail: Carlton](#)



AUGUST 2013: NETHERFIELD TRAIL

We enjoyed the last of our summer season of local walks. We were joined by other interested U3A members to find out about Netherfield in the Past. Ably led by Alan with his own extensive local knowledge, our walk took us through the heart of Netherfield. There were common or individual memories of children's matinees and romantic soirees at the Cosy Cinema, theatre classes in the dance hall above the Netherfield Co-operative store and schoolboy stories about watching the antics of customers at Jackie Bell's pub.

Many other memories too, of course! Much has disappeared over the years but there are still some lovely old buildings: the Ceylon Tea Tower is interesting, as is the Baptist church opposite, along with the somewhat grander former Lloyds bank building. We also passed the site of the Bourne factory, which employed many women workers - are you related to one of the 'Bourne Angels'? If so, let us know!

A guided tour of St George's Church had also been arranged. Built at about the same time as St Paul's in Carlton, this is a quite different sort of architecture. Much plainer and more functional, it was designed to fit more comfortably with the railway housing being established for the workers. Inside is a very attractive and welcoming space with some lovely architectural features. Memories for some, too, of weddings and baptisms.

Thanks, Alan, for leading the walk and revealing many fascinating facts about the town, and to everyone who contributed their stories.

To see a detailed description and photos of the walk click on the link:

OCTOBER 2013

At the last meeting we welcomed some new members and together we exchanged information on what we know, remember or have learned about our local area. The discussion ranged from the shops on or around Carlton Square, the forge in Gedling where the blacksmith was known as 'George the Forge', to the nickname of the Kozy cinema in Netherfield - the fleapit. Does anyone else remember the slot machines in the cafe of the Ceylon Tea Store? And, if you grew up locally, can you recall the eerie sound of the trains, carrying far and wide on a damp night?

We talked about the row of cottages in the middle of the marshalling yard, where the Victoria Retail Park stands today and the building on Burton Road next to Park House Health Clinic which in our lifetimes has been a manufacturer of window blinds and of bespoke furniture and also an art gallery but started life as a cotton mill. What next for this lovely building now the current business is closing - executive apartments??

An update on the Tracks in Time project was given, with which some of the group are involved. Many thanks to the volunteer who came along to record the memories of a new member. These included stories and photos of "The Lilac Dominoes": a carnival band from the 30's and 40's. A very interesting and lively session.

NOVEMBER 2013

This month we considered topics for further research. A number of ideas were discussed, including examining and photographing local gravestones with a view to researching the histories of those whose names are subscribed there and the local area in the 1930s. As the centenary of World War 1 arrives next year, we also discussed the possibility of researching into how the Great War affected the local community and impacted on the lives of the people, perhaps our own families included.

Of course, members are free to follow up their own particular interests, perhaps utilising the excellent library resources, reporting their findings back to the group. Thanks to Ian for his talk this month on the history of Notts waterways. We learned among other things that the River Trent, the 3rd longest river, is the only river that flows north. And that the 15 mile long River Leen incorporated fishponds in medieval times which supplied the needs of Nottingham Castle. In the late 1800s, convicted prisoners were lowered into small boats there for passage to larger ones on the Trent and eventually to prison ships for transportation to Australia. Fascinating stuff!

Thanks also to those who brought along articles to share, family tales and snippets of information.

Tracks in Time event

Many thanks to those members who contributed to the weekend of events and to the many who visited and enjoyed seeing the wealth of material in the exhibitions and the range of activities on offer. A special mention to those Local History Group members Alan, Christine and Steve for their active participation.

Hundreds of people attended the various events and the weather was also fairly kind, cold but dry and we even had a bit of sunshine to cheer things along. A very interesting project for the local history group to be involved with. It brought back memories for many and revealed the hidden history of the community behind the development of Netherfield as a railway town and the enormous role that it played in the growth of our local economy.

DECEMBER 2013

Our main activity this month was the quiz. The questions all related to the outings, research and information exchanges at previous meetings. But there was a lot of scratching of heads as memories were searched for the answers! However, very respectable scores were recorded - everyone deserves a well-earned pat on the back, because we have discussed a wide of variety of topics in the group.

While answering the questions other topics arose, which triggered further questions or reminiscences. We generally find that many remember similar experiences and members can even discover links with each other! Maybe went to the same school, or watched films at the same local cinema. The more we talk to each other the more we manage to piece together the history of the area and our discussions are always peppered with "well I didn't know that.." and "but what about..?" Every answer seems to raise another question!