

LOCAL HISTORY 2019

January 2019: PINTS AND PUBS

January saw us at the Richard Herrod Centre for another entertaining talk by Bob Massey. This time Bob regaled us with stories of Pubs and Pints. We heard how Pepys described the pub as the heart of England, and how its origins can be traced back to Roman taverns.

We learnt the difference between taverns (drinks only) and hostelries/inns (overnight accommodation with food). Two examples of local coaching inns are the Grosvenor on Mansfield Road and the Robin Hood and Little John in Arnold. Coaching inns have either a balcony or window that is level with the top of the coach to allow the luggage to be easily unloaded.



Bob also explained the difference between ale and beer. Ale is made with just malt whereas beer is made with malt and hops and was introduced from the Netherlands. In Anglo-Saxon times women used to brew the ale and would put a branch up on a pole to signify that the ale was ready. This is the origin of the pub sign as we know it today. We have Richard II to thank for this as he compelled landlords to display signs in 1393.



During the English Civil War beer was taxed to raise funds. During this time it wasn't unusual for a pub to change its name depending upon who was winning at the time. By 1700 a license was needed to brew beer. In 1735 John Leper of Arnold was charged with brewing without a license and fined one shilling. In 1830 the Beerhouse Act was introduced. It abolished the beer tax and extended the opening hours of licensed public houses. The Act also introduced the Beerhouse and Beershops - premises which could sell only beer.

Another entertaining talk by Bob, with lots of questions for him to field.

Anne Palmer

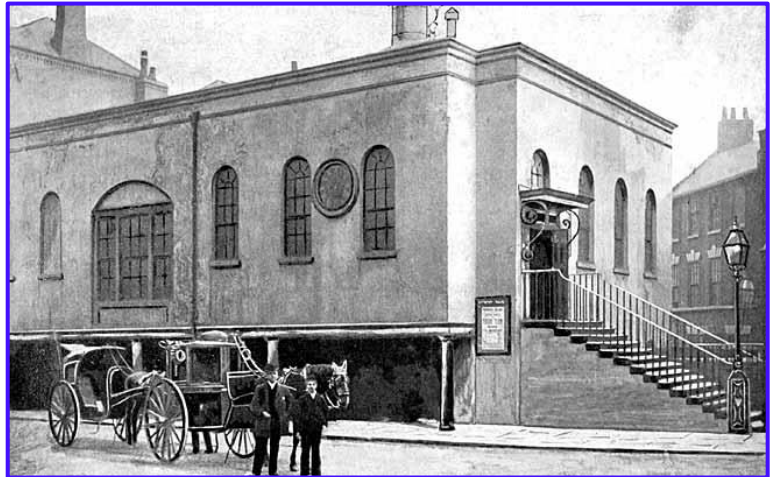
February 2019: LACE MARKET TALK

This month's meeting saw a record-breaking turnout of 36 to welcome the return of Dorothy Ritchie who presented her talk on the Lace Market, in preparation for our guided walk next time.

Our talk started with Dorothy showing us some maps, highlighting the boundaries of the Saxon town of Snotingham, meaning dwelling place of Snot's people, around High Pavement and Fletcher Gate. She recounted a brief history of the city of Nottingham, as it became known after the Vikings invaded after travelling up the River Trent in 868 AD. The Saxons recovered the town in 921, and Edward the Elder, king of the Saxons, built a ditch and timber wall along the lines of Bridlesmith Gate, Fletcher Gate, Warser Gate and Goose Gate ("Gate" deriving from the Danish for street). In 1068 William the Conqueror asked William Peveril to build a castle, and the area around it became the French Borough.

Dorothy then went on to describe a market set up around Weekday Cross, and the building of a Guildhall and other timber-framed houses. While the town continued to develop, the judicial and administrative systems also developed, and the town, incorporating the Saxon and Norman boroughs, was made a separate entity from the County of Nottinghamshire.

However, the county's courthouse, the Shire Hall and the Castle remained under the control of the crown and county, so the Shire Hall in High Pavement was officially part of the county until it ceased to be courts in the latter part of the last century.



Shire Hall

After the Civil War, more elaborate houses with large gardens were built in the area, including Pierrepont House and Plumptre House, both on Stoney Street.

The former was the 2nd largest house in Nottingham and was demolished for a hosiery factory in the 19th Century.

The latter was bought by Richard Birkin for £8410 in 1853, and after briefly being used as the School for Design was demolished for Broadway to be built by T.C. Hine.



Pierrepont House

Industry was beginning to make in-roads with the setting up of a glass works by the Italian Paravicini near to where the ice stadium now stands and subsequently, as housing started being built, many homes had knitting frames installed where the inhabitants produced lace work. Over time, larger buildings were required for the finishing of the lace, and warehouses to store the product. Many of these large buildings remain, and we shall be seeing some on our walk for our next meeting.

Dorothy gave us so much information in her talk that it is hard to do it justice here. For those interested, there is much information available on the internet.

Graham Palmer

March 2019: LACE MARKET WALK

Our meeting for March was a tour of the Lace Market area with Dorothy Ritchie as a follow up to her presentation in February. 31 of us met at Weekday Cross, which we learnt stands on the site of the Saxon marketplace.

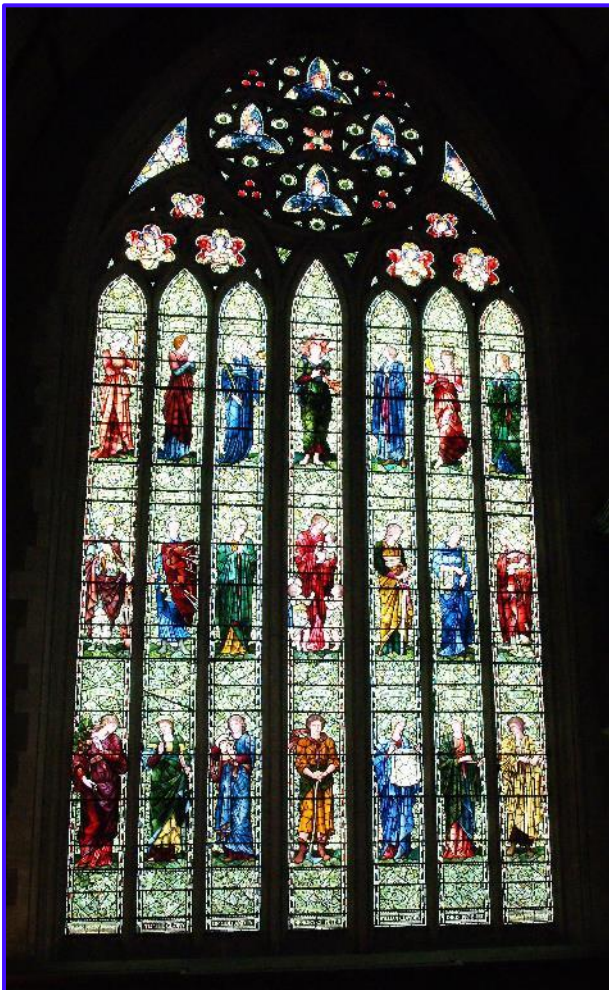
We were told that the original Nottingham Guild Hall was built where the Nottingham Contemporary gallery now stands. Originally a hall for the merchant Guilds, it became the Court House and Town Hall of the Nottingham Corporation. It was abandoned in 1877 with the opening of the new Guildhall, and was demolished in 1895 when the Great Central Railway built a tunnel.

Weekday Cross



From Weekday Cross we walked to what is now the Pitcher and Piano (formerly the Unitarian Church) to see the impressive stained glass window designed by Burne-Jones.

As we made our way to St Mary's Church we passed County House, or Judges Lodgings, opposite the Shire Hall, now the Galleries of Justice. We learnt how executions took place on the front steps of the Shire Hall until 1864. At St Mary's Church we heard there had been a church on the same site since Saxon times and saw the war memorial plaques either side of the main gate for the men of both the city and county.



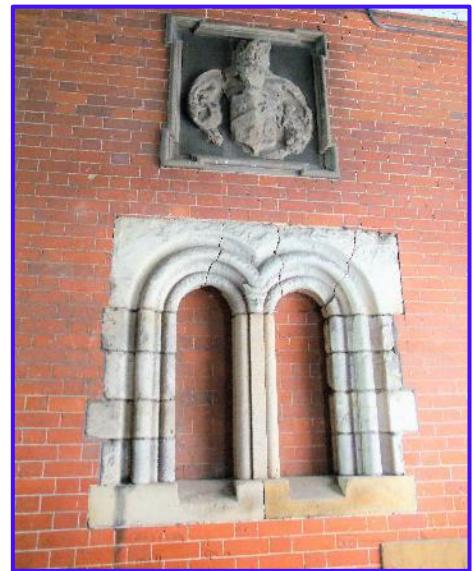
Pitcher & Piano



St. Mary's Church

From St Mary's church we walked to Commerce Square where we saw the impressive 18th century warehouses, which were a stark contrast to Narrow Marsh which was reached from Malin Hill just off the square. From here we retraced our steps and walked down Kayes Walk where we saw the grave of George Africanus, Nottingham's first black entrepreneur.

From Kayes Walk we walked to the Richard Birkin Building. This building was designed by T C Hine and has an arched window thought to be part of the original Norman St Mary's Church.



On the ground is a line which states '*Boundary line of Mr T Birkins land 1834*'.



We then admired another of T C Hine's buildings; the Adams Building, currently part of New College. Our tour ended by the 17th century Sherwin House, which is now being converted into student accommodation.



Thanks again to Dorothy for a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon, finished off with a well-deserved drink. For those interested in more details and a route of the tour click to visit our [Lace Market Trail](#) page.

Anne Palmer

April 2019: ROPEWALK & CASTLE AREA

35 of us joined Kevin Powell, of Nottingham Civic Society, for an extremely interesting walk around the Ropewalk and Castle area. We met outside the Playhouse where we were told that development of Wellington Circus followed on from the Enclosure Act of 1839. We heard about the history of the Nottingham Albert Hall and the building of St Barnabas' church which became a cathedral in 1850.

From the Playhouse we headed off around Wellington Circus past Newcastle House where the 5th Duke of Newcastle died. Most of us braved the steps leading down to the Park Tunnel. The tunnel is excavated from 240 million year old sandstone and was opened in 1875. The tunnel was only able to be used by pedestrians as the gradient of 1 in 12 proved to be too steep for carriages.



We entered the Park Estate which we heard was a royal hunting ground for the castle. We also heard that William Gladstone took 55 minutes to chop down a beech tree here in 1875.



We retraced our steps onto Park Terrace and down to Regent Street. As we walked to Regent Street we left the Enclosure area into the Castle area. We passed St James' Street which is the last full Georgian street left in Nottingham. We then moved on to the Rotunda designed by Alfred Waterhouse for Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee and opened in 1900. We then walked to the Castle via Standard Hill where King Charles raised his standard over three days in 1642.



The Castle, we were told, was built by William I in 1068 when he stayed in Nottingham to put down a rebellion in the north of England. In decline by the 16th century, it was largely demolished in 1649. The Duke of Newcastle later built a mansion on the site, which was burnt down by rioters in 1831 and left as a ruin. It was later rebuilt to house the art gallery and museum we know today.

Our walk finished at the newly refurbished statue of Robin Hood. The statue was the work of James Woodford and unveiled in 1952. It is reported that the people of Nottingham didn't like it as it didn't look like Errol Flynn.

Another enjoyable and fascinating walk by Kevin which we thoroughly enjoyed.

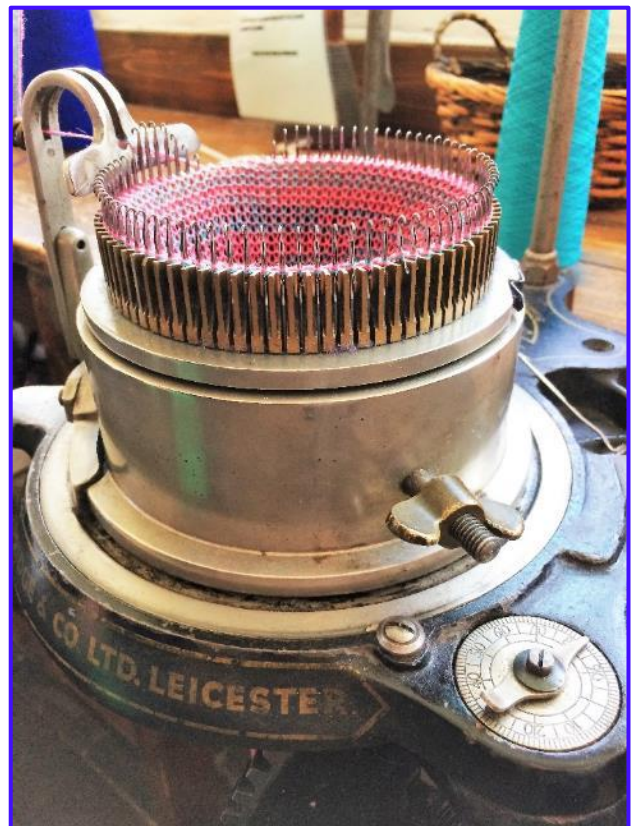


May 2019: FRAMEWORK KNITTERS MUSEUM

May saw the Local History group enjoy a private guided tour of the Framework Knitters Museum in Ruddington where 22 of us enjoyed an extremely informative tour of the museum.



We were initially shown a short film about the life of the knitters whilst enjoying a cup of tea and biscuits. We then split into three small groups to visit the rest of the museum. Our group were first taken up a flight of stairs into a room full of small circular machines known as Griswold machines. These produce tubes which are turned into socks, with differing patterns obtained through moving different needles in and out. Several members of the group had a go at this with great success.



We were then shown around a cottage occupied by the site manager of the time and also a back-to-back with a single room on each floor, typically used by workers. There were often over a dozen people living in these cottages and all the family would be involved in the knitting process in some capacity.

We then ascended another set of stairs into a room full of stocking frames where the machines were explained to us.

One of the machines was demonstrated to us by the very knowledgeable manager. He showed us, in slow motion, all the steps involved in knitting a row. This involving much pulling and pushing of levers, and we could only imagine the noise levels when 20 or more frames were being used at the same time in the room.

We were all surprised by the very fine lace that the machines can make.



We finally went to view the small garden (split into 4 strips, one for each cottage), pig sty, ash pit and outside toilets. As on the last visit we were so engrossed in the rest of the museum that we still didn't see Queen Victoria's stockings (again). Oh well, maybe next time...

We can thoroughly recommend a visit to this museum.



June 2019: PAPPLEWICK PUMPING STATION

The June meeting saw 21 of us enjoying a very interesting tour of Papplewick Pumping Station. We started our tour by the cooling pond where we were told about the history of the station. The station was built by Marriott Ogle Tarbotton from the designs of Thomas Hawksley to pump water from wells in the Lenton Formation and cost £56,000. It was built between 1882 and 1887 and consists of two wells, the pilot well and the main well, both 18 x 7 x 200ft deep and connected by a pipe.

The station came on line in 1885/6 and closed down in 1971. In 1974 the Papplewick Pumping Station Trust was formed and in 1975 the volunteer association was formed. The station opened to the public in 1976 and today still relies heavily on volunteers, although there is now one permanent employee.

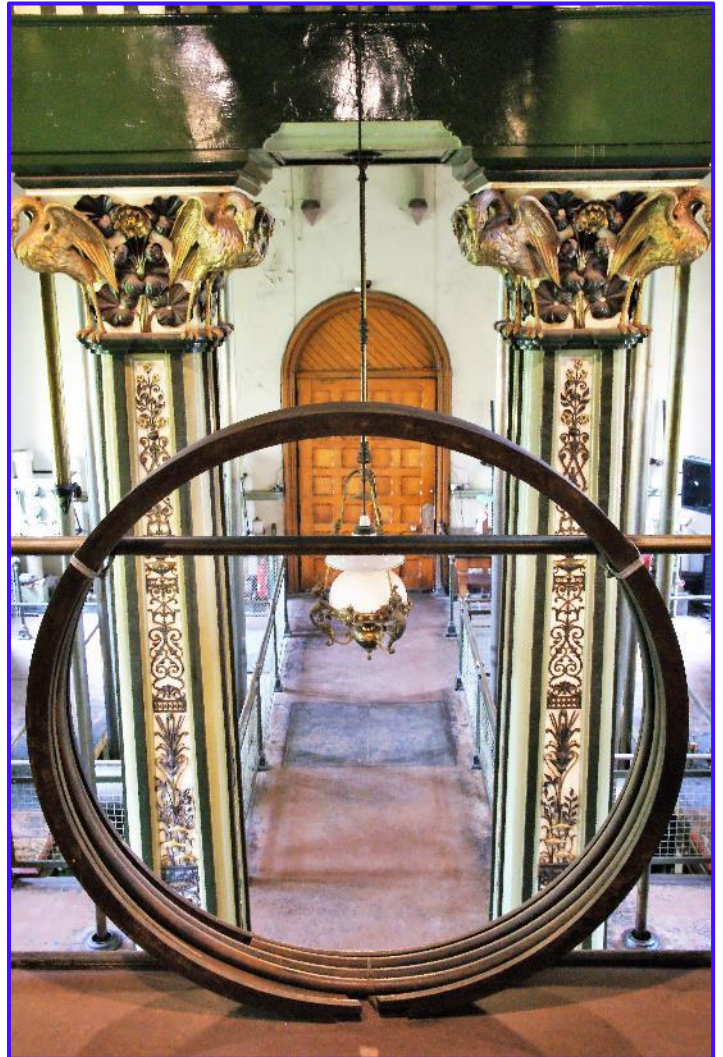
A reservoir was built on the site by Thomas Hawksley but was closed in 1911 due to leaks. Also on site there is the deputy's house and a stable block which used to consist of a blacksmiths, fitters shop, store room and stable for two horses. The chimney is 120ft high with 10ft deep foundations, although we were told it does move. Having heard that piece of information we quickly moved into the boiler room away from the chimney.

The boiler room contains six Lancashire boilers made in Manchester in 1883. They were run as three on three off with a change over every three months. Only one boiler is used these days on steaming days. The boilers are 28ft long and 7ft in diameter, with two fire boxes 6ft x 3ft and stoked by hand.

From the boiler room we moved onto the main room where the beam engines are housed. The engines were built by James Watt and Co. in Birmingham, and run at 11.5 RPM and lift 1.5 million gallons of water a day.

The station is very ornately decorated, and it is rumoured this was because Tarbotton had some spare budget, although in reality this may have been in the original plans.

A very enjoyable afternoon and I would recommend a visit on a steaming weekend, when a look around the reservoir can also be undertaken.



July 2019: PAPPLEWICK HALL

Our July meeting saw 24 of us enjoy a very interesting tour of Papplewick Hall, the home of Jonathan Godwin-Austen. Mr Godwin-Austen is related to Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Haversham Godwin-Austen who explored the Himalayan Mountains and the second highest peak in the Karakoram Range, K2, was originally given the name Mount Godwin-Austen after Haversham.

We started our tour in the main entrance Hall. Whilst we marvelled at the impressive cantilevered staircase, Mr Godwin-Austen told us the history of the site. Papplewick was part of Newstead Priory and was in the hands of the Byron family from 1540 until the early 1700s when it was sold to Sir Theodore Colladon. When Sir Theodore died in 1712 he left the house in trust to his daughter Anne, who married Charles Montagu MP in 1725. Charles was friends with Horace Walpole who helped landscape the gardens, which has a ha-ha and several beech trees.

Charles died in 1759 and the estate was inherited by his son Frederick Montagu. Frederick built the current house, starting in 1781 and completing in 1786. Frederick never married and had a staff of 17 people to look after him. After his death Papplewick Hall passed through several generations of his family until it was sold to pay of gambling debts and was purchased by Alderman Albert Ball, father of Albert Ball VC. Ball sold the house to Claude Chadburn, owner of Mansfield Brewery. When he died in 1979 the house passed to a relative and the contents auctioned off. The house was bought by Richard Godwin-Austen in 1986.

We were shown around the ground floor of the house and a scorched patch on the library floor where suffragettes had tried to set fire to the Hall at the end of WW1 was pointed out. Also in the drawing room we were shown the ceiling which has never been restored, retaining the same painting and ornate decoration as when it was built in 1786. We all admired magnificent views across the fields from the drawing room and dining room.

A thoroughly enjoyable and informative tour and I can thoroughly recommend visiting the hall.

Anne Palmer



August 2019: WOLLATON HALL

18 of us visited Wollaton Hall for a guided tour. The hall was built for Sir Francis Willoughby between 1580 and 1588, and was designed by architect Robert Smythson in the Elizabethan style. The hall cost the equivalent of £8,000 to build, mainly paid for by the coal produced in mines owned by the Willoughbys.



We climbed one of the main staircases and were shown paintings around the walls and ceiling attributed to Sir James Thornhill and perhaps also Laguerre. It was pointed out on one of the paintings that Thornhill may have overpainted the original by Laguerre. From the main staircase we then climbed a stone spiral staircase to the Prospect Room.



The Prospect Room was mainly a viewing room, with extensive views over the park and the city. We were told that the original floor was built using a Chinese lattice system with oak boards on top. The structure shrank and pulled the floor away from the wall rendering the room unusable. Thanks to a heritage lottery grant the floor has been replaced so the room can be enjoyed again.

From the Prospect Room we climbed down another spiral staircase and out onto the roof. We heard how the gentlemen used to have raucous parties on the roof as the ladies were unable to join them

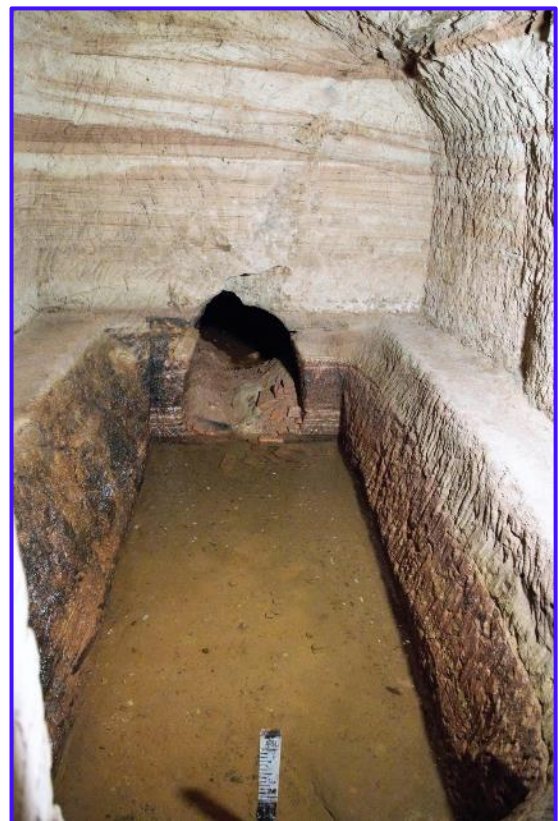
due to the width of the staircase. Later a wider staircase was added which then allowed the ladies access to the roof and the parties became a more genteel affair.



From the roof we descended to the outer kitchen where the families food was prepared. We were told that only men were employed in the kitchen even though they were more expensive than women as they were considered more trustworthy. The cook was the second highest paid employee on the estate being paid 10 shillings a quarter with the brewer being paid the highest wages. We moved on to the inner kitchen where the servants food was prepared and then onto the larder where food was prepared for storing.

Our final destination was the cellar which contains a well and associated reservoir tank, in which some accounts report that an admiral of the Willoughby family took a daily bath. This was a very interesting and informative tour providing us with some spectacular views over Nottingham.

Anne Palmer



September 2019: GREEN'S MILL

21 of us enjoyed a guided tour of Green's Windmill in Sneinton on a lovely sunny afternoon. We were told that the mill was built in 1807 by George Green senior, a baker whose bakery was where the Motorpoint arena now stands. His son George Green (1793 - 1841) was a mathematician who only attended school for four terms as at age 9 he was required to work in the mill. He didn't enjoy the mill work and spent his spare time working on mathematical problems. He was eventually persuaded to go to university, and aged 40 he attended Caius College in Cambridge, but died 4 years after graduating. His work was not well known during his lifetime as most science and maths was based on Newton's work and Green based his work on continental maths. Green's work was based around wave motion, electricity and magnetism. His theorem is still in use today and was used in the development of the MRI scanner.

The mill that stands on the site is a tower mill. A post mill originally stood on the site but was not included in the sale so was removed. The mill was only used as a mill for about 60 years when it was forced to close due to competition from the steam powered mills. It was later used to store polish and in 1947 burnt down. The mill was restored in the 1980s and today mills around 10 tons of flour a year. They currently mill organic wheat, spelt, rye and oats using 1,000 kg millstones made of French quartz.

After the talk we were taken into the mill where we climbed several steep steps (not for the faint-hearted). We were shown where the grain is fed into the grain cleaner to remove the chaff before being fed into the mill stones. The fine powder (meal) is collected in sacks and then passed through the dresser which separates the wholemeal and white flour ready for bagging to sell.

After our tour of the mill we went into the science centre where we had a go with the interactive exhibits as well as exploring the attached community garden. We had a thoroughly interesting and entertaining afternoon. The mill is well worth a visit.

Anne Palmer



Green's Mill



Sundial



Green's Theorem

October 2019 NOTTS CCC LIBRARY, TRENT BRIDGE

15 of us paid a very entertaining visit to the library at Trent Bridge Cricket Ground. Our convivial host was the extremely knowledgeable Peter Wynne-Thomas BEM. We were told that the museum was created in 1969 from the ladies section of the main pavilion. The ladies only used this part of the pavilion for a year after their original pavilion was turned into the Century restaurant. The library was put into this room in 1978 and was opened in 1979 by Norman Yardley before the first Sunday home game of the season against Yorkshire.

The library remained there until 2002 when Albert Bocking, the Notts chairman, arranged for a squash court to be converted. The library was fitted out by Boots and the table and chairs taken from the Long Room. Peter has catalogued all of the books and keeps them in sections similar to the library at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in Australia. The sections include biographies, tours, how to play cricket, statistics and yearbooks etc.

After hearing about the library, Peter regaled us with stories of the history of cricket. We were told that the first mention of cricket is in 1598 in Guildford, Surrey when a farmer stole some land and put a fence around it. The locals took him to court and it was decided that this was common land as John Derrick had stated that he had played cricket on the field.

We heard of the first cricket related fatality on Saturday, 28 August 1624, at Horsted Keynes. A fielder called Jasper Vinall was struck on the head by the batsman, Edward Tye, who was trying to hit the ball a second time to avoid being caught (two members of the group re-enacted the scene, happily with a non-fatal outcome). We also heard that the first inter-county match took place in 1825 between Sussex and Kent, and in 1835 Notts challenged Sussex to a game played on the Forest.

After this, Peter told us about some of the many books he's written, including one published in 1982 containing information on 12,000 players all written on his trusty typewriter.

We had a very informative and entertaining afternoon in Peter's company and would love to go back.

Anne Palmer



November 2019: CARRINGTON STREET

We returned to the Richard Herrod Centre for a very interesting talk on the Carrington Street area presented by Kevin Powell. Kevin started by giving us a brief history of Nottingham from its naming in 600 after the Saxon chieftain Snott, the invasion by the Vikings in 868 to the Industrial revolution.

Kevin then moved on to the history and development of the Carrington Street area. In the 1700s the area was a meadow covered with crocuses and the development started with buildings for framework knitters. With the Industrial Revolution coal became important and needed to be moved more efficiently than by horse and cart. In Yorkshire and Lancashire coal was moved on canals and soon Nottingham followed suit. Building of the canal started in 1792 and was completed in 1796 with the official opening in 1802. As a result, new streets were made including Carrington Street, which was named after Robert Smith, Lord Carrington.

In 1839 the Midland Station was built and there was a surge in building new hotels along the Street. In 1842 the Carrington Street bridge was built at a cost of £6,000 and was designed by the architect Henry Moses Wood. In 1902 the bridge was widened ready for the new Midland Station which opened in 1904.

In 1897 Nottingham became a city, and in 1898/99 the Gresham and Portland hotels were built; both of these hotels were temperance hotels. In 1904 the Victoria Hotel was demolished and the Bentinck Hotel was built on the site as part of changes made between 1900 to the 1920s when the Victorian buildings were swept away and replaced.

Kevin then covered what are known as the City Buildings, built between 1896/7 to 1901, the most memorable of which housed Redmayne and Todd. Redmayne and Todd was formed in 1903 and moved into Carrington Street in 1910. The shop here closed in 2001.

Finally we heard about the Nottingham Canal gunpowder explosion on September 28th 1818 and the first balloon flight on 1st November 1813 which lasted 59 minutes and travelled a distance of 36 miles.

As usual this was a very interesting and informative talk given by Kevin. We will be following up this talk next year with a guided tour of the area with Kevin in April.

Anne Palmer

December 2019: CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

Our meeting in December was the usual social get together in the Willowbrook. Twenty of us enjoyed a sociable couple of hours chatting and discussing the proposed activities planned for 2020.

Amongst the current proposals are guided walks around The Park, the Carrington Street area, Southwell and a guided tour of Laxton village.

We received several suggestions from members including trips to the D H Lawrence museum, Mr Straw's house and Mansfield. Members also suggested possible talks for our winter meetings.