

BOROUGHBRIDGE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

<http://www.boroughbridgehistory.co.uk>



NEWSLETTER SPRING 2018

CONTENTS

NOTES FROM THE CHAIRMAN	2
LOCAL MUSICIANS	2-3
SPOTTING LOCAL HISTORY	4
ALDBOROUGH ROMAN BURIAL	5
CHRISTMAS IN DAYS OF YORE	6-7
ANNUAL TRIP	8

SPRING PROGRAMME

TUESDAY, 9TH JANUARY

SIX NORTH RIDING CHURCHES

JOHN WINN

TUESDAY, 13TH FEBRUARY

HOSTELRIES OF BOROUGHBRIDGE PAST AND PRESENT

MIKE COLLINS

TUESDAY, 13TH MARCH

LIFE WITH THE DUPUIS FAMILY AT SESSAY RECTORY,
c.1891

JANET RATCLIFFE

MEETINGS ARE HELD IN BOROUGHBRIDGE LIBRARY JUBILEE SUITE AT 7.30

ALL WELCOME: MEMBERS FREE; VISITORS AND GUESTS £3.00



NOTES FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Welcome to the Spring Newsletter. I hope all readers had a lovely Christmas.

We are some weeks away from light evenings and the promise of warmer days but to brighten our Tuesday evenings we have an interesting programme of speakers for you. Many thanks to David Barley for organising the presentations and to our own John Winn for being our January speaker.

I will take this opportunity once again to thank all society officers and volunteers who, in a variety of ways, make our history group so effective.

During the October AGM the new committee was voted in and is now as follows:

Peter Fleming : Chairman, newsletter production

John Whitehouse: Vice-Chair

Jackie Akers: Treasurer

Linda Dooks: Secretary & Archivist

David Barley: Speakers' Secretary

David Bellwood: Website Manager

John Winn: Minutes

Margaret Tasker: Publicity, Newsletter Distribution, Room Bookings, General Enquiries, Annual Excursion

Mike Tasker: Book Project Coordinator

Christine Tasker: Committee member, Annual Excursion

Pat Smith: Committee member

Christine reported that our society was in sound financial health and Mike updated us on progress with the *History of Boroughbridge* book. This is now at a very exciting stage with a contract for publication about to be agreed. Of course, there is still much refining and editing to be done and to assist with this Mike would appreciate volunteers for proof reading. If you can give any time to this do let him know.

Happy New Year to you all.

Peter Fleming, Chairman

Local Musicians: A look at the history of the brass band movement

Gavin Holman

On Tuesday, 12th September Gavin Holman, entertained us with an interesting talk on the brass band movement, which dates back to the early nineteenth century and England's Industrial Revolution, evolving from the medieval 'waits'. With increasing urbanization, employers began to finance work bands to decrease the political activity with which the working classes seemed preoccupied during their leisure time.



Brass bands musicians play a range of instruments including cornets, flugelhorns, tubas and trombones as well as percussion instruments.



As bands were encouraged by employers they became associated with specific locations and trades. Most collieries, iron foundries, textile mills, gas works and railway yards boasted a brass band. Religious organisations such as the salvation army, the boys' brigade and the YMCA also had brass bands to enliven their proceedings. Even friendly societies and political movements had brass bands. Given the gender roles at the time it is not surprising that players in bands were men. However, there were a few women bands, including one based at Horsforth.



Gloucester Railway Carriage & Wagon Company Band, 1916

With so many bands in existence brass band competitions were soon organised starting with local shows and soon becoming national and international events.

Locally, there was a Boroughbridge Brass Band active in the 1850s and an Aldborough Band on record from 1864. In 1873 the two combined. Burton Leonard, Great Ouseburn, Kirk Hamerton and Ripley all had bands. A British Legion band remained active in Boroughbridge into the 1950s. Today, we are familiar with a few very well known bands such as the Black Dyke Mills Band and the Brighouse and Raistrick Band but most bands have disappeared. There are now around 1200 bands in the UK, down from 20000 at the height of the movement.



The Leeds Temperance Band in Boroughbridge 1906

SPOTTING LOCAL HISTORY

Many of you will be familiar with the obvious reminders of Boroughbridge's past: the Devils' Arrows, The Crown Hotel, Mauleverer House, the wheel plate outside the Old Smithy etc. However, some of you might have missed the odd small detail. For me it is always interesting to have something new pointed out and I am grateful to Jackie Akers for the following insert. This is new information to me and perhaps to some other society members also.

Yorkshire Insurance Company Ltd



The above is a picture of a Fire Plaque which is situated between the two upper windows of Vale Optician, 1 The High Street Boroughbridge. Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company was established in 1824 and adopted the picture of York Minster as its official emblem in 1826.

During the early half of the 19th century there were no organised local fire brigades, insurance companies maintained their own fire brigades. The Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company purchased its first fire engine in 1824 and tackled fires in York for over 50 years until the city corporation assumed responsibility for all fire fighting in 1876. The Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company became a limited company in 1908 changing its name to Yorkshire Insurance Company Ltd.

Fire plaques were fixed to the front of insured buildings as a guide to the insurance company's fire brigade. It is known that The Yorkshire Fire and Life Insurance Company was advertising for an agent for Boroughbridge in 1832, possibly an agent was found at this address.

The Aldborough Roman Burial: Local farmer Nick Wilson's talk about the finding of this tomb and the profound impact the discovery has had on him

At our 14th November meeting Nick Wilson from Hundayfield Farm gave a lecture that was both personal and informative about the discovery in 2007 of a lead coffin and skeleton on farm land south of Boroughbridge, just forty metres from the B6265.

This ancient landscape is near to Dere Street and Roman Aldborough which provides some explanation for this remarkable find. In addition to the coffin there was a dressed stone surround suggesting the burial was of someone of some importance. English Heritage agreed to fund the excavation.

The stone chamber and lid stones were carefully removed to reveal the lead coffin beneath, surrounded by oak. The sandstone was from Aldborough. Iron nails were found alongside the burial suggesting a possible second burial. Heather had been placed in the second burial chamber, perhaps indicating some form of burial ceremony had occurred.

The coffin was opened and the skeleton slowly revealed. It was 93% complete. Although there was acid in the soil the coffin had preserved the skeleton, analysis of which showed the deceased to be male, aged 36-45, 5' 7", with a fractured lower spine and osteoarthritis to the feet. This person had not been a labourer.

Geophysics was employed on the field where the skeleton was found and revealed a possible Iron Age enclosure, possible barrows, possible round houses and enclosures. Some Iron Age pottery was also uncovered. It seems likely, therefore, that this site had seen earlier burials. Naturally



The Skeleton as recovered from the site

the skeleton attracted media interest and Nick found himself responding to requests for interviews on how he discovered the tomb.

The discovery strengthened Nick's interest in history and he started to study the subject as a result. He has been awarded an MA and is now undertaking research for his PhD. He also grappled with a number of moral issues which he shared with us, the most significant one being was it right to remove a skeleton from the burial site the living person had almost certainly requested?

Overall, this talk was extremely thought provoking and interesting. Thank you Nick.



Painstaking work on the find

Christmas Time in Days of Yore: A light-hearted look at what our ancestors did around the festive season — Marion Moverley

Very appropriate for the time of year, our December meeting saw Marion Moverley provide entertainment and insight into Christmas time in years gone by.

As Marion explained, each generation celebrates Christmas slightly differently, but there is continuity also. Timings for Christmas have changed in so far as Advent used to be a time of fasting whereas today Christmas lights are displayed throughout the season. Also in times gone by the Christmas celebrations would begin on Christmas Day and continue until 6th January (12th Night) compared with the more recent trend of taking down the tree as soon as new year is declared.



We are all aware of the increase in advertising by charities at Christmas time. Giving at Christmas is nothing new. Bequests in wills of gifts for the poor at Christmas time were common in earlier times. Alms from the Poor Box were distributed in December. Parson Woodford's diary (1759-1802) reveals how his Vicarage was opened to the poor for a Christmas meal (1783). After 1834 when the Poor Laws changed inmates of workhouses were visited at Christmas and gifts given. For example, Bedale Brewery, Lightfoots, gave a barrel of beer to the local workhouse each Christmas.

Most wealthy families gave to tradespeople at Christmas. William Taylor, a footman, kept a diary which lists all the various trades and service providers given a gifts by the family he worked for. Bank holidays are a recent innovation, even in Victorian times many trades worked on Christmas Day. Christmas cards became popular as printing and postage became affordable from the 1840s onwards. It is possible that in the digital age physical cards may disappear.

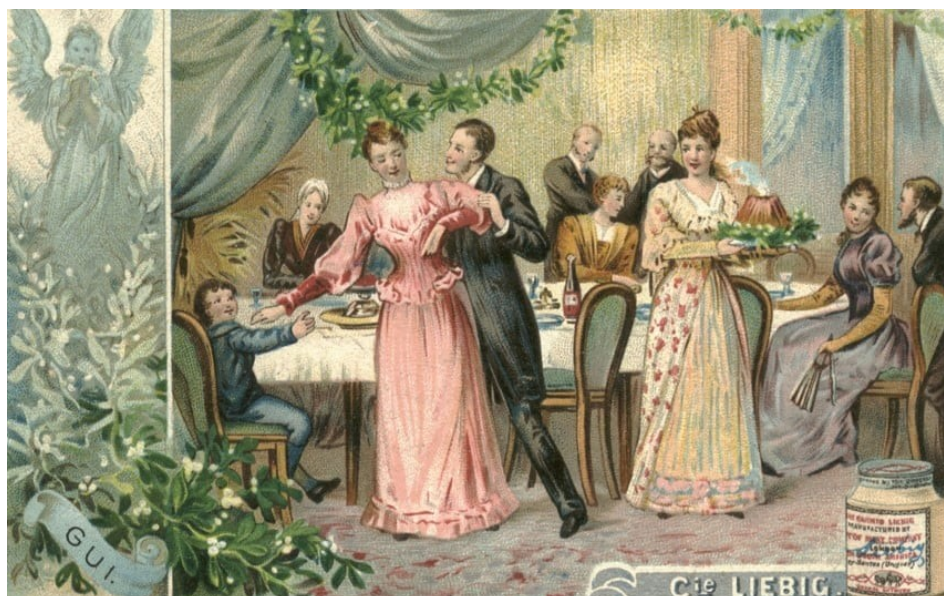
Many people now watch TV as a family at Christmas but in earlier times music making and games provided the entertainment. For example, Snap Dragon was a game in which raisins were placed in brandy, the brandy was ignited and the raisins had to be grabbed! Christmas trees were introduced from Germany by Prince Albert. Many in the audience were able to remember the use of real candles as decorations for Christmas trees.



Frumenty

Pantomimes at Christmas have been around for centuries. For example, Pepys' diary reveals that he went to the pantomime in 1661. By contrast, Christmas carols were only introduced into churches in the nineteenth century. Prior to this carols had existed but without religious themes, many providing tunes suitable for dancing to.

As part of her presentation Marion treated us to a taste of a traditional Christmas recipe, frumenty, being made from wheat, milk, dried fruit and alcohol. Delicious!



Victorian Middle Class Christmas



Turkeys have been with us since the 1500s

THE ANNUAL TRIP

A very happy and healthy New Year to all members and we hope you enjoyed your Christmas, wherever and however you spent it. The New Year encourages us to think of new ideas and new challenges, so Christine and I are asking you to make suggestions NOW for the Annual Trip. Do you have a wish list for day's outings? If so please pass them onto us, & we will investigate the possibilities and hopefully have made a decision on destination by Easter.

The first Tuesday of July this year is the 3rd and as this time of year seems to be the most popular, please pencil this in as a provisional trip date.

Thanks to all who supported us last year & we hope you will again

Christine on 01423 862896 or email Christine@multitasker.co.uk

Margaret on 01423 322862 or email margaret.tasker322@btinternet.com

