

BOROUGHBRIDGE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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



NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2019

CONTENTS

CHAIR'S NOTES	2-3
EXPLORING AN IRON AGE SITE	4-5
ROMANS ON YOUR DOORSTEP	6-7
THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY ON THE WESTERN FRONT	8-9
VISIT TO BROMPTON	10-11
MPs OF BOROUGHBRIDGE	12
ANNOUNCEMENTS	13

AUTUMN PROGRAMME

TUESDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER

SOCIETY AGM

MIKE TASKER: MPs OF BOROUGHBRIDGE

TUESDAY 8TH OCTOBER

SIMON RICHARDSON:

RELICS OF THE ROSES

TUESDAY 12TH NOVEMBER

EDGAR HOLROYD-DOVERTON:

TURNPIKE ROADS

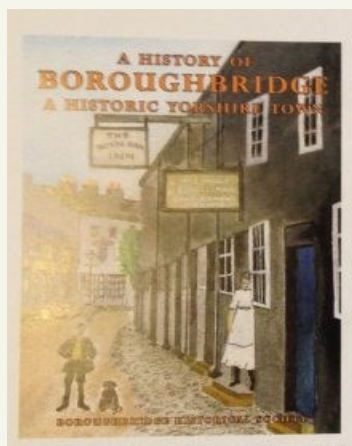
TUESDAY 10TH DECEMBER

STEWART LILES:

TRAMWAYS OF THE DALES

MEETINGS ARE HELD IN BOROUGHBRIDGE LIBRARY JUBILEE SUITE AT 7.30

ALL WELCOME: MEMBERS FREE; VISITORS AND GUESTS £3.00



A HISTORY OF BOROUGHBRIDGE

AVAILABLE FROM TOURIST INFORMATION, PYBUS,
AND OTHER SHOPS IN BOROUGHBRIDGE.

COPIES CAN ALSO BE BOUGHT AT MONTHLY
BDHS MEETINGS

NOTES FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Here we are at the start of a new season for BDHS. The coming year is an important one for us as it represents 25 years since the society was formed. To mark this significant date we will be holding a special event at the Crown Hotel on 12th May, 2020. Colleagues from the Yorkshire Film Archive will be providing the evening's 'entertainment', so make sure the date is in your diary.

We are fortunate to have a very active local history society with committee members and other volunteers who all pull their weight. Current committee members (see below) have agreed to continue in role for another year. Their posts will be ratified at the AGM in September. At that meeting Mike Tasker will also update us on his research into the M.P.s of Boroughbridge (see page 12).

If you would like to join the committee please let me know. We are always on the look out for people who can spare a little time for the society. There are also opportunities for members to become involved in the creation of information board for the Devils' Arrows and the Battle of Boroughbridge (see page 13).

I am pleased to be able to report that the membership fee for 2019-2020 will remain at the current rate. On page 3 is information about how you can pay to renew your membership.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM in September.

Peter Fleming (chair)

Committee Members 2019

Jackie Akers: Treasurer

Peter Audsley: Committee member

David Barley: Speakers' Secretary

David Bellwood: Website Manager

Linda Dooks: Vice Chair and Archivist

Peter Fleming: Chairman, Newsletter

Christine Tasker: Annual Excursion

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

Mike Tasker: Book project

John Winn: Minutes

BOROUGHBRIDGE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUBSCRIPTION 2019-2020

The annual subscription for 2019-2020 is £18 per person.

If you are already a member, please pay by bank transfer or by bringing a cheque or cash to the first meeting of the new season on Tuesday, September 10th, 2019.

If you pay by bank transfer the society's account details are:

HSBC a/c 91087029

Sort Code 40:12:28

Please put **your name** in the Reference option

If you pay by cash or cheque please hand in the form below with your fee. Putting them in an envelope will help speed up processing. as the envelope can be handed in to Jackie Akers at the first meeting you attend. Thank you.

BDHS SUBSCRIPTION 2019-2020

If you are already a member and your address and e-mail address have not changed please complete only your name below.

Name

If your address or e-mail details have changed or if you are a NEW MEMBER please provide details

Name

Address

E.Mail

I am happy to receive information about BDHS and related events by e-mail **YES/NO**

Signed _____ Date _____

May Speaker

Jon Kenny: Exploring an archaeological site near York

Dr. Jon Kenny, community archaeologist, spoke to the society in May. Jon has been involved in many archaeological projects but talked to us on this occasion about a dig south of York, in a lowland district between the Ouse and the Derwent rivers.

The area looked as though it might be of interest based on aerial photographs showing ancient field systems and wall patterns around the villages of Skipwith, Riccall, Escrick and North Duffield. The latter became the name of the dig and films of progress made can be viewed on You Tube by searching for 'North Duffield Archaeology'.

On the ground geophysics was used to reveal the best places to dig and magnetometry showed a distinct circular structure near to North Duffield. A three year excavation commenced. The remains of Iron Age round houses were uncovered, challenging the idea that Iron Age people lived only on higher ground. Drainage systems were identified and pottery and bones from dogs and cattle were also revealed.

Lottery funding was used to gain community involvement through the recreation of a round house and staging of Celtic festivals. The project, led by North Duffield Conservation and Local History Society and RSPB Blacktoft Sands, used only locally-sourced materials for the house, including reed from the nature reserve for thatching. The roundhouse is now used as an educational resource to help local children understand what life was like 2000 or more years ago.

Community involvement in the project was excellent with over forty regular volunteers.





North Duffield Excavation



Recreated Round House

June Speaker

Wendy Hyam: Romans on Your Doorstep

Wendy Hyam, from Friends of Roman Aldborough, joined us in June to deliver an interesting talk updating us on developments in our understanding of Roman Aldborough.

Isurium Brigantum was a Roman town in the province of Britannia at the site of present-day Aldborough. It was the most northern administrative centre in the Roman Empire. Its remains, the Aldborough Roman Site, are in the care of English Heritage.

There were excavations in the C19th, when Roman mosaics were unearthed, and the 1920s and 1930s. The involvement of Cambridge University from 2009 has revealed fresh insights into the settlement.

The town was divided into four clear sections. It had an amphitheatre and forum. There is evidence of defensive walls, ditches, gates, substantial houses with hypocaust heating and mosaics. It is estimated 3000 people occupied the 22 hectare site when it functioned as a civitas or administrative centre.

In 2012 magnetometry surveys uncovered what appeared to be three large buildings. Excavations in 2018 uncovered possible warehouses. However, the pottery and bone findings in the area suggest it is more likely that these 'buildings' were in fact additional defences. Since 2016 small excavations have been carried out to re-examine earlier trenches. These included a trench in 2016 to look at part of a bath complex in a large town house and one in 2017 on the verge opposite the pub to find the Forum. Cobbles, limestone mortar, and animal bones were found.

Wendy's talk was detailed and interesting and a good reminder of the wealth of history we have 'on our doorstep'.



Tessellated Mosaic



Recent excavations



July Speaker

Sue McGeever: Ladies of the Women's Auxiliary on the Western Front

Thanks go to Sue McGeever for a very interesting talk about the Women's Auxiliary, formed in 1914.

The YMCA was established in the 1880s. The red triangle image they used represents the three aspects of man: mind, body and spirit. The YMCA helped to look after British soldiers in France and recruited women to run recreation centres behind the Front lines. These 'huts' provided soldiers with food and drink (not alcohol) and a place to play games and relax.

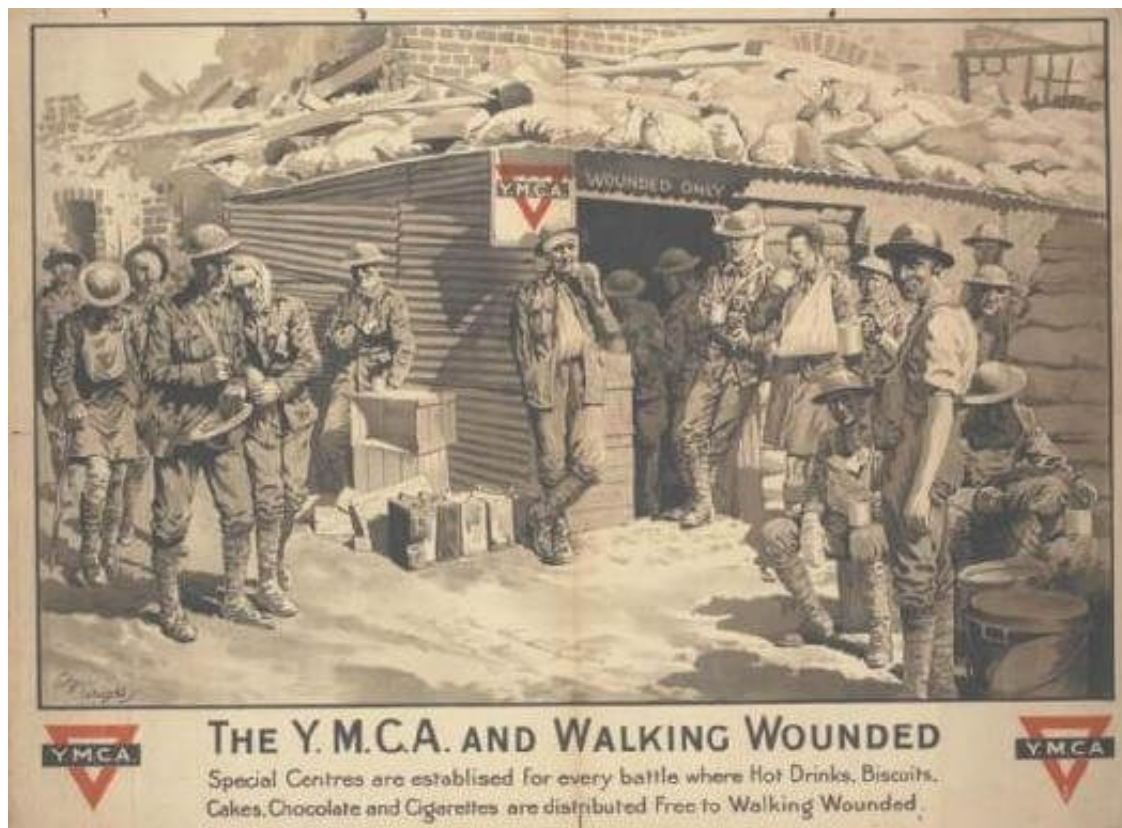
In total, 40000 women volunteered, mainly from the middle and upper classes. They ran 250 recreation centres and canteens. They provided writing kits for the men to be able to keep in touch with their families (subject to the censor carefully doctoring what they wrote). YMCA fund-raising took place at home, through flag days and hut weeks, in order to support the troops in France. The public donated around £3 million, with £81,500 from Yorkshire alone.

Sue told us the story of a local volunteer. Betty Stevenson ran a canteen and then became a driver for a Motor Transport Scheme. She was aged nineteen when she volunteered. Sadly, she died aged twenty one as a result of an air raid. She was given a military funeral. There is a memorial to her in Christ Church, Harrogate.





YMCA hut (above) and fund raising campaign image (below)



Visit to Brompton, 2nd July

Society members visited Brompton, near Northallerton on the evening of 2nd July. We were shown around the village by members of their local history group and refreshments were provided. BDHS will reciprocate in due course. Thanks to Linda for organising and Tim for providing transport.

The village was an important centre for linen making and weaving in the 19th century with eight mills in the village at its peak in 1820 but declined by the early 20th century. The last mill John Patison Yeomans was located in what is now the residential area of Linen Way. Bricks from the demolished chimney of the John Wilford Mill on Station road now form a memorial to linen workers which is situated on Water End Green, opposite the Village Inn. The village is now largely residential with just a few small businesses.

The river running through the village is named Willow Beck. This was the water source for the linen mills and as result created regular floods, mainly at the Water End area of the village. Since the factory's demolition flooding is no longer commonplace and the last time any properties suffered flood damage was 2000.

St Thomas' Church on High Green is a Grade I listed building dating from the 12th century with additions in the 14th and 15th centuries and a restoration undertaken in 1868. It has a collection of Hogback sculptures. This collection together with Viking period crosses suggest Brompton was the base for a company of stone carvers during that period.



Hogback sculptures displayed in the church



Society members and hosts outside the rebuilt windmill



Village green and weavers' cottages

MPs OF BOROUGHBIDGE

MIKE TASKER

MPs for Boroughbridge and Aldborough.

Research is continuing to uncover the fascinating history of the MPs who represented Boroughbridge and Aldborough over two and a half centuries when the parish of Aldborough including Boroughbridge, with its population of some 1300 souls, was represented in Parliament by four MPs. Bribery and corruption stories were legion, with chicanery, injustices and malpractices of all descriptions, remarkable stories of survival through very dangerous times, father and son conflicts including fighting on opposite sides in the Civil War. There are stories of great courage, great political achievement, great responsibility alongside these malpractices, but as for interest in the Boroughbridge local area – well - there was not a lot. Interest in promoting personal aggrandisement – there was plenty of that. Overall little wonder that the term ‘rotten borough’ applied to this and many other small places across the country at that time. They had just the same sort of background. It can be claimed however that Marmaduke Lawson of Boroughbridge Hall kick started the gradual reform of the clearly outdated and unfair electoral process of those days to the electoral system we have today. In our current turbulent political times I am sure readers will have their own opinion on that!

On reflection, however bad it was in this country, it was a damned sight worse on most of the continent, where there was often no semblance of democracy.

A formal proposal will be made at the AGM in September to adopt this topic as the next project for the Society, with the aim of getting this fascinating aspect of our local history collated, recorded and published for future posterity. I will also give a talk on what I have uncovered so far at the meeting.



Boroughbridge was one of many rotten boroughs political reformers complained about

UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Aldborough and Boroughbridge Show

BDHS took part as usual with a display at the A&B show on Sunday 28th July at Newby Hall. The local history of the River Ure and the Milby Cut canal were the subject of the display assembled for the Society by David Barley. It was clearly well received by visitors to the show and offered the opportunity to promote the wider history of the area, and provide a platform for the sale of books on the 'History of Boroughbridge'. The stand was manned by David Barley, Mike Tasker, Margaret Tasker and Peter Audsley. A fruitful and well worthwhile event in our endeavour to promote the history of our local area.

FUTURE PROJECTS

The next meeting of the Archive group will be on Friday 6th September in the room above Boroughbridge Library at 2 p.m. where we will be looking at two new projects for the Society to tackle.

The first one, led by Mike Tasker, is a long term project to look at the parliamentary history of Boroughbridge and Aldborough from its earliest days to the time of the Rotten Boroughs and the Reform Act. The basic idea is to record details about each M P who represented us.

Mike will give a presentation illustrating the work he has already done on this at the AGM in September.

In the shorter term we have been asked by the Boroughbridge Walkers and Welcome Group to create two display boards; one which has been required for quite a while now at the site of the Devils Arrows and one on The Battle of Boroughbridge (1322.) The latter will involve the help of The Battlefield Trust and will hopefully be erected in time for the 700 celebrations in 2022.

There is some money to be applied for from the commuted sums from all the new house building so we would aim to provide something similar to the Dog Kennel Lane or the Town Tour Boards.

If you are interested in helping with the research etc for these two projects do come along to the meeting on the 6th September and find out more.

Linda Dooks



Friends of Roman Aldborough: Forthcoming Events

September

Saturday 21

In search of origins and endings at Aldborough: New Results from the 2019 excavation
Professor Martin Millett and Dr Rose Ferraby, 7.30pm in St Andrew's Church, Aldborough

October

Thursday 3

Walking Tour of Roman York, including Roman Baths Museum
Led by Kurt Hunter Mann

Wednesday 9

Scotch Corner
David Fell, Northern Archaeological Associates, 7.30pm in Aldborough Village Hall

November

Saturday 9

Staging Plays in Ancient Rome and throughout the Empire
Dr Erica Bexley, Department of Classics and Ancient History, Durham University,
2.30pm in The Shed