

BOROUGHBRIDGE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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



NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2022

SPRING PROGRAMME

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TUESDAY, 11TH JANUARY

DAVID BARLEY

WHEN I WAS A LAD: RECOLLECTIONS OF BOROUGH-
BRIDGE IN 1952

TUESDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY

PETER DAVIDSON

ARMS AND ARMOUR OF THE LATE 13TH AND EARLY 14TH
CENTURIES

TUESDAY, 8TH MARCH

TONY GOODALL

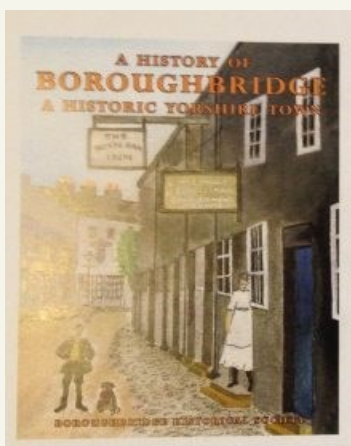
A HISTORY OF ALCOHOL

TUESDAY, 12TH APRIL

TO BE CONFIRMED

MEETINGS ARE HELD IN BOROUGHBRIDGE LIBRARY JUBILEE SUITE AT 7.30

ALL WELCOME: MEMBERS FREE; VISITORS AND GUESTS £3.00



A HISTORY OF BOROUGHBRIDGE

COPIES CAN BE BOUGHT AT MONTHLY BDHS
MEETINGS

NOTES FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Happy New Year and welcome to 2022.

It is nearly two years since we first learnt of Covid 19. In the early spring of 2020, weeks after it was known about in China, the virus began to take hold in Europe. It was not long before Italy was in lockdown and we soon followed. What a strange time it has been since; guidance and rules changing so frequently it is difficult at times to keep up. Most of us will know of people who have died as a result of the virus; sadly, some of us will have lost loved ones to it.

Although the battle against Covid is far from over, the amazing speed at which scientists produced a vaccine means that, even with new variants emerging, the threat of loss of life for most people seems to be diminishing.

As things improved during 2021 the BDHS committee decided it would be safe to begin meeting again. We have been gathering together every second Tuesday of the month since September. Numbers attending meetings have been lower than pre-pandemic but with around twenty or so in attendance each month

we have agreed to continue with face to face sessions in 2022. The Spring programme organised by David Barley looks very interesting and we look forward to seeing those members who feel secure with attending. For those shielding or vulnerable especially, we hope the various communications we have made with suggestions for on-line history events have been useful. We are grateful to Bedale Historical Society for allowing us to join events they have organised.

As far as membership fees for 2022 go, we have decided to ask for just £10 for the period from January to August. This rate is lower than pre-Covid and reflects our awareness that people may not be able to attend all sessions due to voluntary isolation etc. You can pay in cash at the January meeting or by bank transfer. The HSBC BDHS bank details are:

sort code — 40:12:28

a/c— 91087029

Please put your name in the reference box.

Best wishes,

Peter Fleming

September Meeting

AGM and Quiz

This was our first meeting since the spring of 2020 and people seemed very pleased to be face to face once again. Mike Tasker provided an interesting quiz on Boroughbridge to entertain us. People with embarrassingly low scores were reminded that the society's book, *History of Boroughbridge*, contains all the answers!

Committee members agreed to remain in post for a further year.

The AGM minutes are published later in this newsletter.

October Talk

Votes for Men — John Winn

Very few people could vote in early 1800's Britain – in England and Wales, this was less than 3% of a population of nearly 8 million and in Scotland, only 4,500 out of 2.6 million. This right was also only extended to men and in a lot of locations it depended on whether they owned any property or paid taxes of a certain amount. Equal representation in Parliament was also an issue. Large industrial towns like Manchester had no MPs to represent them whereas some rotten boroughs and burgage boroughs with extremely small populations (like Boroughbridge and Aldborough) did.

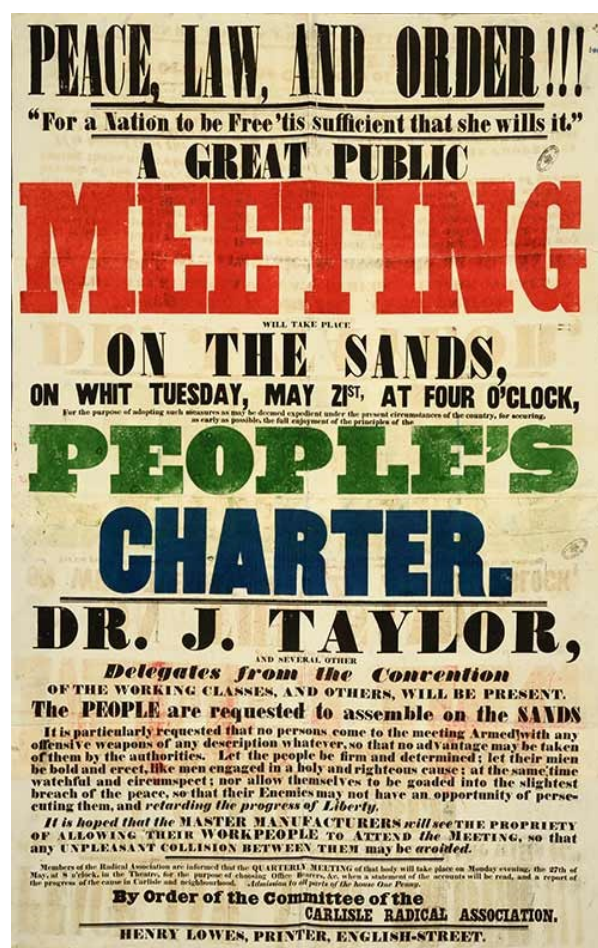
Initially, pressure for reform came from the wealthy and powerful merchants and traders, who wanted to gain a political power to match their economic influence. After the French Revolution, this notion reached wider audiences. Politically-fuelled works such as *Rights of Man* by Thomas Paine and various campaigns, including one by the Birmingham Political Union, made many realise that a drastic change was needed. The first Reform Act of 1832 extended voting rights to males who rented land of a certain value. It also disenfranchised all of the rotten boroughs and created 67 new constituencies. This, in turn, redistributed representation in Parliament and allowed it to portray the country a little bit more accurately. The act was revolutionary in the sense that it allowed the middle classes to share some social and political power with the upper classes. But no change had been achieved for the working class, as most of the men did not fit the property qualifications required to vote.

The Chartist Movement developed after the 1832 Reform Act failed to extend the vote beyond those owning property. Its members were typically from the working class and their 1838 People's Charter was established by the London Working Men's Association. The petition had six demands:

1. Universal suffrage
2. The secret ballot
3. Annual Parliamentary elections
4. No property qualifications
5. Equal voting districts
6. Payment of Members of Parliament

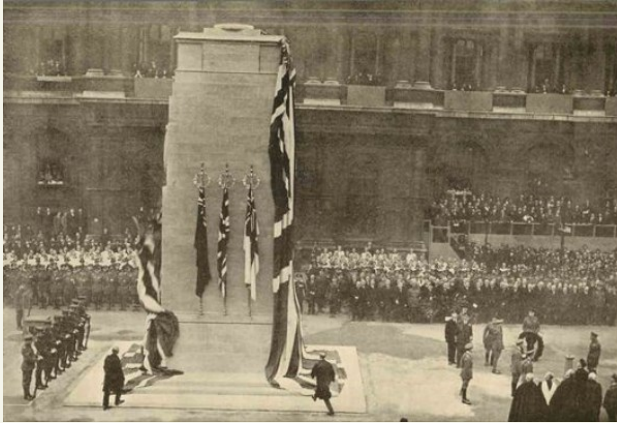
Despite state repression, the Chartist movement remained strong into the 1840s and many of their demands began to seem less threatening as the century advanced.

The second (1867) and third (1884) Reform Acts, though they increased electoral size considerably, still resisted the idea of 'one man, one vote,' as 40% of adult males in Britain still did not have the vote. As well as working-class males, the Reform Acts excluded women of all ages. It was the 1918 Representation of the People Act which symbolised the end of the long and weary path for universal male suffrage.



November Talk

History of the Two Minutes Silence — John F Moss



John's timely and interesting talk looked in detail at the origins of the two minutes silence. He presented to us a range of suggestions/theories. The most compelling is given below.

Throughout the Great War, whenever South African Troops suffered losses a period of silence was observed at noon in Cape Town. In May 1919 Australian journalist Edward Honey suggested a five minute silence. In a minute dated 4th November 1919 and submitted to Lord Milner by Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, former British High Commissioner to the Dominion of

South Africa, and whose son was lost in France in 1917, was the following:

'In the hearts of our people there is a real desire to find some lasting expression of their feeling for those who gave their lives in the war. They want something done now while the memories of sacrifice are in the minds of all; for there is the dread – too well grounded in experience – that those who have gone will not always be first in the thoughts of all, and that when the fruits of their sacrifice become our daily bread, there will be few occasions to remind us of what we realise so clearly today. During the War, we in South Africa observed what we called the *three minutes' pause*. At noon each day, all work, all talk and all movement were suspended for three minutes that we might concentrate as one in thinking of those – the living and the dead – who had pledged and given themselves for all that we believe in... Silence, complete and arresting, closed upon the city – the moving, awe-inspiring silence of a great Cathedral where the smallest sound must seem a sacrilege... Only those who have felt it can understand the overmastering effect in action and reaction of a multitude moved suddenly to one thought and one purpose.'

The proposal was discussed by the War Cabinet and a 'Service of Silence' was approved for Armistice Day, but they amended the duration of the silence to one minute. The proposal was taken to the King who after deliberation amended the period to two minutes.

On 7th November 1919 the following appeared in the newspapers:

'Tuesday next, November 11, is the first anniversary of the Armistice, which stayed the world wide carnage of the four preceding years and marked the victory of Right and Freedom. I believe that my people in every part of the Empire fervently wish to perpetuate the memory of the Great Deliverance, and of those who have laid down their lives to achieve it. To afford an opportunity for the universal expression of this feeling, it is my desire and hope that at the hour when the Armistice came into force, the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, there may be for the brief space of two minutes a complete suspension of our normal activities. No elaborate organisation appears to be required.

At a given signal, which can easily be arranged to suit the circumstances of the locality, I believe that we shall gladly interrupt our business and pleasure, whatever it may be and unite in this simple service of Silence and Remembrance'.

John reminded us that silences had occurred before 1919. For example, at the funeral procession of Queen Victoria and in churches during the war as a means of honouring the dead and remembering those wounded and fighting.



Gone but not forgotten; remembrance then and now



Brief History of Inoculations and Vaccinations

Peter Fleming

Those written up in the history books often got there on the shoulders of others. At school we were taught that Edward Jenner was the father of vaccinations. It is true that Jenner brought vaccination to the world but he did not invent the procedure.

The story of vaccination begins with human efforts to combat smallpox. In C18th Europe 400,000 people died from the disease each year (out of a population of about 150m-200m); many who survived were blind as a result of the infection; all had terrible skin scars once fluid retaining lumps drained. Smallpox is estimated to have killed 500 million people in the last 100 years of its existence.

While in Britain there was no known way of preventing smallpox in China variolation had been used since the C11th; a small dose of smallpox pus (from someone with mild symptoms) was used to infect a person so natural immunity could be developed. In the picture dried, crushed smallpox scabs are being blown up the patient's nose. This approach came from observation; those who survived an attack of smallpox rarely caught it again. This idea spread along the silk routes to the Mediterranean and Africa.



The Royal Society ignored reports of variolation until Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (wife of our Ambassador to Turkey) got involved. After living in Turkey in the early 1700s she returned to England and encouraged people at Court to use the procedure, known as 'The Inoculation'. She had used it successfully on her children in Turkey. Meanwhile, in some rural areas of England people infected their children with smallpox by 'buying the pox' from an infected person, believing that a mild dose in childhood would prevent death from infection as an adult.

Then came vaccination. Benjamin Jesty used cowpox in 1774 to prevent smallpox, preceding Jenner in vaccination by 22 years. Jesty was born 1736 in Yetminster. He followed his father and grandfather into dairy farming. Already, there was an idea among country folk that cowpox had protective powers. This mild bovine infection was transmitted to dairymaids through abrasions on their hands. Milkmaids seemed never to catch smallpox and were famed for their pure complexions, unlike those who survived smallpox and carried pock marks as a result.

During spring of 1774 Jesty took his wife and two sons to a nearby farm where there was cowpox. He used a stocking needle which he inserted into a cowpox lesion. He then stuck it in his wife's arm just above the elbow. He repeated the process with his sons, this time just below the elbow. This was the first recorded vaccination. When word of the event got out, he was reviled and hounded and ended up having to relocate. We now know that the virus particle of cowpox is similar to that of smallpox; surface antigens of cowpox stimulate an immune response to cowpox but also smallpox.

Smallpox was eradicated from the world by the WHO by a combination of surveillance and observation, isolation and ring vaccination. The latter involved vaccinating contacts then contacts of contacts. The last known case of smallpox was in Somalia in 1977. The last person to die of smallpox was Janet Parker who was infected through air conditioning in a research lab in Birmingham.



What then of Edward Jenner? In 1796 he vaccinated a boy called James Phipps by taking cowpox from the hand of a dairy maid, Sarah Nemes, and infecting Phipps with it. He later infected Phipps with smallpox to show he was immune. In 1798 he did more vaccinations, using material taken from a cow and infecting children with it. He perhaps deserve to be called the father of vaccination, even if he didn't invent it, as he tirelessly encouraged support for vaccination through the gentry, the military and medical fraternities.

He met much opposition at the time. Despite this opposition, magnificent advances were soon made. Louis Pasteur's 1885 rabies vaccine was the next to make an impact on human disease. And then, at the dawn of what is called bacteriology, developments rapidly followed. Antitoxins and vaccines against diphtheria, tetanus, anthrax, cholera, plague, typhoid, tuberculosis, and more were developed through the 1930s.

The middle of the 20th century was an active time for vaccine research and development. Methods for growing viruses in the laboratory led to rapid discoveries and innovations, including the creation of vaccines for polio. Researchers targeted other common childhood diseases such as measles, mumps, and rubella, and vaccines for these diseases reduced the disease burden greatly.

Innovative techniques now drive vaccine research, with DNA technology and new delivery techniques leading scientists in new directions. Disease targets have expanded, and some vaccine research is beginning to focus on non-infectious conditions such as addiction and allergies.

From Jenner's time onwards there has been opposition from some people to vaccination. This is still evident in a minority of people who refuse to be vaccinated against Covid.



Cartoon opposing cowpox vaccinations

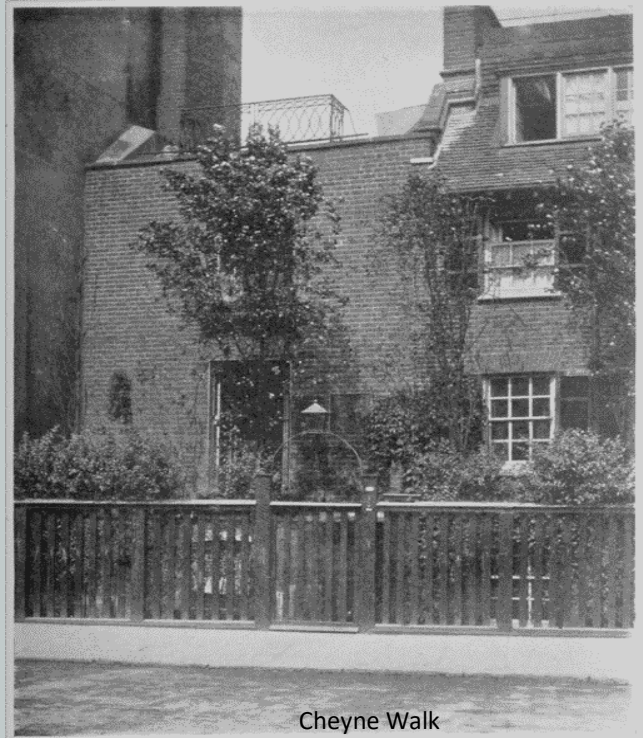
Turner's London Residences – David Bellwood

Background

During lockdown, my wife became interested in finding out more about her ancestors. With the help of the Ancestry Library we got to work.

Adrienne was born in Stepney, London, and the immediate family were all born and grew up in the East End. Adrienne's maternal grandmother was called Rose Ellen Greatwood, and when we found her name on the 1891 Census, we discovered that she was living at **118 Cheyne Walk**, Chelsea, in West London – a bit of a surprise! This was then a House of multiple occupancy.

When researching family history, we probably all imagine how interesting it would be to find photographs of the houses our ancestors lived in. This doesn't often happen. But it's always worth a try, so of course I Googled "119 Cheyne Walk". There are then quite a lot of results, mostly related to "Turner's House". This was, however, the last of Turner's many homes, so we'll return to Cheyne Walk a little later.



Cheyne Walk

JMW Turner was born above his father's barber shop at number 21, Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, in 1775. Maiden Lane is a street that runs from Bedford Street in the west to Southampton Street in the east. His mother, Mary Marshall, came from a family of butchers. Turner was baptised at St Paul's Church in Covent Garden on 14 May 1775. At some point, they also lived at No.26. Both of these have since been demolished. The site of No.21 was at one time occupied by an American style diner called 'Fat Boys' but has now been redeveloped.

Around 1786, Turner was sent to Margate on the north-east Kent coast to go to school. At the age of 11 this was probably the first time he had seen the sea; it would come to be one of his greatest subjects. Even after his education was over, he visited the resort regularly. Now, Turner Contemporary, a modern art gallery, has been built on the site where his old boarding house once stood. Created by British architect David Chipperfield, it is the largest contemporary art space in south-east England.

In 1799, Turner moved from his father's house in Covent Garden to Harley Street in London's West End. Although Turner was an artist best known for his atmospheric paintings of landscapes, he had another less known talent. He created bespoke galleries specially designed to display his paintings. Five years after moving to Harley St, he converted some outbuildings attached to his home into a gallery where he could show his pictures. This was the same year his mother died in Bethlem Hospital.

The gallery was a success and many wealthy visitors (and buyers) came to see it. Art collector Sir John Leicester was among them. He wanted to have his own gallery at his country house in Tabley, Cheshire. Turner helped him to design it.

Just four years later in 1809, Turner moved from his Harley Street address around the corner to 47, Queen Anne Street West. He designed another gallery for this property in 1818. Every aspect of the gallery – from its heating and lighting to the arrangement of paintings on its walls – was carefully planned by Turner.

Unfortunately, this house was demolished in the late C19th.

Sandycombe Lodge is a grade-II listed house at 40 Sandycombe Road, Twickenham. In the picturesque-cottage style, it was designed and built by Turner himself in 1813 as his country retreat, where he may escape from the pressure of the art world in the city. His first name for it was Solus Lodge, but he changed the name a year later. Turner lived there from 1814 to 1826. It is the only surviving building designed by Turner, and shows the influence



Sandycombe Lodge

of his friend, Sir John Soane. In fact, Turner had once declared that “if he could have his life again, he would have been an architect.”

While there, he enjoyed walking the Thames path, sketching and fishing. When his father, William, retired, he took charge of the household and garden.

2019 saw a £5,000 grant from Richmond Council’s Civic Pride Fund bestowed on the cottage in order to make it fit to exhibit loaned Turner works in 2020. Sandycombe Lodge is now his only former home that is open to the public.

Turner was a frequent guest of George Wyndham, 3rd Earl of Egremont, and lived at Petworth House in West Sussex for a period. There he painted scenes of the grounds and the surrounding countryside, as commissioned by Egremont, including a view of the Chichester Canal. Petworth House is now a National Trust property and its collection of art still includes 20 of Turner’s works – the most from any one artist.

Turner formed a relationship with Sophia Caroline Booth (1798–1875), who had formerly been his landlady in Margate. They lived at 118 and 119, Cheyne Walk in Chelsea for about 18 years. Turner actually adopted her name and lived as ‘Mr Booth’ to conceal his identity. It is rumoured that in 1841 Turner rowed a boat into the Thames so he could not be counted as present at any property.

Turner spent his last years living anonymously and modestly in Cheyne Walk. In fact Leopold Martin, son of the painter John Martin who also happened to be living just a few houses away was far from impressed when he visited: “the house had but three windows in front and was miserable in every respect, furnished in poor fashion.” He also recalls that an old woman served them bread with porter (dark ale). That old woman was probably Sophia Booth, Turner’s landlady and his loyal life companion during his last years. Local boys called him “Puggy Booth” and the boatmen dubbed him “The Admiral” as he had a habit of carrying his telescope with him. Turner spent most of his time watching the Thames from his first floor room overlooking the river. He also climbed up to the roof and watched the dawn and sunrise from there. A special wrought-iron balustrade was installed to prevent him falling from his favourite viewing point.

Sometimes Mr Booth and Mrs Booth would venture across the river to Battersea fields. It would often be local boatman Charles Greaves who would row them across the Thames. Later at night Greaves would wake up his neighbour and painter John Martin if the skies looked particularly stormy. Several years later Charles Greaves’s sons, Walter and Henry, would row another painter: James Abbot McNeil Whistler. Once on the other side of the Thames, Turner and his loyal Mrs Booth would walk to the Battersea church where he would watch the sunset over the water from the vestry above the west door.

It was Turner’s priority to protect his secret life in Chelsea. His official address was the house he owned in Queen Anne Street, Marylebone. There is a story that after a dinner party he once attended, he was helped by his host into a cab. The host asked what address he should he give to the driver. Turner’s clever reply was; “Tell the fellow to drive to Oxford Street and then I’ll direct him.” In fact, it was only a letter that the landlady of his official residence found in the painter’s coat that provided the clue to his Chelsea address, where he was traced to just the day before his death. Turner died at Cheyne Walk at the age of 76 in 1851.

In Margate, ‘Shell Lady’ on Margate Harbour Arm is named ‘Mrs Booth’ – a link between his childhood muse, the sea, and that of his later life. Mrs Booth refers to Sophie Booth an artist and landlady of the boarding house JMW Turner used to stay in on his many visits to Margate.

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY—Linda Dooks

Plans are well in hand now to celebrate in 2022 the 700th anniversary of the Battle of Boroughbridge (1322). Over the last year members of the committee have been working with the Battlefields Trust, the local Parish Councils on designing a battlefield trail complete with explanatory display boards. We have now applied for the planning permission for the erection of the boards at five specific sites around the town. We have also begun work on finalising the design of the boards and getting copyright permission to use the illustrations on them and the accompanying leaflet.



We are still hopeful of holding a event in commemoration of the battle on the 2th March, the nearest weekend to the actual battle. It is hoped to have a living history display, and a exhibition about the battle on the Boroughbridge shared space.

We have received support from the Earl of Hereford who is hopeful of attending on the day, his family being a direct descendant of Humphrey De Bohun who was killed at the battle. The Battlefield Trust also hope to present guided tours of the 1322 Battlefield site on the day. For more information on the battle visit the Website at www.battlefieldstrust.com



Minutes of the Boroughbridge & District Historical Society AGM, Tuesday September 14th 2021 7:30pm

The chairman began by marking the death of founder member and former chairman John Whitehouse. Details of the funeral will be forwarded to members when known.

Apologies were received from David Barley, Sue Markham and Vivien and Barry Green.

The minutes of the 2109 AGM were approved as an accurate record.

Chairman's report

Peter reported on what had been a difficult two years for the society. Before the cessation of meetings in February 2020 the society had heard talks on Boroughbridge MPs, The Battle of Stamford Bridge, Turnpike Roads, Tramways of the Dales, The Newby Hall Ferry Disaster, the American West and Emigration to Nova Scotia.

During the pandemic the committee has continued to meet via zoom and newsletters had been circulated to keep members up to date. Peter thanked all those who had helped to keep the society going during the last 18 months when no meetings had been possible. We are grateful to the Bedale Society for allowing access to their talks.

Treasurer's Report

Jackie reported a balance of £2065 at the bank and £274 in cash. Sales of books had covered the reprint costs and the society has 57 books in hand. There are 46 members of the society. Jackie warned that banks would shortly be introducing charges for organisations like the society.

Secretary/Archivist's Report

Linda reported on the installation of the display board at the Devil's Arrows Site. The council has plans to make the site more accessible.

We have been involved in discussions with the Battlefield Trust over the setting up of a Battlefield trail in celebration of the 700th anniversary of the battle next year. Plans are well in hand with funding from Miller Homes and we hope to start moving forward with art work etc in the near future.

One of the more interesting family history enquiries concerns the successful but tragic Husband family from Whixley who lost a son killed by a cricket ball and another by drowning. In addition there was an aunt killed in a train crash. On a brighter note another son became coroner and Mayor of Ripon.

Pauline Barker had contacted us about the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of Boroughbridge Secondary Modern School.

Other enquiries had concerned the Leake family at Skelton and the Holmes and Pierson family at Ellenthorpe Hall.

Linda concluded by thanking those who had helped with these enquiries and all members for their continued support. We are particularly grateful to Peter for his work as chairman during this difficult time.

Election of committee and officers.

The existing committee and officers were returned.

Meetings procedure

It was agreed that meetings should be held subject to conditions including hand sanitation, adequate ventilation and a capacity of 25. Initially meetings would be confined to members. The possibility of digital recording was considered.

Fees

It was agreed that no fees should be charged until January when a half fee might be introduced. Admission at the door to remain at £3:00

AOB

The next three meetings will be as follows:

October John Winn 'Votes for Men'.

November John Moss 'The history of the two minutes' silence'.

December Peter Fleming 'The History of Vaccination' and David Bellwood tba

Date of 2022 meeting 13th September 2022

Boroughbridge and District Historical Society Minutes, 7th December 2021.

This was a face-to-face meeting held in the Jubilee room.

Minutes of the last meeting were taken as read

Apologies - John Winn.

Treasurer's report – Balance at the bank £2023.24. cash in hand £244.72. Jackie reported that the bank charges for using the account had not come through yet. Bacla had been paid for room hire and the subscription for BALH membership which included insurance had been paid. A total of approx. fifty books were still available for sale.

Dog Kennel Lane Walk reprint - Boroughbridge Walkers are Welcome had asked for a contribution towards re-printing the walk leaflet which had been funded by our

DKL project previously. It was agreed that £150 should be donated towards the £350 approx. cost for 2,500 copies. It would involve a change to include our website address. Proposed by Mike Tasker and seconded by Peter Fleming.

Battle of Boroughbridge commemoration 2022 – A date had not been arranged for this yet as planning permission still needed to be arranged for the installation of the boards. Linda stressed again that the History society were not going to be the main organiser of this event other than she felt we could organise, as we had been asked, an exhibition on the day in the Jubilee room. It would make a good base for the events planned that were taking place on the day ie tours of the Battle field and unveiling of the boards etc., It was suggested that the Town Council or the Chamber of Trade should take on anything such as a medieval market or large re-enactment if that was required. Linda would take this back to the next meeting of the Battle Group.

Robin Hereford, an ancestor of de Bohun the 4th Earl of Hereford who was killed at the 1322 battle. was very interested in attending. and had supplied us with some history, Robin being the 19th Earl of Hereford.

Arrangements for the rest of the year – Linda agree to book the room up to July for both the monthly meeting and the next committee and project meetings. There was some discussion about numbers attending so, publicity re poster and outside attendance would be discussed after the next meeting. It was decided that as the 25th anniversary of the group was well past to look at celebrating something for thirty years in four years time. David Barley who agreed to do the January talk, to look at booking speakers up to July.

Peter and David Bellwood had agreed to look at filming the speakers talks to put on the website

It was agreed the committee would do the refreshments on a adhoc basis.

Membership Fees - It was agreed that in January the membership would be asked for £10 to cover membership up to the AGM in the autumn. If allowed to attend, visitors would remain at £3. Proposed by Jackie Akers, seconded by Linda Dooks.

Facebook – A discussion took place about a Facebook page for the society, but as it would need to be consistently updated and monitored it was felt that we could post thing on other Facebook pages such as Boroughbridge chatter to get our message out.

A.O.B – Members of the project group had met with Liz Leatherbarrow from the tourist Information regarding a map of Boroughbridge showing the historical features that visitors may like to visit. Mike T had done some work on this, and it was agreed that the Historical society would look at publishing a A3/A4 folding map with illustrations. Further discussion would take place on this at the next project meeting on Friday 7th January 2 pm in the Jubilee room. Liz to be invited.

Date of next meeting 15th February 7 pm.

Masham Druid Stone Circle - Peter Fleming

In the last newsletter I wrote a piece about the Bedale Leach House. A few members commented favourably on this and as a result I thought I would do a short piece in each newsletter about some aspect of Yorkshire history based on what we can still see today. I will focus mainly on buildings but for this newsletter I have decided to write about the Druid's Temple. This is a Regency-era folly in open woodland near the Yorkshire village of Ilton, near Masham. The folly was loosely modelled after Stonehenge.

William Danby (1752-1832) was an eccentric 19th-century country squire, a former Sheriff of Yorkshire and the owner of Swinton Park, near Masham. In the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars, the residents of Danby's Yorkshire estates were suffering from a serious economic depression, so he decided to do something about it.

Danby was inspired by the stone circle at Stonehenge, which leading antiquarians incorrectly assumed had been created by the Druids of Celtic Britain. He decided to create his own Druid's Temple, modelled loosely on Stonehenge. He hired unemployed workmen and paid them one shilling per day to create a fanciful folly based on a circle of standing stones. The stones ranged up to 10 feet high and formed an arrangement measuring 100 feet long.

The standing stones are arranged around a low stone altar. At the back of the circle is a cave in the style of a tomb. There are two large stone circles. One is in the form of a *vesica piscis* (intersecting circles creating an eye-shaped outline) that has four monolithic standing stones and a central monolith like a phallic symbol on a stepped base. Three more stones form a screen to an antechamber, and beyond that is a circular chamber centred on the altar, or sacrificial stone. Beyond that is the tomb area. On the hillside overlooking the circle is a large column carved with the signs of the zodiac.

Not only did Danby design the temple, but he also hired a 'hermit' to live in the 'tomb' for seven years. The hermit was instructed to remain mute and let his hair and beard grow. It was always going to be a difficult task; the successful hermit lasted only four years in his role and it was rumoured that the requirements of the job drove him insane.

The Druid's Temple was built at a time when there was growing interest in British history - and a lot of confusing speculation that wasn't founded in facts. Antiquarians like Danby hearkened back to an idyllic golden age of British history, ruled by a Druidic elite. The temple is fascinating not only as one of the most interesting follies in England but as an example of what the early 19th-century English wanted to think about themselves and their heritage.

