

Winster Local History Group

Newsletter No.26

December 2002

Next Meetings

Monday 24 February, 7.30 in the Burton Institute. Professor David Hey:
Packhorse Trails and Other Trade Routes in the Peak District

Monday 24 March. Professor Geoff Williams, British Geological Survey. The
Geology of the Winster Region and the Peak District.

Technology at the Burton Institute

The Reading Room project has quite a range of technology available for public use, much of which would be of interest to History Group members.

Our ten computers (and Internet connection) are available for use on a drop-in basis (Wednesday evenings 7pm-9pm). If anyone wanted to organise a special session at some other time (perhaps for a group of people to do research via the Internet) we could certainly arrange that too.

We also have a video projector, which can be used in the Main Hall or Jubilee Room (please book in advance). The projector can be hooked up to show videos or DVDs (we have players for both) or it can show whatever would be shown on a computer screen. In time, we will have an "interactive white board" in the Jubilee Room (which allows you to control the computer by touching the screen) and a 9' screen in the Main Hall; for the moment, we just have a 6' portable screen, but it will give a good result for groups of up to about 20. (Unfortunately, our insurance does not allow us to lend the equipment for use outside the building.) We don't have a 35mm projector, but we do have an OHP.

Lastly, we have a digital camera - nothing terribly posh, but simple to use, and quite good enough for postcard-size pictures (or full-screen pictures or websites), and it's available for village groups to borrow.

Enquiries and bookings to John Geddes 01629 650364

[On February 12 John received the District Council Chairman's Community Award in recognition of what he has achieved for Winster. John is always generous in his help and encouragement, and it is good to see his hard work for the village acknowledged in this way.]

Archives Awareness Month September 2003

The County Archivist, Margaret O'Sullivan has asked me to put forward an idea to the Group for discussion. It relates to a recent national initiative, 'Archives Awareness Month'. As the name suggests, the aim of the month is to encourage archive repositories throughout the country to undertake an extra programme of activities in their regions and localities in order to raise awareness of the richness and diversity of archive collections and their potential uses. There is a particular focus on trying to reach new audiences, but we are also keen to inform and involve existing users. The month that has been selected for 2003 is September.

Margaret has suggested that as part of the programme she would like Derbyshire Record Office to undertake an activity with a local history group, on a partnership basis. Her suggestion is that Record Office staff could offer an event that would take place in a local venue away from the Office, in collaboration with the chosen group. The group would help with provision of the venue and some of the publicity.

The event would probably take the form of a presentation on, for example, 'Victorian photographs'. This would focus on the research potential of photographs and how to interpret them in relation to particular themes, e.g. costume. Attendees might wish to bring in their own photographs for illustrative purposes but we would also draw on collections at the Record Office for the purpose of the session.

As the Winster Local History Group is very active, Margaret wanted to put this proposal to you for discussion.

Jo Ichimura

[Jo is a member of the History Group Committee and she also works as an archivist in Derbyshire Record Office in Matlock. We discussed the suggestion at our Committee Meeting on 4 February and decided to take up this opportunity and make it the basis of our first meeting, on 22 September. The focus of the session will be the research potential of photographs from the Victorian period, i.e. photographs as a historical source and what can be learnt from them. Details later.]

Oral Group

The Oral History Project is the most successful and long-running of our working groups. The plan is to document the social history of Winster's remembered past before too much of it is lost. The first batch of tapes gave the group the material for the book *Winster: A Peak District Village Remembers*.

Unfortunately, the group's regular transcriber, Barbara Berry, found herself unable to continue doing the job on account of new work commitments, so the

untranscribed recordings began to mount up. The task is fairly laborious, and Brenda Newsam, our new volunteer audiotypist, was finding it difficult to get through the backlog.

However, appeals in the Parish Magazine, the Matlock Mercury and the Peak Advertiser have brought in about ten new volunteers. So now the recording team has to leap into action to make further tapes, otherwise the bottleneck will merely have shifted.

If you would like to join the group or can suggest people to interview, please phone Freda Forster, 650110.

From the Parish Magazine One Hundred Years Ago

In his letter of January 1903 the Vicar, W.H. Nixon, expressed his wish for the happiness of his parishioners, reminding them that 'Happiness apart from faith in God is impossible'.

In particular he appealed for more Sunday School Teachers. 'Mr. Prinsep - old in harness and yet keen as ever in his work is never absent from his class and cannot rest, for no one offers to take his place.' His supporting team of four - numerous by present-day standards - was apparently insufficient, and he urged others to 'volunteer, at once!!!'

'Then, as to our Choir. I should like to welcome two or three young men (preferably with some knowledge of music) and whom I can always trust to be in their places at both services on Sunday. This, I take it, [is] most important, not only as a matter of duty but of privilege as well. The only aim of a Chorister should be to assist in leading the worship of the congregation. No other motive should be his, and he should, if he takes up the responsibility, allow no question of convenience or self interest to weigh with him in the carrying out of his duties. He should in fact consider it of as great moment to be punctual and conscientious in his work for God as in his work for man and he should dare to give God only of his best. It has saddened me in the past more than I can tell to notice the more than paltry excuses which have kept men from doing their duty not to me, or to you, but to God Himself. The Sun of God's mercy shines upon the unjust as well as upon the just, but He promises his blessing to the just alone.

I commend these matters to your careful thoughts. Your affectionate friend and Vicar, W.H. Nixon.'

[It is not recorded whether this warm invitation had the desired effect.]

Arthur Jewitt's Sketchbook (Derbyshire Record Office D787/1, pp108-113)

This small sketchbook is that of Arthur Jewitt, father of 17 children, one of whom was Llewellynn, the famous engraver and publisher who lived in Winster Hall from 1867 to 1880. It contains pencil and ink sketches of a range of places in Derbyshire, but of particular local interest are three that relate to the notorious duel of 22 May 1821 in the garden of Bank House, West Bank, Winster, in which the village doctor, William Cuddie, was shot by William Brittlebank of Oddo. Brittlebank was charged but jumped bail and escaped abroad.

The first sketch is of 'Winster Church as seen from the Spot where Mr Cuddie fell'. The church is partly obscured by trees and by the garden wall, but the sketch is of special interest as one of only three known illustrations showing features of the building before the extensive remodelling of 1842 and 1885.

Next is 'Oddo, the Seat of Mr Brittlebank, as seen from the spot where Mr Cuddie fell'. The house is modest in style and proportions, unlike the mansion by which it was replaced about 1830, which was itself replaced by the present one in 1936.

Thirdly there is 'Mr Cuddie's house at Winster, as drawn from the walk at the bottom of the Garden', with numbers and letters indicating such things as 'the place where Cuddie fell, marked by the Rose tree', Brittlebank's station', and 'Bole of a Yew which received the Bullet after it passed thro Cuddie's body'. The yew is still there.

The sketches are dated 12 August 1821, and the trial of Brittlebank's alleged accomplices took place on 14 August. So great was the interest of the public that two booklets about it were rushed into print, one by G. Wilkins of Derby and the other, 'The Only Authentic Report of the Trial...', by Stephen Glover of Wirksworth. The latter has two illustrative engravings by Orlando, another famous son of Arthur Jewitt, one of Oddo 'as seen from the spot where Mr. Cuddie stood, when he was shot' and the other 'A View of the House occupied by the late Mr. Cuddie, Surgeon, Winster, taken at the bottom of the Garden'. Both engravings are very clearly based on the sketches, although in the latter the garden has been altered slightly and figures of men aiming pistols, along with their seconds, have been inserted where the sketch has only the numbers 1 and 2.

In all, then, the sketches illustrate the processes by which such publications came into being, and the collaboration of members of the Jewitt family, presumably under commission, in achieving successful pictures for the press - the 1821 equivalent of photo-journalism.

Membership of Winster Local History Group

Our membership is now up to 60, which is probably a record.