



# *Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society*



## NEWSLETTER MAY 2013

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**Tissington Well Dressing, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2013**

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## Editors Notes

This is the first Issue of our Newsletter to introduce our new series of four issues per year. I would like to thanks all the contributors who have produced all the articles that you will find as you turn the pages.

The success of this venture depends entirely on our increasing membership offering items, pictures news items and articles on what you have done, have been interested in and what you have come across that you have thought 'that would interest our members'. Most items, although covered by copyright, can be reproduced subject to acknowledging the source, sometimes getting permission at no cost (like the excerpt from Nature in last issue). You will not have to do that yourself, that's one of the Editors jobs!

This is also the first issue where colour will be introduced more widely, as we are progressing towards a greater on-line system. I can assure you that I shall be very discrete about using colour as this requires me to learn how use a more complex software than Word!

Paul Norris email:pm.norris@virgin.net

## Going Digital!

One of the challenges that face a Society like ours is how to strike the right balance between the digital world in which we now live, and the familiar and perhaps comfortable ways in which we have always done things. Change for the sake of change is rarely helpful or sustainable, but we do need to be constantly vigilant for new ways by which we can improve the services that are offered to SAHS members, and how we manage our business.

In recent years we have taken some important steps. Like most other similar groups, we have developed our website and we continue to look at how we can maximise its use. Our published Transactions can now be consulted on line, and as many members will know, they are also available on a disc. We also have the opportunity of supplement our communication with members through e-mails, hence the importance that the Committee has attached to gathering our members' e-mail addresses over the last twelve months or so. We are now about to embark on our next step in this programme.

One of the most important activities that SAHS promotes is the publication of our Newsletter. This is still fundamental to how we keep in touch with everyone and let you know what is happening in the Society and beyond; there are no plans to change this. All vibrant societies have, or aspire to have, interesting and attractive Newsletters; they can be signposts to both the strength of the Society, and serve as publicity that promotes interest and attracts new members. The Committee have therefore decided to further support the revitalisation of our Society by adding a digital version of our printed Newsletter to the publications we offer.

The digital Newsletter will not replace the printed Newsletter. Members will continue to receive the printed Newsletter by post. However, for those members who request it, we will be able to send a digital version of the Newsletter rather than the paper publication. We anticipate that digital editions will offer us greater flexibility in compiling and publishing the issues; the ability to use colour will add to the visual impact of the Newsletter, and they will be accessible through the website. Not only do we think that the production quality of the Newsletter can be improved, it is also the case that if enough of our members opt to receive this, we will be able to make savings on our annual running costs. We hope that you will welcome this initiative and will consider switching to the digital Newsletter. We plan to introduce this option in 2013 - 2014 and will be announcing more details later. Meanwhile, don't forget that this is your Newsletter and we would urge you to make full use of it. Our Newsletter Editor is always keen to receive items from you for inclusion!

John Hunt.

## OBITUARIES

Although the Society published an Obituary of Jim Gould in the last Issue of the Newsletter, this additional Obituary was written by another of our members for the Society of Antiquaries, the professional journal for archaeologist.

### JIM GOULD MA FSA

James Tynan (Jim) Gould died at home 7th January 2013, aged 94, and was remembered by his family and friends at a celebration of his life on 28th January.

Jim Gould grew up and lived his entire life in and around Aldridge (Staffordshire until 1974). He earned a scholarship to attend grammar school, but out of respect for his family financial circumstances, did not proceed to the tertiary education that he richly deserved, going on instead to work as a railway clerk. During the Second World War he served in the navy without leaving our shores, and shortly afterwards he qualified as a history teacher, eventually ending his career as deputy head of Perrycrofts School in Tamworth. Alongside his teaching commitments, he worked unstintingly as a local historian and archaeologist, developing his own knowledge and generously sharing it with others. A product of adult education opportunities that are regrettably now largely unavailable, he metamorphosed from student to teacher of adult education classes for the Workers Educational Association. He went on to lecture part-time for Birmingham and Keele Universities, the latter awarding him an MA (Hon Causa). He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1966.

His highly regarded book, *Men of Aldridge* (1957) 'filled a need for those who like to teach or learn history from a human angle' (Adrian Oswald). However, it is his numerous published papers for which he is chiefly recognised, ranging in subject matter from prehistoric stone axes to a fifteenth-century iron mill. As a founder member and the Secretary of the Lichfield and South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society he directed excavations on the Romano-British forts at Wall (*Letocetum*) near Lichfield. Decades before the era of developer funding, he carried out rescue excavations on the line of the Wall by-pass. Later, as Philip Rahtz worked on the Anglo-Saxon defences in Hereford Jim Gould competed with him to be the first to encounter them in Tamworth. Jim also wrote incisive papers on local place names, and such diverse subjects as the medieval Cannock Forest and the identity of St Edith of Polesworth.

A more detailed appreciation of the life and work of a modest, unassuming, scholarly gentleman is planned for a forthcoming volume of the Staffordshire society that he helped to found.

Bob Meeson

### SNIPPETS (1)

The recent Staffordshire History Day featured a talk about the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. The interesting part of this talk was that this dictionary is available free on line to all Staffordshire Libraries members. The web site is [www.oxforddnb.com](http://www.oxforddnb.com) and you can access this from your own computer (or a library terminal). To use the site you need to enter your Staffordshire Library number, the long number on your library ticket; once you have done this the site will ask if you are a member of Stoke or Staffordshire Libraries and then you have access to all the biographies in the dictionary, a real treasure trove of accurate, referenced information. All this is possible as long as Staffordshire Libraries maintain their subscription to the dictionary.

Other talks on the day were from current graduate students of the Universities of Keele and Birmingham, talking about their research. This is a notable development as much of this research is buried in unpublished theses, only available from the relevant University Library. Finding these theses has always been difficult but the website [www.history.ac.uk/history-on-line/theses](http://www.history.ac.uk/history-on-line/theses) is an accessible database of past and current theses. Not complete as some students with work still in progress have yet to give permission for their theses' titles to be included, but it still provides an extensive overview of current academic historical research.

Richard Totty

## **FIELD TRIP TO THE TOWER BREWERY, WALSITCH MALTINGS, BURTON-ON-TRENT**

Date: Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2013

The Tower Brewery is an independent family brewery established by John Mills in 2001. It is located in the water tower of the Walsitch Maltings, who supplied malt to Thomas Salt and Co. Salt's once ranked with Bass, Worthington and Allsopp's as a major brewer, not just on the local scene but also worldwide, including exporting its famed IPA to the lucrative Indian market. Expansion in the 1870s included a new suite of buildings, with their traditional gabled kiln roofs with top vents. Salt's was taken over by Bass in 1927 for the considerable sum of £1.17 million. Today many of these buildings are still extant, but are used for storage by several Burton companies.

The water tower itself had been abandoned for many years. Broken windows in the uppermost floor, where the reservoir which once held the water, became filled instead with 6 tons of pigeon droppings. John Mills's first job on purchasing the Walsitch Maltings' tower was to shovel the guano into bags and lower it down the three storeys by crane. Happily the new brewery is now pigeon free and only the aroma of beer fills the air.

After meeting in John's excellent tap room – a cameo museum room in its own right – the tour started on the top floor. This is accessed today by a spiral staircase, though originally there was only an inspection tunnel, with a hatch. The reservoir was supplied by Salt's own borehole, from the underlying sandstones, with its gypsum rich water that Burton is famed for. The large water tank was bitumen lined. The party also marvelled at the craftsmanship of the pine beams and trusses, upon which was a signature, message and a date denoting when the building had originally become redundant in 1957.

Tower breweries rely on gravity to feed the grist case and supply the water pressure. On the second floor we were able to sample the different malts and hops that are used for making the beers at the Tower Brewery.

On the ground floor we saw John's modern brewing equipment, where the final product is fermented and barrelled. We then returned to the warmth and hospitality of the tap room, with its log burning stove and fascinating collection of mirrors, jugs and brewing memorabilia.

John Mills brews 5 regular beers and 4 rotating, seasonal ales. The Walsitch Maltings' conversion was awarded a Civic Society Historical Building restoration award. The plaque is displayed on the wall at the front of the building. We could all only concur that this was a well deserved accolade and thank John Mills, master brewer, for an erudite and entertaining tour of his historic Tower Brewery.

Peter Evans

P.S. Nigel Tringham has an informative history of brewing in the V.C.H. volume on Burton-on-Trent. I also note that James Debney has added a link on the S.A.H.S. website to the Tower Brewery.

P.E

### **A FOOTNOTE**

In a newsletter last year I wrote about the ambition of many travellers to visit as many World Heritage Sites as possible. To visit all 962 is now a realistic prospect as a travel agent is advertising a two year world tour which takes in all of them. The cost is £998,000 per person. Having given the matter some thought we have decided that two years absence from home is too much – the garden would be a jungle and we could not afford the boarding fees for our three cats so we are giving it a miss. However I look forward to seeing the reports of any SAHS members who might embark on this adventure in future newsletters.

For those less adventurous the nearest sites are the Derwent Valley Mills just north of Derby, interesting but not well maintained and little actually to see last time I visited some years ago, and Ironbridge just south of Telford; in contrast there is lots to do and see here and it's well worth the hour's drive to see this birthplace of the Industrial Revolution.

Richard Totty

## TALKS SEASON 2013-2014

The offerings for the first half of the season are appended below. The narrative about the subject matter is still at the moment very brief and one date has yet to be resolved although the invitation has gone out. I am as of 9<sup>th</sup> May awaiting a response/confirmation to that.

The dates do of course include the BLAST FROM THE PAST musical history treat to be held at the Guildhall on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013.

<b>4th October 2013</b>	<b>Richard Cust</b>	<b>Discovering Charles 1</b> New work and research into Charles 1
<b>18th October 2013</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<b>TBA</b>
<b>1st November 2013</b>	<b>Blast From The Past - The Guildhall</b>	
<b>8th November 2013</b>	<b>Simon Davies</b>	<b>Early Neolithic Longhouses</b> The earliest known houses in Britain and elsewhere.
<b>15th November 2013</b>	<b>Clive Waddington</b>	<b>Fin Cop - A Hilltop At War</b> The excavation and the discoveries on the Iron Age Hill Fort at Monsal Dale Derbyshire
<b>29th November 2013</b>	<b>Emma-Jayne Hopla</b>	<b>Drowned Landscapes</b> The research and results devoted to the Pre inundation of the Southern North Sea or Doggerland as it has become known by.
<b>6th December 2013</b>	<b>AGM Matthew Morris</b>	<b>The King Under The Car Park</b> Richard III



## **NEW ZEALAND HISTORY**

One of the delights of travelling round New Zealand is coming across Museums in the smallest of towns. They may only have a population of a few hundred but the history of their settlement is proudly displayed.

One such that I saw on my recent visit set me thinking. The little town of Collingwood, on the north coast of South Island, part of the Marlborough Sounds area, has a population of about 200 I should think. It boasts a garage, a supermarket a paper shop, a chocolate shop and a Museum.

This is tiny. It is about 20' long with glassed displays either side of a 4' walkway. On the left hand side are the agricultural implements, the horse tack, school books, and an old telephone exchange apparatus. On the other side, Singer sewing machines, domestic items, military portraits and medals from both World Wars and right at the end, taking up about 3 feet of space, the Maori artefacts.

These consist of a collection of Moa bones (large flightless birds hunted to extinction by the Maori and the earliest whaler settlers); fish hooks made from the bones, polished stone hand axes and polished jadeite jewellery. This was the extent of Maori technology in 1800. They had not invented the wheel, they did not know about smelting ores for metal – and there is plenty in the country, including gold. Maori had arrived about 800AD from other Polynesian Islands. They must have been superb sailors, but their dugout canoes were built with stone axes and first they had to fell the trees!

I would love to know why they had advanced so little. Yes, they were hunter gatherers and were a very warlike people, fighting between the tribes was endemic. They did not settle down to farm until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, so perhaps they had no need of other tools. The country is very mountainous in parts, much easier to carry what belongings you had than try and use a cart, but even so it is remarkable that they continued in a Stone Age environment for so long. Mind you, they are making up for it now ...

Betty Fox

## **OOPS!!! ~ THEY WANT HIM BACK**

I have to declare an error in the last newsletter 112. I failed to acknowledge the two images and the text extracts.

The extracts were taken from the slim self published volume of E.B.Harris printed and distributed in 1864. It is now out of print but is available as a “print to order” from Kessinger Publishing.

The images are from E.B.Harris's volume and the Sultanganj image bank of Bing Images ([www.bmagic.org.uk](http://www.bmagic.org.uk)).

Following on from this it is very sad really that books out of print or not available is getting more and more frequent and more particularly so with libraries removing often unique books from the shelves because they are in excess of ten years old!

Brian Bull

## **BLAST FROM THE PAST: HISTORICAL MUSICIANS**

Blast From The Past are among the most sought after historical musicians in the UK. Their musical repertoire, costumes and historical expertise span six hundred year period from the Middle Ages to the First World War. Their clients include English Heritage, The National Trust and Warwick Castle.

Lichfield Arts and Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society have joined forces to present Blast From The Past perform their brief History of Music as part of their Autumn Tour. The concert will take place at the Guildhall in Lichfield, on Friday 1st November 2013. The Tour takes in other cathedral cities the musicians also playing at The Bishop's Palace in Wells and Chester Cathedral.

Details of tickets will be made known closer to the date, though information on Blast From The Past can be found on their own website or via the SAHS website, recently updated by James.

Peter Evans

## Tissington Village and Hall

On a windy afternoon in May 24 members visited Tissington Hall near Ashbourne. The Hall was built by and is still occupied by the Fitzherbert family. We saw parts of the original house which date from 1650 and parts from the major renovation and extension in 1900. The Hall contains a small collection of paintings, notably two splendid portraits by the eighteenth century artist Angelica Kauffman, together with furniture and other interesting items from various ages, including some excellent wood furniture made in this century. There is an eighteenth century Chinese porcelain dinner service with the family crest and some later Spode plates to the same design made to replace plates broken. Outside the garden was in good condition despite the poor weather, with a colourful display of tulips and daffodils.



Tissington is a small village of stone built houses and cottages owned by the Tissington Estate which means that there are few intrusive modern developments. There is a local and very old tradition of dressing the six wells, or rather springs in the village, with flowers and foliage pressed in a clay base to form pictures illustrating mostly biblical scenes at this time of year. The weather improved enough for us to walk around the village viewing the dressed wells which represent very considerable efforts by talented villagers who have worked together with the present owner of the Estate Sir Richard Fitzherbert to provide a most interesting experience.

Richard Totty

May 2013

## Welcome to new Members

The Committee would like to extend a very warm welcome to new members who have joined the Society during the 2012/13 season. We are always keen to attract new members interested in archaeology and history and are delighted that this year the number of new members, 25, is the largest on record in recent years. We look forward to getting to know you at lectures and on visits over the coming months.

## 2012/13 Lecture Season ..... More popular than ever

This has been a busy season with a programme of 12 lectures which attracted highest ever number of members and visitors. The excellent speakers have informed and enthused us on matters local and international and Brian Bull, our Lecture Meetings Secretary, is working hard to finalise arrangements for the next lecture season which commences on Friday 4 October when the subject will be Charles I.

This season's programme was very popular and attendance at lectures totalled 763, approximately 100 higher than in the previous three years and 200 higher than in 2008/09. The lectures attracted 77 visitors, a 38% increase on the previous season. The Swinfen Hall lecture was the most popular with an audience of 82. The most popular lecture ever was John Cooper's lecture on the Fauld Explosion in January 2006 which was attended by 95 people.

As you know, we have been publicising the Society in various ways and would like to thank everyone involved for their contribution in encouraging visitors to come along to meetings. This year 25 new members have joined the Society bringing the total membership to 163. Inevitably a small number of members did not renew but this was more than offset by the number of new members. It is important that the Society continues to attract new members so please keep up the good work!

Susan Lupton

## “Gift Aid It”

“Gift Aid It”, as the national slogan for Charities goes! Have you “Gift Aided It”?



Whilst over time many from the Society's Membership have completed Gift Aid Declarations, many have not done so. For every £1 it receives by way of subscription or donation, SA&HS can claim 25p from HMRC towards its funds.

If you think you have not “Gift Aided It”, and would like to do so, please complete the Declaration to be found within the pages of this Newsletter. Please then detach the Declaration and forward/hand it to the Treasurer. Thank you.

The Gift Aid Scheme began on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2000 and SA&HS registered to be involved from the start. To date the repayment of tax from the Inland Revenue/HMRC over the last twelve years amounts to £4149.13. This has been an important and vital contribution to the running of the Society.

SA&HS is most grateful in acknowledging those choosing to be Gift Aid Declarers – many thanks indeed. We look forward to more of you signing up!

The proviso is of course that you must pay in each relevant tax year an amount of Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the amount that the Society reclaims on the subscription or donation received.

“Gift Aid It”

Keith Billington email:kjbouthere@yahoo.co.uk



## SHENSTONE PROJECT – FURTHER WORK – THE CHURCHES

It was noticeable from the Tithe Apportionment Award of 1838 that Shenstone parish appeared to only have two establishment churches at that time of the Award. The main church is St John's in Shenstone village and St Peter's Stonnall (built 1823) originally a subsidiary church to Shenstone is actually squeezed over the border into Lower Stonnall.

There are indications in the records to the presence of a chapel between Upper Stonnall and Lower Stonnall which was later demolished but the references sadly do not indentify a precise location. This is testing the Stonnall History Group who are on the search for said chapel. St John's Shenstone is also referenced as being extended with a South Transept to accommodate the Stonnall parishioners for services and utilising the materials arising from the demolition. This may have been carried out in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This chapel at Stonnall may have been the 'chapel of ease' referred to elsewhere. There are field names that may indicate a possible location and on examination there are two possibilities thus: **Chapel Hill** fields (B43, B44, B45) are on the eastern slope of the hill where the current church St Peter's is situated. **Church Leasowe** fields (B162, B163, B164, B166, B177) are to the east of Lower Stonnall on Gravelly Lane/Footerley Lane. Both locations are possibilities and the research will continue with that. There is however a suggestion that the chapel may have been located adjacent to the **Pinfold** (A187) and searches in this particular location are ongoing although the evidence discovered thus far does not confirm this. The finds are limited to some masonry with mortar and other small artefacts. Perhaps the only way to confirm would be to undertake a full dig – we shall see.

St Peter's Little Aston came much later although there are reports of a 'chapel of ease' there is no evidence to confirm this, other than an oddly located Yew tree and the legend that goes with such trees and their association with churches(Yes I know - 'absence of evidence ...etc').

The parish church St John's built in 1843 at Wall is outside the Shenstone parish (John Mott and William Mott gave the land for the church and the graveyard respectively) but the South side of the Watling Street (old A5 through Wall village) is actually within the Shenstone parish so no doubt the 'south side' villagers will have will have gone to services at Wall once the church had been constructed and consecrated, it being somewhat closer than either Stonnall or Shenstone. Prior to that Shenstone would have been the nearer church to worship at.

The Tithe Award of 1838 does not record it but a Wesleyan Chapel was in use at Little Hay. The evidence for this discovery came to light after scrutinising Trades Directories (Whites 1834). This Chapel was located at Little Hay House which in Whites is also recorded as being a school. The Reverend Joseph Ellis is further recorded in two locations in Whites as the Schoolmaster and the Minister. Examination of contemporary maps throws up a small detached building on the land attached to Little Hay House. This it has to be presumed was the dual use building – school in the week and church on a Sunday. We have to assume this situation existed until the 1871 census when he was recorded solely as the Wesleyan minister and his nephew Charles William Ellis was now the school master. Oddly there is no record of either person in the 1861 census data set either by name or address – almost as if Little Hay was missed out! Indeed the Ellis clan of Little Hay seem to have disappeared in the 1861 census – even looking through Staffordshire entries there are none of our particular Ellis's. They were back in 1871 by which time Joseph our minister was now 84 and actually died a short time after the census was completed during the second quarter of 1871 where the census was taken at the end of the first quarter of 1871, whereupon his nephew, we presume, became the Wesleyan Minister by default as well as the school master. In 1896 Charles William is recorded as being a Wesleyan Minister and school master by which time he was 63. It is similarly presumed the Little Hay House Wesleyan Chapel was the forerunner of the corrugated iron chapel that is extant nearer to the village centre and erected in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. It appears on the 1914 maps but not the 1903 maps.

Right returning to Shenstone and Stonnall churches...

When you consider that in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century most folk in the parish could be categorised as being god fearing and righteous whatever their religious leanings or form of worship and we presume maybe attending church on a very regular basis. Indeed other worshippers would notice if you were not at services! This is also a period when most things are still to a large extent revolving around the establishment church for birth, baptism, marriage, death and possibly other things as well despite the national recording having commenced in 1837. For

what was predominately an agricultural community Sunday would have been a busy day for both worshippers and the minister in charge. Indeed with the only minister in the parish residing at Shenstone and probably with three services in the early days at both Shenstone and Stonnall, the Rev Woolley would be doing a lot of travelling just to perform his duties. Later in the century there is recorded an additional minister covering Stonnall. However the Rev Woolley did keep the income in the family as the new minister was either his son or a nephew.

We have to presume that possibly the majority of the parishioners would be 'taking the walk' on Sunday. A look across the older maps suggests that there were footpaths that might be described as "church paths" or "funeral paths" connecting outlying hamlets and residences to whichever church was chosen by particular families.

Given the distances involved to Stonnall and Shenstone churches from the various and outlying areas of the parish, the folk who had to walk to services would already be well on their way when the prayer bell started to ring out. Those travelling further presumably set out in good time for the service to enable them to cope with whatever the weather and conditions underfoot in particular were in the winter. A few of the residents no doubt will have gone to all the services, probably the majority to the main service on Sunday morning with a few perhaps even repeating the travel to the evening service. It might suggest that Sunday was certainly a day of not working but equally not a day of rest! Additionally the residents at Hill Hook although outside the parish in Warwickshire and nearly three miles away made their way to Shenstone for services. Indeed Little Aston is about the same distance but worshipping at Aldridge would be somewhat a shorter distance to travel.

Those who could would, no doubt travel by horse power, whether that is on the back of, or behind in a carriage. This latter category probably would include those family residents of Little Aston Hall, Fotherley Hall, Shenstone Park, Shenstone Hall etc but it is assumed not the servants who would be expected to make their own way to and from church and, probably have to be back at the 'big house' before their masters return!

It is reported that the Shenstone and the Stonnall churches can be seen from one another across the parish. Both our churches at Stonnall and Shenstone are elevated at approximately 145metres and 120metres respectively whereas the main parish hovers around 50 metres elevation. But you do have to remember that this suggestion was made at a time the trees that are present now immediately around each church may not have been present in the 1840s. Also it might be reasonably assumed that on a good day the 'call to prayer bell' would be heard at some distance across a large part of the parish. Once the church at Little Aston was constructed (again at about 135 metres elevation) the prayer bells would almost certainly heard all across the parish.

The worshippers at St Peter's Stonnall were regaled with two sermons on a Sunday. This came about as a result of a donation by John Mellor and related to the rent that accrued from the field **A472 'Far Moor'** being presented to the minister at Stonnall. Failure to present two sermons resulted in the rent being distributed around the poor of the parish. So the worshippers at Stonnall had to live with two sermons.

No references have been located relating to any Roman Catholic worship so we have to presume either there are no Roman Catholic worshippers within in the parish or those that were resident made their way into Lichfield some four miles distant. Again this would be a carriage ride or at the very least a walk of about an hour.

Well that is all for this piece at the moment. There will be more from this as research continues.

Brian Bull

## **GARDENERS**

There you go – Now isn't that a really inspirational title for a piece in a Newsletter from an Archaeology Society!!!

So why pick on this area to write about I hear you ask. Good question – I am still not sure myself!

It was during a website session for my Shenstone Project Further Work pieces that something else appeared out of the mist. I had been searching through 'Trades Directories' (Kelly's and the like) and yes, you will be pleased to know that there is a website devoted to Trades and Commercial Directories where they exist in digital format for all to use ([www.historicaldirectories.org](http://www.historicaldirectories.org) sponsored and set up by Leicester University if you are interested).

For this extra curricula work on Shenstone Project, I was working a particular direction of investigation and started to interrogate the Trades Directories covering the Shenstone area, but I very soon came to the conclusion that in addition, those covering Lichfield would need consulting, as in some Directories Shenstone is incorporated into the entry covering Lichfield. The particular ones examined thus far are Whites 1834, Pigots 1835, Pigots 1842 and Slaters 1851.

It was here I noticed entries for Gardeners and Seedsmen as a separate profession. Of course there is nothing odd or unusual in that. However what was noticeably odd was the number of entries under the heading thus...

Whites 1834 - 32

Pigots 1835 – 20

Pigots 1842 – 31

Slaters 1851 – 40

The oddity (as I see it) does get better and this is what really was the inspiration for this piece, is the number of gardeners/seedsmen residing or operating out of Greenhill, Lichfield and they are recorded thus...

Whites 1834 - 12

Pigots 1835 – 10

Pigots 1842 – 13

Slaters 1851 – 20

Yes OK 'Greenhill' was known as an area encompassing Church Street, Greenhill and Rotten Row rather than the relatively short street that it appears to be in 21st century Lichfield but when you consider there were in the mid 19th century a goodly number of public houses, taverns and beer houses plus other businesses in the area it does make you wonder where all these gardeners actually lived.

Furthermore from the Directories it would appear that Tamworth Street, George Lane and Stowe Street also seemed to have a disproportionate number of our gardeners as residents.

There is more of course!

When you look closer at the professions in Lichfield in the thus far selected Directories you start to notice that a few of these gardeners are also listed under other headings.

The Maddox family are a good example here. This family ran a number of the public houses, taverns and beer houses during the 1840s and some family members were recorded also as gardeners and probably carrying on two jobs. There is nothing wrong with that as it happens in 2013. In fact in the 1841 census, 32 Maddox family members are recorded and, in the 1851 census 41 are recorded. The records suggest they are of the same family. They probably needed a large family to enable them to run the several public houses etc!

I did wonder whether some of the gardeners were 'gilding the lily' as it were and putting words on their curriculum vitae that made them look good or better than they actually were – indeed folk do that today so nothing changes. In the 1841 census a number of those folk listed as gardeners have been recorded as agricultural labourers.

There is no evidence to suggest why there are so many gardeners congregating residentially in the Greenhill area. There must be collective noun for that!! It just seems odd and making assumptions as to why we are possibly creeping into the area known as 'the eye of faith'. Assumptions might be applied to the owners of 'big houses' – the likes of Maple Hayes, Beacon, Abnalls etc where they might have a 'tied' gardener who lives on or very close to the premises that are in their care. There is a scatter of gardeners outside Greenhill area across Lichfield which might support this theory but further delving and research will be needed to confirm this.

There are now probably more questions arising from the above. So during the coming months further examination will be undertaken and the conclusions included in the newsletter at a later date.

Anyway that is enough for this stroll along this garden path!

Brian Bull

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual History Fair at Middleton Hall**

Middleton Hall held its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual History Fair on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May, organised by the Peel Society. Having been invited to attend once again, Staffordshire Archaeological & Historical Society sent three of its Committee Members and had a display stand, sited indoors fortunately, in the ballroom. Whilst the generally poor weather on the day undoubtedly kept the public attendance down, the interest shown by those who did turn up in what we as the County Society have to offer was excellent and admirable, not too strong a way to put it I don't think. As at the History Day event in Stafford in March, we were able to offer for free sizeable quantities of older Transactions back numbers and off-prints and these were taken up in considerable measure – they actually went like hot cakes!! Leaflets were taken away, some recent publication material was purchased and lots and lots of interest was drummed up generally, and our day was felt to be a success and very satisfying. One new Member paid subscription to join the ranks. Others are thinking about it. We hope many will be sampling the website. On the next occasion, let's hope the weather is more Spring like and not depths of Winter! We are certainly keen to do it again.



The photograph shows Betty Fox standing proudly in charge of our display before start of the event early in the morning.

Keith Billington



## CORRUGATED IRON BUILDINGS

This piece came about when your writer was researching the subject of churches in Shenstone Parish ('researching' - such a posh sounding word that – sounds as though some tome or magnum opus is about to be published!!! – 'Looking at' is probably the more appropriate wording!). Anyway this is in part a continuation of my extra curricula look at the Shenstone project however tenuous the link is. It is not one of the seeds of ideas from earlier skirmishes into the Tithes Award which has produced some gems alluded to in a previous piece. They are at the moment 'work in progress' but watch this space! – This particular piece is a brief foray into and about corrugated iron buildings. In railway terms it is a chuff along a loop branch line which eventually returns to the main track farther on. The piece comes about as a result of two corrugated iron chapels being situated in the Shenstone Parish albeit they are not within our published survey as they are somewhat later.

Right - now down to business...

The patent number 5786 for "corrugated iron" was taken out in 1829 by Henry Robinson Palmer. The method of "folding" iron and steel sheets for rigidity had been known for some years prior to this date. However this particular patent 5786 covered the use of corrugated iron as a roofing material primarily for agricultural and industrial buildings and not its method of manufacture. That seemed like a good wheeze as probably the majority of corrugated iron sheeting was, at the time, used in roofing anyway!

Palmer however did not capitalise on his patent and sold it in 1832 to Richard Walker (a carpenter) who did to capitalise on it by roofing the new buildings being erected in the London Docks.

Unfortunately raw iron and steel, was and indeed still is, prone to corrosion thus requiring the application of some protective paint many times during its working life. In Paris however, over a number of years during the 1830's, Stanislas Sorel developed the hotdip zinc galvanising process which gave the sheeting a much longer life without the requirement for further protection by paint other than maybe on cut edges. We have to presume hot dip galvanising arrived much to the chagrin of the manufacturers who might see the possibility of the sale of replacement sheeting disappearing at great speed!

We are informed that Sorel, similar to Palmer earlier, did not really capitalise on this important development. The hot dip process so we are told was eventually brought across into Britain by Commander H.V. Crawford RN who did capitalise on the development taking out the patent in 1837.

In its early days the galvanised corrugated sheeting continued to be utilised as a roofing material on a variety of buildings. However enterprising manufacturers always keen not to miss a trick saw the possibility of cladding walls and during the 1850's developed a flat pack method of manufacture of buildings. As far as possible these flat packs were made up utilising standard size panels thus allowing 'mixing and matching' possibilities. Furthermore they commenced producing designs for structures other than agricultural and industrial buildings and new structures such as chapels, mission halls, houses, cricket or sports pavilions and the like started to appear in the sales catalogues.

Initially these flat pack buildings were destined for the export market and thus to the new world following those people who had left British shores seeking a better life in Canada, Australia etc but obviously and probably encouraged by the advertising by manufacturers seeing an eye to making a profit the home market beckoned even achieving Royal patronage with a structure at Balmoral which survives today.

Following this surge of demand manufacturers did spring up throughout the main industrial areas of Great Britain.

Corrugated iron buildings were originally designed and produced to be used as temporary structures for erection prior to a more substantial and permanent structure being constructed. However there is today a large number extant around Great Britain indeed throughout the world indeed they are still in use in a variety of ways. A good number of these "temporary buildings" in the later 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were chapels. Some are still in use as chapels but the remainder have been put to other uses. In the main those still around are now have been declared 'listed buildings' whatever that means in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

An example of corrugated iron buildings being used as a temporary structure was for the 'village' erected in Derbyshire for the construction of the Derwent Valley dams where houses, shops, workshops, churches etc were put up for the duration of the work and then upon completion of the dams taken down and we must presume erected elsewhere probably on another construction project.

Initially the Church of England was sceptical about using these corrugated iron buildings as chapels or churches obviously preferring the construction of a structure in masonry signifying importance. This scepticism was most probably influenced by Pugin and Ruskin neither of whom liked the structures. Perhaps it did them out of design work! Additionally William Morris said in 1890 that these buildings were "spreading like a pestilence".

Yes OK architecturally these buildings did not excel but they did perform by being both functional and relatively inexpensive to construct. The approximate cost of construction was between £1 to £2 and £4 per site for a chapel. The latter cost being the very early days of these buildings and as more competition came along prices reduced accordingly.

In 1874 by way of an Essex newspaper article corrugated iron chapels in particular became to be known as 'Tin Tabernacles' a name by which they are stuck with today however irreverent it is.

Your writer knows only of three extant in the local area and these are or were Wesleyan chapels. There may be others that your writer has not come across yet but there is still time!

There is small one at Woodend but sadly it does not look loved at all. From memory it has had chequered usage throughout the last thirty years or so. The chapel building or Mission Room as it is described on maps and it appears on the 1914 map but does not appear on the 1903 map.



The chapel/mission hall at Woodend.

From observation there may have been a 'bell tower' or similar structure on the roof as a base remains that might suggest one being present. Also as can be seen from the photographs is the parlous state of the building in need of much TLC!



The chapel at Little Hay.

This photograph is not your writer's effort but a *Panoramio Pedrocot* discovered on an image website.

This is another example of a corrugated iron Wesleyan chapel at Little Hay. This photograph shows it more exposed than it is at the moment – the hedges are higher and more dishevelled and there is a pair of tall gates in lieu of the field gate. However it does look as though it is still in use whatever that use is. Similarly with the example at Woodend it appears on the 1914 map but not the 1903 map.

With regard to the chapels at Little Hay and Woodend, the research continues (there's that word again!) as although they appear to be contemporary with one another they are of different designs.



The chapel at Streetly.

The third example is on Aldridge Road Streetly. It is slightly larger than the previous two examples and indeed sits on a very generous piece whereas the previous ones seem to have been shoe horned on to their respective sites. This particular one is shown on the 1903 map as a school and then later as a mission hall. It is also indicated on the earlier 1889 map but no legend accompanies the plot of land.

The common corrugated iron buildings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that people might be more familiar with is the ubiquitous **Nissen** hut which was developed for use in WW1 in 1916 by Major Peter Nissen a Canadian Engineer. A building of standard size 27ft x 16ft easily recognised by its semicircular shape and designed to be assembled with the minimum number of parts. They answered the need for soldiers' billets in France, Belgium and Germany during that war. Not to be outdone of course the United States of America produced in 1941 the **Quonsett** hut (Quonsett, Rhode Island if you are interested), slightly larger than the Nissen and differed only with the sheeting fixed horizontally. I suspect that became a rainwater trap!

Nissen huts continued to be manufactured for some considerable time and even entered the housing market for briefly but ceased as being too expensive.

Well that is it for this piece. We will see whether we can get a speaker for the subject as all I have done is skimmed a stone across the surface of the water as it were!

Brian Bull



## WAR REMNANTS MUSEUM

There comes a time when events which seem to have taken place just the day before yesterday are regarded by younger persons as Ancient History. I had this feeling very strongly during a recent visit to the War Remnants Museum in Ho Chi Minh City. This museum is of course dedicated to the events which we know as the Vietnam War, and consists mostly of displays of photographs published in newspapers of the time together with a very few actual items from the period. Outside the museum there is a collection of US Army and Air Force equipment: tanks, artillery, helicopters, small aeroplanes etc.



The guide books say that this museum is popular with Western visitors; well when I was there a few Westerners were looking around but none with much sign of enjoyment. The vast majority of visitors were Vietnamese teenagers, and as most teenagers are in these circumstances these were more interested in talking to, prodding or texting each other than looking at the actual exhibits. It struck me that for these teenagers the events depicted took place in the time of their grandparents or even great grandparents, and their attitude was much like mine was when at their age I was reminded of the First World War – events well before I was born and of little relevance to modern life. And yet I remember the Vietnam War very clearly – it was well covered in the UK media and many of the photographs on display I recall seeing at the time. The Vietnamese were either not good at photography or more likely not concerned with it for most of the photographs on display were taken by American photographers working for the US media of the time, mostly the popular News Magazines.

American visitors to the museum are frequently heard to complain that the exhibits are one sided, and show the US in an unremittingly poor light; an odd complaint given that the photographs were mostly taken by American photographers and given wide publicity in the US at the time. But the fact remains that the US lost this war; an utter and complete defeat as any and it is the winners who write the history. And whilst this history is written by the Vietnamese it is very much the history that I remember. North Vietnam in particular was devastated; much of its infrastructure in ruins and the USA even if it did not match the threat to bomb the North Vietnamese into



the Stone Age certainly had a good try at it. There are reminders of the war around the country – the Hanoi Hilton is still there and pointed out to tourists and the building in Saigon that was the US Embassy where the last helicopter took off is now an office block. But for the ordinary Vietnamese the memories must be more personal, of family members who disappeared, or fought for the wrong side and had years of imprisonment or re-education, of victims of the chemical spraying, and the many other atrocities.



The UK features but little in the museum's contents. There is one photograph of a British Parliamentary delegation taking tea with North Vietnamese leaders in Hanoi in I think 1957 – no doubt the Parliamentarians enjoyed their visit but it can hardly have led to much and certainly not any support for the North Vietnamese position.

It's a war that is now very little thought about , perhaps because it was a defeat the US has no reason to celebrate any actions there , and there seem to be few books written about it. Of course the US casualties are remembered, not least in the memorial in Arlington Cemetery that I visited in 1970, just as the war was entering its final phase. But did the US learn anything from its defeat? History is selective – what we get is what historians are interested in and want to write about and this particular one , fought with a ferocity on both sides that has not been matched since , is slipping into a mist where it can remain , little remembered , and of little interest .

Richard Totty

March 2013

## Snippets 2

### Where will those bones rest?

As members will be aware, the Society AGM for 2013 will take place on Friday December 6<sup>th</sup> and will be followed by a talk on 'Richard III, the king under the car park'. In view of this topic, and the considerable interest that the discovery occasioned and the debate that has subsequently followed, members might be interested in the following topical item reported recently in '*Salon*', the Newsletter of the Society of Antiquaries of London -

'In a piece in *The Times*, published on 30 March 2013, David Palliser wrote about the controversy surrounding the proposal to bury 'the remains of Richard III' in Leicester. David begins by pointing out that Leicester would have been anathema to the king, as it was a stronghold of the rival House of Lancaster. He goes on to say that 'it is true that no will survives with his burial intentions ... we can, however, make a shrewd guess, in that, as king, he began to establish and endow a lavish college of 100 priests at York for them to celebrate Masses for him'. David then quotes the late Barrie Dobson, 'Professor Barrie Dobson, of the University of Cambridge, who has analysed the surviving references to the college, thinks it entirely plausible that Richard intended it as his own mausoleum.'

On another matter -

### Volunteers needed for Open Churches policy

The Churches Conservation Trust is looking for volunteers to help with its newly announced initiative of ensuring that every church is open and accessible. The CCT says that there is a strong correlation between churches being open, the numbers of visitors and the amount of money left in the donations box. The trust is inviting volunteers to register with the CCT and work out which of three options is best for them: to leave the church open at all times, set up a volunteer key holder team to be responsible for opening and closing the church every day, or fitting an automatic time lock. For further details, go to [www.visitchurches.org.uk/openchurches](http://www.visitchurches.org.uk/openchurches)

John Hunt.

### Wall Private Research Archive

Whilst Frank and Nancy Ball were directors of the Society excavations at Wall, we enjoyed a summer holiday. Nancy & Frank were excavating at Wroxeter from July to September, I needed a project to keep me out of mischief and was given the task to research the early drainage systems in the Wall area with reference to those which had been discovered close to the "Mansio"/ Bath House site. This led to an in depth research project covering the whole of the village and surrounding area. Much original material was unearthed at Stafford and Lichfield Records Offices.

I have never published the material which was taking up shelf space. So it has been donated to the Friends of Wall. They intend to digitise as much as possible to form an online library for Wall. The original material will then be deposited at Lichfield Records Office.

I have requested that this will be acknowledged under my name and that of the Society.

Diana Wilkes



# Water Meadows at Yoxall

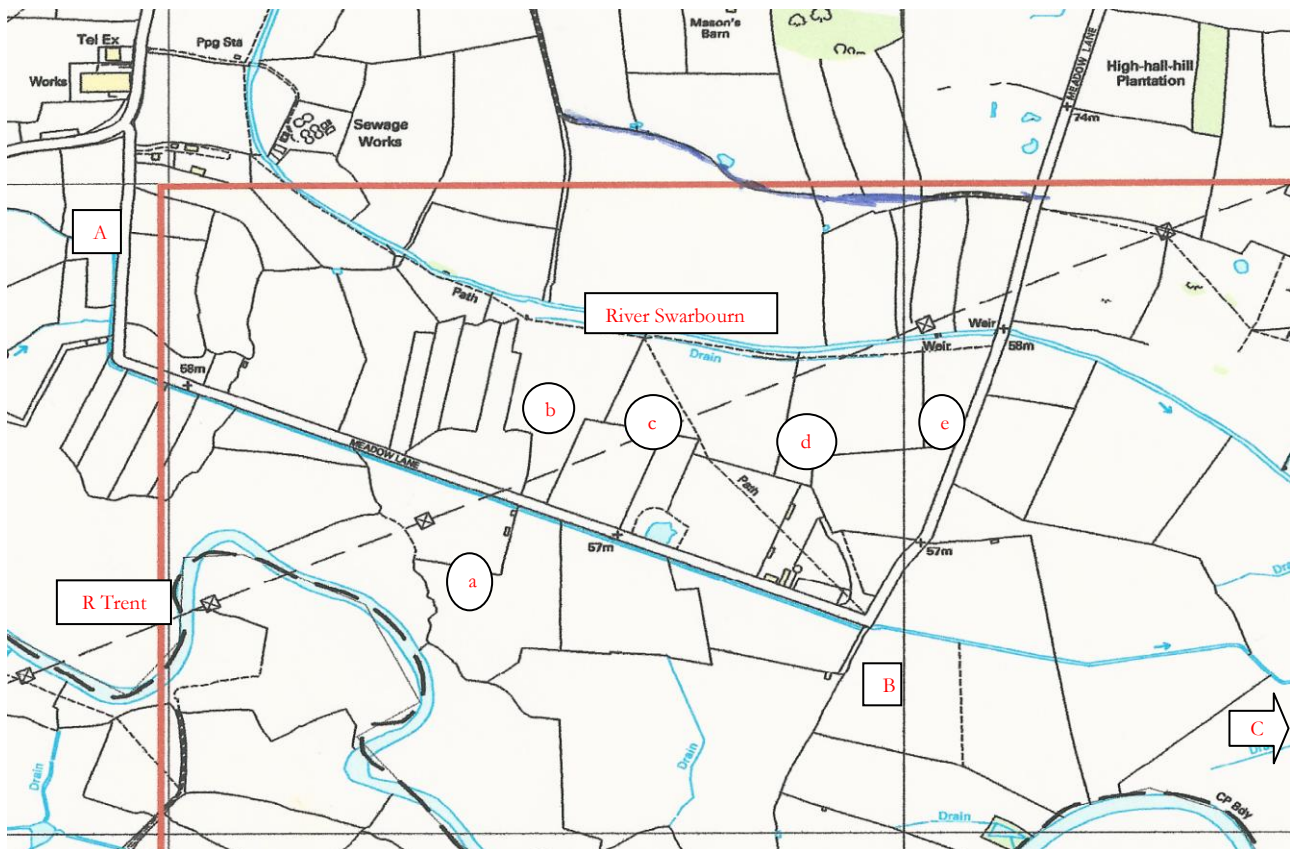
One of our favourite walks is a right of way along a canalised portion of the River Swarbourn just south of Yoxall GR SK11 145 176 to 151 177. A few metres to the south of the river there are brickwork arches appearing to connect small bridges over a large ditch running parallel to the river. We have accepted this mysterious structure as part of the landscape without really wondering why it was there.

The 2011 Transactions featured an article about the known Water Meadows of Staffordshire, together with a map showing their locations, “Opening the Floodgates” on Staffordshire's Water Meadows. P 85-106). We noticed that the R. Swarbourn was not featured either on the map or in the text as having any water meadow on its course. However we believe that the structures we shall describe and the photographs of the structures give good evidence for a water meadow at Yoxall.

Subsequent investigation has found that the area is included as a Water Meadow area in the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) but with only five HER record points in an area stretching from the R Trent on the A515 to Wychnor, a distance of over 3km W to E and over 1km N to S. There is only one HER point in the area of interest and it is not obvious from the record what it records!

A water meadow was a man-made feature to bring water and silt from a nearby stream or river to flood grassland to promote the growth of flower rich meadows to feed milking cows and beef cattle during dry summers. Rather like the irrigation of crop growing land. Water was diverted from a running source, via culverts and ditches controlled by sluice gates, onto the grassland. From the main ditch, little parallel spaced side ditches took the water into the field.

A few weeks ago, our parish council was given a painting of a pair of sluice gates. The painting is not a masterpiece and also badly needs cleaning but it states on the rear of the frame that it shows the sluice gates from the river Trent leading to the Yoxall structures. We have yet to identify where these gates were but believe them to have been near where the new bridge over the Trent between King's Bromley and Yoxall on the A515.



Looking at the map SK11N, we can see a clear stream, probably canalised running alongside Meadow Lane from the marked point A to point B. It flows on to join the R Swarbourn at point C. About half way along the road, where the electricity pylons cross, {point (a)} an arched brick opening conducts some of the flow northwards under the lane and then in a ditch towards the R Swarbourn.



At point (b) a few metres from the river bank is the start of the water meadow system. Other photographs taken at location (b) show the arrival of the water, now in a culvert, entering a control pool, from where it is directed East, keeping parallel with the river but never connected to it. An arched brickwork culvert, covered by a now grassy cattle bridge, opens into a straight ditch. The ditch is still about a metre deep in the centre, but as the ditch heads nearer the east branch of Meadow lane it becomes more shallow and eventually flattens out near the river bridge at meadow Lane {point (e)}.

The accompanying bank is on the river side of the ditch. It is hardly noticeable at point (b) but becomes very prominent between (d) and (e) as the ditch shallows.

There are arched brick culverts at points (c) and (d) and one between them.

Several side ditches lead from these culverts south into the fields and these side ditches also branch but to get the full picture of their positioning would need a proper survey.

To our knowledge, a survey has never been done and we cannot find anything that has been written about them.

During the summer we shall try to find out more from elderly residents in the village but if anyone has been fired with curiosity by this short account, we would be delighted to show them the site or be enlightened by their greater knowledge, perhaps via a future newsletter.

Jean Norris



# STAFFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## FIELD TRIP TO ST. PETER'S CHURCH AND THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE, NORTHAMPTON

**Date: Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

St. Peter's Church has been described as one of the most outstanding Norman Churches in the country. Constructed in red ironstone and yellow oolitic limestone, these two local rocks are used throughout for decorative purposes. The sculptured capitals are a highlight of the Romanesque in England, with faces, foliage, birds and abstract motifs. An unusual Saxon grave slab, a monument to William Smith, the father of English Geology, and Victorian stencils decorating the interior of the east wall are further delights.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is also of Norman origin, built under the stewardship of Simon de Senlis, the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Northampton. At its core is the original circular nave. It is the largest of the four remaining round churches in England. The church also has strong military connections. There will be two guides to help us explore the history of St. Seps. This will be followed by tea, coffee, sandwiches and cake, to be taken in the historic 'Round'.

### Itinerary:

- 10.30** Meet at St. Peter's Church, Marefair
- 10.45** Guided tour by John Rigby of the Churches Conservation Trust
- 12.15** Break for lunch
- 2.0** Meet at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre
- 2.15** Talk and tour of the church by John Kightley, MBE. Military talk and tour by David Parish MBE
- 4.0** Tea, coffee, sandwiches and cake in the historic 'Round'

### VISIT TO NORTHAMPTON, JUNE 8 2013

Please reserve.....places @ £14. I enclose a cheque made payable to the Society for.....

Name.....

Address.....

Tel. No...(for emergencies).....

Return to: Mr. Peter Evans, 'Drunemeton', 18, Newhall Crescent, Heath Hayes, Cannock, WS11 7ZD by **Friday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2013**. No acknowledgement of receipt will be made.



**STAFFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL and HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP 2012-2013**

TITLE .....NAME(S) .....

ADDRESS .....

..... POST CODE .....

**EMAIL Address** .....

PHONE .....

I agree to allow the Society to contact me/us by email and telephone.

Signature

I/We enclose ..... for my/our Subscription for the year 2012/13 for Single/Joint/Student or Unwaged.

Single £18.50, Family (2 persons) £27.00, Student/Unwaged (excluding Pensioners) £12.50.

Please send to Ms L Lupton, 71 Birchwood Rd, Boley Park, Lichfield. WS14 9UN or bring to the next Meeting.



**GIFT AID DECLARATION**

TO: STAFFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Choosing to Gift Aid the Subscription or donations you make to the SAHS will allow the Society, which enjoys Charitable status, to reclaim from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs the basic rate of Income Tax paid on the amount of those subscriptions or donations without any cost to you, the Member. It is only necessary to fill the form in once.

To do this you must be a UK Income Tax/Capital Gains Tax payer and have paid an amount at least equal to the tax the Society reclaims in the Tax Year concerned.

Declaration:

Members Full Name .....

Address .....

..... Post Code.....

I would like the Staffordshire Archaeological & Historical Society (SAHS) to treat as Gift Aid all Subscriptions and Donations I make from the Date of this Declaration.

Signature .....Date .....

Please return to the Honorary Treasurer, Keith Billington, 4 Gainsbrook Crescent, Norton Canes, Cannock. WS11 9TN or by hand at a Meeting.

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