



*Staffordshire  
Archaeological  
and Historical Society*



**NEWSLETTER January 2017**

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President:	Dr John Hunt BA, PhD, FSA, FRHistS, PGCE.	Tel: 01543423549
Hon. General Secretary:	Dr T M James, BA, MA, Ph.D, FHA.	Tel: 01543 253968
Hon. Treasurer:	Mr K J Billington, ACIB.	Tel: 01543 278989



**Trentham Gardens in Winter**



Welcome to the first SAHS Newsletter of 2017 and best wishes to all of our members for the coming year. We look forward to welcoming you to the second half of our lecture programme which restarts on February 17<sup>th</sup> with something rather different; a discussion of the application of forensic archaeology to a study of the Second World War in the Channel Islands. This talk will launch us into a further series of six sessions that will cover many periods of history as well as explore both our own region and beyond.

Many of you may have been with us for our last talk before Christmas when Kevin Colls gave us a fascinating glimpse of Shakespeare's Stratford-upon-Avon when he described his work on New Place. If so, you might also be interested to know of another important discovery in the town, the discovery of several painted scenes on the walls of a church across the road from the house in which William Shakespeare was born. However, William would never have seen them as in the year before his birth in 1564, his father had the murals 'defaced and limewashed'. One of these paintings is shown below in a photograph from the *Daily Mail*.



These paintings are in the Guild Chapel in Stratford, where two have been restored by the Stratford Town Trust with the aid of a £100,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. They once covered most of the chapel walls, and survive (or not) in varying states of preservation. One of the best panels is that illustrated which depicts death at work. A feathered angel watches over a shrouded corpse in the bony soil, while the literate could also consider the stanzas incorporated into the scene, reminding the reader about the penalties of sin and the transitory nature of earthly glories. Other scenes included the martyrdom of St Thomas a Becket, the Last Judgement, St George slaying a winged dragon, and a many-headed beast who may be the Whore of Babylon.

The paintings have been known about since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century but this latest phase of conservation follows the completion of work to the building that has ensured a stable atmosphere and moisture levels. The Trust is seeking further funding to unveil and conserve more of the paintings.

Another ongoing project that promises some fascinating outcomes is a collaborative project led by the universities of Birmingham and Nottingham exploring the relationship between late medieval art and music.

This is the 'Alabasters Project', which a recent seminar also evocatively described as 'Eloquence in Sound and Music'. The project brings together Latin-texted sacred music and contemporary religious images, produced in England during the long fifteenth century (c.1380-1520), with the intention of exploring the relationship between the two in the context of late medieval religious devotion. It is part of a larger project to restore late medieval and Renaissance polyphony to its wider context, visually, spatially and acoustically, combining historical insight and sensitive interpretation with a new and illuminating concert experience for the present day, for all types of audience. In short, it aims to explore the interaction of sound and the visual in the English late Middle Ages, with a particular emphasis on polyphonic music and Midlands religious alabasters.

Music of the period is widely recognised as a phenomenon of major international influence; by contrast, attention to alabaster carving, also a focus of large-scale international interest and trade, has been limited. The project therefore offers an important cultural parallel which will function as a showcase for national and local patrimony as well as a potential boost in (national and international) profile for important, but neglected, regional collections. One of the co-directors, Andrew Kirkman, is particularly well-placed to give substance to this research. As director of the Binchois Consort, the performance of these works is an integral part of the project that seeks a better experiential understanding of both the music and the sculpture by bringing them into a closer communion.

Finally, I am sure that many SAHS members will know, or know of, Pamela Sambrook and her work. Her latest book has recently been published, which will undoubtedly be of interest to many. *The Servants' Story: Managing a Great Country House* considers the personal lives of the people who served one of the richest families in Britain, drawing on first-hand accounts. Trentham was the Staffordshire home of the Leveson-Gower family, the Dukes of Sutherland. They owned many other country houses and estates, and left a huge archive which is relatively unexplored. The stories of Trentham's servants are not just family histories; they reveal experiences and unravel relationships to which we can all relate, and demonstrate how people coped in the face of the immense change to country-house life in the early years of the transition into a modern nation. It promises a 'good read'!

John Hunt

Honorary President, SAHS.

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## The Servants Story;

Hardback. RRP £20. Special price direct from author £18 Contact [pam.sambrook@btinternet.com](mailto:pam.sambrook@btinternet.com) or leave a message on 01785 815492

*My favourite item from the Sutherland Archives is the book kept by the gatekeeper at Trentham to record the servants movements ; he once caught a male servant creeping back in the morning after spending the night out. The book was not kept for long and it must have caused great resentment amongst the staff at Trentham. Ed.*

You can explore the papers of the Dukes of Sutherland of Trentham Hall on [www.sutherlandcollection.org.uk](http://www.sutherlandcollection.org.uk) which is a Staffordshire Archives website made using items from this massive collection transcribed by volunteers as part of the Sutherland project which followed the purchase of the collection. The project was undertaken to make the papers more accessible to the public. Whilst there are many interesting items on the website they are only a small proportion of the full collection which is available at the Staffordshire Record Office in Stafford for anyone to look at.



## Agincourt

In October Dr Simon J Harris of Keele University spoke to the Society on the subject of the battle of Agincourt which took place in 1415. His talk concentrated on placing the battle in the context of the lengthy wars between England and France, describing the events that led to the English invasion of France and the movements of the English Army around northern France before the battle. We thought that you would like this illustration of the battle itself taken from the description of the battle in the St Albans Chronicle



**W**hen the king was besetted he  
 was besetted he  
 lord & he matir per  
 were in pe toime  
 viii c. men of warre w<sup>o</sup>ut lord  
 & stat. And per were the names of pe  
 lordes. Sir Jakes de l'arecourt cap  
 tain. The lord Gaucourt. The lord of  
 l'arkuse. The lord of flory. The  
 lord of Aleynwile. The lord of  
 Cyprot. The lord of Combraule.  
 The lord of Blanshure. & op mo  
 which shal be refected becafter.

**T**he king per sent to fakes  
 del arecourt captein of l'arkuse  
 & hym comanded to deliuer pe toim  
 And fakes answard: said he toke  
 hym non to kepe no: non he shuld  
 hane p. **A**nd when pe ansuar  
 was brought vnto pe king he made  
 to say goodgrace his gret dome:  
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 comanded his gonners to bete  
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 on ich side & brak down peralles:  
 the houses w<sup>o</sup> in pe toime. When



# STAFFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## LECTURES for SEASON 2016-2017

17th February 2017

**Dr Caroline Sturdy Colls**

### **Forensic archaeological approaches to the German Occupation of Alderney of the British Channel Islands.**

Very few people are aware that the Holocaust occurred on British soil. This is because the history of the Occupation of Alderney, an island located in Channel Islands 60 miles south of the English coast and 8 miles from France, is not widely known. In June 1940, the British government decided that Alderney was too difficult and expensive to defend. This led to the evacuation of the island's 1500 inhabitants and paved the way for a period of occupation by the Germans that would last until the 16th May 1945. During this period, thousands of workers were sent to Alderney from across Europe. Individuals from 27 different nations – including Jews and political prisoners - were forcibly interred in within a network of labour camps and the SS camp, Lager Sylt. The purpose of their transportation to the island was to facilitate the construction of heavy coastal and anti-aircraft batteries, tunnels, bunkers and earthworks along the Atlantic Wall. This talk will discuss a programme of historical and forensic archaeological work that has sought to re-examine Occupation of Alderney in order to re-evaluate the crimes perpetrated there. It will outline how the remains of the camps and mass graves have been located and recorded, and how the history of the Holocaust on British soil is being rewritten as a result.

Dr Caroline Sturdy Colls is an associate professor of Forensic Archaeology and Genocide Investigation at Staffordshire University. Her research focuses on the investigation of Holocaust and contemporary conflict sites. Dr Sturdy Colls is also the Research Lead and co-founder of the Centre of Archaeology at the same institution. Her most recent monograph, *Holocaust Archaeologies: Approaches and Future Directions* was published by Springer in March 2015.

24th February 2017

**Dr Roger White**

### **A Clash of Arms: The Romans in the West Midlands**

Roger White has visited us on previous occasion the most recent was a talk about Wroxeter Roman City.

This evening's talk is centred on the West Midlands and the Roman occupation thereof.

17th March 2017

**Sarah Arrowsmith**

### **Mappa Mundi: Hereford's Curious Map**

Sarah Arrowsmith is the Education Officer at Hereford Cathedral and is responsible for communicating the history and archaeology of the Cathedral and its environs to the visitors and schools in particular. She has also become an author having written a volume about Mappa Mundi, once seen as an example of cartographic naivety, in fact provides an extraordinary insight into the Medieval world view and is the subject of the talk this evening.

**31st March 2017**

**Beryl Holt**

### **Brocton German Prisoner of War Camp**

Beryl's talk "Broctonlager" tells the story of Brocton German Prisoner of War Camp on Cannock Chase from April 1917 until it closed towards the end of 1919. Using original documents from the Imperial War Museum, the National Records of Scotland and Staffordshire Record Office together with many letters, newspaper reports and the unpublished diary of the Camp Commandant, she has compiled an account of the daily lives of the prisoners, of the Commandant and his family.

Beryl came to Staffordshire from South Yorkshire with her husband 50 years ago and immediately wanted to know more about the area. She joined Berkswich History Society when it was formed in 1992 and has been Chairman of the Society for 8 years. The research has always been based on the Parish of Berkswich, which includes Brocton, hence the desire to discover what she could about the PoW Camp.

**21st April 2017**

**Deidre O'Sullivan**

### **The Christian Monastery on Lindisfarne**

Deirdre O'Sullivan is Lecturer in Medieval Archaeology at Leicester University and her research work has been extensive and includes Christian Archaeology of Cumbria (MPhil), the Dissolution and Friaries. Fieldwork projects include St Bees (last season talk), Lindisfarne and Post Medieval pottery manufactory at Ticknall Derbyshire.

The subject of the talk this evening is the Christian Monastery on Lindisfarne (Holy Island) and will include the earlier work with the emphasis being on the current further work and research being undertaken.

**5th May 2017**

**Jon Goodwin**

### **Excavations at Three Hanley (Stoke on Trent) Potter Factories**

Jonathan Goodwin is Senior Planning Officer (Archaeology/HER) at City of Stoke on Trent. The recently published volume XLVIII of the Society Transactions included the report of the extensive investigation and is the background for the talk this evening.

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## **Practical Archaeology 50 years ago**

My first excavation was in 1965. Having time between the completion of a first degree and the start of a second I decided to combine a love of Cornwall, acquired from childhood holidays, and an interest in archaeology by spending a season with the Cornwall Archaeological Society. That year was the second season's excavation of a promontory fort on Pentire Head, known as The Rumps. This is on the North Cornwall coast just north of Polzeath and is a hilly site of a few acres connected to the mainland by a narrow neck of land ; the whole surrounded by 100ft vertical cliffs. It's quite a spectacular site. There are ramparts and ditches across the narrow neck with one entrance and a few possible flattened platforms in the interior. The photograph shows the defensive banks and ditches very clearly with the entrance in the middle. There were then no scientific aids to archaeology and the investigation depended on assessments of the landscape features and excavation, followed by detailed recording and photography. We were there for a month , much of the time spent in hard physical labour as we worked through the banks and ditches. Health and Safety was minimal so no hard hats and no



barriers between us and the cliffs. We were a small band of enthusiastic and mostly young amateurs with a retired bank manager as director; we camped nearby under canvas, had all our food provided and a small payment each week. Evenings were spent in local pubs in Polzeath and Delabole or occasionally further afield and weekends in exploring stone circles on Bodmin Moor. The weather was kind, as I remember little rain, and we could swim at lunchtime in a little cove near the camp. So I learned all the standard archaeological techniques and had a very enjoyable time.



The only real issue was that the archaeology was not very interesting; very few portable finds and the excavations of the entrance and nearby banks and ditches revealed little not visible on the surface. The internal sites may have been artificially levelled to support shelters but there was little evidence for this. The conclusion was that this was a refuge for a group newly arrived from France who quite quickly moved away inland. Whilst defensible the site was very exposed and would have been most uncomfortable in poor weather; in addition there is no fresh water source within the site and none nearby so any water needed would have to be carried quite some distance or collected from rainwater. As a defensive refuge it has drawbacks, one of which is that there is no back way out, so no opportunity of retreating. This sort of speculative excavation is now well out of fashion and I don't think that any work has been done on this site since I was there. The results though have been written up in full and can be found in the Journal of the Cornwall Archaeological Society.

Richard Totty

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## **Friends of Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service**

### **A talk by Oliver Gerrish**

**The architectural patronage of the Bostock family in Stafford, with particular reference to Shawms by Henry T Sandy and Upmeads by Edgar Wood**

Monday 20 March 2017 at 7.30pm

In the Staffordshire Record Office Eastgate Street Stafford

Oliver Gerrish is an eminent architectural historian who is a member of the Bostock family. The Bostocks were the owners of several major companies in Stafford at the end of the nineteenth century and commissioned modern architects to build their houses there. Upmeads, an Arts and Crafts flat roofed house and garden on Newport Road was designed by the Manchester architect Edgar Wood and built in 1908. Shawms at Weeping Cross was designed by the Stafford Architect Henry T Sandy in 1905 in the Voysey style. For details contact Richard Totty at [richard.totty4@gmail.com](mailto:richard.totty4@gmail.com). SAHS members £3.50

**STAFFORD'S RADICAL MP:  
RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN  
SATIRIST, PLAYWRIGHT AND ORATOR**

## PROGRAMME

10:30-10:40am

## Welcome and Introductory Remarks

10:40-11:30am

Dr Robert Jones (University of Leeds)

## Introducing Sheridan

## Celebrity, Theatre and Politics

11:50-12:20pm

Dr Rachel Wilson (University of Leeds)

### 'The Parliamentary Voice'

## Experiencing Sheridan

in the House of Commons

**12:20-2pm: Lunch (not provided)**

2-2:50pm

**Professor Martyn Powell (Aberystwyth)**

### 'Recognising Sheridan

### Drink, Debt and Print Satire

2:50-3:40pm

Reading Sheridan: Interactive Workshop on

### the Challenges Presented by the Project

3:40-4pm

## Future Work: Final Questions and Closing

Comments

WWW.LEEDS.AC.UK/SHERIDANPROJECT  
TWITTER: @SHERIDANPROJECT



Saturday 18 March 2017

10:30 - 4pm



Staffordshire Record Office,  
Eastgate St., Stafford, ST16 2LZ



£10 per person



To book, phone 01785 278379  
or visit

[www.staffordshire.gov.uk/archives](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/archives)

[illegible]

## The new History Centre at Stafford

Now that the Heritage Lottery Fund has agreed to support the renovation of the buildings in Eastgate Street Stafford which form the William Salt Library and the Staffordshire Record Office the project has started. Initial work has concentrated on procurement activities to appoint consultants for the project, architects to design the buildings and members of staff to work on the project. Announcements of the results of these procurements are expected shortly. The next phase will involve detailed designs and this will take several months. The new facility will house the William Salt Library, the collections now in the Staffordshire Record Office, the collections in the Lichfield Record Office and items from the County Museum at Shugborough. Meanwhile in Lichfield work continues on the project to renovate the St Mary's centre to house Lichfield Library and including a small history access point. Initial plans were published in December. These are exciting times for Archive Services in Staffordshire so keep your eyes on the local media to follow developments.



## **News from the Past: the latest Archaeological Discoveries in the West Midlands**

**Saturday 4 March, 2017, 10.00am - 5.00pm**

### **Birmingham city centre**

The Church Room at the Carrs Lane Church Centre, Carrs Lane, Birmingham B4 7SX

Fee: £20, CBA WM members may deduct £5. (Refreshments will be available but please bring your own lunch.)

This annual event, organised by the Council for British Archaeology West Midlands, includes several illustrated presentations about sites and objects from rural and urban parts of the region. Talks this year range from excavations of prehistoric and Roman sites and medieval churches and castles to studies of Roman brooches, lidar survey and recording, dating and restoring historic buildings.

### **Programme (the times and order of individual presentations may be subject to alteration)**

**Chair:** John Hunt (Vice-Chair, CBA West Midlands)

**10:00-10:10 Welcome and introduction** by Sheena Payne-Lunn, Chair CBA West Midlands

10:10-10:30 Castle Bromwich Castle - Mike Hodder

10:30-11:00 The Weavers' Cottages, Kidderminster: recording and restoring - Tim Cornah (Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology) and Sue Whitehouse (Worcestershire Buildings Preservation Trust)

**11:00-11:30 Break** - tea, coffee, biscuits

11:30-12:00 The Tilley Timber Project: Assessing the history of a small Shropshire hamlet through dendrochronology - George Nash (University of Bristol)

12:00-12:30 The Early Neolithic of the English Midlands: recent investigations at the Mavesyn Ridware and Alrewas causewayed enclosures - Paul Garwood (University of Birmingham)

12:30 - 1:00 A clash of cultures? The Romano-British West Midlands - Roger White (University of Birmingham)

**1:00 - 2:00 Lunch break** (lunch not provided)

2:00 - 2:30 Polden Hill brooches - Angie Bolton (Portable Antiquities Scheme)

2:30 - 3:00 Things Look Great From Up Here! The Lidar Survey Across Cannock Chase - Steve Dean/Gary Ball (Staffordshire County Council)

**3:00 - 3:30 Break** - tea, coffee, biscuits

3:30 - 4:00 Holy Trinity church, Sutton Coldfield - Cathy Coutts (Archaeology Warwickshire)

4:00 - 4:30 Prehistoric and Roman landscape at Hillmorton - speaker tbc (Archaeology Warwickshire)

**4:30 Close**

You can download a programme leaflet and booking form at

<http://cbawm.archaeologyuk.org/meetings.php>

This is a very popular event, so early booking is strongly advised!

# Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society Excursion

Thursday May 25 2017 1.30 pm

## **Boscobel House** near Brewood on the Staffordshire/Shropshire border

We will have a guided tour of the house at 2.00pm and there is time after the tour to see the garden and grounds , visit the Royal Oak and have refreshments in the tea room.

Boscobel is known as the hiding place of Charles II after the battle of Worcester in 1651. For many years it was a working farm and its appearance and furnishings now are those of a prosperous late Victorian farmhouse. It is an attractive and interesting building and there are displays telling the history of the house and its Royal connection.

Boscobel House is an English Heritage property and members of English Heritage are entitled to entry free of charge. For non members the cost will be £7.00

To book a place please complete this form or write the relevant details on a separate sheet of paper if you do not wish to deface this newsletter

Name.....

Address.....

Email..... Telephone.....

No of places ..... of whom ..... are English Heritage members

Cheque ( made out to SAHS ) for £ ..... enclosed

Send to Richard Totty Rock Cottage Redhill Rugeley WS15 4LL before the end of April.

There are places for 20 people only on each guided tour ; if there are more than this number we will divide into two groups and the second group will start their tour a little later.

We have been planning this visit for two years to follow the talk given to the Society on this house but the exterior has been covered with scaffolding for repairs to the structure which has meant not only that the exterior of the house could not be seen but that access to parts of the interior were not accessible.

The full address is Boscobel House Bishop's Wood Brewood Shropshire ST19 9AR.

Car parking is available on site. There is a shop selling guide books souvenirs hot and cold drinks and ice cream as well as a tea room selling a variety of light lunches cakes and drinks.

It is also possible to walk to the remains of White Ladies Priory – a small nunnery of the Augustine canonesses- which is about 20 minutes from Boscobel. Access is free but through a woodland path which can be quite muddy in wet weather. This is not part of our organised tour but will be a pleasant walk if it is a fine afternoon.



# Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society Excursion

Friday April 28 2017 at 1.00pm

The church of St Mary and St Barlok **Norbury** Derbyshire

The manor of Norbury was held by the Fitzherbert family from Norman times until 1987 . The church has a magnificent Decorated chancel and the glass is mostly original. The rare Grisaille glass has been dated as 1306 and was recently restored ; it is one of the best examples in the country. There are chest tombs with effigies of Midlands alabaster splendidly carved and there are incised floor slabs and brasses. The choir stalls are also ancient. The present church was built on the site of an Anglo Saxon one as shown by the Saxon columns. We shall have a guided tour of the church followed by tea and cake. The church has three stars in Simon Jenkins guide.

Next door is the Old Manor , a National Trust property open on Fridays from 11.00 to 1.00 and members might like to visit this in advance of the tour of the church. The manor is very small but not without interest and the garden is attractive. If the weather has been dry there is a pleasant walk through woods down to the river Dove. (It is the manor building that is open and not the adjacent house which is a NT holiday let.)

There will be a charge of £3.00 for the tour of the church including refreshments payable on the day. National Trust members have entry to the Old Manor free of charge but for others there is an entrance fee payable directly to the NT.

To book a place please complete this form or write the relevant details on a separate sheet of paper if you do not wish to deface this newsletter

Name.....

Address.....

Email..... Telephone.....

No of places .....

Send to Richard Totty Rock Cottage Redhill Rugeley WS15 4LL or e mail [richard.totty4@gmail.com](mailto:richard.totty4@gmail.com) before April 20.

There is a limit of 24 on the number of visitors so please book early.

Norbury is in Derbyshire – just – and the postcode is DE6 2EQ.

There is parking available on site but the entrance from the B5033 to the manor and church is a little difficult so take care when coming and going.

## Lecture Evenings at the Guildhall – A Success Story

The move away from St Mary's to the Guildhall occurred back in the autumn of 2015 since when there have been 18 interesting and well attended Friday lecture evenings. Brian Bull has arranged an eclectic set of talks, all to his usual highest standard, and this is set to continue.

Whilst the Society finished at St Mary's for a variety of factors we would have been looking for an alternative by now anyway, Lichfield library to be relocated there before too long and it now looks as though this is to come to fruition. The Guildhall is a fine historic building and provides an exceptional and superior venue, and we hope the Membership agrees. Attendances are averaging about 75 which compares most favourably with the numbers seen at meetings of similar heritage groups both regionally and nationally and we are delighted that this is the case. The various publicity arranged by Susan Lupton undoubtedly helps attract visitors as well.

The procedure we undertake to record people coming in, via the tick sheets, is in place to enable statistical analysis, and additionally could be a side benefit as a paper record for checking purposes in case of sudden need to leave the building. We hope you all accept and understand the merits of our doing this each time.

The Guildhall tends to be set out, at our request, with seating to accommodate about 100, though it could be much higher if we were to foresee a need, the maximum capacity being 195. We can if needs be increase the seating on the night, and have done so once or twice. At St Mary's we were limited to 90 and no more, and that was it. It has to be said as well, the Guildhall seating is comfortable whereas the wooden chairs at St Mary's quite simply were not !

We've pretty much got the Guildhall sound system sorted out to our requirements and the fact that we are able to pass the additional microphones around amongst the audience at question time, so that all can hear what is being said, is a definite advantage and an improvement and we hope you all agree. At St Mary's, those spread around the room quite simply could not hear, for the most part.

We'd like to point out and remind people that there is the availability of the lift, at the end of the downstairs corridor in the Guildhall building, as an alternative to having to climb or descend the stairs to get up and down to and from the Guildhall auditorium. You don't necessarily have to contemplate using the steps.

It actually, and maybe surprisingly, costs the Society less in hireage fees to book the Guildhall than it did so at St Mary's, so this puts a ready smile on the face of your Treasurer !

The winter break is still built into the annual lecture programme and the next set of six 'spring' meetings begins on Friday 17th of February when all will be welcome to come and listen to Dr Caroline Sturdy Colls talk to us about 'Forensic Archaeological Approaches to the German Occupation of Alderney, Channel Islands'. This should be really interesting and we hope to see you all then.

Keith Billington

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## Lunar Events

**Erasmus Darwin House** in Lichfield is hosting a series of full moon talks and other events to continue the celebration of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lunar Society, Details at [www.erasmusdarwin.org](http://www.erasmusdarwin.org). First up is David Garrick who is hosting a wine tasting on Saturday February 10 at 7.00pm. Later on in the year there are talks about Maria Edgeworth, Joseph Wright of Derby, James Brindley, Samuel Galton and Anna Seward as well as a gin tasting !



## **Visit to the Lapworth Museum, University of Birmingham**

Members of the Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society are invited to join a visit to the Lapworth Museum which has been arranged by the Midlands region of the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG).

A few years ago Peter Evans arranged a visit to the museum for members of the Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society and this event offers an opportunity to revisit the museum following completion of the major redevelopment project which has enabled more of the outstanding collections to be exhibited. Details of the event are below. There is no charge; lunch at own expense. If you would like to attend this event please contact Susan Lupton as indicated.

**Saturday 25 February 2017, 11 00 am – 3 00 pm**

Museum visit (Birmingham)

**Lapworth Museum of Geology, University of Birmingham**

Dr Jonathan Clatworthy

An opportunity to visit one of the UK's most outstanding geological collections following the recent redevelopment project. Includes introductory talk and guided tours of the museum galleries and behind the scenes.

Venue: Lapworth Museum, Aston Webb A Block, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT.

Places: free; please book in advance.

Contact Susan Lupton; T 01543 416144, E [susanmlupton@gmail.com](mailto:susanmlupton@gmail.com)

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## **CELEBRATIONS IN LICHFIELD FOR THE CORONATION OF KING GEORGE IV - 1821**

### **Introduction**

George Augustus Frederick, eldest son of King George III, Prince of Wales and Prince Regent (5<sup>th</sup>. February 1811) was noted for his many mistresses, extravagance and profligacy. His father, concerned about the succession, forced him into marriage by refusing to pay his astronomical debts unless he did so. George married Caroline, Princess of Brunswick Wolfenbüttel in 1795. It is said that at their first meeting, at a reception at St. James' Palace, he was so shocked at her appearance he had to down a large glass of brandy in order to recover. The marriage was not a success and George deserted her in the following year. She was allowed to travel abroad in August 1813 taking into her service, whilst in Italy, Bartolomeo Bergami described as her Italian dancing master.

Rumours began to reach England of her relationship with him and she returned to England on the death of George III (29<sup>th</sup>. January 1820).

Her husband, now proclaimed King George IV, determined to divorce her and she was impeached and brought to trial before the House of Lords. However, the mood of the country was very much in her favour due to her treatment by George and rallies in her support led to the fear of civil unrest and the trial was abandoned in November 1820.

The Coronation of King George IV took place at Westminster Abbey on the 19<sup>th</sup>. July 1821, a most extravagant affair, its cost equivalent to some £20 million today. Caroline was excluded from the ceremony but nevertheless turned up and was refused entry to the Abbey.

She fell ill that same day and died shortly afterwards on the 7<sup>th</sup>. August proclaiming she thought she had been poisoned !.

### **The Celebrations**

The Coronation Celebrations in the City of Lichfield are described in great detail in the Lichfield Mercury of Friday 20<sup>th</sup>. July 1821.

*--- For some time previous to its arrival, preparations had been going on with the utmost spirit and activity – In addition to a subscription amounting to between three & 4 hundred pounds, a variety of presents were made by individuals of sheep, coals and*

other articles. Three tables were placed in Boar street paralel to each other from one end to the other, each about 200 yards long, and at proper intervals were fixed three immensely large painted Barrels, filled with excellent ale, on the largest of which was inscribed "the Royal George", and on the two others G. R. IV.

Two large columns, nearly 60 feet were erected, by the direction of Mr. Holmes, about the middle of the street, very tastefully decorated with laurel and coronal garlands, and a flag with the following inscription:

May the King, like his father, live in the hearts of his subjects.

The City flag was hoisted at the top of St. Marys Church, and the public Inns of the City were also decorated with flags &c. At the Old Crown Inn, there was a beautiful Crown exhibited over the door, which was afterwards taken down and placed in the centre of the dinner table. Five oxen and about ten sheep were cut up and distributed amongst respectable housekeepers, to roast and boil against the appointed dinner hour; and in addition to the Meat no less than 580 large Plum-puddings were provided by different individuals, and also a large supply of vegetables &c.

The day, which was most gloriously fine, was ushered in by the ringing of bells, at the Cathedral and different Churches – the shops were all closed, and at about 10 o'clock, almost every respectable inhabitant of the place, - many gentlemen out of the neighbourhood, the troop of Yeomanry Cavalry, the boys and girls from the public schools with an excellent band, had assembled at the Town Hall from whence they proceeded to the Cathedral along Market-street, and Bird-street, in the following order, the Band playing the National Anthem "God save the King"

Quarter Master.

Four Privates.

Trumpeter.

Captain Sir Roger Gresley.

Privates 6 in front.

Lieutenant Proby, and two Serjeants with the Standard.

Privates 6 abreast.

Lieutenant Mott.

Farrier.

Clifford's School.

National  
School.

Girls  
3 a breast.

A beautiful  
Garland, with a  
Crown, presented  
by Mrs. Madan.

National  
School.  
Boys  
3 a breast.

Band.

Standards &c.

Corporation – 4 abreast.

Clergy.

Gentlemen – 4 abreast.

On entering the Cathedral, the Hundreth Psalm was sung by the Choir, with an effect which cannot be described – it can only be felt; and pitiable indeed must be the heart which could not melt at the impression. The grandeur and solemnity of the place, the recollection of circumstances in History so immediately connected with this venerable Pile – the sufferings of our forefathers in the cause of Religion and Liberty, at once rushed upon our imagination –

A most eloquent and appropriate discourse was delivered by the Rev. Archdeacon Nares – We understand that the Rev. Gentleman has already been requested to publish his Sermon -. During the service the Coronation Anthem was sung in a very superior style.

The procession returned to the Town-Hall in the same order as above, and on their arrival "God save the King" was again played by the Band, and after a salute of 3 times 3 the Procession separated, in order to render their services at the approaching dinner. At half past 1 o'clock the tables were covered with the Roast Beef of old England, plum puddings, &c. and upwards of three thousand persons partook of this excellent dinner, the Band playing at intervals. - We never witnessed a more gratifying sight – cheerfulness and good humour seemed to rest upon every countenance –

After dinner "the King" was drank with 4 times 4, in which the company joined, most heartily –

About 150 Gentlemen repaired to the George Inn, at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, to a most sumptuous dinner, provided by Mr. Taylor. A baron of beef was placed in the centre of the table, beautifully ornamented with an elegant Crown. After the cloth was drawn "Non nobis Domine" was sung by the Gentlemen of the choir, with considerable taste, after which the Chairman proposed "King George the IV. May he reign long, happy and prosperous. Received with applause, and drank with 4 times 4.

"God save the King", was then sung.

Sir Roger Gresley here addressed the meeting in a speech of considerable length which met with repeated interruptions from the applause of the company – The health of Sir Roger was then drunk with 4 times 4.

The Duke of York and the Army, 3 times 3 – after which was sung the glee – "When order in this land commenced with Alfred's laws.

The Duke of Clarence and the Navy, 3 times 3. Glee – "When Britain on her seagirt shore."

The Royal Family, 3 times 3.

The Duke of Wellington and the Heroes of Waterloo, 4 times 4. Tune, "See the conquering hero comes."

The Lord Lieutenant of the county of Stafford, 3 times 3.

The Bailiffs of the City, 3 times 3, the High Bailiff returned thanks.

The Dean and Canons of the Cathedral of Lichfield, 3 times 3.

The health of Mr. Archdeacon Nares, and thanks for his excellent sermon (unbounded applause). -



*Prosperity to the City of Lichfield.*  
*Colonel Moncton and the Staffordshire Yeomanry. Mr. Mott returned thanks.*  
*The Magistrates of the county of Stafford, was proposed by the Rev. T. Levett.*  
*General Dyott proposed the health of the President and Gentlemen of the Committee, by whose exertions the business of the Celebration of the Coronation had been so well conducted. The President Mr. Hinckley responded.*  
*Mr. Dodson, a Member of the Committee, was called upon by several Gentlemen and thanked them for drinking the health of the Committee.*  
*The Marquis of Anglesea and Staffordshire Heroes.*  
*Lieutenant Proby rose and proposed the health of Capt. Parker, who returned thanks.*  
*Sir R. Gresley proposed the health of Rev. T. Levett, who replied.*  
*The Members of the City, 3 times 3.*  
*Many other toasts were given and several songs sung, during the evening, which we are happy to say closed with great harmony.*  
*The bustle was kept up till a very late hour, and bon-fires enlivened the different parts of the town. The Ball was attended by all the rank and beauty and fashion of the city and neighbourhood, and had a most brilliant appearance.*  
*We had almost forgotten to notice also the public dinner at the Old Crown, which we understand was well attended. After partaking of a most excellent dinner provided by Mr. Mansell, the company enjoyed themselves in drinking the usual toasts, and spent the evening in great harmony and good humour.*  
*As our paper is obliged to go to press so immediately many circumstances of this eventful day will probably, in the hurry of drawing up our report be omitted, and others noticed in a cursory manner. We shall endeavour to make up the deficiency in our next publication.*

### Background

Sadly, I have as yet been unable to locate the next edition of the Lichfield Mercury from this early period. The British Newspaper Archive has holdings only from 1877 onwards. I keep looking.

There is no doubt that this celebration was the greatest that has ever been seen in the history of the City.

In examining the background to this outpouring of joy we have to remember that as the late King George III had reigned for 60 years, very few of the city's inhabitants would have been living at the time of his coronation. During his reign England had faced almost constant warfare.

The Seven Years War 1756-63; the French & Indian Wars in North America 1754-63; American War of Revolution 1775-83; United Irishmen Revolt 1795-97; the War of 1812-15 with the United States of America; the many military campaigns in India as we fought to dominate the country; the British Annexation of Cape Colony 1802-14; various other British Expeditions and the long and bitter French Revolutionary, Napoleonic & Peninsula Wars 1793-1815 which had only recently ended.

The country was now at peace and economic stability was slowly returning. The Prince Regent's scandalous reputation had enlightened the gloom of recent years and now he was to be King. There was much to celebrate.

To read the Mercury's report is to journey back in time, you can hear the noise, the people shouting, bells ringing, band playing, flags flying, the military & civic uniforms, see the colours, chimneys smoking, smell the cooking, taste the ale, see the bonfires. What a day that was, it would have been a topic of conversation for many years afterwards between those who were there that fine summers day.

Roger J. Knowles

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From time to time the Society receives requests from individuals for assistance with their research into historical events in Staffordshire. One of these concerns the 11<sup>th</sup> century manor of Peschale, said to be in Staffordshire. Did it exist? Where was it? Was it anything to do with the hamlet of Pershall near Eccleshall? If you think that you can help please contact the enquirer directly [kgp11@hotmail.com](mailto:kgp11@hotmail.com) – he lives in Florida.

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We are looking for an email officer to handle the Society's emails. The role involves sending out the newsletter and other general communications to members by e mail and monitoring incoming e mails, and forwarding them to the member(s) of the Society best placed to answer them. The only requirements are a reasonable internet connection and a willingness to spend some time helping with the administration of the Society. Please think about this; we would very much like to find a willing volunteer to do this essential work for us.

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