

FRIENDS OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ARCHIVES (FONA)
established 2012

www.fona.org.uk

NEWSLETTER

No.4

September 2013

A VERY SPECIAL FLY-PAST!



Mark Dorrington took this fantastic picture, capturing the moment when the Red Arrows flew over Nottinghamshire Archives. The fly-past signalled the start of 'Armed Forces Day' (29 June).

The day coincided with FONA's latest 'Bring a Document to tell a Story' event, a report of which can be found inside.

BUILDING THE FUTURE OF THE ARCHIVES

It is a time of exciting developments at the Archives. We will be reporting on these changes, as they progress, in future newsletters. Chief amongst these changes is the building extension, on which Mark Dorrington reports below:

External visual 1 - extensions



£2,568,000 capital funding has been provided by Nottinghamshire County Council to extend Nottinghamshire Archives. This will provide additional archive storage and improved public and learning accommodation. Planning permission has now been granted by Nottingham City Council and the plans can be viewed in the Archives search room.

Internal visual 1 - ground floor



[Some plans of the proposed layout following the building extension]

In preparation for the building work to commence, **the Car Park will close to the public and staff from 23 September 2013.**

During the building work, there will be periodic restrictions on access to collections and at the end of the programme a full temporary closure of Nottinghamshire Archives. When more information is available, these dates will be published in the Archives search room, in the Archives email newsletter and on the Archives web pages.

HOW CAN FONA MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

The Friends of Nottinghamshire Archives will be consulting with the Archives on the best way of supporting the service following the completion of the new extension. A number of ideas have already been considered by the committee but we are also keen to hear what Friends think should be our priorities. Please direct any comments to FONA's chairman (and newsletter editor), richard.gaunt@nottingham.ac.uk.

The same is true of any aspect of our work, including members' events, visits and speakers. Keep the ideas coming so that we can work together to build upon our strong foundation.

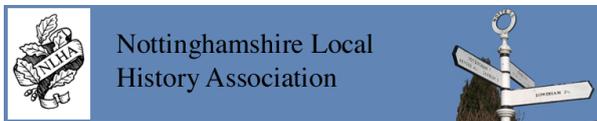
MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS – Did you know that you can save time by filling out a standing order mandate for your membership renewal next year? For further information and a form, e-mail treasurer@fona.org.uk

COMMITTEE – We welcome Mark Whitehouse as a member of the FONA committee. Mark will be helping us (amongst other things) in planning towards achieving charitable status.

CALLING ALL BUDDING ARTISTIC DESIGNERS!

FONA would like to invite suggestions for a suitable logo representing the organisation. No quill pens allowed! If you have any suggested designs (or even ideas for them), please let us know. There will be a small prize - and lasting recognition - for the successful designer.

As a way of stimulating some ideas, below are two logos of local heritage and civic organisations:



And the logos (below and right) of two other Friends organisations: can you guess which counties they represent?



THE NEWSLETTER - Will appear three times a year in January, May and September. The editor invites short items (250-500 words) of an archives-related nature which will be of interest to the membership. Deadlines are 1 January, 1 May and 1 September.



Please e-mail your suggestions (and answers!) to Richard Gaunt at: richard.gaunt@nottingham.ac.uk.

OUR NEXT EVENT - 26 SEPTEMBER at 2pm - JOHN BLEY OF EAST LEAKE

Keith Hodgkinson will be talking to us at **East Leake** about the book he has recently co-authored with Rachel and Ian Flynn, published by the local Historical Society. It tells the story of John Bley who was reputedly the son of the former curate William Bley. As a boy he was sent to a private school at Hoton, four miles away. In 1690, he was apprenticed to a distiller on Thames Street in London. He led an eventful life in the metropolis and eventually became a member of the Distillers Company. He also became well acquainted with Sir Thomas Parkyns of Bunny. Bley built a house in East Leake and also endowed a school there. At his death, in 1731, he left legacies to several people and land to provide an income for the upkeep of the school.

Come and join us to hear more about John Bley's fascinating life story! The talk will be followed by refreshments and an opportunity to purchase a signed copy of the book. All enquiries to our Programme Secretary at smleeds@virginmedia.com.

BRING A DOCUMENT TO TELL A STORY

Our members continue to surprise us with fascinating insights into their lives and interests as stimulated by archives and documents. At the latest event, more revealing stories came to light....



Elizabeth Robinson (pictured above) started by giving two definitions of a document – as having ‘an original and official purpose’ and as ‘writing conveying information’.

She gave as an example of an official document a certificate issued by St John’s Ambulance Brigade, Bottesford Branch, to William Band in the early-1890s, which qualified him to render first aid to the injured. Using the Certificate as a source, Elizabeth was able to ‘flesh out the bones’. She found William’s father Vernon was employed by the Duke of Rutland at Belvoir Kennels, dealing with the rats which were attracted to the kennels by the warmth and food to be found there.

Elizabeth had been able to discover that William Band lived until his 90’s, having been employed for 42 years, as a plate-layer with the GN Railway. Why did he need the first aid certificate? Possibly because plate-laying was so dangerous!



Pauline Chettle (pictured above with husband Jim) brought the embroidered sash which her grandfather, George Fletcher of Hucknall, had been awarded as Past Chief Ruler of the Hucknall Tent of the Rechabites Abstinence Movement. This provided social and meeting activities for all members of society without them having to frequent public houses which were often the only other venues for meetings. Such societies were encouraged by the many chapels in the town for providing family activities, and photographs show teas, picnics and other functions. The movement also used to have a junior section, and provided insurance for funeral expenses.

Pauline finished by saying that although the ‘Pledge’ had been signed for her to the age of 16, her grandfather must be spinning in his grave as she was an amateur wine judge for 30 years!

Madeleine Scott read extracts from airmail letters sent from her uncle to his sister, her mother, between May and October 1945, when he was stationed in India and Ceylon, as it was then, with the Royal Navy. She chose a broad range of examples to illustrate how Joseph Fletcher used his experiences to expand his knowledge. For example he wrote about tea plantations, various religious festivals, the work of women, politics and social problems, history and poetic descriptions of beautiful landscapes. She

finished by quoting an historical question referring to the city of Bombay for his ten year old niece. Somebody came up with the correct answer!



Katherine Stead (pictured above) showed the group two Illuminated documents which were Apprentice Indentures, dated 1924 and 1892. Her grandfather was a stonemason from the Isle of Purbeck (Dorset) who came to Nottinghamshire when concrete started to replace stone, and her father was involved in building the first council houses in Nottingham, in the 1920's. The documents were relics of a past age when such documents were both impressive and beautiful.

Jenny Page showed her mother's Army Pay Book recording her service in the ATS (later the WRAC) during the Second World War. She explained this was an example of finding more than was immediately obvious - inside the back of the document was a small pouch which

her mother had obviously used to keep some small treasured items. There was a letter from her father saying how glad he was that the war was ending and she would be coming home, a poem possibly written but perhaps just noted by her mother, a wartime recipe for a cake without fat or sugar, and a small hand-made card from Jenny to her mother whilst she was in hospital. It had been a delight to find such items and, amongst other things, to see examples of the writing of Jenny's grandfather, mother, and herself aged about nine.



Sheila Leeds (pictured above) ended the event by showing the card from the Queen which her mother had received on her recent 100th birthday. In addition to the royal card, centenarians were also sent a card from the Department of Work and Pensions which had a picture of the Houses of Parliament and a message from the Secretary of State.

There will be more stories from this event in our next newsletter.

With thanks to the contributors for sharing their recollections with us, Mark Dorrington for taking the photographs and Jenny Page for additional reporting.

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