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# FONA consultation meeting - the outcomes

Back in June, we held a Consultation Meeting to look at ways we can grow FONA and support Nottinghamshire Archives - our prime reason for existing - in the most efficient and effective way. Many, many thanks to those Friends who were

able to make it to the meeting or sent written comments and suggestions in advance. We considered every point and discussions were enthusiastic and thorough. If anyone would like to see a full record of the discussions, let me know and I'll send you a copy.

What emerged from the talks were four overarching themes and we (i.e. the Committee) are starting to adopt some of the suggestions made, though some things take longer than others to come to fruition, so please bear with us.

**COMMUNICATION** - we need to communicate what we do better.

- We now have a Facebook page. Friends of Nottinghamshire Archives-FONA on Facebook. If you're on Facebook look us up, comment, like and share our pages. Let's get FONA out-there in cyberspace.

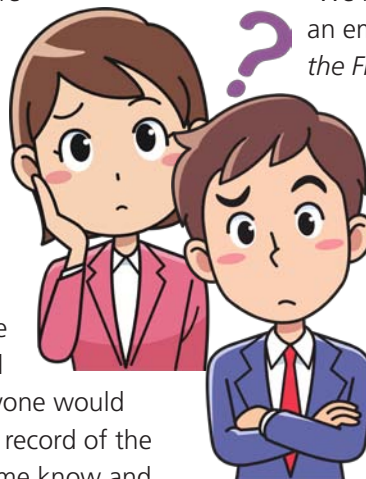
- We're experimenting with an email update *Notes from the Friends of Notts Archives*.

This will come out irregularly but should fill-in the gap between newsletters and include different information. (Unfortunately, because of postage costs, we can't mail this out.)

- We're looking at ways we can promote and market ourselves better but watch this space.

**PROGRAMME** - we were asked to create a more varied programme; something that makes us distinct from other groups.

- We hope you'll find what we are planning for 2020 will meet this objective. More details to follow soon.



**BE MORE ACTIVE** - create opportunities for Friends to be more involved with FONA and Nottinghamshire Archives

- We recognise that Friends enjoy our talks and occasional visits very much. At the same time, there are some who would welcome the opportunity to be more involved or active in the organisation. We're looking at ways this can happen.

### **PROMOTING FONA and PROMOTING NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ARCHIVES**

- This is similar to Communication but focuses on the organisation rather than individual events or activities - though the two go hand-in-hand.
- We have a stock of a new promotional leaflet/application form which should be included in any information handed out to new Inspire members who visit Nottinghamshire Archives.
- Last year we attended the Mansfield History Fair with a display about FONA activities and will look to do this again in 2020 and get to similar events. We've investigated having a dedicated notice board in Nottinghamshire Archives but unfortunately due to building controls the cost was prohibitive.

### **HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

Your Committee has lots of ideas for what we can do, but we are few in number and most do at least two jobs (I'm Secretary and Newsletter editor, for example) so we do feel stretched at times. But, if you are able, you could help us out.

If you belong to a history or heritage group in your local area, you could

- Make sure they know about FONA events.
- Take some FONA promotional leaflets to other history and heritage groups you belong to - just ask me for a supply.

- Invite a FONA member along to your group to talk about what FONA does - only 10-15 minutes at the start of your regular meetings.
- Let us know if there's an appropriate 'fair' or heritage event where we could have a display/attend. OR perhaps you could put up a display and/or hand out leaflets on behalf of FONA.

Help out at FONA events - this could be anything from putting out chairs to chairing a talk; helping organise an event or composing a write-up of a visit for the newsletter. It would be good to know who we can call on for extra help if we need it.

Send in suggestions for events or activities. Or Website content. Or FACEBOOK posts.

Do you have a background in marketing/PR that you could share with us?

Are you good at organising things?

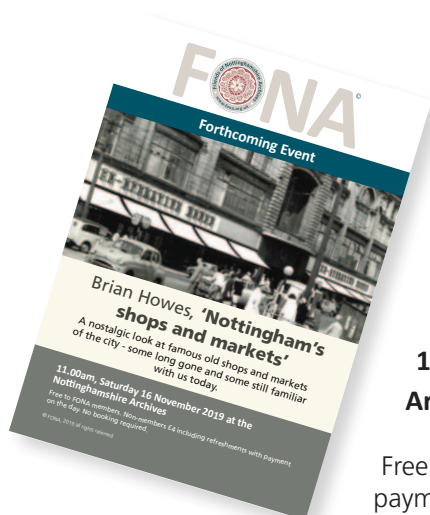
Can you edit a newsletter?

Do you have hidden talents or skills that FONA could exploit - sorry - that you think might help FONA develop!?

Or maybe you would like to join the Committee and help plan future strategy - elections take place at the AGM in March, so you've got time to think about how you might be able to contribute to FONA and make it bigger and better!

**Judith Mills**

FONA Secretary and Newsletter Editor  
secretary@fona.org.uk



## **Our next event**

### **Brian Howes, 'Nottingham's shops and markets'**

A nostalgic look at famous old shops and markets of the city - some long gone and some still familiar to us today.

**11.00am, Saturday 16 November 2019 at the Nottinghamshire Archives**

Free to FONA members. Non-members £4 including refreshments with payment on the day. No booking required.

# Talking of Volunteering!



Left to right: Pauline Chettle, Pauline Smith and Sheila Leeds.

These three well-known ladies have been serving tea and biscuits and - washing up - for many, many years at both Nottinghamshire Archives and FONA events. We believe this photo was taken at the very first Heritage Open Weekend hosted by Nottinghamshire Archives- was this in 1994?

And they are still doing it. And we are eternally grateful to them.



## Catharine Arnold spoke to FONA about her latest history book, *Pandemic 1918, the Story of the Deadliest Influenza in History*. Here is a summary of her talk.

In the dying months of the First World War, an outbreak of pandemic influenza suddenly overwhelmed the globe, killing up to 100m people. Soon dubbed 'Spanish flu' the pandemic became one of the greatest natural disasters in history.

Nobody escaped the impact of this horrifying visitation, with its symptoms that turned skin blue and left victims vomiting blood and gasping for breath. Facing a common enemy, the Allies referred to it as *le grippe* while the Germans called it *blitzkatarrh*. Spain gave rise to the pandemic's distinctive title, although the virus probably originated in army camps in France and the United States, developing from a strain of bird flu carried west by Chinese labourers. At some point, the virus crossed the species barrier and infected humans with a strain of hitherto unknown ferocity, dispersed about the globe by troop movements and invading and poisoning every continent.

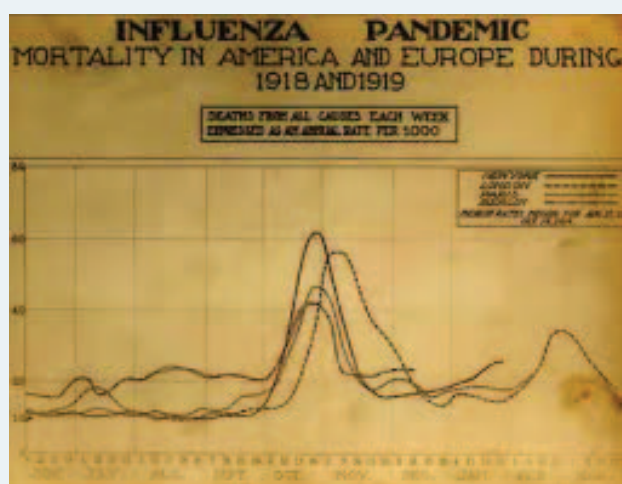


Chart plotting the mortality figures in America and Europe throughout 1918 and 1919.

Catherine shared the human stories behind the colossal casualty figures, gleaned from diaries, notebooks, newspaper stories and letters. The experiences of gallant doctors and nurses, insights





*Spanish flu nurses.*

from children such as the little girl in Philadelphia who lay in bed and heard her friends being buried to the toll of the bells. Writers Katherine Anne Porter, Duff Cooper and Vera Brittain witnessed the horrors at first hand while world leaders President Woodrow Wilson and British Prime Minister David Lloyd George nearly died. Gandhi only survived after supporters pleaded with him to drink a little goats' milk, 'for the sake of India.'

Then there were the devastating stories about Spanish flu in Nottingham, which by November 1918 had the highest death rate in the country, particularly in Bulwell and Basford. Victims included people like Katherine Wade-Dalton, married at St Mary's, Lace Market, on 23 October 1918 and buried there a week later. Katherine is commemorated with a stained glass window showing her in her Nottingham lace wedding dress. Tragic death notices included Pte Willie Eggleshaw, from Hyson Green; Sapper Bakewell, of Blue Bell Hill, who committed suicide while delirious with flu; Minnie 'Dollie' Seaton, just 14, 'a pure white rose in heaven.'



*Lymn's Undertaking business in Bath Street, Nottingham.*

True resourcefulness was demonstrated by Harold Lymn, an undertaker's son called home from the Royal Flying Corps to help with the family business. Mass graves had already been sunk at the Rock and General Cemeteries; but the Council was running out

of places to store bodies. Harold took over the Victoria Baths in Sneinton as a temporary mortuary. Harold's descendant, Nigel Lymn-Rose, later commented: 'the baths were perfect for body storage, a clinical environment which could be easily washed down.'

Asked if the world faced pandemic flu on a similar scale today, Catharine thought that the West is better prepared, with civil contingencies designed to cope with catastrophic events. However, parts of the world, such as Africa and India which lack sufficient resources, are still at risk from pandemics like the Spanish flu.





# Visit to St Mary the Virgin Church, Lace Market: July 2019

In July, around 24 Friends enjoyed a guided tour of St Mary's Church in the Lace Market. The guide was excellent and regaled the group with good stories. Here are some highlights of the tour.



## The Unicorn and the Lion

*These heraldic devices standing on either side of the west door date from the early eighteenth century. During the reign of Queen Anne (Queen of England, Scotland and Ireland between 8 March 1702 and 1 May 1707 and later as Queen of Great Britain and Ireland until her death in 1714) they symbolised the union of the old kingdoms of England (the lion) and Scotland (the unicorn) in 1707.*

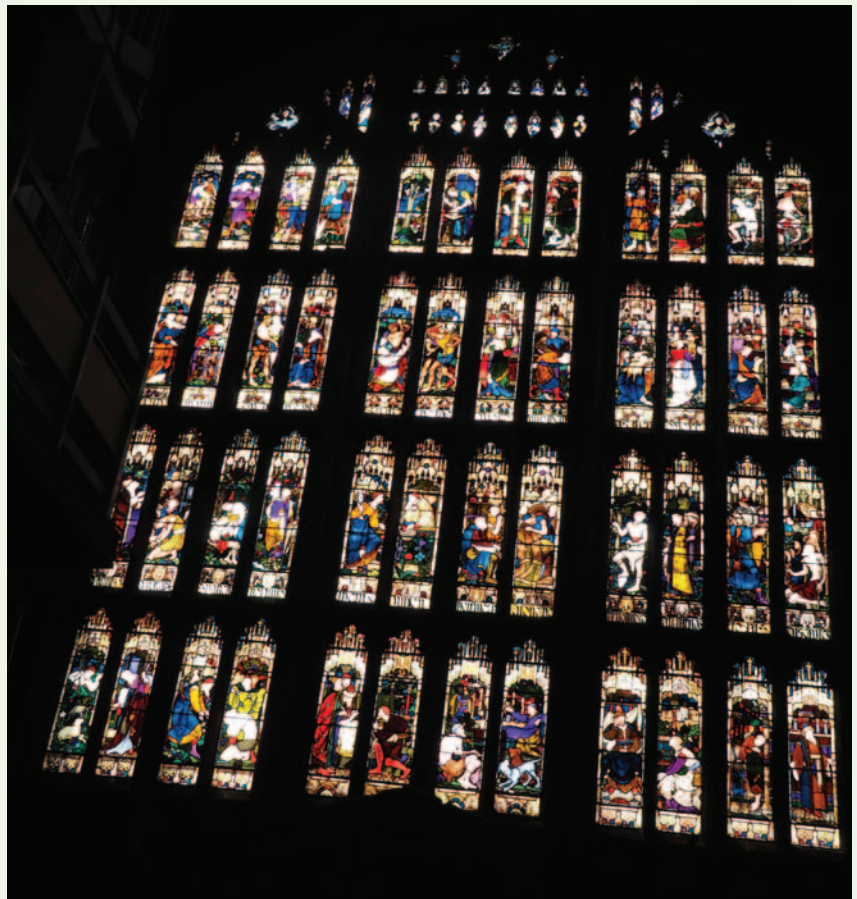


## The Baptistry



*The octagonal mediaeval carved stone font has a palindromic Greek inscription which may be translated as: 'Wash away thy sin, wash not thy face only', said to have been composed by the Greek Emperor Leo in the ninth century. The oak font canopy was added in 1957.*

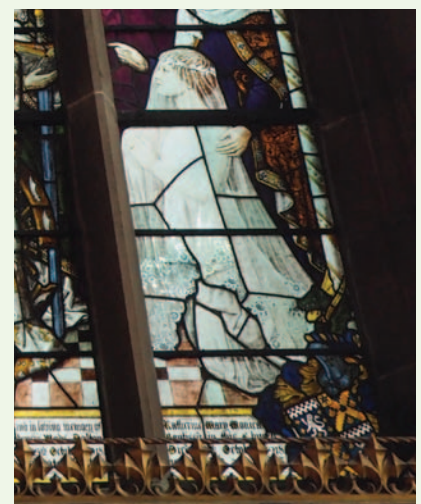
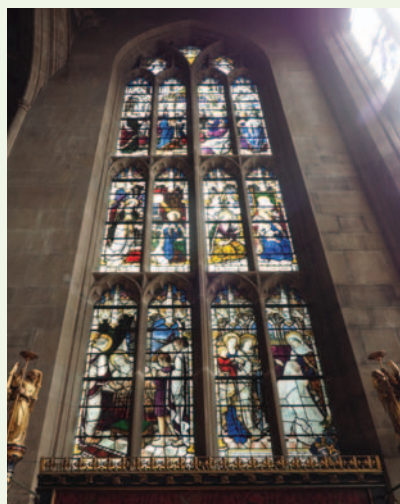
## Stained glass



*St. Mary's has a fine collection of late Victorian stained glass windows. The Great South Window was installed in 1867 and made by Heaton, Butler and Bayne of London. Pevsner describes this window as 'a major mid-Victorian design, as exciting as the very different early ones by Morris & Co.' This colourful window shows the Parables of Christ and is dedicated to the memory of Thomas Smith, the founder of Smith's bank, Nottingham.*



*The carved choir stalls were designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott in 1872. The mediaeval ones were thrown out and reputedly bought in Sneinton Market for £10, by Mr William Henry Wilcockson, a banker, refurbished and installed in St Stephen's Church Sneinton where they remain today.*



*This window at the East end of the Lady Chapel is a memorial to Katherine Mary Monica Wade-Dalton (see Catherine Arnold's earlier article, page 4). The detail on the right shows her wearing a Nottingham Lace wedding dress.*



## Cathedra



*This Cathedra, or bishop's throne, was installed in 1890, following the announcement that a bishopric would be created for Nottinghamshire. It was assumed that St Mary's would become the cathedral but the decision was taken to base the bishopric at Southwell Minster instead.*

## The South Aisle



*The South Aisle houses many military memorials including those dedicated to the Robin Hood Rifles - Boer War, Parachute Regiment, Burma Star Association, Sherwood Foresters and South Notts Hussars - South Africa and the Normandy Veteran's Association.*



*This union jack was the flag flown by H.M.S. Nottingham, of the second cruiser squadron, throughout the Battle of Jutland on the 31st May 1916. The Nottingham was sunk by a torpedo in the North Sea on 18th August 1916, when twenty one of the ships company lost their lives.*

# Two Households of Upton

***"16 August 1835: I wore my silk hood and gloves at Church, in memory of Mrs Longstaff."***

So reads the first entry in the Journal of Anne Cooke, a gentlewoman from Macclesfield who came to live in Nottinghamshire in her early fifties. (Nottinghamshire Archives Ref DD/689/1 & 2)



*Ann Cooke's diary (image courtesy of Nottinghamshire Archives)*

In 1835 Anne was living in Upton and had been in the village for at least five years. Discovering more about the friendships Anne formed reveals a number of interesting families in Upton in the first half of the 19th century. This is an account of two of them.

### Longstaff

Upton's parish register confirms that Ann Longstaff, aged 82, was buried at SS Peter & Paul's church on 13 August 1835. Anne Cooke must have been a particularly close friend to receive a silk hood and gloves as mementoes. White's Directory for 1832 lists David Longstaff, gentleman, as one of Upton's residents.

The Journal provides little further information on the family other than to record that David Longstaff



*Longstaff grave at Upton.*

was 'an out and out Conservative' when it came to politics. On the face of it the Longstaff family were simply local yeomen, sufficiently genteel to become part of Anne's social circle.

Further research revealed a far more interesting story.

The *Stamford Mercury* of

21 September 1821 reported the marriage at Flintham of Mr Longstaff of Upton and Mrs Robinson. Flintham parish register recorded the marriage but added no more information other than to confirm Mrs Robinson's name was Ann.

Seven years later *The Nottingham Review* reported the marriage of Mary, the only daughter of Mr Longstaff of Upton, to George Marshall. The marriage allegation, (Nottinghamshire Archives SC/8/5/2150), and corresponding entry in Upton parish register confirmed George Marshall was a solicitor from East Retford and the couple married on 1 May 1827. Clearly David Longstaff was a widower when he married Ann.

At this point I was put in contact with John Longstaff, a direct descendant of David Longstaff of Upton, who kindly shared his own research into his family history. The details are fascinating.

David Longstaff was baptised at Sherburn in Elmet, Yorkshire on 19 December 1773. His father was the licensed innkeeper of an alehouse at neighbouring Mickleford. David married Sarah House on 18 February 1802 at York, by which time, now aged 29, he was living at Howsham Yorkshire. John Longstaff believes he may have been employed as butler at Howsham Hall, although this remains unconfirmed.

It is certain, however, that by 1804 David was employed as butler to Sir Robert D'Arcy Hildyard, of Sedbury Hall, Gilling, Yorkshire, as his occupation is given on the baptismal records of his children.

Tragedy struck the family in 1814. David's eldest child, Ann, had died

in 1810 when only 7 years old. Four years later, his mother, Mary, died in February 1814, his wife Sarah died in the July, followed two months later by his young son Thomas. John Longstaff informs me cholera was prevalent in that year. In addition, David's employer, Sir Robert D'Arcy Hildyard, died on 6 November, leaving no children, and his estates passed to his niece, Anne Catherine Whyte. The year 1814 left David bereaved with no employment and two young children, Mary and John, to bring up on his own.

Fortunately, David Longstaff did not have financial difficulties to add to his troubles. Sir Hildyard left him a legacy of £50 a year in his will and it seems probable he had savings and possibly another source of income from an alehouse in Goodmangate in York. But what brought him to Upton?

David Longstaff appears on the Land Tax Assessment return for Upton in May 1820 where he was assessed for a house lately owned by Mr Weightman. A year later he married widow Ann Robinson of Flintham, who was 20 years his senior.

A search of the Flintham parish burial register produced the burial on 6 November 1810 of Francis Robinson; butler to T. Thoroton Esq. This would have been Colonel Thomas Thoroton of Flintham Hall. His son, Thomas Blackborne Thoroton married Anne Catherine Whyte, heiress of David Longstaff's employer, in 1815, taking the surname Hildyard to comply with Sir Robert D'Arcy Hildyard's will.

Flintham Hall is clearly the link between David Longstaff and Nottinghamshire, although we may never know the precise

details. Did he meet the Robinsons when the Thoroton family visited Sedbury Hall? Or was David taken into the employment of Anne Whyte when she inherited the estate? Did he form part of her household when she married and moved to Flintham Hall? Whatever the answer, it is interesting that, like Anne Cooke, David Longstaff migrated to Upton to become part of the growing, successful middle class whose financial security enabled them to purchase an influential role in local society.

There remained a final link in the chain between Anne Cooke and Ann Longstaff, which demonstrates the importance of the networks of family relationships during this period. Ann Longstaff was born Ann Hole of South Muskham and was closely related to Samuel Hole of Cauntton Manor, Anne Cooke's brother-in-law.

## Collingham

By contrast, the Collingham family had their roots in Nottinghamshire. They were butchers and small-scale farmers at Upton throughout the 18th century. Anne's acquaintance with the family began when they became her landlord; she rented one of their houses in Upton. Over the years, Anne formed a close friendship with their widowed matriarch, Mary Collingham and the surviving diaries show Mary to be one of Anne's most frequent visitors whilst she lived at Upton.

Mary was just a year older than Anne Cooke. She was born Mary Gill, the daughter of Upton farmer George Gill, in 1776; and married butcher William Collingham on 14 January 1799. The Collingham graves in Upton churchyard tell a sad story. They all stand side by side in a row and reveal that Mary





*The Collingham family graves.*

lost three sons in the space of three months in 1812 and another son in 1814.

Of the couple's eight children only their son, George, survived with his sisters Mary, Elizabeth and Ann. Mary's husband died in 1827 and, although George was 21 and of age, Mary appears to have been acting as head of the family. Her eldest daughter was married by this time to James Clarke of Park Leys, an extra parochial farm of 300 acres five miles outside of Newark. This must have seemed a good match, but the marriage did not last.

After Anne Cooke moved to Hawton she recorded a visit to Upton:

**15 May 1837:** *"Two clubs - Mr Cane preached. Walked to Upton, sat 2 hours with Mrs Kirk - Mrs & Miss Collingham gone to the house I lived in - Mrs Clarke and two youngest children to be with them, she is at last separated from her husband, he leads a shameful life - much tried."*

Six months later Anne visits again on **18 November 1837:** *"Called also on Mrs Clarke in her small dwelling of one room, two corners partitioned off for pantry*

*and wash place, and up to the elbows in potato parings &c. - a sad reverse for her - they have not as yet brought her nought of a husband to any settling of income."*

Some arrangement is eventually agreed for Mary Clarke as she is described as an Independent or Annuitant on the 1841 and 1851 Census returns.

Her sister Elizabeth is more fortunate in her choice of husband, marrying John Brown, alias Whitaker, in 1829. Her brother George also marries in 1836, at which point their Mother and sister Ann move from the family's home to the house previously rented by Anne Cooke.

The Collingham house can still be found in Upton today, sitting sideways on to the main road as it bends sharply leading towards



Newark. Many of the original features are retained including a row of butcher's hooks on the

wall. It was the family home for around 100 years, appearing on the Upton Enclosure Award Map and described in the Enclosure Award of 1795 as "an ancient homestead belonging to Robert Collingham". (Nottinghamshire Archives Ref EA/1/2, EA/1/4).

George Collingham's son and daughter, Robert and Mary Collingham, continued to occupy the house and manage the family business and properties after their father's death in 1843. George's third son, William, inherited equally under the terms of his father's will, but appears to have been the black sheep of the family. In 1864 he married his cousin, Fanny Whitaker, but 5 years later the family seem to have lost touch with him. In her will dated 1869, his sister Mary left her share of the family estate to her brother Robert subject to the following bequest: "On decease of my mother, I bequeath to my brother William Collingham, if then living, the legacy of £400 payable out of real estate within 12 months of my mother's death." (Nottinghamshire Archives Ref DDM/112/204).

William had emigrated to South Africa where he died in 1908, survived by his wife Fanny and four children. The Death Notice states that he was a fruit farmer in Sydenham Natal where he had lived for the past 44 years, indicating he must have moved there shortly after his marriage. I wonder if he ever received the legacy from his sister Mary?

Robert Collingham also married a cousin, Lois Whitaker, in 1866 but the couple had no children. When Robert died in 1882 the estate was finally sold and that branch of the Collingham family came to an end. A plan of their estate,

drawn in 1867 and used in the sale in 1882 shows the house still in Robert Collingham's possession. (Nottinghamshire Archives Ref UP/1/1)

In many ways this was an odd friendship for Anne Cooke whose family connections were of a higher social status. Anne herself held a more ambivalent position in society. She never married and, although financially independent to some extent, she relied heavily

on her closest male relations for both the administration and management of her finances and for her introduction to "society" itself.

Whilst she lived in Upton she socialised with the most important family in the village, Thomas Wright of Upton Hall, but this was not a close friendship and there is always a sense of condescension towards Anne from the Wright family. Her ties to the Hole family

ensured she had friendships with Samuel Hole's sisters, Jane and Catherine Hole of Muskham Woodhouse. But left to her own devices it is the butcher's widow, Mary Collingham, with whom Anne becomes intimate. It is an interesting example of the limitations placed on women's independence and freedom at this time and their reliance on male relatives for their social position.

**Karen Winyard**, FONA member

# Digging up holes and digging through documents

In 2017, the National Lottery Heritage Fund - or as it was then, the Heritage Lottery Fund - awarded Involve Heritage CIC a grant to research the village of Kelham, near Newark, up to the time of the Civil War and the building of the first Kelham Hall. The Project was named Kelham Revealed!

Led by Matt Beresford, and building on a pilot project he'd run in 2014-16, inevitably the attraction of many of the community volunteers was the opportunity to dig holes, hoping to find 'archaeological treasure' – Anglo-Saxon torques or previously unknown medieval buildings or more practically some pottery fragments or musket balls which give clues to dating.

As I live in Kelham, I quickly signed-up for the project. But, I DON'T dig holes! My interest was in digging through documents. And many other members of our volunteer group had similar interests.

We began by making a visit to Nottinghamshire Archives where Richard Berman gave an excellent introduction to the collections and a guided tour of the storage rooms, cold room (brrrrr!) and conservation. Everyone found the conservation work riveting - who knew you could wash old documents! Richard then introduced the group to some potential sources for our research project.

One set of documents proved to be a great starting

point for later work. In the mid-nineteenth century there was a dispute about who was responsible for repairing Kelham bridge. As part of the legal case Tallents Solicitors, on behalf of John Manners-Sutton, the then owner of Kelham Hall, reviewed all the available documentation about the bridge, transcribed the Latin and then provided English translations (DD/T/17/4). This immediately took the research back to 1344 when the Bishop of Lincoln was accused of not repairing the bridge. The Bishop was found not guilty on both charges, but no decision was made on who was responsible for the bridge. These 19th century documents turned what might otherwise have been a difficult and wide-ranging piece of research into something immediately and relatively easily accessible.

The same set of transcriptions and translations revealed that two years later, the men of Kelham (i.e. the villagers) were given the right to charge a toll for items crossing the river - the income to be used to 'mend and repair' the broken bridge. The grant includes a list of 35 items on which a toll could be charged. Other documents show that tolls were collected at Kelham from the early 1200s, mainly for the benefit of the bridge. In 1276, one Walter Touk, a local landowner, was accused of blackmailing strangers crossing the Trent at Kelham while in 1324, there was a King's Inquest into Agnes Sutton, known as the Lady of Averham, who was accused of charging **10**





*The bridge and list of tolls.*

people for crossing the bridge illegally. The outcome of the Inquiry isn't - unfortunately - recorded.

Another set of valuable resources were the published volumes of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Letters Patent, transcriptions of the Archdeacons Court 1566-1675 and other books on the reading room and library shelves including, of course, *Transactions of the Thoroton Society* and *Thoroton Record Series*. Original documents were not neglected however, as the Saville Family collection (DD/SR/102) and Cartulary of John Holles (DD/P/31/1), for example, provided evidence of land ownership from the mid-12th century onwards. This included a considerable area given to Rufford Abbey which, post-dissolution, came into the hands of the Saville family and was then sold to the Sutton family of Averham. These documents also showed how frequently land was transferred from owner-to-owner, with no one family dominating. This pattern of lots of landowners rather than one major 'lord of the manor' was also seen in the tax records from 1327-1600 which we looked at in the National Archives. Tax records also highlight the 'commercial' potential of the village; the 1327 tax list records a carter and a baker while later records show several men and women taxed on 'goods' rather than land.

Of course, when you start looking at really old documents, you hit the problem of palaeography and currency and roman numerals and all those other complications. We tackled this by working as a group; helping each other out and practice! It was great fun

to work together in this way.



*Group working.*

So, what's all the digging around documents got to do with digging holes? Well, in parallel with the documentary research, those who were interested in holes in the ground carried out standing building surveys, geophysical surveys and dug test pits. And yes, they found musket balls and a flint arrowhead, but no golden torques. On the other hand, pits in the gardens of the oldest houses in the village were full of 13th -15th century pottery of fairly high status, which was not found anywhere else in Kelham, disproving that the local belief that the village moved at some stage. Documentary evidence indicated that Kelham bridge had moved several hundred yards along the river at some point. Archaeology revealed its original location and the line of the original road through the village, both of which were close to Kelham Church, cutting through what is now the grounds of Kelham Hall.



*Digging holes.*

Documentary research had shown that there was no Hall or Manor House in Kelham before the mid-seventeenth century, and a survey of the cellars of the current Hall revealed the seventeenth century foundations of the first building. It also identified some medieval foundations, possibly of a large farm house, though what's visible is not enough to draw any definitive conclusions except to say it was not a

large Hall. All this supplemented and confirmed the documentary work which had suggested that Kelham was inhabited by a number of reasonably wealthy landowners who probably farmed or leased their land for farming. They were gradually 'bought-out' by the Sutton family who, after the English Civil Wars, built their new, grand, house in Kelham. There are no pictures of this first Hall, but an inventory from 1723 shows that it was probably three storeys high with several 'parlours' and drawing rooms, about nine bed chambers for the family, one or more children's nurseries and extensive servants' quarters. There were also many outbuildings including a dairy, stable block, still house, laundry, brew house, kitchens, pantries and a 'House of Office' [toilet] in the garden. The road and bridge were probably moved when this Hall was built, or possibly when it was rebuilt in 1725-30; more work needed on this point!

Documentary research has also revealed much about Kelham church, including architectural drawings of the church before the Victorian restoration in 1873 (DD HF 17/1-32); a seventeenth century inventory of church goods and chattels and a terrier of the Rectory glebe land (PR 5694 and PR 5695) as well as the cost of building the Lexington Memorial in 1725.

So how do you publicise the results of all this digging holes and digging documents? Thanks to the support of Jonathan Pass, the owner of Kelham Hall, the project has been given exhibition space within the Hall. The final phase of the project was to develop exhibition materials and to write up a series of



*Setting up the exhibition.*

reports detailing the findings. Putting documentary research and archaeology together allowed the project group to produce a timeline of the village from pre-history to the mid-seventeenth century; build a model of the earlier medieval village and give a more complete picture of the development of this village. The exhibition was officially opened by Cllr Sue



*The timeline.*



*Village model project.*



*Project description.*

Saddington and the official launch attracted about 50 people - enough to crowd the available space.

The project group has also written a set of reports of its work, again as a collaborative project, and they are available online at <https://kelhamrevealed.wordpress.com/project-legacy/>

Travellers on the A617 probably pass through Kelham without a second thought beyond the congestion on the bridge. Next time you're passing through, why not stop and have a look?



# ArchivesFest

At 10:30am on the morning of Saturday 28th September the team at Nottinghamshire Archives and a great group of volunteers were ready and waiting to celebrate 70 years as the county's record office. The doors opened and we welcomed over 30 guests to listen to a great day of talks, watch demonstrations, and eat a rather large amount of biscuits.

Many thanks to everyone who came along to help, the staff (who would like to not move anymore tables for a few months) and our excellent volunteers on the day: Pauline Chettle, June Cobley, Mo Cooper, Cherry Knight and Karen Winyard.

Our speakers were Ian Morgan who talked about adventures on the Great North Road while archaeologist James Wright mused upon strange encounters in historic buildings and I told tales of uncanny archives such as the werewolf of Rolleston and the poltergeist of Ghost House Lane. The Women's History Group spoke about the struggle for suffrage in Nottinghamshire and the audience was treated to a live demonstration by Senior Conservator David Ackrel on how to bind a Victorian book in leather. The leader of Nottinghamshire County Council has commissioned a film to showcase David's skills!

The day was rounded off by the ever-interesting Dr Richard Gaunt of the University of Nottingham (and FONA's first and founding Chair). He explained how archives, and one archive in particular, have been central to his work as a professional historian.



*Ruth Imeson and Richard Gaunt.*

Thanks again to everyone involved – the speakers, the volunteers and the audience – who all contributed to the success of the day.

**Ruth Imeson**, Heritage Services Manager

.....  
**Two FONA Volunteers have sent in their impressions of the day.**

## ArchivesFest - in celebration of 70 years of Nottinghamshire Archives

What a great day we had at ArchivesFest - a jam-packed event with talks and demonstrations. After the shock of being allowed to drink in the search room (taken over and reconfigured for the talks) it developed into a relaxing day, with lots of tea and cakes!



Ian Morgan set us off with a humorous wander through 'Footpads, kings and highway men', taking us along the villages of the Great North Road with tales of bad men, moving roads and local characters. Then champion conservationist, David Ackrel, demonstrated binding a 19th century book. With the help of a camera and screen we all had a good view of the process. We saw a lot more detail than you would see on the regular archive tours; great seeing such old traditions alive and well in Nottingham.

After lunch Ruth Imeson told us about some of the weird and wonderful archives, including hangings, exorcists, ghosts, and burial registers. Disturbing and hilarious in equal measure! There followed James Wright, a local archaeologist, and author of *Castles of Nottinghamshire* who sketched his career via his various digs.

After another cup of tea (this is important) we had a three-handed presentation with the spotlight on

women's history. Sian Trafford and Miriam Jackson from Nottingham Women's History Group described their research on Nottinghamshire's women's suffrage through the lives of Nellie Dowson (suffragist) and Helen Watts (suffragette). Ruth finished this off with a presentation of women's suffrage records and



*James Wright (right) in conversation.*

The last speaker of the day was FONA's very own Dr Richard Gaunt with a presentation entitled 'The historian as archives detective'. He talked about a few of his research subjects, including Gladstone, as an influential politician and Emma Wilmott as a local middle-class woman. He discussed the journey of a researcher - from the first idea through to the frustrations, the connections, the conclusions and the unanswered questions.

This was the first time Nottinghamshire Archives has run an event in this format, it proved very popular, not least for the opportunity to meet other people who use the Archive over a cuppa. As a volunteer on the day I was impressed with the organisation and smooth running. Hopefully this will become a regular event on the archives calendar.

**Mo Cooper**, FONA member

## Happy 70th Birthday Notts Archives!

Saturday 28th September saw the first Archivesfest event, a day packed full of fascinating talks and demonstrations to celebrate 70 years of Nottinghamshire Archives. The speakers delved into material that took us on a grand tour of our County's history from Iron Age hill forts to modern day road networks in Retford and Tuxford. It was a tour de force of time travel.

We were treated to accounts of the weird and the wonderful including werewolves, poltergeists and exorcists - Nottinghamshire has had its fair share of them all. We discovered just how many castles were built in the County, most of which leave only surviving fragments unearthed by archaeologists like James Wright. We learnt a little more about Nottinghamshire's history from women's perspectives, from the diaries of Lucy Hutchinson, the paintings of Emma Wilmot and the lives of Nottinghamshire suffragettes and suffragists.

Every talk was both entertaining and interesting; but the highlight of the day was Head Conservator, David Ackrel's live demonstration of Victorian bookbinding techniques. Archivist Nick Clarke filmed the demonstration and the live feed was displayed on a raised screen so that everyone had a clear view as David talked us through the process. There is something very satisfying about watching a master craftsman at work and David held his audience spellbound as he worked on his book with tools and techniques that have not changed since the middle ages.



*David Ackrel.*





*David at work during his demonstration and the finished bound book.*

Archivesfest was far more than an indulgent look back over Nottinghamshire's past. It also provided a real insight into the work that is carried out by the staff to conserve, catalogue, understand, reference and present the wealth of material and information the Archives holds. Hopefully it dispelled forever the myth that the Archives is simply a glorified library.

There was also a glimpse of great things to come. Ruth Imeson shared with us some of the work Nottinghamshire Archives, as part of Inspire, is now doing to develop outreach activities. For the first time this year Nottinghamshire Archives has allowed



documents to go on show at Nottingham County Council, an initiative they hope to develop further.

The next 70 years promise to be both exciting and innovative.

**Karen Winyard** FONA member

## Archives Events

**Friday 29th November 2:30pm : Nuns, Nurses and Notables of Nottingham with FONA member Mo Cooper**

**£5 per ticket**

Based on Mo Cooper's popular walks, this talk focuses on the Ropewalk area of Nottingham and considers the development of nursing and hospital services, Catholicism in the city and some of the local notable women. Mo is a Community Historian and a founder member of Nottingham Women's History Group (and a FONA member).

**Five free tickets available for FONA members.**

Please remember to bring your FONA card with you to gain entry to the event. Book your tickets via <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/nuns-nurses-and-notables-of-nottingham-tickets-75862652235> or phone the Archives on 0115 9581634 or ask at reception.

**Friday 6th December, 2:30pm: Home cooked Heritage with James Wright**

James Wright will use medieval house accounts to show what grew on the estates and how retinues of people could be fed, describing kitchens at sites including Tattershall Castle, Rufford and Doddington Hall. How did the food get from kitchen to dining hall, and was it stone cold?

Home Cooked Heritage is supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund. This talk is free to all, so please pass the information along to your friends. Book your tickets via <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/home-cooked-heritage-talk-at-nottinghamshire-archives-tickets-53437453863> or phone the Archives on 0115 9581634 or ask at reception.

# Reminder

In a month or so, our Treasurer and Membership Secretary, David Anderson, will be writing to you about your subscription for 2020. At the AGM in March it was agreed that these won't increase for 2020, so please pay promptly.

# Deadline

The deadline for the next edition of the FONA Newsletter is 1 February 2020.

Everyone is welcome to contribute - articles, suggestions, letters, jokes (archive-related of course) - are all considered.

Please send these to the newsletter editor [secretary@fona.org.uk](mailto:secretary@fona.org.uk) or you can put your contribution in an envelope addressed to me and hand it in at the Reception desk in Nottinghamshire Archives.

Judith Mills