

In this issue

Book Launch

FONA ventures into publishing.

page 1

Great Nottinghamshire History Fair

This annual event goes digital for 2021.

page 2

FONA events for 2021

Two events for May and July and plans for a third later in the year.

pages 2 - 3

FONA makes waves!

News of our initial 6-part podcast.

page 3

FONABytes

Ten short videos on our own YouTube channel.

page 4

Chris Weir on Zoom

Karen Winyard reviews his look at Curious Nottingham.

page 5

FONA's AGM results

page 6

Archives re-opened

page 6

Book Launch

Lockdown 2020: the first 100 Days



This beautifully illustrated book is a compilation of extracts from 13 diaries written during the first lockdown. Arranged in themes, it covers a whole range of new experiences, from what is the best way to shop to the emotional shock of not being able to see or touch loved ones. It also covers subjects such as the environment, local and national heroes and supporting the NHS.

Some of the diarists have contributed to a short video about the book which will be available on the Great Nottinghamshire History Fair website between 1-31 May.

<https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/heritage/great-nottinghamshire-history-fair-2021/>

Details of how to obtain a copy of the book are also in the video, or you can email me at chair@fona.org.uk. The book costs £4.50 plus P&P and has been produced with support from Nottinghamshire Local History Association and Cllr Sue Saddington, Nottinghamshire County Council.

Judith Mills

Chair and Newsletter Editor

NEWS UPDATE
Two FONA events planned for May and July
see pages 2 - 3 for full details

Great Nottinghamshire History Fair

This Fair - as many of you will know - is normally held on the first Sunday in May. Last year it had to be cancelled. This year it has gone digital with all the participants submitting videos presentations about their organisations or areas of interest.

This includes FONA. In addition to the BOOK LAUNCH video (see page 1) there is a short (10 minute) video about what we have done, what we're doing now and some idea of what we hope to do in the future.

For more information about the History Fair go to <https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/heritage/great-nottinghamshire-history-fair-2021/>.

FONA events for 2021

There are two events planned for May and July 2021 with a third in the planning stage - see below for details.

Information about events for later in the year will be published when we are more certain about what we can, and cannot, do.

11am, 22 May 2021 - a Talk over Zoom
In Their Own Words
by Karen Winyard



A look at harnessing the power of storytelling to bring history to life, using contemporary accounts to 'voice' the past; and some of the pitfalls of turning fact into fiction.

Please email me at chair@fona.org.uk for a link to this talk.

(You may also be interested to read what Karen has to say about FONA's plans for 'podcasts' on p.3).

17 July 2021
A Day Out in Norwell - a FONA visit

Courtesy of Prof Michael and Mrs E Jones, and Norwell Parish Heritage Group. This will be a visit for Members and Guests Only, and it is important to book your place.

The Heritage Group has, over the last few years, researched and published trail leaflets, booklets and a CD about the history of this small, pretty and historic village. Lying about 6 miles from Newark on Trent, it is mentioned in the Domesday Book when it had a church, a priest and a watermill.

The plans for the day are:

10.30 - 11am Meet in St Laurence Church for coffee/tea (subject to restrictions permitting)

and chance to see an exhibition of items on Norwell history, especially resources used for the nine booklets the group has produced. Prof. Jones will also give a short introduction to the sources and how they have been used.

12.30 lunch Bring your own picnic lunch, which can be taken al fresco or in church if wet.

1.30 Walk through Norwell (distance - about 3/4 of a mile) from the Church to Pub passing the most interesting buildings (mill, schools, farm houses, redeveloped farmyards, pinfold, early timber-frame buildings etc.), emphasising archival material used.

This walk takes up to two hours and potentially finishes with visit to Palishall prebendal manor house (external certainly, internal possibly depending on circumstances/ numbers etc).

3.30 OPTIONAL visit to Norwell Nurseries for tea/coffee and cake (at your own cost) and a look around this nursery which specialises in rare and unusual

plants. Set in inspirational gardens, the Nursery is worth a visit in itself. If you would like to stay for tea, please tick the box on the booking form.

For more information about the Nursery, see the website: <https://www.norwellnurseries.co.uk/>

Parking options are to park near the pub and walk to the church (so you are near your car on the return journey) or park near the church and walk back from the pub at the end of the visit.

For more information about the village and the Heritage Group please go to <http://norwell-online.org.uk/norwell-organisations/heritage-group>

[org.uk/norwell-organisations/heritage-group](http://norwell-online.org.uk/norwell-organisations/heritage-group)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART IN THIS VISIT PLEASE COMPLETE THE BOOKING FORM ACCOMPANYING THIS NEWSLETTER, AND RETURN IT TO ME NO LATER THAN 7 JULY 2021.

THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR THIS VISIT BUT I AM SURE THE HERITAGE GROUP WOULD BE VERY WILLING TO SELL YOU COPIES OF THEIR BOOKLETS AND A COLLECTION WILL BE MADE AS A DONATION TO BE SHARED BETWEEN CHURCH AND HERITAGE GROUP, AS A TOKEN OF THANKS.

(I SUGGEST A MINIMUM OF £3 PER HEAD).

We are also considering a similar visit to George Martyn's Barn at Keyworth for late summer/early autumn, but this is dependent on numbers. Please indicate on the form if you would be interested in taking part in this visit as well.

Information about George Martyn's Barn will be available on the Great Nottinghamshire History Fair website during May.

FONA's making waves!

A new and exciting opportunity for all FONA members

As some degree of caution and restraint could be with us for a long time (even with all restrictions lifted) FONA is now preparing to take to the airwaves with a podcast.

'A pod what?', some of you may be asking. A podcast is an audio programme, similar to broadcasts on the radio, and can take a variety of forms ranging from chat shows and discussions to documentaries and dramas.

FONA's first series will take the form of a radio play and is already in production.

Inspired by the Nottingham Green Spaces project and associated community play by Andy Barrett (details available on <http://www.ng-spaces.org.uk>), we will be telling the story of the city's parks and promenades in 6 episodes, using contemporary voices. The final episode will look at the importance of green spaces during lockdown and the initiative to rewind Nottingham, particularly in the Broadmarsh area, so it will have direct relevance to today.

It's a unique opportunity to learn more about Nottingham's history and the people who lived and worked in the town. We're using contemporary sources such as diaries, newspaper reports and Council documents as far as possible to bring the people and their times vividly to life; and to tell their story as authentically and accurately as possible. If you want to know more about this process, tune in to our Zoom meeting in May, In Their Own Words (see page 2).

This is an exciting new venture for FONA and one which brings a spotlight to bear on some of the diverse and fascinating collections held at Nottinghamshire Archives.

With 6 episodes to fill, we're always in need of volunteers to voice a character. If you would like to take part, please do get in touch with Karen Winyard at karen.winyard@fona.org.uk. It's great fun and, as it's an audio piece, you don't have to learn your lines!

Karen Winyard

FONABytes

There are now TEN FONAByte videos available on our YouTube Channel the most recent being

- A History of St Ann's Allotments by Mo Cooper
- The Secret Life of Cuckney Mill by Chris Weir

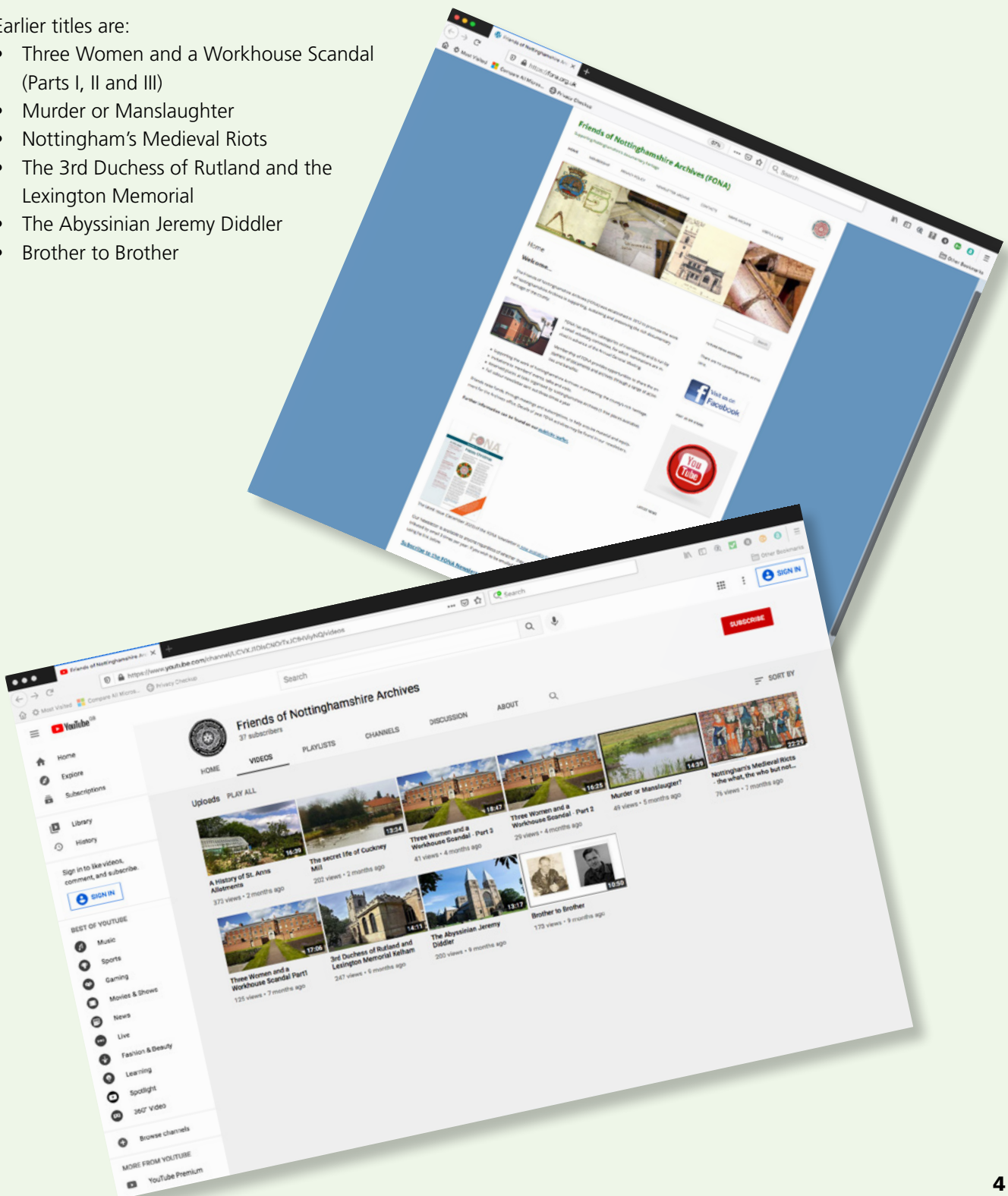
And there are more in the pipeline

Earlier titles are:

- Three Women and a Workhouse Scandal (Parts I, II and III)
- Murder or Manslaughter
- Nottingham's Medieval Riots
- The 3rd Duchess of Rutland and the Lexington Memorial
- The Abyssinian Jeremy Diddler
- Brother to Brother

The easiest way to find our Channel is to go to the FONA website and click on the big red YouTube button <https://fona.org.uk/>

Or subscribe to our site and you'll always find us on your list.



Chris Weir's *Curious Nottinghamshire*



Locked down at home, with patches of snow still on the ground, it was lovely to join FONA's first talk of 2021 by Zoom. Heritage Consultant extraordinaire, Chris Weir, took us on a "light hearted romp" through the more offbeat and mysterious aspects of Nottinghamshire's history. From the Mince Pie Murder of 1857, through skeleton hoards, mesmerists and ducks; it became curiouser and curiouser.

Chris is well known to many of us, having been the principal archivist at Nottinghamshire Archives before his retirement. His popularity was evident in the excellent turnout, there were 68 joining the meeting, and Chris did not disappoint us.

His talk demonstrated the richness and diversity of Nottinghamshire's history. It introduced me to so many historical curiosities and quirks I'd not come across before, and like all of the best talks, left me wanting to delve straight back into the archives to find out more. There's plenty of scope to do just that, as not even Chris has all the answers.

Do you know what happened to the statue of Jonas Hanway, the first male Londoner to use an umbrella, that stood above a shop in Pelham Street? Or what happened to the skeletons discovered beneath the floor of Cuckney church, that might have died in the 7th century Battle of Heathfield? If you do, both Chris and FONA would love to hear from you.

I especially enjoyed hearing about the collection of diaries held at Nottinghamshire Archives and those

of Billy Richards in particular.

They were discovered by accident in a roof space in a house in Sherwood, propping up some plumbing work. Happily for us they were donated to the Archives and are now a permanent record of Billy's life over the years 1909 -1911. His love of football and cricket; his enjoyment of a good night out at the weekend; and his courtship of a lady called Doris, whom, sadly, appears not to have returned his interest. The publicity surrounding the donation of the diaries to the archives was seen by a relative of the family in New Zealand and led to the donation of a digital copy of another of Billy's diaries, a more sombre one detailing his experiences during the First World War.

A timely reminder of the importance of these everyday records of ordinary people's lives, be they photographs, letters, diaries or digital document equivalents. They provide the other side of the coin to the records provided in the national reports in newspapers and the media. They allow us to connect with the peoples of our past in a direct and intimately human way. The work of Nottinghamshire Archives in preserving such records is so important and one of the reasons why FONA is proud to support them. Thank you, Chris, for providing us with such an enjoyable start to 2021 and reminding us of the wealth of interesting documents our Archives has to offer.

Karen Winyard

FONA AGM

and confirmation of votes

Thank you to everyone who participated in the On-Line voting for this year's AGM. There was a 50% response which is a great 'turn-out' in the circumstances.

The Voting was as follows:

Motion 1: Do you accept changes to the constitution proposed by the Chair?

Yes: 31 No: 1 Abstain: 1 Result: Motion carried

Motion 2: Do you accept the financial accounts proposed by the Treasurer?

Yes: 32 No: 0 Abstain: 1 Result: Motion carried

Motion 3: Do you agree that membership fees for 2022 shall remain unchanged?

Yes: 32 No: 0 Abstain: 1 Result: Motion carried

Motion 4: Do you accept the nominated Committee Members and Officers for election?

Yes: 31 No: 0 Abstain: 2 Result: Motion carried

Perhaps in 2022 we may be able to hold a 'live' event - which I'm looking forward to very much. I'm delighted to report that since the AGM, Emily Philips has been co-opted onto the Committee and is looking after our Publicity needs. You'll be able to find out more about Emily in the next Newsletter.

Nottinghamshire Archives now open

Nottinghamshire Archives re-opened on 13 April for pre-booked appointments only. The opening hours are

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	10am - 12.30pm and 1.30 - 4pm
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	10am - 12.30pm and 1.30 - 4pm
Friday	Closed
Saturday	10am - 12.30pm
Sunday	Closed

For details of how to book your slot and pre-order your documents, please go to the website <https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/heritage/archives/> and click on the box labelled 'Visiting Nottinghamshire Archives'.

You can also find out more about INSPIRE events by clicking on the 'What's On' tab.



In Memory

Jenny Sissons (Page) 1946 -2021

Many FONA members will remember Jenny who sadly passed away on 8th March 2021. She was one of the founding members of FONA and served on the original Committee. She was also a long-standing member, active supporter and trustee of Nottinghamshire Local History Association [NLHA].

Jenny was very active in her local community. As Chair of Brinsley village action group and a parish councillor for Brinsley. In later years as a member of a writing

group she became a published author for her memoirs and poetry, and she was very active in the LGBT movement. As a former student of the University of Nottingham she gained a Masters degree in Local and Regional History and went on to teach family history to community groups and give local history talks. She was an expert on Grimsby fishermen and the village of Papplewick.

She will be greatly missed.

Wanted - Newsletter Editor

The FONA Newsletter is published 3 times a year. It comprises updates on FONA activities, news from Nottinghamshire Archives, and articles of interest by members and others.

Currently the Newsletter is edited by Judith Mills, who's also Chairwoman and would dearly love to have someone take over this important area of FONA's work. Being Newsletter Editor is a great way of keeping up to date with all FONA activities.

The work involves:

- Collecting information, articles and photographs submitted by members.
- Commissioning contributions (and sometimes nagging contributors).
- Writing the occasional piece of Editorial, as necessary.

- Liaising with Bob Stoakes about the layout of the Newsletter.
- Proof reading.
- Liaising with the Chairwoman or Secretary about distribution of the Newsletter.

Because we have a volunteer graphic artist (Bob Stoakes) there is no graphics or layout work involved.

Ideally, the Newsletter editor is a member of the FONA Committee, but this is not essential (though probably helpful). The Committee meets 4 times a year (plus AGM) usually by ZOOM and keeps in touch, as necessary, by email.

If you'd like to know more, please contact chair@fona.org.uk.



All rights reserved, 2021

If you would like to contribute articles to the FONA Newsletter please contact Judith Mills, Chair.

chair@fona.org.uk