

North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society

NEDIAS Newsletter No. 16 – November 2004
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Chairman's Comments:

Blank paper syndrome is but a fleeting moment when sitting down to write these notes, or the 'Chairman's Chat' as our worthy editor prefers to call it. A lot has happened around the NEDIAS sphere since the August Newsletter and there is plenty more in the offing. Three very well attended lectures have taken place, starting with Trevor Lodge on the industry built up around coal by-products – leaving me with a rueful memory of the pitfalls of mentioning a certain Izal product in the introduction! October was one for the rail buffs, with Nigel Carabine showing us Peak Rail's achievements, hopes and aspirations, followed in November by the duo from the Bugsworth Basin restoration project, Martin Whalley and Ian Edgar. Martin and Ian ably demonstrated that a sense of humour is an essential tool when faced with the problems and pitfalls of a trunk road scheme next to the site and canal water with a distinct tendency to seek out escape routes, on a project of more than thirty years duration. A visit to Bugsworth by NEDIAS is a must for next summer, along with 'visit part two' of the other long-term restoration project the Arkwright Society's Cromford Mill.

November also saw NEDIAS taking part in the third annual VCH Scarsdale History Fair at Arkwright Town. We had an upstairs room which was not ideal but we did have plenty of visitors. As mentioned elsewhere in this Newsletter, growth in attendance at NEDIAS lecture meetings is prompting us to look around for an alternative meeting place and the success of the VCH local history fairs appears to given them the same problem. It is a good position to be in but change always needs careful management if we are to suit the interests of the majority of our members and visitors.

With the last two lectures having shown so much of other societies' work outdoors, and bearing in mind the need to present a fresh and attractive display at VCH's Scarsdale 2005, does beg the question of more participation in site surveying, and perhaps even conservation, by NEDIAS members. So, anyone knowing of a former industrial site upon which a study or survey would be of interest to our society, please get in touch.

Speaking of which, by the time this Newsletter is published we will have had a meeting to explore local interest in work to conserve and redevelop Cannon Mill. We have long been aware of this small survivor from the large iron-making and engineering industry in Brampton carried out by the Smiths around the turn of the 19th century but

enough inspiration and motivation have not yet emerged. It is to be hoped the meeting on 22nd November will see a change in that situation.

So that is it! Now the end of yet another year approaches, preceded by Christmas. Whatever may be your mode of celebration, I hope you will enjoy it, along with many more to come.

David Wilmot

Ed: Our congratulations to David – see page 7.

WHAT'S ON?

STOP PRESS: A VISION FOR CANNON MILL!

On 23 November, Richard Robinson outlined a vision and future for the historic Cannon Mill on Goyt Side and entailing possible conservation with assistance and funding from a number of sources.

Two important dates are proposed and interested NEDIAS members are invited to attend both:

Saturday 11 December 2004 at 11am: Short presentation and tour by Richard Robinson **inside the Cannon Mill itself.** (Parking is available adjacent to Cannon Mill on Goyt Side Road/ Dock Walk)

Monday 17 January 2005 at 7.30 at Friends Meeting House: Richard will outline a **VISION FOR THE FUTURE** for discussion, which may entail establishment of "Friends of Cannon Mill", reviewing possible conservation, restoration, funding and eventual uses.

DON'T MISS THESE DATES

NEDIAS Lecture Programme, 2004/2005

When: Meetings are usually held the second Monday of each month, starting at 7.30 pm.

Where: The Friends Meeting House, Ashgate Road, Chesterfield (junction of Brockwell Lane).

13 December 2004	Cliff Williams: <i>Clay Cross Works Paternalism</i>
10 January 2005	Peter Machen: <i>The Sheffield Flood</i>
14 February 2005	Catherine Wilson: <i>Lincolnshire Windmills – their history & development</i>
14 March 2005	AGM & Members' Evening
11 April 2005	Martin Sanderson: <i>A History of the Bryan Donkin Group</i>
9 May 2005	Ann Hodson: <i>The Derwent Dams & Birchinlee Village</i>

What else is on?

Monday 6 December 2004: Christmas Event – Our annual get together at the **Civil Service Club, Calow**, starting 7.30. Buffet refreshments and entrance at no charge! A snip! Have you already put your name on the sheet? If not and you're coming, please advise David Wilmot **as soon as possible**, so that we can ensure correct numbers for the buffet.



Tuesday 14 December 2004: Abbeyle I and Abbeyle II, a presentation by **Professor Francis Evans**, a Hunter Archaeology Society Meeting, held at 7.30 in Lecture Room 9, Arts Tower, University of Sheffield

Friday 7 January 2005: "Swedish Iron of Sheffield Steel: Why Pay More?" Presentation by **Rod Mackenzie**, a Hunter Arch Society Field Research Section Meeting, 7.30 at the Traditional Heritage Museum, Eccleshall Road, Sheffield.

Saturday 15 January 2005: Derbyshire Archaeology Day. 9.30 – 17.15 at the Pomegranate Theatre, Chesterfield. Includes presentations on field surveys at Unstone, which must be unearthing a wealth of finds.

Wednesday 23 February 2005, “350 Years of Robinson’s Business in Chesterfield (From Pots to Plasters)”, by **John Robinson** 7.30pm at the Winding Wheel, Chesterfield, tickets £3.40 (Concs. £2.70) available from the Winding Wheel or Chesterfield TIC.

NEDIAS Membership Renewal due 1 January 2005

It’s that time of the year! Enclosed with this Newsletter is notice for renewal of your subscription. (Please ignore if as a new recruit, your membership commenced from September this year)

Industrial Activity at the Staveley Works Site

by Ronald V. Presswood

As shown in the ‘CHRONOLOGY’ of notable events (see below) there has been some form of manufacturing activity at the Staveley Works site, before the English Civil War, and although the precise origins of the Staveley Forge are unknown it was certainly in existence by 1639 when the Freschevilles had already established an iron making activity there.

Various Lessees of the Staveley Forge followed but in 1832 George Hodgkinson Barrow become the sole proprietor of the works and significantly developed the activities there. Sometime afterwards he chose his younger brother, Richard Barrow to continue these developments and during the 1840s he cleared out the outdated forge and iron works, built two new Blast Furnaces and sank a sequence of new coal pits nearby.

The Midland Railway became his major customer for Top Hard Coal and between 1847-55 took delivery of some 80,000 tons and he later entered into an agreement with them to provide locomotives for use at the Staveley site. Around this time he also forged commercial links with France and Russia by exporting locomotive coal to there.

By the 1860s Richard Barrow had exploited some 6,000 acres locally, which yielded some 340,000 tons of coal. This was transported locally by Rail and Canal to various parts of the Country. Iron castings were running at the 20,000 tons level and in 1862 he had supplied 4,000 tons for the Great Exhibition.

In the following year he converted his family’s considerable investment of over £500,000 into a limited liability company and so the Staveley Coal and Iron Co. Ltd. was born. This proved to be a wise decision since he died, a bachelor two years later, with no immediate heirs but incorporation had ensured continuity for the business.

Prior to the nationalisation of the Coal Industry in 1946, at what was undoubtedly the height of its prowess, this organisation had become the largest employer in the district. It had some 15,000 workers and a large number of these were living in the model communities that had been erected at Barrow Hill, Hollingwood and Arkwright. Then the organisation had a totally integrated industrial activity based primarily on three indigenous minerals namely coal, iron ore and limestone. Some of the 2.5 million tons per annum of coal produced locally by their five collieries was carbonised to coke, which together with the other two minerals was used in the then four blast furnaces for making 200,000 tons per annum of pig iron.

By-products from the coal carbonisation process gave rise to the adjunct tar & chemicals production and the massive quantities of ‘waste’ blast furnace and coke oven gases were used to produce 30 cycles electricity in three giant gas turbines named, Edna, Enid and Joan. Besides being used internally to electrolyse salt to produce chlorine, caustic soda and sodium chlorate large quantities were supplied to the immediate local area as far away as Clowne.

The site covered some 640 acres and stretched from near the old tramway, which linked the Whittington Glass Works with the Chesterfield Canal close to Dixon’s Lock at New Brimington, to Hall Lane at Staveley. The Rother effectively divides the Staveley complex, on the west of Works Road there remains a remnant of the former iron utilisation activity i.e. The Foundries. The Spun Plants, which made iron pipes, were situated to the east between the road and the River Rother but have completely disappeared. On the far side of The Rother, referred to as The Devonshire Works, were the iron, tar and chemicals production. However, on the formation of Staveley Chemicals Limited in 1966 the two ‘halves’ of the site split ownership and the furnaces were finally blown out on 4 May 1966 bringing iron making to an end after some 330 years.

Staveley Works undoubtedly made a significant contribution throughout WWII, supplying among other things, chemicals for explosives, and a smoke screen gas (Chlorosulphonic Acid - CSA) and artillery gun barrels. Interestingly, in spite of Germany having accurate detailed plans of the Works and its various activities, although it

tried it was unable to carry out a successful air raid mainly due to the ‘smog’, which due to inversion covered this part of the Rother Valley.

Today overall site activity is just a very pale shadow of its former heyday. Both parts are wholly owned French subsidiaries. Pont de Mousson own Stanton plc and Rhone-Poulenc own Staveley Chemicals. In 1998 the remaining Chlor-alkali & Sulphuric Acid Plants became Rhodia Eco Services Ltd. Sadly employees at both sites are around 150, just one percent of the original manpower strength of the once mighty Staveley Coal & Iron Co. with its associated companies.

A Chronology from Staveley Forge to the Present Day:

- 1639 The Freschevilles had already established an ironworks at Staveley Works by this date.
- 1650s George Sitwell (1601-67) of Renishaw leases the Staveley furnace and forge from Lord Frescheville.
- 1693 John Jennings of Warwickshire – Lessee Staveley Forge.
- 1700 Denis Hayford, leaseholder of Staveley Hall – manages Staveley Forge.
- 1770 John Fell – Lessee Staveley Forge.
- 1779 Chesterfield Navigation opened and George Hodgkinson Barrow born.
- 1783 Walter Mather of Kirby-in-Ashfield leases Staveley Forge from Duke of Devonshire.
- 1787 Richard Barrow, brother of G H Barrow born.
- 1796 William Ward and Edward Richard Lowe, sons-in-law of Walter Mather, inherit lease following his death.
- 1805 G H Barrow, husband of E R Lowe’s widow Eliza and William Ward jointly control Staveley Works.
- 1832 G H Barrow becomes the sole proprietor of Staveley Works.
- 1836 Midland Railway - Act passed.
- 1840 G H Barrow acquires a new lease of the coal and ironstone over the manor of Staveley from Duke of Devonshire.
- 1852 Richard Barrow starts to build a Model Community named Barrow Hill, which was completed 1856.
- 1864 Staveley Coal & Iron Co.Ltd. formed.
- 1865 Richard Barrow died.
- 1866 Midland Railway and Staveley conclude 100-year agreement for the supply of locomotives for use of Ironworks.
- 1868 Charles Paxton Markham born.
- 1888 C P Markham joins the board of directors and personally purchases Broad Oaks Ironworks, Chesterfield.
- 1889 C P Markham converts Broad Oaks Ironworks into an engineering factory trading as Markham & Co.
- 1895 C P Markham is elected to Chesterfield Borough Council.
- 1903 C P Markham is elected Chairman of Staveley Iron & Chemical Co.
- 1911 C P Markham is made Freeman of the Chesterfield Borough.
- 1914 C P Markham becomes Deputy Lieutenant of the County.
- 1920 Hollingwood state-of -the art housing estate commenced.
- 1924 Markham & Co. becomes a subsidiary of Staveley Coal & Iron Co. Ltd.
- 1925 C P Markham donates Tapton Park to Borough Council.
- 1926 C P Markham died.
- 1939 Stanton Ironworks Co. acquired by Stewarts and Lloyds.
- 1946 Coal Industry is nationalised and the Company loses five collieries, which represent a large part of its business.
- 1948 Samuel W Martin elected Chairman and Managing Director of Staveley Coal & Iron Co. Ltd.
- 1948 Staveley Iron & Chemical Co. formed as a subsidiary of Staveley Industries Ltd.
- 1951 Denationalisation of Iron & Steel Industry – Staveley Industries Ltd., decline to buy back company.
- 1960 Staveley Iron & Chemical Co. Ltd acquired by Stewarts and Lloyds.
- 1966 Staveley blast furnaces finally blown out, concluding at least 327 years of iron making at Devonshire Works.
- 1966 Staveley Chemicals Limited formed.
- 1988 Staveley Chemicals Limited acquired by RTZ.
- 1989 Staveley Chemicals Limited acquired by Rhone-Poulenc.
- 1998 Staveley Chemicals Limited becomes Rhodia Eco Services Ltd.
- 2004 The 140th Anniversary of Staveley Coal & Iron Company’s formation.

Ronald V. Presswood

Joseph Clayton & Sons., Tanners & Curriers.

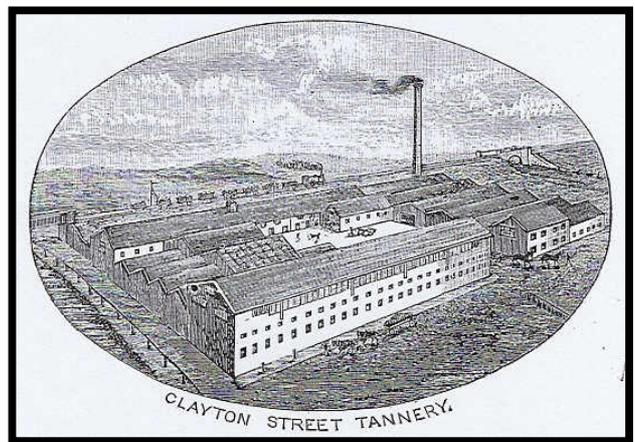
from Douglas Spencer

Ed: Douglas has managed to unearth a fascinating, flowery and glowing account of Clayton’s in “Chesterfield Illustrated, its History, Trade and Commerce” published ca 1892 by Robinson, Son & Pike, Brighton. The following is extracted from the article. It is interesting to note the total number of tan pits, I think 770, and those who have been to Clayton Street will know what I mean!

“The great increase in our national resources has enormously developed the leather trades, and created a vast demand for leathers of all descriptions. Not only the boot and shoe manufacturer but also the saddler, portmanteau manufacturer, book-binder, upholsterer, and many other classes of manufacturers now demand immense quantities of leathers in a surprising variety of classes and qualities. One of the foremost and most successful firms in the production of goods of this kind is that of Messrs. Joseph Clayton and Sons, of Chesterfield, whose leathers have a well-known reputation throughout the country for soundness, durability, and high finish. This firm holds a unique position in the trade, and although their annual output is exceptionally great the character of the productions themselves is still more remarkable than the quantity turned out. Commercial and industrial competition in modern times, however, is not always conducive to the maintenance of a high standard of morality in trade. When the resources of science are available for the purpose reducing the cost of production and economizing time, labour, and expense the result is a clear benefit not only to the manufacturer himself, but also to the consumer and to the community at large, provided the quality of the manufactured article is not thereby deteriorated.

“The rapid demand for cheap goods in certain trades has caused the market to become flooded with leather, which, as an experienced buyer recently expressed it, was designed to “please the eye and pick the purse.”

“We have recently seen it stated in the press that in Paris the skins of the stray dogs that are captured about the city and destroyed by the authorities are purchased by speculators at a nominal cost, and after being treated “scientifically” with electricity, are placed on the market as a desirable material for ladies’ boots and shoes, the whole preparing process not lasting more than a few days. Those who are interested in tracing the origin of mysterious diseases might find scope for their research in productions of this class, but what we wish more particularly to refer to here, is the injurious effects such methods have on genuine trade. The unfair competition introduced in this way, affects the trade generally, and unfortunately, only a very few of our British tanners have had the moral courage to withstand the temptation to meet such competition with its own weapons. To this rule Messrs. Clayton and Sons are a conspicuous exception.



“It is a special feature of their extensive works at Clayton Street and Spa Lane that, while every possible improvement has been introduced in their arrangement and equipment, the tanning and preparing of the hides and skins are carried out in the most approved manner, and by methods which have stood the tests of long and well-tried experience. No acids or other deleterious agents are employed, and the most scrupulous supervision is exercised over the whole work to ensure the genuine character of every article turned out.

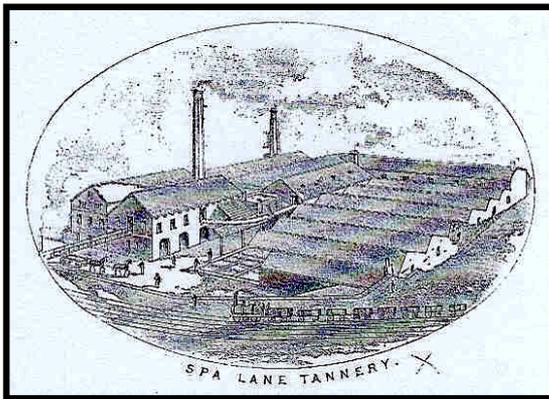
“The business is an old-established one, having been founded about 45 years ago by the late Mr. Joseph Clayton, who was universally esteemed for his enterprise, public spirit, and sterling integrity. He determined from the very first to maintain the best traditions of English trade, and to eschew all the “scientific” and other practices which were not compatible with genuine, straightforward dealing.

“The Clayton Street Works now cover an area of something like three acres including works, yards, stores, and outbuildings. The main building is an imposing edifice, with a frontage of about 500ft., and a depth from front to rear of 50ft. The whole front of this building is occupied by tan pits, and at the end of the range are more pits, extending at right angles towards the railway line. There are, in all, 420 pits on these premises, in which the hides are treated by the slow and careful processes which experience has shown to be the only efficient and reliable methods. The premises are entered by a spacious gateway, near which is fixed the large weighing machine.

“The offices are placed at the Chesterfield end of the frontage, and are well-appointed, commodious, and comfortable, and among the prominent outbuildings in the yards are spacious, well-constructed stables, stores, &c., the whole range of building on the right being occupied with the beam buildings and lime pits. The unhairing, liming, and tanning are done in a very careful manner, and the currying department occupies two floors along the whole front of the main building above the tan pits, the equipment being of the most complete character. About 50 experienced curriers are regularly employed here, and the scouring, splitting, and other processes are carried out in

a very efficient manner, with the most improved modern machinery. The whole place is fitted up with steam pipes throughout, and the spacious drying lofts and seasoning departments are models of judicious arrangement. The end of the range towards the railway, is occupied by stores for tanning material, of which a great reserve is kept, as well as by the striking and rolling shops, which are equipped with a costly plant and present a very busy spectacle. In the tanning material stores are situated the two powerful grinding mills, which are of a very improved type and capable of getting through an enormous amount of work.

“The whole of the machinery is driven by two fine horizontal engines of 100 combined horse power; English oak bark is used largely in their system of tanning, and a heavy stock is always on hand; the lighter leathers, such as those used by harness makers, etc., remain from six to nine months in the tan pits, while the heavier classes, such as sole leather, etc., require nine to twelve months to complete the tanning process, but, long and expensive as the process is, it is more than compensated for in the superior quality of the goods turned out.



“At Spa Lane the works are somewhat similar, there being about 350 pits, and all the latest improvements in machinery and appliances being in use; a whole range of buildings in Spa Lane are packed from top to bottom with the best English bark, and the output of finished goods is very large. The Clayton Street and Spa Lane works both lie close to the Midland Railway, only a distance of about 250 yards separating the two sets of premises.

“There is an abundant water supply, and cleanliness is one of the features that particularly characterise the works. There are about 100 experienced hands employed, and every provision is made for their health and comfort; the very best relations subsist between employers and employed, and the

members of the firm are looked up to, not only with respect, but with personal affection, by the workmen.

“The partners, indeed, are universally esteemed in commercial and social circles, and among the general body of the people in and around Chesterfield; they are not only the representatives of an old and highly-respected family, but have themselves personally for many years taken an active and a leading part in every movement that tended to the advancement of the general interests of the district or the prosperity of the citizens, while their enterprise and integrity in business affairs have sustained the reputation of the town, and upheld the best traditions of British mercantile honour. Mr Morton Clayton, the senior partner, is a Justice of the Peace; and is also Mayor of Chesterfield for the second year in succession; he has been a prominent member of the Council for the past six years, and is also a member of the County Council; Mr J. E. Clayton is also a member of the Town Council, and holds a seat on the School Board.”

Letters

Ed: Following NEDIAS publication of the report by Paul Smith of the survey at Damstead Works, copies have been lodged with both Dronfield and Chesterfield Libraries, the county archaeologist, as well as with the Old Dronfield Society. The following letter of appreciation was received by Paul from the ODS.

Dear Paul,

I am writing on behalf of the Old Dronfield Society to thank you and other members of NEDIAS who have worked so hard at the Damstead site and produced such an excellent report.

We are delighted to have received a copy of your report and it will be placed in our archives at the Peel Centre in Dronfield for both members and the public to access for information purposes.

Again – sincere thanks

Barbara Smith for Old Dronfield Society

IA News and Notes

New Publication – “Pleasley Pit and Its Steam Winding Engines”

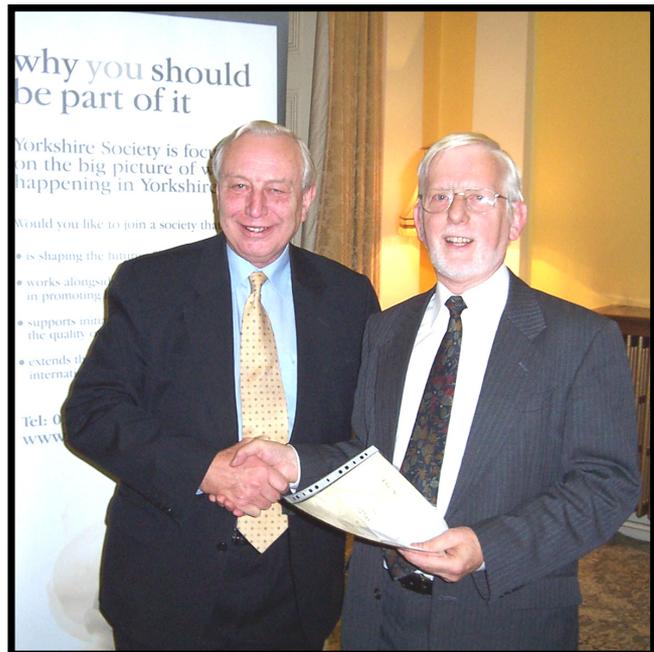
Peter Southworth of the Friends of Pleasley has produced a new publication “**Pleasley Pit and Its Steam Winding Engines**”. This includes the history of the pit, the winding engines including many drawings and photographs. Available from Carol Abbott on 01623 810 414 or at NEDIAS December meeting. Price £5.50 (£6.00 by post).

Prestigious Award for David Wilmot from the Yorkshire Society – CONGRATULATIONS!

I’m very pleased to announce that our Chairman David Wilmot has been awarded the prestigious Bramley Award by the Yorkshire Society. This award was for a history essay entitled “**Emerson Bainbridge of Newcastle and Sheffield, an Overlooked Entrepreneur**”.

During his research on the Lancashire, Derbyshire and East Coast Railway, David became aware of unpublished aspects of the life and work of Emerson Bainbridge, a typical “self-made” Victorian business leader in the fields of coal-mining, model villages for the workers and the development of the canal and railway systems.

David’s article is shortly to be published in the Yorkshire Archaeological Journal, and I hope that following the initial publication, some of the content can follow in a future NEDIAS Newsletter.



David attended a special presentation ceremony in Leeds on 20 October, at which he received the award from Keith Reynolds OBE.

East Midland Industrial Archaeology Conference

The next EMIAC conference, titled “**Industries of Worksop**”, is to be held on Saturday 21 May 2005. For further information contact Tom Farnsworth on 01332 703883.

NEDIAS Newsletter – bound copy of the very first Issues 1 – 12, our first 3 years

NEDIAS intend to publish in the New Year a complete and **fully bound** set of the first 12 editions of the NEDIAS Newsletter. The cost is likely to be approx £6 - £8 depending on print numbers, so I do need to know numbers for print. If you’d like to purchase a copy, please let me know at next meeting, phone or mail to c2clea@tiscali.co.uk.

With the growing popularity of NEDIAS, this will become a collector’s item!

AIA Conference, 2005

The Derbyshire Archaeology Society is to host the next national AIA Conference in September 2005; NEDIAS have agreed in turn to host visits to sites in the NED area during one of the days of this three day national IA event and conference.

NEDIAS Meetings – Bulging at the Seams!

Yes, our numbers continue to grow steadily. As David mentioned earlier, we do need to find more commodious accommodation for the lecture meetings, where we can fit in perhaps 70 – 90 on a regular basis, with convenient coffee facilities, and at a budget cost.

Can you suggest a venue? Pam Alton is currently looking at all the other options, and would welcome your input.

Scarsdale Local History Fair

This now annual event organised by the Derbyshire Victoria County History Trust and the DCC took place at Arkwright Town on 30 October, with a greatly expanded exhibition, and participation from a wider variety of local history and related societies and organisations.



Our stand showed details of the Mag Clough survey and research. In addition we exhibited the unusual sword-like edge tool found during the Damstead survey, asking visitors whether they could identify, or shed further light on the purpose of the tool.

Not for the squeamish: the most interesting suggestion was that it was a quite common tool used in the days when the “family pig” was a common sight, to eat household scraps, and eventually to supply family and neighbours with bacon. A possible tool for killing pigs, and helping to collect their blood for black pudding! Interestingly, the Editor is investigating the finding of a very similar tool on a site at Eckington, another well-known area for edge tool production.

And Finally a Christmas at Cressbrook Mill

During 1849, the Ashton Chronicle published accounts of life of apprenticed children at Litton and Cressbrook Mills, no doubt with pangs of conscience. One apprentice boy, an orphan from Stepney, recounts:

“ Before being sent from London, we were told what roast beef and plum pudding we should have! But I only *once* saw a piece of beef.... Dinner was potato pie five days in the week.

“We *never* tasted flour bread, except once a year, Christmas Eve, when we had what we called a flour cake dry without butter which we had never tasted at Cressbrook. We had a pint of ale at Christmas Eve , which was the only time we ever tasted anything stronger than water. To have seen us walking up and down, flourishing the flour cake in one hand, and the ale in the other, would have made anyone think that we were the happiest mortals in the world. We felt ourselves for once as big as the King.

“The spiced pudding of which we were told so many tales, never came but once a year....

**.....and then consisted of a lump of cold, sad, suety pudding,
with two or three currants and raisins in it.”**

Think of this as you’re tucking into your Christmas dinner this year!

Cliff Lea

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NEDIAS Committee: - *Chairman* – David Wilmot; *Secretary* – Patricia Pick; *Treasurer* – Pamela Alton. *Membership Secretary/Assistant Treasurer* – Jean Heathcote; *Publicity & Newsletter* – Cliff Lea; *Lecture Meetings* – David Rance; *Archivist* --Pete Wilson; *Committee Members* – David Hart, Stuart Kay, and Jack Smith

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