

No 1/03

July 2003

EDITORIAL

I am writing this editorial during a heat wave at the beginning of August, with temperatures forecast to reach 34 deg C. Perhaps a touch hot for many of us, but let us hope that the summer weather lasts at least until after the Village Visit to Glaston on 20 September. Another event which will benefit from a little sunshine is our Guided Historical Walk through what was once the Royal Forest of Leighfield on 6 September. Last year's walk, to Martinsthorpe and Brooke, was the first for the Society and nearly 40 people took part.

Talking of „firsts“, there are two more in the new programme. On 30 August we have an evening of historical music at the Castle and on 11 December, after the presentation of the George Phillips Award, there will be a „Work in Progress“ meeting. This will be a series of short reports by members about their own research activities.

Two recent local events which caught the public imagination are the inspiration for two of our talks. The excavation which resulted in the discovery of woolly rhinoceros, spotted hyena, reindeer, wolverine and other animal bones during a routine archaeological investigation on a building site at Glaston was the subject of many newspaper stories. It was featured by “Meet the Ancestors” and “Time Team”, and over 600 people visited the site on the two public open days. John Thomas will give us all the details in his talk at the Glaston Village Visit on 20 September.

The other event was the launch of Ann Paul's book *3000 Strangers: The Building of the Kettering to Manton Railway* at Gretton Village Hall in July. 400 people descended on the village to see the exhibition and get their signed copy of the book.

Ann's talk on Thursday 9 October will provide a unique insight into the lives and characters of the navvies who came to work and live in the district when the line was built between 1875 and 1879

Full details of our programme are given later in this newsletter. I look forward to seeing you at many of these meetings.

Robert Owens



Ann Paul at the launch of her book

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

85 members attended the Society's Annual General Meeting at Rutland County Museum on 23 May. Officers elected included Edward Baines who became the Society's new President, replacing Prince Yuri Galitzine who died in December 2002, and who had been chairman and President for over a quarter of a century. Also elected was Robert Owens who became the new chairman following Auriol Thomson's decision to step down after 2 years in office. Dr Ian Ryder replaced Dr Mike Tillbrook who had served as Treasurer for over 15 years. Both Auriol Thomson and Dr Mike Tillbrooke agreed to carry on as committee members. John Ervin continues as Legal Advisor, but does not wish to serve on the committee. Kate Don resigned as a committee member and Chairman of the Archaeological Group but continues to support the group's activities (see Archaeology report below). Vicky Sanderlin-McLoughlin, Alan Curtis and Dr Peter Diplock are welcomed as new committee members. All other officers and committee members were re-elected. The

membership of the Executive Committee is therefore as follows:

President: Edward Baines
Chairman: Robert Owens
Vice Chairman: Professor Alan Rogers
Secretary: Sue Howlett
Treasurer: Dr. Ian Ryder
Editor: Tim Clough
Membership Secretary: Enid Clinton
Archivist: Carl Harrison
Editorial Adviser: Robin Jenkins

Committee:

Audrey Buxton
Elizabeth Bryan
David Carlin
Hilary Crowden
Alan Curtis
Dr Peter Diplock
Christine Hill
Vicky Sanderlin-McLoughlin
Auriol Thomson
Dr Mike Tillbrook

Contact us

Rutland Local History and Record Society
President: Edward Baines
Chairman: Dr Mike Tillbrook
c/o Rutland County Museum,
Rutland County Museum
Calmose Street
Oakham
Rutland
LE15 6HW
England

t: 01572 758440

Secretary: Jill Kimber
Editor: Tim Clough
www.rutlandhistory.org

NEWS FROM RUTLAND COUNTY MUSEUM

Museum Development Programme

By the time that you read this the contractors, Denman and Sons, should already be on site in the Stable Block, starting the work of refurbishing the museum. Meanwhile Simon Davies and Phil Rayner are putting the finishing touches to the texts for the new “Welcome to Rutland” exhibition that will provide an introduction to the history of the county, as well as to the displays in the rest of the museum. Later this year new displays and

a lift to the mezzanine floor will be installed, before finally closing the present entrance on to Catmose Street. The new entrance is expected to be operating from the beginning of 2004.

Museum Services Manager

Simon Davies, who recently joined the Museum staff as Services Manager, has provided the following notes about his background:

„Museums feature in some of my earliest memories: I have no idea how old I was when I was first delighted by the dinosaurs in the Natural History Museum, or puzzled by the seemingly magical interactives in the Science Museum, but I was not very tall at the time. However it was only many years later, while I was studying sculpture at Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts in London, that I realised I might find work in such an interesting business. I had already discovered that museums could be like icebergs, with stores that might be as interesting as their exhibitions. However it was only as a Viking re-enactor that I first met people who were working in museums and began to wonder whether I too could persuade someone to pay me to research the subjects that I chose to study in my free time.

Of course it was not as simple as that, and I have never yet found anyone who would employ me as a curator of early medieval cultural history! However I have found many other aspects of museum work to be equally rewarding, whether it be the reorganisation of a store, helping a researcher to find the answer to a question they have been struggling with for years, or setting up a new exhibition. You may gather from this that I see myself as a generalist, rather than a subject specialist, and as such I always wished to work in a Local Authority service. Obtaining such a post took me some time however.

I started work as a volunteer for the Royal Engineers Museum in 1983, moving on to the Aldershot Military Historical Museum and the King's Shropshire Light Infantry Museum, before joining the National Army Museum for my first permanent post in 1985. It was not until 1989 that I at last found work with a Local Authority and moved to the Museum of Leathercraft in Northampton. Later I became the Exhibitions Officer for Northampton Museums. Then in 1996 I took the opportunity of joining an Area Museums Council and spent seven years providing support and advice to museums of all shapes and sizes across the East of England. I am delighted to be back working for a local museums service again and looking forward to talking to you about the future of Rutland County Museums Service at the Friends of Rutland County Museum AGM next year."

RUTLAND COUNTY MUSEUM EXHIBITION PROGRAMME

The Museum has provided us with the following details about exhibitions planned between now and the end of November. Some items are tentative and it would be worth checking with the Museum (01572 758440) before travelling far see a particular exhibition:

21 July - 31 August

Colonel Noel Suite
Jean Annessl
'Landscapes in Pastel'
Exhibition of paintings

28 July - 5 September

Riding School
Soar Valley Artists
Exhibition of Paintings

15 September - 26 October

Colonel Noel Suite
Janet Mayo
Exhibition of Paintings

15 September - 9 November

Riding School
Shoe Exhibition in conjunction with Local Community Colleges

RLHRS / FRCM PROGRAMME

Saturday 30 August, 7.15 to 9.30 pm at OAKHAM CASTLE

RLHRS/FRCM Social:

Music at the Castle

An evening of historic music provided by **Chantrelle** (Terry & Florence Warrington). Terry makes musical instruments from the 13th C to modern, including Cittern, Hurdy Gurdy, Hammer Dulcimer, Pipe and Tabor, Banjo and Ukelele. Their entertainment includes music, songs and dances based on these instruments, and they wear colourful period costumes. Light refreshments will be available during the interval at about 8 pm. Book in advance only – further information and booking form on a separate leaflet.

Saturday 6 September.

Guided Historical Walk:

'The Royal Leighfield Forest'

Meet at 2.00pm, Belton Church. Leaders Robert Ovens & Sheila Sleath.

This circular walk, in conjunction with the Leicestershire & Rutland Rural Community Council, starts at Belton in Rutland. It follows tracks and footpaths to Ridlington through the heart of what was once the Royal Forest of Leighfield, returning via the site of the medieval Ridlington Park.

Distance is approximately 7 miles, but there is opportunity to return after about 3 miles. Walking boots or strong shoes are recommended. Booking not necessary – just turn up on the day!

Saturday 20 September, 1 to 5 pm

Glaston Church Rooms:

RLHRS Village Visit to Glaston.

Talks on **Glaston and its People** by Sue Lee and Auriol Thomson, and **From Rhinos to Racing Cars – a History of**

Settlement in Glaston by John Thomas (ULAS). **Then and Now** exhibition of photographs and leaflet-guided **Historical Walk** round the village. £4.50 to include refreshments.

Book in advance only – further information and booking form on a separate leaflet.

Thursday 9 October, 7.30 pm at RCM

Talk by Ann Paul:

'3000 Strangers: The Building of the Kettering to Manton Railway'

Ann Paul is the author of the book of this title which was launched at Gretton Village Hall on 20 July.

Between 1875 and 1879 the Midland Railway built a connecting line between Manton Junction and Kettering. In fewer than 16 miles it involved high embankments and deep cuttings, four tunnels and five viaducts, including the Welland Viaduct, at 1,250 yards the longest on Britain's railway system. **Ann Paul** will provide a unique insight into the lives and characters of the navvies who came to work and live in the district.

Thursday 13 November, 7.30 pm at RCM

Talk by Jenny Dancey, Keeper, Melton Carnegie Museum:

A Taste of Melton

The newly refurbished Carnegie Museum contains informative and innovative displays about the rich and varied heritage of Melton Mowbray and the surrounding area. The area is explored through permanent displays that include the British Sporting artist John Ferneley as well as artefacts associated with the Stilton Cheese and Pork Pie industries, and the natural environment. At this meeting **Jenny Dancey** will focus on the food industry. We hope to arrange a visit to the museum in 2004.

Thursday 11 December, 7.30 pm at RCM RLHRS/FRCM Joint Members' Evening.

Presentation of **George Phillips Award** followed by **Work in Progress** – a series of short reports (10 to 15 minutes each) by members of both societies about their own research activities. Please contact either Sue Howlett or Peter Diplock if you are willing to talk about any aspect of your own research.

Coffee and mince pies will be available after the meeting.

Thursday 8 January, 7.30pm at OAKHAM CASTLE

Talk by Tim Clough, former Curator at Rutland County Museum and Oakham Castle:

A Guide to the Historic Horseshoes

Oakham Castle's presentation horseshoes are a unique feature of its magnificent Great Hall. The earliest documentary reference dates from 1470, but the origins of the horseshoe custom are believed to lie in the years following the Norman

Conquest of 1066. **Tim Clough** will outline the history of the horseshoes, drawing attention to those of special interest: those who attend will reap the benefit of holding the meeting in the midst of the subject matter.

Thursday 12 February, 7.30 pm at RCM

Talk by Tim Appleton, Reserve Manager, Rutland Water Nature Reserve:

25 Years of Rutland Water

Tim Appleton has had overall responsibility for the management of Rutland Water Nature Reserve since it was created in 1975. He will talk about the changes, the successes and challenges that have happened at the reserve on our doorstep.

Thursday 11 March, 7.30 pm at RCM

Friends of Rutland County Museum AGM followed by:

Talk by Simon Davies, Museum Services Manager:

Rutland County Museum and Oakham Castle: the next 10 years?

Simon Davies will share his thoughts about how the Museums Service – the Museum and the Castle - might change in the next 10 years – and hopefully how members of both societies might be able to help with these changes.

Thursday 18 March at UPPINGHAM SCHOOL (Old Schoolroom - off High Street West)

RLHRS Bryan Matthews Lecture 2004

By Professor Marilyn Palmer, Leicester University:

The Industrial Archaeology of Rutland

Marilyn Palmer is Professor of Industrial Archaeology at Leicester University. She will talk about various aspects of the Industrial Archaeology of Rutland. (See her article in Rutland Record volume 11 where she describes the industries that supported the rural economy and the expansion of the extraction industry following the improved road and rail communications).

Thursday 20 May, 7.30 pm at RCM

Rutland Local History & Record Society AGM followed by:

Talk by Robert Ovens:

The Jack Hart Collection of Rutland Postcards

Robert Ovens will talk about his exploration of the Jack Hart Collection of Rutland Postcards – not just the pictures on the front, but also the words on the backs.

AWARDS FOR ALL LOTTERY BID

In January we applied for a Heritage Lottery Grant under the Awards for All scheme. This was to help with the cost of purchasing a computer for editorial work, together with a scanner, printer and publishing software. This would enable the Society to design its own publications and thus avoid the high cost of having this done commercially. Although we felt that we had

put forward a good case the Awards for All team turned down our application on the grounds that they felt that we should have indicated a more significant financial contribution towards the project. That's the bad news. The good news is that we are encouraged to re-apply and this we will do in the near future. We will seek funding for the publication of specific titles (there are at least six waiting in the wings!) the printing costs of which will enable us to show a much greater percentage contribution to the overall cost.

Dr Ian Canadine has agreed to continue to be an independent referee for the bid.

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Since the last newsletter *Rutland Record* 21 has been published, and *Rutland Record* 22 is now in active preparation. The major article will be on the Religious Census of 1851 by Peter Tomalin

Work continues on an *Index of Rutland Record 11-20*, and it is still intended that it will be issued free to members this year.

Several articles have been requested or offered for future editions of *Rutland Record*, but any member who has a subject which might form the basis of an interesting article is invited to contact the Editor.

Of the several Occasional Publications waiting in the wings, the Rutland Land Tax and Poll Tax of 1712 is nearest to publication. This book is basically a transcription of the original documents carried out by members of the Rutland Village Studies Group, with an historical introduction by Dennis Mills. Tim Clough is currently working on the layout and it will soon be ready for indexing.



Members of the Oral History Group at a recent meeting

SITUATIONS VACANT

1. Events Secretary

In the December 2002 Newsletter we highlighted the need for an Events Secretary. We still have not filled this post and consequently the appeal is repeated here.

As well as our regular Winter and Spring Lecture Programme, organised jointly with

Friends of Rutland County Museum, the Society has over the years organised other events ranging from the highly successful annual Village Visits to a summer barbecue or guided walk through historic woodlands.

However, many members have suggested that they would like more in the way of social meetings or outings, for example a Christmas dinner or trip to the new Visitors' Centre at Sutton Hoo.

What are your views on this? And would you like to help organise such events?

The Society is greatly in need of an enthusiastic member to volunteer as „Events Secretary“ - helping to meet the needs of members by adding variety and spice to our programme. The workload can be as little or large as you have time for, with help and support from the committee and other members. Perhaps there are two members out there who would like to share this role?

2. Publicity Officer

We also need a publicity officer – some one who attends most of our events and who could write short but interesting reports for the local press. Not a difficult task, but an important one as we need to keep reminding the public at large that we exist.

If you are interested in either of the above, please contact Sue Howlett or Robert Ovens.

ORAL HISTORY GROUP

This small group continues to meet every 2 to 3 months at the home of one of the members and for our June meeting we were the guests of David and Sheila Bland at Greatham.

The group now has two minidisk recorders, provided by the Society, and members are now using them with increasing confidence. Topics currently under consideration include the storage, transcription and indexing of media, and

the acquisition of copies of recordings made by others. A recent approach to Rutland Radio seems likely to result in copies of their recordings being placed in the Society's library.

The next meeting is on Thursday 25th Sept at Belton in Rutland. Further details about this meeting and the Oral History Group are available from Lin Ryder on 01572 767666.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Kate Don and members of our Archaeology Group have been fieldwalking the site of a Romano-British town near Thistleton and their report on this work has won this year's Miss Linford Award for the best amateur archaeological project in Leicestershire and Rutland. So, congratulations to Kate and her team – this is the second time the group has won this award in recent years.

Kate has let us have this overview of the project:

„The site of a Romano-British town near the villages of Thistleton and Market Overton had been known in the archaeological record since at least 1779. Ernest Greenfield, a government archaeologist who worked ahead of the ironstone quarrying from 1956 – 1964, left notes in the Journal of Roman Studies and an intriguing dotted line on an O.S. map indicating his estimate of the extent of the town. The fieldwalk aimed to establish whether this estimate was accurate and also to potentially supply further evidence of pre-Roman occupation, noted by Greenfield as earlier structures beneath the site of the temple and Coritanian coin. Anecdotal evidence from local people is fascinating – many remember going to see the "skellingtons" unearthed in 1962, and some recall being terrified by tales of a ploughman who heard strange hollow sounds as he worked!

"Old Hands" from RLHRS teamed up with several "rookies" from Market Overton to undertake the fieldwalk during October – December 2001. In total over 4000 sherds of pottery, brick and tile was recovered, together with 42kg of iron slag and a quantity of worked flint and burnt stone. Identifying the material took several months, under the expert tuition of Elaine Jones, without whose guidance this project would not have got off the ground. The subsequent mapping suggests that Mr. Greenfield's estimate of the town corresponds well with the concentration of Romano-British finds and the iron slag recovered, whilst the scatter of Medieval and Post-Medieval pottery indicates manuring rather than occupation. Expert identification of a small number of coarseware sherds is required, which

currently can best be described as Iron Age/Anglo Saxon!

Further work is required to the west of the fieldwalked area to fully establish the extent of the town. The University of Leicester has secured funding to undertake a geophysical survey, which will hopefully take place in early September."

An exhibition of the material and an explanation of the fieldwalk took place at Market Overton Village Hall on 26th July.

Kate Don

SOCIETY LIBRARY

Since the last Newsletter, Peter Tomalin has been hard at work sorting the books, leaflets and notes donated to the Society by Prince Yuri Galitzine. This collection, which forms the core of the Society's library, is now beautifully arranged on shelves and in filing cabinets in the Prince Yuri Galitzine Room at the museum.

Prince Yuri's family have agreed that we can use his coat of arms on a bookplate which will identify the donated books in the collection.



Prince Yuri Galitzine's coat of arms

The collection now has to be catalogued and a system has been set up which will eventually result in a searchable database on the Society's computer. For now the details are being collected on paper forms which will provide a standard format for later computer entry. Help is required with this task and if you would like to spend a few hours a week (or less!) in the library please contact Sue Howlett initially.

At the last meeting of the Executive Committee it was decided to restrict access to the library to Society members and that all the publications in the library would be for reference only. This means that any non-member wishing to use the library must join the Society first. At present we do not have the manpower or facilities to admit the general public, or to loan books.

Initially the library will only be open for one afternoon each week, when one of the

committee members will be present. As an interim arrangement this will initially be every Thursday from 2pm to 4pm, and anyone using the library should sign the visitors' book.

For the latest position regarding this please contact Sue Howlett.

RUTLAND MAGAZINE

The Rutland Magazine is published every two months by the Rutland Times. The editor, Janet Kirkwood, is looking for more Rutland based articles and with this in mind the Society has been invited to contribute a series of short articles on various aspects of Rutland History. Three have already been promised and at least three more are required. These are the parameters:

- about 1500 words.
- 9 to 12 illustrations, preferably in colour but not essential.
- must relate to some aspect of Rutland history.
- must be submitted through the Society.

The current edition of The Rutland Magazine (August / October 2003) includes two such articles by RLHRS members – Audrey Buxton on Martinthorpe Marriages and Sue Howlett on Cuthbert Bede – and these give a good idea of what is required.

For more information please contact Sue Howlett or Robert Owens.

RUTLAND BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following recent publications have been noted and it is hoped that full reviews will be included in future editions of Rutland Record:

The Photographic World and Humour of Cuthbert Bede

by Bridet & Heinz Henisch.
(Edwin Mellin Press, 2002).

The Rev Edward Bradley was for 12 years the rector of Stretton. He published 20 books under the pen name of Cuthbert Bede on such diverse subjects as the comic aspects of photography and imprisonment of Mary Queen of Scots.

3000 Strangers: The Building of the Kettering to Manton Railway

by Ann Paul
(Silverlink, 2003)

A unique insight into the lives and characters of the navvies who came to work and live in the district between 1875 and 1879 when the Midland Railway built the line between Manton Junction and Kettering, including the Welland Viaduct, the longest on Britain's railway system.

Life & Work Among the Navvies

by Rev D W Barratt. (Silverlink, 2003)

This facsimile reprint of the 19th century book provides a first-hand account of navy life during construction of the Welland Viaduct.

The Turnpike Roads of Leicestershire and Rutland

by Arthur Cossens. (Kairos Press, 2003)

The history of the development of turnpikes: their origin, construction, maintenance, the speed of coach journeys, tolls, and an example of the procedure for passing a Turnpike Act through Parliament. Also gazetteer which gives details of the relevant Acts of Parliament and a route sketch for each of the 34 turnpike roads which ran through the counties.

SOCIETY WEBSITE

Thanks to a great deal of (free) help from a professional the Society website is being re-developed with more information and more features, but most importantly we have a new domain name – **www.rutlandhistory.org**. The new site should be up and running sometime in September.

MEETING REPORTS

Simon de Langham – December 2002

Last December more than 40 members of the Society and the Friends of Rutland County Museum were entertained and inspired by the achievements of Simon de Langham. The talk, **'From Homespun to Cloth of Gold - The Story of Simon of Langham'** was given by Brenda Tew. Her researches over the last 15 years have taken her in Simon's footsteps from Langham to the medieval library of Westminster Abbey and then to the former Papal court of Avignon in France. Vivid and colourful slides, prepared by Robert Ovens, illustrated the talk with images including 14th century London, the Westminster Jewel House, the famous 'Pont d'Avignon', examples of richly embroidered textiles such as those bequeathed in Simon's will and his magnificent tomb in Westminster Abbey.

For those of the audience who wished to investigate the subject further, a detailed pictorial display, books and copies of Simon's will provided a wealth of background information.

Brenda Tew's interest was first aroused when gazing at the wonderful architecture of Langham Church which was rebuilt in the 14th century, and hearing local traditions of the benefactor, Simon of Langham. The gifted boy who grew up in medieval Rutland came to the attention of the monks of Westminster - Oakham and Langham had been part of Edward the Confessor's bequest to Westminster Abbey. After becoming a Benedictine monk at Westminster Simon was sent to study at Oxford, where the fees of £7 10 shillings were paid by the Abbey's manor at Islip. Simon returned to Westminster to find that the Black Death had killed around half of the monks. He was elected Prior and shortly afterwards became Abbot, equivalent to a Bishop, with a seat in the House of Lords. Simon's frugal lifestyle helped to get the Abbey out of debt, and he

was later able to add Chelsea and Knightsbridge to Westminster Abbey's estates.

In 1356 Simon of Langham officiated at the wedding of the Black Prince, and was made Treasurer and Chancellor of England. He was responsible for building the Jewel House which ensured that the King's treasure could no longer be stolen, as had previously occurred, from under the floorboards of Westminster's Chapter House! As Bishop of Ely Simon gave the manor of Cherry Hinton to Peterhouse College, Cambridge, where he is commemorated in a portrait. While Chancellor of England, he opened Edward III's Parliament with the first such speech in English, as noted in Melvyn Bragg's recent televised history of the English language. After two years as Archbishop of Canterbury Simon was summoned to Avignon to be made a Cardinal, spending the remaining years until his death in 1376 at the Papal Court where he made his will, 'sound in mind but somewhat weak in body'. In this he bequeathed his treasure and a valuable library to Westminster Abbey, where the building work he inspired earned his accolade as the Abbey's third founder, the first two being Edward the Confessor and Henry III.

And what about his mother church at Langham? Evidence is circumstantial, but two carved heads in the church of King Edward III and Queen Philippa, as well as the architectural evidence of a great rebuilding at the time of Simon of Langham, indicate that this humble boy of Rutland left a major mark, not just on the political and religious development of England but also on the history and heritage of the village of Langham.

The George Phillips Award – 9 January

Over 80 members of the Society, the Friends of Rutland County Museum and guests attended Oakham for the annual presentation of the George Phillips Award, followed by a musical entertainment provided by the secretary of the Music Box Society.



Winner of the 2002 George Phillips Award - Curtis House, Stoke Dry, a new sandstone and limestone house over-looking the Eye Brooke Reservoir

The George Phillips Award is sponsored jointly by the Society and Rutland County Council. First place is awarded to the property considered by a panel of judges to be the most significant contribution towards preserving the built environment in Rutland. The entries included restored, converted and new buildings, and the winner this year was Curtis House, Stoke Dry, a new sandstone and limestone house over-looking the Eye Brooke Reservoir.

Bunny Guinness, the well-known landscape architect, presented the award to owner Bob Salmon.



Bob Salmon, owner of Curtis House, Stoke Dry, with his George Phillips Award plaque

Magical Musical Machines – 9 January

In his talk Kevin McElhane told his audience some of the history of mechanical music, illustrated by demonstrations on a wide range of cylinder and disc music boxes, table-top organs, and even a singing bird in a cage.

The earliest known musical machine is a barrel organ dated 1502 now in a collection at Salzburg in Germany. Later, small cylinder music boxes were built into fob watches, and by the end of the 1700s clocks with music boxes were popular. These were generally made by clockmakers who, by 1800, realised that they could sell more music boxes if they were not attached to clocks. Disc music boxes became popular in the mid to late 1800s, as did automatic reed organs which used perforated rolls of paper or card. With each type, many hundreds of different tunes could be played by changing the disc or roll. They were used in churches and for musical entertainment in public houses, the main attraction being that the only skill required was the ability to turn the handle at a steady speed. Another development was the player piano, which again use paper rolls to operate the keys. In some of these, the words to the tune were printed on the roll, possibly an early form of karaoke!

Although they have long been overtaken by technology, there is still an enthusiastic following of mechanical music machines. The Music Box Society has an ever-growing worldwide membership, and cylinders, discs and paper rolls are still being produced with new tunes.

Bryan Matthews Lecture – 20 March

This year's lecture was presented to an audience of 110 members and guests in the Old School Room at Uppingham School. The speaker was Professor Alan Rogers and the title of his lecture was **The Making of Uppingham**.

Alan pointed out that his presentation was very much his own interpretation of the origins and development of Uppingham. Although not mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086, Uppingham existed as a settlement as early as the late fifth century. At this time it was probably an Anglo-Saxon farmstead, located somewhere near what is now the Crown Hotel, between High Street East and North Street. Like many other settlements in the area, it stood on top of a hill.

Uppingham, like Stamford, has developed as a one-street east-west town, and was near one of the three important Stamford to Leicester ridgeway routes. The second was through Wing, Preston and Ridlington, and the third through Manton and Martinthorpe.

The nearest early south-north route through Rutland entered the county from Harringworth, then on through Seaton, Glaston, Wing and Manton to Oakham. The present route from Caldecott to Uppingham was avoided because of the steep hills to the south of Uppingham. This route came later with the creation of the turnpikes.

By 1086, Uppingham was very probably an important market town - its market was granted a Charter in 1281. The medieval market place was much larger than the one we know today. It had at its centre a market hall with a town room above.

North Street is the town's late medieval northern bypass, a feature common to many market towns. The small triangles of land at each end of the bypass are also a common feature.

Open hall and crosswing houses are survivors from the 14th, 15th and early 16th centuries. Uppingham has a number of these and they help to define the extent of the medieval town. Medieval cellars often survive, even though the house above has been redeveloped, and this is an area for further research in Uppingham.

The Tudor timber framed building is represented in Uppingham by the White Hart in High Street West, and there are almost certainly more to be found.

The town's increasing importance at the beginning of the 17th century is demonstrated by the building, within a few years of each other, of four substantial houses - the Manor House, the Hall, Tudor House, and what is now 50-52 High Street East.

In the 18th century Uppingham became more of a trading town and many of the older buildings were refaced with elegant Georgian fronts. In the 19th century the growing population and limited space resulted in the erection of groups of small cottages, often referred to as yards, in the

gardens of street-front houses. The access to these was down shared entries, many of which survive today. The second half of the 19th century saw the removal of many of these cottages and the development of terraces away from the town centre. Surviving examples include Deans Terrace and Wades Terrace.

An important development for Uppingham was the establishment in 1834 of the Uppingham Poor Law Union. It covered an area from Rockingham to Ridlington and from Duddington to Slawston. This became Uppingham Rural District Council in the 1890s which resulted in the town being an economic and administrative centre which was to last until the reorganisation of 1974.

The Historic Buildings of Rutland – 23 May

Following the AGM, Elizabeth Bryan, Rutland County Council Conservation Officer, gave a talk on the **Historic Buildings of Rutland**. Showing slides to illustrate her talk, and using the word buildings in its widest meaning, Elizabeth took the audience on a tour round Rutland looking at interesting historic buildings. At each stop she pointed out what she considered to be the most important features. For example, the tower at Ketton Church, the doorway at Essendine Church, the artificial windows at South Luffenham House, the undercroft at The Green Dragon, Ryhall, and the tallest windmill in the country at Whissendine. Also included in this tour were Wing Maze, the motte at Oakham Castle, the lime kiln at Pickworth, Lyddington Bedehouse, and Flore's House, Oakham.

Rutland has an exceptional collection of dovecotes, built to a variety of designs, many by wealthy London landowners who had retired to the county. Examples described by Elizabeth were in Ketton, where there are several, and Cottesmore.

Some historically important features are not immediately obvious or visible. College House, Oakham School, is a good example. Here a complex medieval roof of *circa* 1320 with 6 crown posts was discovered. There is only one other known example in Rutland, and only 3 in Leicestershire. Another example is the medieval chimney at a house in North Luffenham which is constructed of mud and wickerwork.

Many houses in Rutland are of local stone and this is a spin-off resulting from the growth of the local stone industry to satisfy the demand from London in the 16th and 17th centuries. Prior to this, many buildings were timber-framed with mud walls. Some mud walls still survive, for example in South Street, Oakham and at the rear of a house in Caldecott. Mud walled houses survive in Whissendine and Greetham.

Other interesting early features highlighted by Elizabeth include the

garage chute on a house in Caldecott and canted window bays on houses in Ketton.

There are a number of examples of the use of alternating bands of iron stone and limestone to create decorative patterns in Rutland, including the Priests House in Lyddington, Oakham Castle, and the tower at Ashwell Church designed by William Butterfield.

Plaster floors were popular in Rutland during and after the medieval period owing to the scarcity of timber, and many examples survive. They were laid on rushes and gave great rigidity to a building as well as being less of a fire hazard.

EXTERNAL GROUPS

Rutland Village Studies Group

The most recent meeting of this group was a Saturday afternoon visit to the Uppingham workshops of stone mason John Finemore. Ably assisted by his daughter Melanie and her partner, both stonemasons in their own right, we were shown every aspect of the work of a stonemason. We saw many different types and grades of stone, how stone was selected for a particular project, and how it was cut and shaped using a variety of machines and hand tools. We were also able to see some of the work in progress, and one or two of us even had the courage to have a go at carving the date on a piece of limestone.



Melanie Finemore demonstrates the use of stonemason's tools

The next meeting of the VSG on Saturday 6 September at 3pm at 19 Spring Back Way, Uppingham (Elaine and Clive Jones).

At this meeting Dr Alan McWhirr of Leicester University will discuss **Bricks and Buildings** - different kinds of bricks, how and where they were made, how they were transported, where they were used and when; dating bricks and brick buildings; local examples and differences.