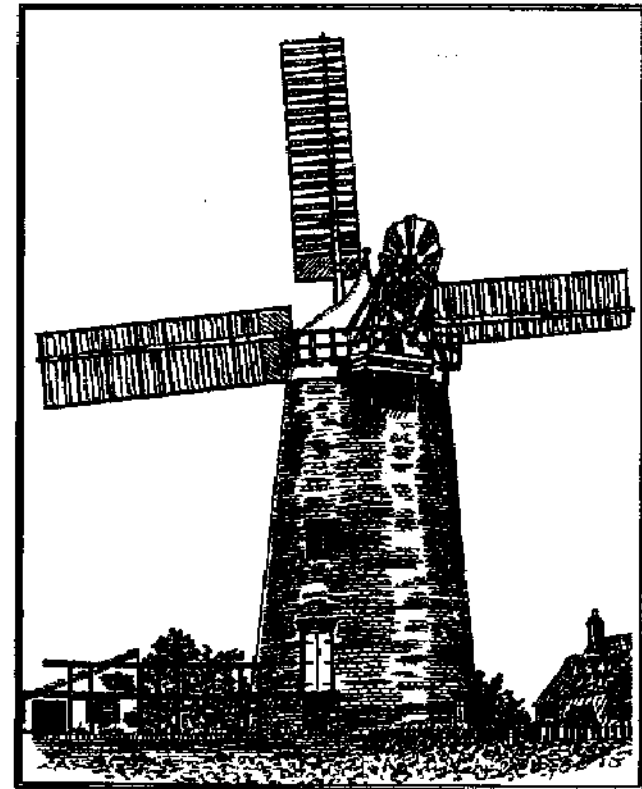


Potton History Society



The Windmill Eotton 1927

Newsletter Number 15 Autumn 1993

Potton History Society Committee:-

Chairman	Norman Parry
Secretary	Mary Leigh
Treasurer	Anita Lewis
Programme/Publicity Secretary	Peter Ibbett
Archive Secretary	Patricia Yates
Committee Members	Boo Matthews
.....	Jack Hutchinson
.....	George Howe
Newsletter Editors	Mr & Mrs Leigh

For access to the archives in our research rooms just telephone the key-holders;

Mr N. Parry Potton 260728

Mrs P. Yates ... Potton 260328

Acknowledgements:-

Thanks to Mr Lawrence for allowing us to use his drawing of the windmill, featured on the front cover.

Our appreciation to Mr & Mrs Ibbett for displaying and selling our publications in their shop.

We also thank the following for advertising our meetings;
Lindsay's Bakery, Tysøe's Hardware Store, Burgoyne Middle School, and Sandy Upper School.

Society News :-

In **May** for the first time in the life of the society we had to cancel our outdoor meeting, a visit to the Carthagenia Sandpit, owing to wet weather. An impromptu indoor meeting was soon set in motion by Mr Dorling, Site Manager of Amey Roadstone Co., who explained what happens to the sand extracted from local quarries. We were particularly interested to learn about *Potton Sand* which is renowned for its high quality. The evening was rounded off by Mr Brookman who told us his own story as landowner of the Carthagenia site.

June was an important month in the Society's calendar when we organised our first (but hopefully not our last) coach trip. The scene had been set at our evening meeting by Mr Cozens, chairman of the Hunts. Local History Assn. who told us about the foundation of the fenland abbeys in the 1st century.

The visit to the sand pit at Deepdale finally took place in **July**, when a group of 26 members and visitors were given a conducted tour.

At our **August** meeting Peter Ibbett took us on a pictorial tour of his home town of Eynesbury. He also gave the audience an insight into the sources of information which are readily available to the local historian.

In **September** Anne Harvey shared with us the fruits of her research into Emily Shore, a young girl who kept a diary of her time in Potton and Woodbury in the early 1800's. These journals, published by her sisters, reveal much about her short life but mystery still surrounds the whereabouts of the original documents and paintings. This meeting also included another first when members performed a short play written by Emily Shore.

-----ooOoo-----

Mrs Yates, our archive secretary, has spent a good deal of time this year preparing for photographic exhibitions which continue to attract considerable interest as Potton History Society's public image.

The first of these was a three day event at St. Mary's Church for their Patronal Festival in July. The theme of *music* had been set for the floral decorations and so our display featured the various musical groups which have performed in Potton over the years. Our annual appearance at the Potton Show was as popular as ever, assisted by an unexpectedly fine day. Many thanks to all those members who helped with the setting-up and manning of both exhibitions.

Another major display which has become an annual event is held at Burgoyne Middle School. This remains in place in the school hall for the Autumn half term and can be seen by all those attending functions, as well as being used by the pupils in their course work.

-----ooOoo-----

We are presenting a much smarter image at photographic exhibitions now that our display boards have been completely refurbished, thanks largely to the efforts of Trevor Ball who has also designed and constructed a more readily portable set-up.

-----ooOoo-----

Many thanks to George Howe, Mick Ibbett and Anne Barker for representing the Society at the Joint Societies Quiz last Spring. The winning team this year was Roxton and District Local History Society.

-----ooOoo-----

Forth Coming Programme

Nov 25th AGM & Potton is Burning

A look at the fires which have been recorded in Potton since the Great Fire of 1783. Will be presented by George Howe and Peter Ibbett.

Dec 9th Pictorial Entertainment

Our popular end of year dip into the pictorial archives.

Jan 27th By Turnpike to Potton

Peter Ibbett has been taking a closer look at the information uncovered in Huntingdon record office regarding turnpikes whilst researching our recent coach trip along the B1040.

Feb 24th The Archaeology of Bedfordshire

Mike Horgen has been investigating all the sites of archaeological interest in Bedfordshire for his new book.

Mar 24th Scouting in Potton

Peter Walker started his scouting in 1934 and has been connected with the movement ever since. He hopes to include 1950's film of events in Potton as well as an exhibition of local items.

Apr 28th A Victorian Traveller

This talk follows a Baptist minister on his railway journey from Lancashire to London in 1856.

May 26th Boundaries and Footpaths

Weather permitting, a stroll along parts of the Parish Boundary and footpaths is anticipated.

Jun 30th 900 Years of St. Mary's Church

The evening will be spent in and around the church checking our Gravestone Survey and viewing the exhibition of the 900th anniversary celebrations.

The complete programme for 1994 will be available at the AGM.

5th Mid Beds History Conference

This years conference, hosted by Langford History Society, was attended by four members from Potton. The first speaker of the morning session was Joel Carré, the project officer of the Ivel Valley Countryside Project. He outlined the ways in which the historic landscape has changed in the Ivel valley and the various factors which have effected the changes.

Next David Baker from the county council's planning department explained the intricacies of the "listed building" system.

After a delightful lunch there was a change of location, when delegates were treated to a guided tour of the Swiss garden at Old Warden.

Our thanks go to Langford for organising a day which was both informative and most enjoyable.

-----ooOoo-----

Maggi Solly, who was appointed Bedfordshire Museums Officer in 1991, has returned to her native Scotland to take up a similar post there. Maggi maintained contact with all the local history societies in Bedfordshire during her time here. She has visited and helped us at Potton on several occasions, the most recent of which was to supply fabric, free of charge, for covering our display boards.

Sadly, due to lack of funding, it is unlikely that a new Museums Officer will be appointed in Bedfordshire.

-----ooOoo-----

Poaching

It was not only Father Christmas who was out and about on Christmas Eve as the following report from the Quarter Sessions Record of 1792 shows.

The information and complaint of John Cooper, one of the Sons of Agents of Mrs. Ann Cooper of Sandy Warren in the Parish of Sandy in the county of Bedford exhibited upon Oath before me one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace in and for the said county this 29th day of December 1792. Who saith that he on Monday night last (being the 24th day of this present month) about Nine O'clock, set out with one William Goss of Sandy aforesaid, labourer to the said Mrs. Cooper his Mother to take a survey about the Confines an Borders of the said Warren along the "posseioning" (processioning) Way in a place called Deep Dale which parts the said parish of Sandy an Potton in the county aforesaid and with a view to look for snares or engines which might be set by poaching evil minded persons or people who come there to trespass on the said warren, they were followed by some persons Inhabitants of Potton aforesaid (who had been secreted there for the purpose of waylaying the said John Cooper and his men, unlawfully armed with great sticks, pickaxe etc.. to set upon and beat them if opposed and molested or interrupted in their own evil purpose) to wit John Daniel, William Gilbert, John Christy labourers in husbandry, and Joseph Westrop, cordwainer, all of the parish of Potton aforesaid who previously came up to them and said John Christy with an oath accosted this informant and said "damn you what business have you here, who tolerated you upon this bit of ground" to wit a bit of ground adjoining to or near the said possessioning way but most undoubtedly in the said Parish of Potton and beyond the limits of Sandy Warren called Brown's Piece.

That he, said Cooper made answer "why, we are not doing you any harm". That John Christy who was then armed with a turnip picker and standing in a resolute posture as if determined for mischief brandishing his said weapon replied "Damn you if I get or have the first blow, them that I hit, shall not have a second" and John Daniel said immediately, "We'll lay them fast asleep one upon another in the ditch". They said they had waited there some time for this informant and his party to catch him off his bounds and Christy doubled his fist and ran it against the face of this informant and also against the face of said William Goss and then asked them if they called that striking, but that he did not strike either of them than as above stated.

That William Gilbert said directly "if we don't do for you at home you will be had from far or near, they'd come on purpose so we may as well do you as they, you will be done-for before Winter is out".

That John Daniel made answer directly "here is not half our gang, the others are got so drunk they could not come, that they had then got one gone for nine pints of beer". That Joseph Westrop seemed more mild an not so desperate or menacing as the other three, and said little or nothing; or at least nothing of a threatening nature, and seemed to act only as directed by them or as they dictated.

The said Informant therefore upon his oath saith, that he is so alarmed and terrified at these menaces and threats and hath been ever since that evening so in fear of his life or some bodily hurt from their hands that he durst not as heretofore go around the said premises upon his Mother's business, or stir out as usual when it becomes evening or towards night and therefore prayeth Security of the Peace from the said John Christy, John Daniel and William Gilbert.....not out of motives of malice or ill will but merely for his personal safety only.

Christy and Gilbert produce sureties for their good behaviour but Daniel could or would not and he remained for some months in Old Bedford gaol.

N Parry

From the Archives

60 years ago!

I wonder if any of our members recall this event

**POTTON WOMEN'S
CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION**

— A —

GARDEN SOCIAL

Will be held in the GARDENS of
Granville House, Potton,
By kind permission of Mr. & Mrs. G. BARTLE, on
FRIDAY, JULY 21ST, 1933
Commencing at 7 p.m.

CONCERT BY
ST. GEORGE'S CONCERT PARTY, BEDFORD.

Mr. Lennox Boyd, M.P.

Will be present and Address the Gathering.

DANCING Music by the
ARCADIANS DANCE BAND.

ADMISSION: Members 7d. Non Members 1/-
(including Tax.)

REFRESHMENTS AT MODERATE PRICES.
IF WET, IN THE PARISH HALL.

R. Ebbick, Printer, Potton, Beds.

From the Archives

POTTON,
BEDS.

Catalogue of the
Useful Modern Household
Furniture
INCLUDING
PIANOFORTE,
Harmonium,
BEDROOM APPOINTMENTS,
2 Wardrobes,
Kitchen & Scullery Utensils,
And Effects,

To be Sold by Auction by Messrs.

ROBARTS & SON

On **FRIDAY, APRIL 20th, 1904,**
By direction of the Trustees of the late
Mr. Jabez Rainsford.

Sale to commence on the premises, Blackbird
Street, Potton, at 12 o'clock punctually.

*Catalogues may be had of the Auctioneers,
Potton, Beds.*

MAY BE VIEWED THE MORNING OF SALE.

ELPHICE, PRINTER, POTTON.

Almost 90 years ago!

I bet none of our members recall this!

The catalogue listed, in 157 lots the contents of Scullery, Wash House, Kitchen, Cellar, Hall, Passage, Staircase, Sitting Room (which today we might call a living/dining room), Parlour (which was obviously used for entertaining and contained the piano and harmonium), Four bedrooms and Attic.

The list contained some unusual and interesting items; for instance what were the following?

A Door Porter

A Loo Table

Mahogany Arabian bedstead

Trussels and Ironing board

The B1040 to Ramsey

The committee of your society has never been satisfied with simply keeping the ship afloat. It has always sought to steer a shipshape vessel on a course towards new areas of experience. A regular feature of our programmes has always been going out and visiting local towns and villages but we had not attempted more than an evening or afternoon expedition.

Our first historical day trip took place on Sunday 27th June on a warm and sunny day. We had targeted the fenland town of Ramsey where the first mention of Potton emerged into the historical records in 969. George Howe and I had looked through books and maps and had travelled down the route before writing out a script for the day. We hoped that we had got our organisation right and that no disaster would befall us.

All worked well. Our 37 fellow travellers were treated to stops at Hilton and Ramsey Rural Museum as well as Ramsey Abbey School. We also had the bonus of passing three circus elephants at St. Ives and a free brass band concert at Ramsey!

The organisers had the satisfaction of seeing their plans work out well and of fully covering the costs of the day. Planning is already underway to follow up this trip with a second which will cover the rest of the B1040 to another fenland abbey site at Crowland.

Another reward was finding a 1754 survey map of the Turnpike road from Stratton to Bury which gives us additional 18th century map of Potton. A minute book giving a lot of financial detail of the Turnpike Trust is in Huntingdon Record Office and I hope to analyse its Potton information in the near future. This should give us an insight into the flow of traffic through Potton during the first half of the last century.

My thanks to all those members who had the confidence to invest £6.00 in this venture. It has helped add to our knowledge of our heritage.

Peter Ibbett

On the trail of the B1040

It sounded like a day out with a difference, so as guest of the Potton History Society I donned my shorts on one of the few warm sunny days we had this summer and set off with Boo and a coach full of other *Pottonites* to enjoy the delights of the Cambridgeshire countryside. Peter and George provided an interesting, factual and amusing commentary as the coach wound its way through some delightful villages. The handout of maps, both old and new, kept me informed of our progress along the B1040 and provided assistance when locating various landmarks. The Turf Maze at Hilton green was intriguing and we certainly intrigued some of the locals because they wanted to take a photograph of us!

Anyway, having arrived at Ramsey, we set off on the Town Trail, ending up at The George inn for much needed refreshment! A plough persons lunch followed by an ice cream from a local shop for Boo and me; we continued the Town Trail rejuvenated, to arrive at Ramsey Abbey - now an historic house and comprehensive school. A fascinating building - highlight for me being the highly decorated boys loos! By now the brass band had struck up it's theme, so it was time to sit on the grass and relax on a lazy Sunday afternoon (bliss!) However we still had time to visit an agricultural museum just outside Ramsey. A cup of tea and slice of cake and a rapid tour of the exhibits allowed yet more time to enjoy the weather and watch swallows nesting in the rafters and butterflies flitting amongst the wild flowers!

We returned via St. Ives and a walk across it's splendid bridge (yet another ice cream, but then I was with Boo!!) I was introduced to a new pastime on the way home - milestone spotting - great fun!

Thank you Potton History Society for a lovely day.

Lindsay Wright
Riseley, Beds.

In Search of Margaret Emily Shore

Daughter of the Rev. Thomas Shore died Funchal Madeira 7th July 1839 and buried in the New British Burial Ground on 9th July 1839.

We started asking questions almost as soon as we had unpacked our suitcases. Where was the Visitor's Cemetery or was it the English Cemetery? We learned there was an English church and an English vicar. We must certainly visit him.

We found the English church - Holy Trinity; it had been there at 22 Quebra Costas since the early 1800's Emily Shore had certainly worshipped there. The door was open to reveal a medium sized church with the most beautiful flowers arranged on the altar. A lady was sweeping the floor; we asked for the vicar. We would have told you that everybody in Madeira speaks English - but not this lady and moreover, she was most suspicious of us and did her utmost to send us away. We asked if the Casa was where the vicar lived - yes it was. We knocked on the door and again she came to move us away.

However we were not to be discouraged; we were on the trail; the bit was between our teeth; we would press on. Up the hill and on and on we were told to go, until you see the bishop's house. It is opposite there. Sure enough, there it was, a cemetery behind a high stone wall and big green gates. We had been told to ring at the little gate and the caretaker would let us in. Again no English but we recognised he was saying "familas" ... he thought we were looking for our family. We couldn't tell him otherwise.

He led us through the chapel into a side room and opened up the safe and there were three or four ledgers waiting for us ... joy of joys. The first was dated 1870 ... not old enough! We turned to the next. It was in alphabetical order and there, where

it should be, under the S was the entry for Margaret Emily Shore (even with a cross reference). The plot number was 66.

On the wall were several plans of the layout of the graves, printed at different times. Next to 66 there was no name. The caretaker led us into the graveyard. How different it was! The stones were just like in an English churchyard but all around grew this sub tropical vegetation. Hibiscus, Jacaranda, Oleander, Bourgeanvillea, giant Gladioli, Palm trees ... bright bright colours so unlike the sober greens of England. He led us to plot 66. The coffin shaped flat stone bore initials but they were not M E S . This was not it.

He took us to another stone marked 66. The inscription was almost illegible but running my fingers over the stone I could feel a J. This was not it.

The graves were not in chronological order and so we went all over from side to side. No Emily Shore. Many of the stones were no longer legible, many were buried under a sea of agapanthus plants.

Finally he took us to the walls where there were tablets set in; again not in chronological order. We walked right round and it made fascinating reading. So many of them were young people in their 20's; many were women; some were military men. Again our luck was out, we could find no stone that commemorated Emily Shore. We took photos of all sides of the cemetery for certainly there, somewhere, amid the agapanthus plants and the giant strelitzia (bird of paradise) under the palm trees lay the mortal remains of Emily Shore.

We did make contact with the vicar, the Rev. Arthur Brown, by telephone a few days later. He didn't know the story of Emily Shore and he was most interested when I told him all about her and her diary. Unfortunately he was unable to cast any further light on the whereabouts of the grave.

Anita Lewis

Attack at Cockayne Hatley by Armed Gang from Wrestlingworth

Strange but true ... but inhabitants of Cockayne Hatley need not worry as the incident occurred in the 15th century, in the reign of Henry VI. The incident is reported in the Law Reports of the time. It happened when John Cockayne was Lord of the Manor at Cockayne Hatley ... or Berry Hatley as it was known at the time. John Cockayne was the grandson of Sir John Cockayne, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who purchased the estate in 1417.

The court case was brought by John Cockayne who claimed that an armed attack had been made on his manor. He accused John Manyingham, gentleman, of Wrestlingworth, with others, that they "with force and arms broke into the close and houses of the said John Cockayne, and made against his servants so many and great threats of life and mutilation of members, and committed there against them such injuries and things grievous to be borne that the same servants by reason of the fear of death and injury to members did not for a long time dare to go openly about their business"

The armed gang who accompanied John Manyingham, included a group of tailors from Bedford and (oddly) a John Gamlyngey of Hungry Hatley ... the old name of East Hatley.

John Cockayne claimed that on the 15th of October 1471 the attack took place "with force of arms, to wit, with swords bows and arrows" so that "for a long time, to wit twelve days ... the servants did not dare to go about their business, namely the cultivation of the soil, the carting of grain, that is of corn, barley and peas, in sheaves and cocks there standing, and the sowing of corn, and the performance of husbandry ..."

John Cockayne claimed £40 for loss of his servants' time. In defence John Manyingham said that they had only "placed their hands gently on the said servants" and in any case, the close and houses were "standing with the doors open". Moreover they had come to arrest a John Wareyn, who had stolen two silver shillings from John Cockayne.

Unfortunately, we don't know the result of the case as on the appointed day, the Sheriff forgot to send the writ to the court in Bedford (so, what is new!)

The case raises a number of questions. What was the result of the case? Was there rivalry between the two local "gents" ... both of whom were of important families whose recent ancestors were Members of Parliament? Can we really believe that John Manyingham was only doing a favour to John Cockayne by arresting a man who had stolen two shillings from him? And, dare we ask, what was meant by "mutilation of members"? Perhaps a more detailed study of the archives will answer these questions ... providing the Sheriff got round to doing his paperwork!

If you would like to know more about the ancient (and more modern) history of Cockayne Hatley, a 40 page illustrated booklet will shortly be available and can be obtained from Tony Crossley (telephone locally 631568) for £1.50 ... it is also available in the church. All the proceeds will go to the Restoration Fund of Cockayne Hatley church.

A. Crossley
Cockayne Hatley

*Mr Crossley has kindly agreed to tell us more about
Cockayne Hatley at our meeting in October 1994.*

Bedfordshire Local History Association

The most important event on the local history scene this year was the formation of the Bedfordshire Local History Association.

The new body has been constituted to promote the advancement of local history within the county. Its membership consists of local history societies, corporate bodies, individuals and other groups interested in the local history of Bedfordshire. Individual members interested in local studies who have no local society in their neighbourhood are particularly welcome.

Among the aims of the new body are the following:-

- a) To promote the study of local history within the county.
- b) To improve the communication between the local societies and the broader historical network.
- c) To provide for the exchange of views, news and other information between the membership, the publication of a regular news letter being central to this aim.
- d) To organise county events such as conferences, one-day educational workshops, exhibitions etc...
- e) To provide information and assistance to its membership in the furtherance of the study of local history.

Such activities will be designed to complement, enhance but not to conflict with those of member societies.

The annual membership fees of the new association are £10.00 for societies, corporate bodies and other groups, and £5.00 for individuals. Membership applications should be sent to the

Honorary Treasurer,
Bedfordshire Local History Association,
14 Glebe Avenue,
Flitwick,
Bedford, MK45 1HS

Potton History Society has joined the new association and the BLHA news letter will be on display at our own meetings for members to keep upto date. We are fortunate to have our chairman, Norman Parry, on the committee of the association so he will also be keeping us informed of the newest developments.

Notice Board

HELP!

As part of the St. Mary's 900th Anniversary celebration in June 1994, Potton History Society has been asked to take part in a pageant which is being staged in the church, preceded by a procession through the town. We have been allocated the topic "Great Fire of Potton 1783" upon which we have lots of information and historical detail.

We need some one to co-ordinate and stage manage the presentation, which will be a scene with a duration of 5 to 7 minutes.

-----ooOoo-----

Paths

Potton Town Council have invited the Society to become involved in a "parish paths partnership" scheme. This is a partnership between highway authorities, local councils and voluntary groups aimed at improving the condition of *Rights of Way*. Anyone wishing to help in this joint project should contact Norman Parry.

-----ooOoo-----

New Home Wanted

It is almost certain that the Society will have to vacate the *Research Rooms* when the sale of Granville House is completed. Our immediate aim is to prevent the collection of photos and documents being split. We are therefore interested to learn of any unused room or secure out-building which could be used to house our records.