



2008 Review

*Thoughts from the empty chair!
The highs and one low*

Visits and talks

This without doubt for me was our best year yet.

Our meetings at the Women's Institute Lowdham have been a success. The room is more appropriate for our needs, with a separate kitchen. The tea, coffee and biscuits are a welcome addition!

We had a diverse range of excellent talks from Mary Queen of Scots – the captive Queen to the common lodging houses of Nottingham and the 'characters' who stayed there.

Our trips included a fascinating visit to the British Geological Society HQ at Keyworth. The highlights of this trip were the Library (open to the public), the fossils and earth core store.



In July we visited Lincoln Cathedral for a roof top tour. Those who arrived early had the pleasure of listening to Evensong. The tour was excellent, as we had an experienced guide who had a passion for the subject and briefed us on the construction of the cathedral, the conservation of the building over the centuries and the people who helped to make Lincoln Cathedral the beautiful building it is today.

Our last trip of the year was to Newark, we were blessed with lovely evening sunshine for our walk around Millgate. Our guide brought Millgate history to life with his knowledge of the people, their homes and industries served by the adjacent River Trent.

The one low point of the year was the death of Jo Ellis. A fitting tribute is paid to Jo by Jackie Mansfield on the back page.

We successfully completed the Heritage Lottery sponsored projects:

The Lambley Historical web site (www.lambleyheritage.co.uk) goes from strength to strength with more information, pictures etc being added all the time. Our thanks go to the people of Lambley for donating their pictures and memories. These are now available to everyone on the website. *John Smith.*

Programme for 2009

26th January 7.30 pm

Annual General Meeting followed by wine and buffet

16th February 7.30 pm

Phil Holmes will let us know about "The Best Kept Secret of World War II"

16th March 7.30 pm

Eddie Woolrich will be speaking on "Nottinghamshire Dovecotes".

20th April 7.30 pm

David Marcombe on Lambley's "Ralph Lord Cromwell and Tattersall Castle"



18th May 7.00 pm

Guided walk of Colston Basset Village with Val Henstock, a Blue Badge guide



17th June 7.00 pm

Museum at Eaking Oil Fields where the Curator, Kevin Topham, will give a talk, film and guided tour of the oil field.

July

Ideas please for an outing this month.

21st September 7.30 pm

Peter Hammond will talk on "Robin Blincoe: Nottingham's Oliver Twist"

19th October 7.30 pm

Rowena Edlin-White talks to us about "Four Medieval Women"

16th November 7.30 pm

Peter Foden will speak on "Manorial Communities: Exploding the Myths".

Please note - unless otherwise stated all meetings will be held at Lowdham WI Hall

**Don't forget to checkout the Lambley Historical Society website
www.lambleyheritage.co.uk**

Medieval Lambley through Manorial Accounts

The study programme comprised six introductory sessions, led by Chris Weir of Nottinghamshire Archives to explain the purpose of manorial documents, followed by six 'hands-on' classes conducted by Peter Foden, tutor in medieval Latin and history, to translate Lambley's Manorial Rolls for 1444-46 from their original Latin. Both courses attracted a full complement of students.

The documents contained a wealth of information about who lived in Lambley in the middle of the fifteenth century and what they did, contemporary field names, construction projects, agricultural activities and the manor's annual income and expenses. They also revealed the previously unknown fact that at the time, Ralph Cromwell, Lord of the manor, was re-establishing his presence locally by building a new manor house, taking into his own hands land he had previously rented out, allowing some homesteads to become derelict, and consolidating settlement in the village. It must have been a worrying time of change for the people of Lambley more than 560 years ago. We are very fortunate to have had the opportunity to understand the realities of their everyday lives. Appreciation is due to all the individuals and organisations who made it possible, but especially to Jo Ellis, without whose imagination, enthusiasm and persistence it would not have happened.

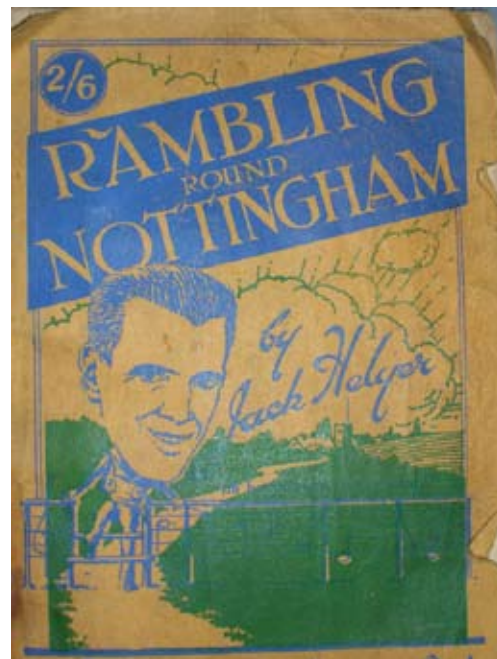
Shelia Mortimer.

REMEMBER JACK HELYER?

Do you remember Jack Helyer? Who was he? Well Jack was a nationally renowned cinema organist who played at the Ritz (later called the Odeon) on Angel Row, Nottingham, from 1934 to 1950.

Jack Helyer had played at cinemas all over the south of England, including a period at the famous Leicester Square cinema organ in 1932, but it was in Nottingham that Jack really made his name. As well as his performances at the Ritz itself he undertook well over 100 public broadcasts on national radio and performed special concerts at venues in many parts of the country. People travelled far and wide to hear Jack Helyer and to see Jack, because Jack created performances that were also a visual delight. He would rise out of the subterranean depths playing the fabulous Conacher organ, attired in coat and tails, and would instantly capture the hearts of his audiences. In addition to his concerts there were musical interludes where he would combine the music with slides showing buildings and scenery from walks he made throughout the British Isles and in Europe. There were musical lectures on artists like Rembrandt, entertainments taking in Alpine scenery and carefully crafted introductions to church architecture and interesting towns and cities that he had visited. These were no ordinary entertainments, these were special occasions that the audiences would never forget.

Jack was born Edmund Helyer in Bournemouth in 1902 though he was always known as 'Jack'. He had no musical education but was taught how to play the piano by his mother. His career started with projection work in local cinemas but he was soon in demand to provide the musical accompaniment to silent films of the day. Later 'talkies' came in but the need for organ music simply grew and grew. These musical interludes were part of a real night out at the Pictures. Jack's name was soon up there with the other greats of the day, organists like Reginald Foort and Reginald Dixon. They were all celebrities of the age and their rising stars coincided perfectly with the rise of the cinema in British cultural life. I'm sure we all have our own memories of visits to our local cinema, sometimes to see a specific film, sometimes going on a date!



Yet Jack had another talent and love – and that was for rambling. When he wasn't entertaining audiences at the cinema or spending time with his family he liked nothing better than to stride out into the countryside. He walked throughout Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire and further afield when time permitted. It was, I think, a stroke of genius, for Jack to combine his love of the cinema organ and rambling in a signature tune, titled 'I'm Happy When I'm Hiking'. This catchy tune caught the spirit of the age and when it was played at the beginning and end of the performances the crowds invariably joined in. Yes, everyone was 'Happy'!

Of course the age of the cinema organ could not last forever and in post-war years Jack continued to make and record organ concerts but he made his living in cinema management. Jack died in 1973 but his name was not forgotten and his family archives are deposited in Nottinghamshire Archives, thanks to his daughter. Long may his memory live on. *Chris Weir.*

Jo Ellis

Jo was a longstanding and very active member of the Lambley Historical Society. Her passion was mediaeval history, her knowledge extensive and her sense of enquiry acute. Jo's philosophy was that the study of local history meant going out and looking for evidence to support answers to historical questions which she did with great tenacity, often ignoring her own physical health in the quest!

However her breadth of knowledge in the many other areas that interested her was immense and her generosity in sharing her knowledge and ideas well known – if we didn't know the answer we would ask Jo and she almost invariably gave us what we needed.

Her contribution to the Historical Society was considerable. She was instrumental in producing the Lambley Millennium book and also "Living in Lambley" We would not have realised the historical importance of the cottage near Lambley school without Jo's keen eye or been given the opportunity to explore it before the refurbishment was completed without her powers of persuasion. Having discussed the cottage with Jo the owners were happy for us to look round.

Latterly Jo persuaded us that the Manorial Account Rolls of 1444 – 46, which describe Lambley, were worth translating from Latin, so she set up a series of lectures and found a tutor to help us in this task, having first obtained a copy from the Kent Archives and permission from Lord de Lysle, the present owner. My last memory of Jo is of her leading Glenice and me on a field walk to identify the fields mentioned in this document.

She was always looking for new experiences and opportunities to extend her own knowledge and that of anyone else who was interested. Jo was a "one off" and her death will leave an enormous gap in our lives. She will be sorely missed. *Jackie Mansfield.*



Treasurers Report:

I am pleased to report that the Lambley Historical Society accounts are in credit for 2008.

In addition to the annual subscription, the Society income has been increased with the sale of the Lambley Book. This is a welcome additional to the Society's funds. The book is advertised for sale at £5 on the LHS website.

The Society's funds have also benefited from the LHI Grant, which has been used to promote the LHS projects and meetings with the local community.

I am pleased to report that membership of the Society has increased from 25 in 2007 to 32 in 2008. New members are always welcome and will be given the New Lambley book (£5) free of charge!

So please, encourage relatives and friends to come along to our enjoyable meetings and join the society for £5 (effective first year subscription).

As always your suggestions are welcome as to how we could supplement our income.

Accounts and Treasurer's report will be presented at the AGM.

John Smith LHS Treasurer.

Pingle Field

The geophysical survey of the Pingle Field in Lambley was completed in February 2008 and with the help of Nottingham University the results were accurately plotted onto a 1:2500 Ordnance Survey Map. A survey report has been completed and sent to the County Archaeologist for inclusion in Nottinghamshire County Historic Environment Record.

The survey has identified several features of potential archaeological interest, including what could be stone facing of the medieval fishponds and a stone structure between two fishpond compartments. In addition there is evidence of stone structures around the periphery of the site which probably represent the remains of medieval buildings.
Alan Morris