

"If you need this information in large print, Braille, other language or on audio cassette please ask"

Annual Archive Day School

This year's Annual Archive Day School will be on the Ecclesiastical buildings of Staffordshire. It will be held at The Gallery, Staffordshire University, Stafford on Saturday 31st March 2007, 10.00am - 4.30pm

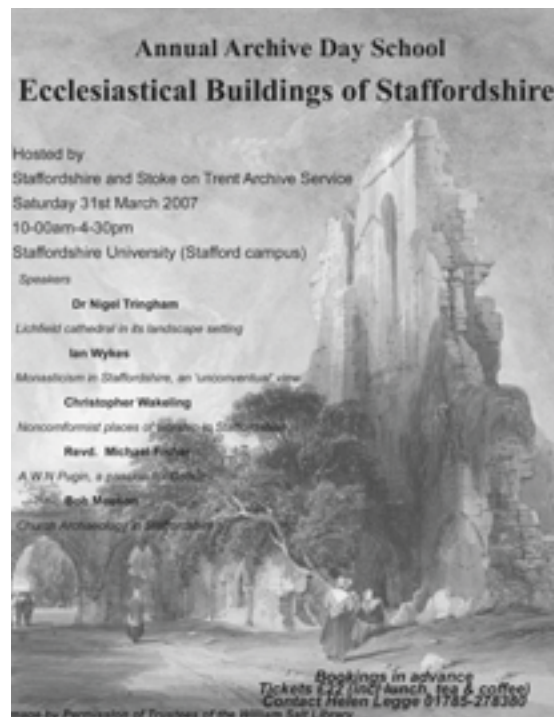
Tickets for this year's Annual Archive Day School held by the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service are going on sale this week. This year's event is devoted to the Ecclesiastical Buildings of Staffordshire. The day will concentrate on non-conformist chapels and parish churches across the county as well as the lost monasteries of the county, such as Croxden and Burton. The event will also cover the great cathedral at Lichfield as well as the Victorian Gothic of A.W.N. Pugin.

The speakers are

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| <i>Nigel Tringham</i> | Lichfield Cathedral in its landscape setting |
| <i>Ian Wykes</i> | Monasticism in Staffordshire, an 'unconventional' view |
| <i>Christopher Wakeling</i> | Nonconformist places of worship in Staffordshire |
| <i>Revd. Michael Fisher</i> | A.W.N. Pugin, a passion for Gothic |
| <i>Bob Meeson</i> | Church Archaeology in Staffordshire |

Booking in advance

Tickets £22.00 to include lunch, tea and coffee, Contact Helen Legge: 01785 278380



Woodland

The autumn saw a continuation of our annual study days held with the Victoria County History of Staffordshire. The day entitled "Staffordshire woods and forests: life outside the village" was based upon recent research by county editor, Dr Nigel Tringham, on the Needwood area of Staffordshire with Brian Rich contributing his expertise built upon many years research of Midland woodlands. The morning began with a fascinating discussion on place-names and how they can help in revealing historic woodland landscapes. This was followed by a very interesting examination of Staffordshire forests touching upon hunting and rights of common pasture. The afternoon sessions brought the story forward with the exploitation of the forest for economic purposes, such as glass making, tanning, charcoal making etc. Finally Dr Tringham rounded off the afternoon by taking us through to the enclosure of Needwood forest and the Bass family interest in the Forest.

Recent Accessions

Among personal papers received recently, there are four letters written by a Belgian man who had been a child refugee with his parents, staying in Knutton during the First World War. These letters were written between 1931 and 1949, first to the vicar asking about people he remembered, and then to a local woman who had remembered him. They include reminiscences about their time as refugees in Staffordshire, as well as life in Belgium immediately after the Second World War.

An unsolved mystery is presented by a rent account book relating to the Shreshill area, 1821-1835. Despite an array of apparent clues, it has not yet proved possible to confirm the identity of the owner in question. Further research by any interested party would be gratefully accepted! The book ends with a grumble about the Shreshill poor rate assessment.

Also included in a small miscellaneous collection is an unusual will for a Miss Smith from Brewood dated 1879. This itemises a large quantity of personal possessions such as jewellery, silverware,

pictures and furniture, while her bequests to servants include poultry, greenhouse plants and a mowing machine. Many of the personal effects are identified as to who had previously given them to her, and shows a nice sense of a family circle and women friendships. The will is also unusual because it bears endorsements from all sorts of businesses in which her money had been invested to provide her income.

The "Boots and Shoes" oral history project last Spring has continued to be a source of further accessions relating to the shoe industry in Stafford. These include warehouse and shipping account books, share and insurance documents, and various contracts, for Lotus and subsidiary companies, the earliest dating back to about 1901.

As usual, we have received several parish deposits. These include 19th century parish registers for the Mease Valley group of churches: Clifton Campville, Chilcote, Edingale, Elford and Harlaston.

December 2006

NEEDWOOD FOREST



The VCH county editor reports on the forthcoming volume

The next volume of the Staffordshire Victoria County History (now due for publication in the summer of 2007) covers the Tutbury and Needwood Forest part of the county, Tutbury castle being the centre of a large feudal estate in the middle ages with the forest originating as a private hunting area. Around the central core of the forest, there were also several parks, created by the lords of Tutbury in the early 13th century as special reserves for deer. Both the forest and the parks were subject to special regulations to protect the game, and court records survive in the duchy of Lancaster archive in The National Archives. There are, however, some stray forest court records in the Staffordshire Record Office, including one for 1698 in which the inhabitants of some surrounding villages (Barton-under-Needwood, Marchington, and Yoxall) were fined for illegally felling trees to make bonfires for Thanksgiving Day (5 November).

Taking timber for such festivities had probably been regarded as a customary right by the villagers, who in the 1550s claimed timber for bonfires to celebrate the marriage of their eldest sons. They had also been allowed to

pasture animals in the forest (provided that they had been marked with a brand), and one consequence of this was that it was possible for the villagers to convert more of their own land for arable. There was, therefore, much local resistance to attempts to inclose the forest, and also in the 18th century some aristocrats converted the small lodges of forest officers into rather grand mansions for use as summer residences. One notable example was Byrkley lodge in the centre of the forest, of which there is a drawing in the Staffordshire Views collection in the William Salt Library. It was not until 1801, therefore, that Needwood was at last privatised.

But rather than being subject to large-scale conversion to arable (which might have led to the creation of new villages and hamlets), much of Needwood remained under pasture. Moreover, about half the newly-inclosed land became part of an estate built up by the Bass brewing family of Burton-upon-Trent, and although they created an estate village at Rangemore, it was kept deliberately small, as a large rural population would have adversely affected the game. The church at Rangemore,

however, was in addition to one at Newchurch, established on the main road in the centre of the forest under the Inclosure Act.

So, concern for hunting deer and other game has determined Needwood's character for several centuries, and as a result the forest has attracted a number of high-status visitors, notably Duke John of Gaunt (d. 1399), who as lord of Tutbury and king of Castile built himself a hunting lodge on the east side of the forest at Belmont (the name means a 'beautiful moat'). Another royal visitor was Edward VII, who in 1902 stayed with his friend Lord Burton in the latter's newly-enlarged home, Rangemore House: indeed, the record office has a volume of architect's plans which show that the extension had been specially designed in order to include a bedroom for the king (but surprisingly not en suite), with a lift directly opposite the door.

For further information about the VCH, please consult the new website

www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk

Making Archives Accessible: the Pay and Power Project

In October and November the Archive Service ran two events as part of the Pay and Power Project. This project was developed by a consortium of the 14 archive services in the West Midlands with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to make uncatalogued Archive collections in our record offices accessible. For Staffordshire, a team of project staff were responsible for cataloguing the Knight and Sons, Solicitors, collection (D4452) held at Staffordshire Record Office and helping us to organise the two events.

In October the Record Office hosted a very successful open evening for Staffordshire businesses and organisations. The purpose of the event was to encourage local businesses and organisations to preserve their historic records and in due course to deposit or donate records to the Archive Service. Attendees were able to see the work of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service in caring for the historic archives of the County, which are essential to our understanding and appreciation of Staffordshire's past. The programme included an introduction to the Archive Service, a tour of the strong rooms, and a demonstration of conservation techniques. In addition there

was a display of archives from Staffordshire businesses and a talk by a local historian about using archives to write a history of a local firm, Knight and Sons of Newcastle under Lyme. We were pleased to welcome representatives of local solicitors firms, the local branch of the law society, the NFU, the Staffordshire Police Museum and various Staffordshire business clubs.

Unfortunately, the Police Museum has closed this year but the Record Office was able to take the large collection of written records into safe keeping. We have also been approached about taking collections from two local businesses as a result of the event. If you would like further information about depositing or donating records to the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Archive Service please contact us (see details below). If you would like to take part in a tour of the Record Office please ask for details of our 'Making the Most of your Archive Service' programme.

The second event in October was focused on the more isolated rural communities of north Staffordshire. We were pleased to welcome attendees from Rushton Spencer, Horton,



Ipstones and Ilam. The day centred on the use of historic maps for local history with a talk from an historical geographer and then the opportunity to examine maps for particular places. The concept of 'memory mapping' was also introduced which encourages people to create a 'memory map' of their village or locality, recording events or memories attached to particular places. We also used the day to consult about how the Archive Service might serve better the places at some distance from Stafford, Lichfield or Stoke. The feedback indicated how much people had enjoyed the day and how worthwhile they had found it.

Results of 2006 Survey of Visitors to British Archives

Back in February 2006 you may recall that the Archive Service participated in the seventh national Survey of Visitors to British Archives. This was a particularly busy period for archive services partly due to the influence of the BBC programme 'Who Do You Think You Are?' As a result the national response rate to the survey showed an increase of 34%. The results of this survey have now been published and we would like to thank everyone who participated.

Improvements since the last survey

The last national survey was in 2004 and we have carried out a number of improvements since then which were highlighted in Time 2 Time issue 11. We carried out our own local survey in October 2005 and used the results to plan service improvements. Since October 2005 we have extended the options for copies by introducing a digital reprographics service. We have also introduced the facility to take credit card payments (customer not present). In the October survey we asked what additional sources you would like us to buy and in response to this purchased another 10 years of the General Register Office indexes for Staffordshire Record Office (now available up to 1920).

How you rated us

The table below shows the Archive Service results for the 2006 survey and the percentage increase in the good and very good rating since 2002 when our target was set.

	% of visitors rating services very good or good in 2006	% increase (2002-2006) in visitors rating our services very good
Advance information	94.4%	+0.6%
Web site	89.7%	+2.9%
Opening hours	92.9%	+4.2%
Physical access to the building	94.6%	+1.5%
Visitor facilities	81.3%	+5.2%
Catalogues, indexes leaflets	95.9%	+4.6%
Document delivery	96.4%	+0.8%
Microform facilities	91.2%	+1.4%
Copy services	85.1%	+1.3%
On-site IT facilities	85.4%	+12%
Quality of staff's advice	97.8%	+2.5%
Helpfulness and friendliness of staff	98.3%	+0.7%
Service and facilities overall	97.4%	+2.8%

What we plan to do in response

We plan to further extend the options for copies across the service by introducing an in-house photography service. We will also be looking to provide additional family history sources across the service. If you have any suggestions for improvements please fill in a comments form and post it into the box at the office you are visiting. Alternatively please write to Joanna Terry, Assistant County Archivist, Staffordshire Record Office, Eastgate Street, ST16 2LZ. Email: Joanna.terry@staffordshire.gov.uk

Be A Volunteer In The Sutherland Project

There are several ways to get involved in helping us increase the accessibility of the Sutherland Papers.

Activities:

Name indexing from the archives

Transcribing documents that our Project Interpretation Officer has decided to feature on the website

Writing up a piece of research that you have done using the Sutherland Papers

Locations and Times

Staffordshire Record Office – On Tuesday morning or afternoon.

Name indexing currently takes place on Tuesday mornings. A friendly group of people get together for two hours and work on the original documents, helping and advising each other as they go. We would like to get another group going in the afternoon if possible.

Stoke on Trent City Archives

The North Staffordshire Mining Research Group meet at Stoke on Friday mornings. They are working for the project on understanding and interpreting the records of mining on the Sutherland estate in the late eighteenth century. They are always happy to welcome new members and you can find out more about the group on their own website [<http://www.stokecoll.ac.uk/nscfweb/IndexNS.htm>]. We are also looking to set up a group similar to the one that meets at Stafford for name indexing only that would meet on Friday afternoon.

In your own home! Any time!

No matter where you are in the world – you can be a volunteer for the Sutherland Project.

We will send you copies of material that you could index or transcribe at home and send back to us. There are a few simple forms to fill in, but there is no obligation on you at all – you can do as much or as little as you like. A couple of hours a week will soon produce a significant contribution.

For more information on any of these options contact the Project Officer Sheila Pill on (01785) 854584 or email spp@staffordshire.gov.uk

STAFFING CHANGES

Regular readers at the Lichfield Record Office will miss Diane Challenor who retired at the end of November after 18 years with the Archive Service. Her post will be taken up in January by Anita Caithness.

Additional General Register Office indexes

In response to our user survey carried out in October 2005 we have purchased another ten years of General Register Office indexes for Staffordshire Record Office. This means that we now have up to 1920 available for consultation. Please contact us if you would like to book a microfiche reader to view the indexes.

60 GLORIOUS YEARS

This year, 2007, the Archive Service celebrates 60 years of collecting and preserving Staffordshire's rich and diverse archival heritage. We also celebrate 10 years of provision of a Joint Archive Service between the County of Staffordshire and the City of Stoke on Trent.

As part of our celebrations we want to give people the opportunity to nominate a favourite document to be displayed on the Archive Service web site in our new Archive Discovery Zone. The document can be from the County Record Office, Lichfield Record Office or Stoke on Trent City Archives.

It isn't a competition. It's an opportunity for you to get involved. If you would like to make a nomination, we would ask you to supply a few words explaining why you have chosen this particular document and why it has been important to your research. You will find a nomination form inside this copy of From Time 2 Time. If the form has vanished, then get in touch with us and we will send you one.

New Family History Resource

After months of hard work by volunteers at the Staffordshire Record Office, we are very pleased to have available now the latest in a series of Poor Law Union indices. The index (available on cd) is of all the admission and discharge registers for the Seisdon Poor Law Union up to 1900. The index can be viewed at the Staffordshire Record Office, Stoke on Trent City Archives, Lichfield Record Office as well as the Burton upon Trent Family and Local History Centre. Further indexes will be made available as they are finished. The plan is to index all the admission and discharge registers held by the service up to 1900. *(Please note there are no plans to sell this cd)*



If you need this information in large print, Braille, another language or on audio cassette, please ask.

Comments or Suggestions...

Any comments or suggestions on the contents of Time 2 Time please send them to: Matthew Blake, Staffordshire Record Office, Eastgate Street, Stafford. ST16 2LZ
E-mail: matthew.blake@staffordshire.gov.uk

Struggling to read something?

The Archive Service has purchased twelve higher magnification lenses for microfiche readers across the Archive Service.

These new lenses offer 72x magnification which means that the image is greatly enlarged on the screen. So if you are struggling to read something please

ask a member of staff about the machines which have the new lenses fitted. You can also request one of these machines when you book your microfiche reader at one of our offices.



Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Archive Service
website: <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/archives/>

STAFFORDSHIRE RECORD OFFICE

Eastgate Street, Stafford ST16 2LZ
Mon, Tues, Thurs 9-5, Wed 9-8, Fri 9.30-4.30, Sat 9-4
Tel. (01785) 278373
E-mail: staffordshire.record.office@staffordshire.gov.uk
Appointments essential

WILLIAM SALT LIBRARY

19 Eastgate Street, Stafford ST16 2LZ
Tues-Thurs 9-1 and 2-5, Fri 9.30-1 and 2-4.30
1st Saturday in each calendar month 9-1
Tel. (01785) 278372
E-mail: william.salt.library@staffordshire.gov.uk

LICHFIELD RECORD OFFICE

The Friary, Lichfield WS13 6QG
Mon, Tues, Wed and Fri 9.30-5 Thurs 11.30-7
2nd Saturday in each calendar month 9.30-12.30
Tel. (01543) 510720
E-mail: lichfield.record.office@staffordshire.gov.uk
Appointments essential

STOKE ON TRENT CITY ARCHIVES

Hanley Library, Bethesda Street, Hanley,
Stoke on Trent ST1 3RS
Tues, Wed, Thurs 9-7.30 Fri 9-5 Sat 9-4
Tel. (01782) 238420
E-mail: stoke.archives@stoke.gov.uk
Appointment essential

BURTON UPON TRENT FAMILY & LOCAL HISTORY CENTRE

Burton Library, Riverside, High Street
Burton upon Trent DE14 1AH
Mon, Wed, Fri 9-6 Tues 10-6 Thurs 9-8 Sat 9-4.30
Tel. (01283) 239556
E-mail: burton.library@staffordshire.gov.uk
Appointments essential