

**Totley History Group
At Totley Library
Wednesday, 28 January 2015**

Present:

21 People

General Items:

Sally let us all know about the Ruskin in Sheffield series of events. Sally has been commissioned as a writer to write about Ruskin's St George's Farm and its legacy where they tried to work collectively. Sally is writing a performance piece as a walk to Woodthorpe Hall and to return to the library, meeting various characters along the way. Sally is looking for anyone who would like to help with research and also for the performance, to be a performer, also help with gathering costumes, tools, refreshments. Information will be in the Totley Independent, it is hoped this will be on the weekend of 20 and 21 June.

Speaker – The Rise and Fall of the Workhouses focusing on the local area by Suzanne Bingham

Suzanne gave a fascinating talk about the workhouses. Everyone was thanked for turning up in the wind and snow to enjoy this!

It was in the 18th century when many of the workhouses were built. In 1834 there was a Poor Law Amendment Act to ensure the workhouse conditions were made so that people would only go there if they were desperate, this was because workhouses were funded by a parish "poor rate" similar to the present day council tax and local ratepayers didn't want to pay any more than absolutely necessary. Unions of parishes came together to have one large workhouse. By 1880 50% of the inhabitants were the elderly, 30% were children. Later in the 19th century legislation was passed requiring that every workhouse should have a separate hospital building. This was the first time that proper medical care was available. The workhouse hospitals were open to anyone not just workhouse inmates.

At the start of the 20th century there was the introduction of women and working class people as poor law guardians and this called for a review of the workhouses. The end of the workhouses came on 1 April 1930 and the poor law guardians were abolished and workhouses were renamed Public Assistance Institutions and were run by local councils, it was not until the introduction of the NHS when these ended.

The Sheffield area had its first poor house at West Bar Green in 1628. As Sheffield expanded there was a new alm house built at West Bar. In 1829

when larger premises were needed an abandoned cotton mill at Kelham Island was used. The Ecclesall area had some small workhouses. In the 1834 Amendment Act workhouses were made larger, examples were at Nether Edge (later became the hospital) and at Grenoside. There was a workhouse at Hollow Meadows on the Snake Pass for the able bodied poor where they worked the land. In the 1870s these workhouses were getting too small so a site was found at Fir Vale. In the 1930s when the workhouses were abolished, Fir Vale became the Fir Vale Infirmary and the hospital was ran alongside this until it amalgamated to become the Northern General Hospital.

How did people end up in a workhouse? It was because they were poor, ill, couldn't look after themselves, had no family to help them, they had no work, unmarried pregnant women, mentally ill. They were interviewed on arrival by the housemaster to establish their circumstances. Upon recommendation their possessions were taken away and they were given a bath not in warm or clean water, they had a haircut, a thorough medical examination and issued with a workhouse uniform. There were 7 classes of pauper and you would stay with the same class, segregated from other classes. There was a daily routine, the diet was poor and described as a diet of starvation. Work would be stone breaking, oakum picking (picking old rope) and domestic cleaning. Vagrants were admitted at 6pm, given a hammock and then at 10am on the 2nd day discharged, if they had nowhere else to go they rejoined the queue to be readmitted at 6pm again!

In later years there were improvements for the deserving poor, with better uniforms, more rest and refreshments. In the 20th century the high walls segregating the various classes of pauper were demolished and the classification system was ended. There were improvements for the children in Sheffield where there were scattered homes that were leased out houses and looked after by a housemother. They were part of the local community and by 1930 there were 30 of these around the Sheffield area. At Ecclesall there were cottage homes, a self-sufficient village built for the children. They had a strict routine for education every day. When the children were 15 years old they would leave and go to work.

Future Programme

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|--------|--|
| 25 Feb | The Story of the Snake Road - Howard Smith |
| 25 Mar | Showing of local photographs from the Thompson postcard collection – Christine Shimell |
| 22 Apr | AGM followed by Mary Queen of Scots, the captive years 1568-84 – David Templeman |
| 20 May | Ruskin and his connection to Sheffield – Mark Frost |

All meetings are at 7.30 pm at Totley Library

**Totley History Group
At Totley Library
Wednesday, 25 February 2015**

Present:

31 People

General Items:

Sally let everyone know that the Ruskin Walk will be in June, date to be confirmed. She is looking for helpers with the costumes, stewarding etc. All to let her know if they can assist. We are going to have this walk as our June meeting.

Dorothy advised that the Totley History Group website had now had over 260,000 hits. There are some new items including details about Cherry Tree from someone whose mother was the assistant matron.

The Soldiers Book is still on sale, £4.50 per copy.

Next month's talk will be Howard Smith, the story of the Snake Road, unfortunately he could not attend this month as he is moving house.

Pauline has written a book all about Totley Rise, it is currently at the printers and should be on sale at £5 by the end of next week. Copies will be available at future meetings.

Speaker – Christine presented some of the Thompson postcard collection.

Highlights of some of the postcards shown:-

Back Lane – Colin Thompson pictured with horses and cattle, he bred high class animals, also pictured is his slaughter house where he killed the animals at the back of number 69 on Totley Rise, now the pet shop.

Vernon Mather, a butcher at Thompsons, pictured on Back Lane.

Highland Cattle grazing on Totley Rise in the area which is now the dual carriageway.

Meat hanging outside Thompsons butchers shop.

J W Marrison – A grocers shop, with a horse and cart outside on Totley Rise.

A postcard of the part of Bricky Row which is now the fish and chip shop. It shows the buildings before the flat roof extension was built on the front. It was then the Post Office and a sweet shop, the sweet shop has a sign for Fry's Chocolate outside.

Lots of shops had bicycles outside, these would be for the deliveries.

A postcard dated around 1914, shows the change over from horses to cars for transport. And a later postcard where there are more shops visible which would be during the time of the Totley Tunnel being built, once the tunnel was completed some of these shops closed down.

1950 postcard on Totley Rise shows an increase in cars, Grattons and Damms the cobblers can be seen.

Aerial postcard showing Totley Rise and Back Lane and another lane called Thompson Lane. A field owned by Thompson is shown where they used to grow peas.

Bradway Bank and the Chemical Yard and also shows a building with a sign for Brookvale Laundry on it.

View from Abbeydale, Dore now where the Westfield flats are built. The path to Prospect Place is clearly visible as there is little housing at this time.

Baslow Road with an old bus and motor cars on it, shows how narrow it was before it was made into a dual carriageway

Buildings which are now the Totley Dentist, it looks very rural with fields across the road

Green Oak Totley with fields, now where the Laverdene estate is

Cross Scythes old frontage, people sat outside very dressed up, some with top hats, there was a weighing machine outside and adverts on the side of the building for the bowling green, stout and ales and cycles. It shows a police box across the road near the old police house.

Early picture of Butts Hill, all the washing hung out can be seen with Cannon Hall in the background.

Hillfoot Road and Avalon cottage before it was demolished.

Totley Hall Lane with Bramalls Farm and South Cottage which was 3 cottages, now rebuilt with the existing stone and is one dwelling. This is opposite Totley All Saints Church.

Totley All Saints Church, built on land donated by the Milners in memory of their son who was the first Totley soldier to die in the war

Totley Hall on Totley Hall Lane covered in ivy

View of the Totley Rifle Range around the time of the 1st World War and Lane Head Road can be seen.

The Totley Moors and rifle range and the cobble path on Chapel Fields all very open, no shrubs or trees like today.

Monny Brook possibly showing where the poor house building was

Baslow Road leading to Owler Bar, narrow road, no traffic, the road was quite barren, called a turnpike

Hay cutting in the fields by Totley, with a horse and cart for transporting the harvest

Totley College high rise building and accommodation blocks at Highfield all long demolished.

Everyone agreed it was a very interesting viewing by Christine and all were thanked for joining in and making it so enjoyable

Future Programme

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|--------|--|
| 25 Mar | The Story of the Snake Road - Howard Smith |
| 22 Apr | AGM followed by Mary Queen of Scots, the captive years 1568-84 – David Templeman |
| 20 May | Ruskin and his connection to Sheffield – Mark Frost |

All meetings are at 7.30 pm at Totley Library

**Totley History Group
At Totley Library
Wednesday, 25 March 2015**

Present:

48 People

General Items:

Dorothy advised everyone that Brian Edwards recently died following an illness over the last few years. Several members of the group went to his funeral which was very well attended.

Pauline has written a book entitled The Rise of Totley Rise, it is £5 per copy and is available to buy at our meetings and also at Totley Rise Post Office and Scrivens.

Speaker – Howard Smith – The Snake Road

Howard gave us a great talk on the making of the Snake Road.

Before the 1850s goods were transported on the back of horses. There were lots of benefits of moving goods via waggons and wheels which required turnpike roads to be built. In 1756 the first one was built from Sheffield, Chesterfield to Derby and then a network of roads began to be built. There were 2 routes to Manchester, one from Barnsley which later became the A61, and the southerly Hope Valley route. This kept being modified with the Winnatts Pass being opened via Mam Tor which is now closed.

Why was a third route needed? Around 1812 the American markets for Sheffield cutlery were affected by the war between America and Britain and there was an embargo on buying products. 6,000 people were employed in Sheffield for the supply of the American markets for edge tools, knives, nails etc. The war ended and there was a backlog of orders, Sheffield was desperate to cash in on this and it was decided to have a new road to speed up the journey times for getting goods to Liverpool via Manchester to be shipped to the US. The area from Sheffield to Glossop had no settlements and unusually the road was completely new and designed on paper rather than being an upgrade of an existing trackway. This is why we see some long straight stretches which is unusual for a road layout. £2,500 was required to fund its building and this was provided by the Dukes of Devonshire and Norfolk who owned the majority of the land. The surveyor was William Fairbank.

In 1821 the new turnpike was opened, it had taken 3 years to build. Normally by law the width of the actual road was 18 feet but it was 60 feet wide in total to provide grass verges on either side for people with horses, these verges were kept clear of obstructions so there were no hiding places for the highwaymen. However, in the case of the Snake Road this wasn't possible due to the steep terrain. The road was cut into the hillside like a terrace.

Steep gradients were avoided because if the gradient was over 1 in 9 an extra horse had to be provided with a lad until the road levelled out, this was extra expense. There is one steep part near the summit and this is 1 in 10!

Gangs of men from Sheffield and Glossop were employed and they met at the River Derwent, they used picks, spades and wheelbarrows, it must have been very remote and hard work for them.

Toll charges were collected at the toll cottages where the charges had to be displayed outside on a board, these included the costs for moving the various types of animals and the numbers of them. At the end of the hill before Glossop the toll house still exists though it is now privately owned. The windows often had a slant to them so that the tollkeeper could see the traffic approaching from either direction.

The inns on the road provided food, drink and accommodation and the innkeepers also ran the stage coaches and provided stabling for the horses. The Norfolk Arms, Surrey Inn and Ashopton Inn are now gone but The Snake Pass Inn is still in existence.

There was great excitement when the Snake Road opened and the local press said it had cut down journey times and was a fine levelled road. The freight wagons travelled at 2.5 miles per hour and these replaced the packhorses and therefore reduced costs. A journey that once took 3 days now only took one day.

At this time flying wagons were used which went at 3 miles per hour, this was possible as the horses were changed and rested at the various inns on the road, using these people could now get to London in 4 days rather than a week. Stage coaches travelled at 8-9 miles per an hour and these also changed their horses at regular intervals. The Royal Mail coaches were the finest transport and fast, they had armed guards and travelled at night when there were no animals being transported on the roads. By law everyone had to move out of their way and tollkeepers had to have their gate open ready for them to pass through. A horn was used to notify of

their arrival, they travelled at 12 miles per hour. Passenger coaches were also used, these had a crew of two and carried 15 passengers both inside and up on top in the open.

However, the road was financially a failure. Many of the people were put off using it as the moors were a threatening environment and a lot of people stuck to the route they knew where they had existing arrangements with innkeepers. The sailing ships took weeks to get the US so a few hours saving did not make much difference to them. The bad weather during winter and frequent landslips also contributed to its lack of use. Also, not many people needed to get to Glossop, therefore, all these factors meant that not enough money was taken in tolls. It only survived as the 2 Dukes kept providing the money.

In 1875 the tollgates were removed and the trust was wound up, it owed £7,000. The road reverted to the parishes where the only people that mainly used it were shooting parties, later in the 1890s cyclists used it and then once the motor car was introduced it was used again.

Future Programme

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|---------|--|
| 22 Apr | AGM followed by Mary Queen of Scots, the captive years 1568-84 – David Templeman |
| 20 May | Ruskin, Totley and St George's Farm – Mark Frost |
| June | Proposed visit to Haddon Hall – Date to be voted on by members |
| 22 July | What's tha' up to? Policing in the 1950s Attercliffe – Martyn Johnson |
| August | No meeting |
| 23 Sep | History of Measurement from Romans to James Chesterman Tools – J K Nicholson |
| 28 Oct | Open Meeting around WW2 ... artefacts, memories |
| 25 Nov | The Mystery Box – Leo and Malcolm Leader |
| 16 Dec | Quiz Night and good company |

All meetings are at 7.30 pm at Totley Library

**Totley History Group – Annual General Meeting
At Totley Library
Wednesday, 22 April 2015**

Present:

41 People

Apologies

Norman Rolfe

Minutes of 2014 AGM

These were circulated after the AGM last April, if anyone would like to read them we have a copy available.

Matters Arising

All confirmed that there were no matters arising.

Acceptance of the Minutes

Proposed and accepted

Chair's Report

We had several outings last year, at Eyam we had fabulous weather and a great day and in July Pauline took everyone on the Totley Rise History walk, the rain stopped and the sun came out. We had stands at the Sheffield Family History Fair and also at the Totley Show. We held an exhibition in November to commemorate the outbreak of World War 1, this was a great success. The website continues to attract readers, we have had over 288,000 hits. The year ended on a high with Pauline's new book called The Rise of Totley Rise, this is selling well with over 200 copies sold already, copies are available to purchase at our meetings or at Scrivens or Totley Post Office

Dorothy thanked all the members of the management committee for all their help and support.

Treasurer's Report

Norman could not attend the meeting, however, Dorothy reported that the accounts are in good shape and we have copies for anyone that wants to view them. Proposed by Sue Scattergood and seconded by Alan Byron.

Election of Management Committee

Chair – Dorothy – Proposed Avril Critchley and seconded Jill Hnat.

Vice Chair – Christine – Proposed Sally Goldsmith and seconded Ken Blair

Treasurer – Norman – Proposed Jim Martin and seconded Dominic Harris.

Secretary – Kerry – Proposed Dorothy Prosser and seconded Christine Shimell

The remaining 6 members of the Management Committee are willing to stand for the next year, proposed Sally Goldsmith and seconded Vicky Highet

If anyone would like to join the management committee please let one of the members know.

General Items:

Avril advised there is a plant sale for the library funds at the Totley library car park on 9 May from 11am to 3pm, all invited to come along.

Next month's talk is on 20 May at 7.30pm and is about Ruskin in Totley by Mark Frost and is part of the Ruskin in Sheffield events. There is also a walk on 13/14 June around Totley as part of the Ruskin events, tickets are available from the library in May, there are only 25 tickets per walk and 3 walks, so these will book up quickly.

Haddon Hall trip – 24 June – The tour of the house is from 11am to noon, meeting at the entrance to the car park at 10.45 am, the house will be closed to the public during this time. The price is £14, please let Pauline know if you are attending so she has an idea of numbers.

Speaker Tonight

We had a very interesting talk about Mary Queen of Scots, the captive years 1568 to 84, by David Templeman.

Mary arrived in England in May 1568 from Scotland, she had fled in fear of her life as she had just lost the battle for Scotland. It was a dangerous option for her to come to England as England was a Protestant country, however, Queen Elizabeth 1 had promised to help her. Mary went to Carlisle Castle and shortly after to Bolton Castle where she was confined as a house guest.

Mary had arrived in England to enlist Elizabeth's help to regain Scotland. Mary was the lead suspect in the murder of Lord Darnley, however, Elizabeth advised that she could not help her but she could arrange for a court to hear her case. This was arranged in York in September, however, Mary couldn't attend. On the first day the protestant lawyer produced some letters purporting to be love letters from her 3rd husband who she had married 3 months after Lord Darnley's murder, there were no dates on them, they were copies, if they were genuine Mary would be found guilty. The court case dragged on and moved to several other

courts, Elizabeth asked for it to be wound up and so Mary's name was not cleared.

Mary loved sport, like horse riding, the first lady recorded to play golf, played crochet, long bow. She was the cousin of Queen Elizabeth, so they were rivals and also related.

Elizabeth had to consider what to do with Mary long term, to help her to regain Scotland was a non-starter and to send her to France or Spain which were Catholic empires was not an option as they may help her so it was decided to keep her in England and appoint a custodian for her, the 6th Earl of Shrewsbury.

Mary's imprisonment commenced on 4 February 1569, aged 27, at Tutbury Castle, she was kept a prisoner but as a queen with a working court. However, Mary was used to the lovely palaces such as Versaille and Tutbury was part derelict, surrounded by bogs and smelly marshes and within 3 weeks she became ill.

She was therefore moved to Wingfield Manor in April 1569 and within 2 months of her arrival here both Mary and her custodian George Talbot nearly died, there was a large number of people living here (around 240) in a confined space, therefore lots of disease. She often went to Chatsworth from here whilst her apartments were cleansed and in May 1570 Mary arrived in Chatsworth to stay and then later that year in November went to Sheffield Castle the 4th largest medieval castle in England, she stayed here for 14 years.

Mary was involved in plots with the Northern Earls and with Spain, this latest plot led to Mary being arrested for high treason but Elizabeth refused to have her sent to London Tower so instead she was sent to Sheffield Castle. Mary had had a lovely time at Chatsworth with its surroundings but now at Sheffield her staff were reduced from 50 people to 16 and the only outdoor exercise was walking in the courtyard, this went on for years and had repercussions on Mary's health. Mary had several escape attempts at Wingfield, Tutbury and Chatsworth, they were well planned, however, Mary refused them as she wanted the throne of England. She was taken to Sheffield as she was guaranteed more security here. Whilst staying at Sheffield Castle she frequently went to Sheffield Manor Lodge whilst the Castle was cleansed, the lodge was in the middle of a large deer park where deer was hunted

Whilst being held captive Mary read and produced embroidery, a lot has survived. Mary liked Buxton for its waters that eased her ailments. She

also went to Worksop Manor twice, this had 550 rooms and was a leading manor house, unfortunately, due to a candle fire it was later destroyed.

Mary's health deteriorated at Sheffield Castle, she fell off a horse and damaged her back and developed a stoop. She also contracted rheumatic fever and was then hardly able to walk at the age of 42 years old

Her final journey after the Throckmorton plot in 1583 and the break up of the Shrewsbury marriage was to Chortley Manor in Staffordshire. She then became involved in the Babington Plot where she was tried and executed.

Meeting Dates for 2015

20 May	Ruskin, Totley and St George's Farm – Mark Frost
24 June	Visit to Haddon Hall – Meet at car park entrance at 10.45am
22 July	What's tha' up to? Policing in the 1950s Attercliffe – Martyn Johnson
August	No meeting
23 Sep	History of Measurement from Romans to James Chesterman Tools – J K Nicholson
28 Oct	Open Meeting around WW2 ... artefacts, memories
25 Nov	The Mystery Box – Leo and Malcolm Leader
16 Dec	Quiz Night and good company

All meetings are at 7.30 pm at Totley Library

**Totley History Group
At Totley Library
Wednesday, 20 May 2015**

Present:

70 People

General Items:

Our June meeting is a visit to Haddon Hall. It is a private tour which will last around one hour, the car park is across the road from the hall and costs £2, we will meet at 10.30am to 10.45am, Dorothy reminded everyone that there are lots of steps and uneven surfaces so please wear sensible shoes. The cost is £14 which includes the tour.

Our meeting in July is a talk by Martin Johnson about policing in the 1950s in Attercliffe called 'What's Tha' Up To?'. There will be another event in October which will be a film of the June walk and a talk by Sally.

Speaker – Mark Frost – Ruskin, Totley and St Georges Farm

Sally welcomed the large crowd and thanked everyone for attending. This is part of a series of events organised by Ruskin in Sheffield. Sally also reminded everyone about the walking performances on 13 and 14 June called Boots, Fresh Air and Ginger Beer, there are now only 5 tickets left for the Sunday morning. There will be another event in October and this will be filmed.

Sally introduced Dr Mark Frost who is from the University of Portsmouth, he has written a book - The Lost Companions - which includes a lot of information about St Georges Farm

Mark gave us a fascinating and detailed talk about Ruskin and his involvement with St Georges Farm. It was a complicated story, not always a happy one, Ruskin tried to get a commune working together with the land, it was a locally fascinating example of utopianism.

Mark talked about the vast amount of research he has done using archives in the UK and the US, which included an account from one particular worker about his bad experiences at one of the farms.

Ruskin was a keen art critic, and was also interested in architecture, and politics, and inspired generations of all types of people, eg liberals, anarchists etc

The Guild of St George put Ruskin's ideas into practice, purchasing land to be cultivated by Englishmen, however, there was a strict hierarchy, and some of the workers were resistant to how the Guild was set up. Ruskin didn't pay enough attention to what was happening at the Guild, resulting in the inhabitants arguing amongst themselves and this led to the failure of many of the projects.

After Mark's talk, Sally gave a short talk and then thanked Mark for his wonderful talk. Sally has researched the Totley communists helped by Dorothy. They had a variety of occupations including an optician, an musician, stove grate fitter, carver fork manufacturer, surgical instrument maker, engine fitter, carpenter and a mason.

Sally spoke about Edward Carpenter who lived at Millthorpe, he helped out at St Georges Farm and this inspired him to run a small holding at Millthorpe, this was more successful as Carpenter communicated with the working people unlike Ruskin.

Future Programme

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|---------|---|
| 24 June | Visit to Haddon Hall, meet at 10.30am-10.45am |
| 22 July | What's Tha' Up To? Policing in the 1950s Attercliffe –
Martyn Johnson |
| August | No meeting |
| 23 Sep | History of Measurement from Romans to James Chesterman
Tools – J K Nicholson |
| 28 Oct | Open Meeting around WW2 ... artefacts, memories |
| 25 Nov | The Mystery Box – Leo and Malcolm Leader |
| 16 Dec | Quiz Night and good company |

All meetings are at 7.30 pm at Totley Library

**Totley History Group
At Totley Library
Wednesday, 22 July 2015.**

Present:

35 People

General Items:

Our last meeting in June was a tour around Haddon Hall, it was a great day with a very interesting tour around the house.

Totley History Group Website – A new article has been placed on the website today by Eric Renshaw, he lived in Totley from 1932 to 1960, this includes lots of interesting information and photos and all encouraged to take a look.

The Totley Show is on the 5 September and we will have a stand at this event which will include some of Mr Renshaw's photos.

Speaker – Martyn Johnson – What's Tha' Up To?

Martyn gave us a fascinating reprise of a policeman's life walking the beat in Attercliffe in the 1960s. It reminded us all that times have changed, however, he kept his humour despite all he has seen and experienced in his work.

He started his job as a policeman in Attercliffe when he was 19 years old, he was from Barnsley and had never been to a big city like Sheffield before. He said he had never seen so much dirt and soot when he arrived. In his first week at work he had lost 2 teeth, broke his nose and had a black eye and said it was unbelievable hard graft. He stayed working there for 17 years, he loved the people and got to know everyone, particularly the children as they were growing up. He had many humorous stories to tell including a motorbike losing control on the road and driving straight through a house where the front and back doors had been left open, a deaf man who they believed was dead but was alive, looking for a glass eye after a road traffic accident, helping to bury a budgie. He said you never knew what you were going to find from one incident to the next.

Future Programme

August No meeting

- 23 Sep History of Measurement from Romans to James Chesterman
Tools – J K Nicholson
- 28 Oct Open Meeting around WW2 ... artefacts, memories
- 25 Nov The Mystery Box – Leo and Malcolm Leader
- 16 Dec Quiz Night and good company
- 27 Jan The Dore to Chinley Railway – The Hope Valley Line, with
emphasis on the Dore and Totley area – Ted Hancock
- 24 Feb A – Z of Sheffield – Mick Spick
- 23 Mar Open Meeting – A chance to talk about recent research.

All meetings are at 7.30 pm at Totley Library

Totley History Group
At Totley Library
Wednesday, 23 September 2015

Present:

23 People

General Items:

Avril Critchley, a founder member of our group, has sadly died after a long illness. There was a good representation from the group at her funeral.

Our Christmas event details have changed for 16 December. It will now be held at Ecclesall Church where there will be a winter song concert by Sheffield Folk Chorale with guest York Waits. Everyone is welcome, anyone wanting tickets or needs a lift to get there please contact Pauline asap.

Our next meeting on 28 October is an open meeting based around World War II in Totley, everyone asked to bring anything relating to this subject to the meeting, e.g. any photos, memorabilia, stories etc.

Speaker – J K Nicholson – The History of Measurement from the Romans to James Chesterman Tools

Jim gave an interesting and enthusiastic talk about the history of measuring devices.

We were told about very early measuring standards. A yard was a man's stride, an inch was a man's thumb, a hand was 4 inches, a foot being a man's foot length, a furlong was as far as a team of oxen could plough without resting. One acre could be ploughed in a day.

Over the years and centuries batch production enabled measuring tools to be more easily produced. James Whitworth was a pioneer of precision measuring, and it was during the 1840s to 1880s when the real changes were made.

James Chesterman Tools of Sheffield was founded in the 1800s and their main production was measuring equipment. They were the first company to put phosphoric acid on corset springs to prevent them from rusting. Jim brought with him some of his collection of measuring instruments including micrometers, vernier calipers, height gauges, boiler plate

gauges, steel tapes, steel rules, dip tapes, feeler gauges wedge and wire gauges. Jim had collected these over his career in engineering.

On 11 March 1864 the Sheffield Flood took place and the company's works which were on the banks of the River Don were badly damaged. Thereafter they moved to a 2.5 acre site on Ecclesall Road. In 1989 the business was sold to Stanley Tools who were interested in the DIY part of the business. The grade 2 listed buildings were used by Norwich Union.

Future Programme

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|--------|---|
| 28 Oct | Open Meeting around WW2 ... artefacts, memories |
| 25 Nov | The Mystery Box – Leo and Malcolm Leader |
| 16 Dec | Spitewinter Concert at Ecclesall Church at 7.30pm, an evening of winter songs and music, old and new, Sheffield Folk Chorale with guests York Waits |
| 27 Jan | The Dore to Chinley Railway – The Hope Valley Line, with emphasis on the Dore and Totley area – Ted Hancock |
| 24 Feb | A – Z of Sheffield – Mick Spick |
| 23 Mar | Open Meeting – A chance to talk about recent research. |

All meetings are at 7.30 pm at Totley Library apart from December's meeting.

**Totley History Group
At Totley Library
Wednesday, 28 October 2015**

Present:

35 People

General Items:

Sally reminded everyone that tomorrow night there is a film showing of Boots, Fresh Air and Ginger Beer at Totley Library, 7.30pm. It shows the walk that was undertaken in the summer and we can meet some of the characters. On Saturday an exhibition about Ruskin in Sheffield commences for a week, it is being held at The Millenium Gallery.

Pauline let everyone know that the 1939 register, which was taken to ensure everyone had an ID card, is available from next Monday. See Pauline if anyone needs any help.

Our December meeting is at Ecclesall Church to see the Sheffield Folk Chorale perform a selection of winter songs with special guest York Waits who use medieval instruments. Contact Pauline if you need a lift or a ticket, tickets are selling fast and are £7

World War 2 – Stories and Memories

There was a great turnout and many people shared stories, and memories of this time. If anyone lived around the time of WW2 or has any information you are encouraged to write your memories down and tell us about them.

Christine is to produce a map showing where World War II places of interest were around Totley, if anyone has any information please let us know. We were told there were some static water tanks on Mickley Lane and also by the bridge on Totley Rise, all great information to be discovered.

We were told about school life in the war and if the siren went off all the pupils had to rush to the air raid shelter and were given one square of chocolate, if it was a false alarm this was taken from them!! It was known for children to receive the cane if this chocolate was stolen from the store cupboard.

It is believed there were static water tanks by Psalter Lane and a balloon barrage site at the junction of Brocco Bank and Clarkehouse Road.

There was a radio maintenance centre and barrage balloon site at Norton, and from here the barrage balloons were taken to Normandy. There is also a low building at this site which can be seen from the ring road, this was a medical centre where soldiers were sent who had “lost their nerve”.

Stephen Acaster introduced himself to the meeting he is a military historian and offered help to anyone with interpreting photos from this time.

Painted Fabrics at Norton, this was a rehabilitation centre used during the 1st World War and lasted through to the 2nd World War. Sheffield City Museum has exhibits of the printing they produced from their workshop, they also had accommodation. The Duchess of Devonshire was a patron, they produced high quality work that was recognised throughout the country.

There was a fire station on Totley Rise where the vets is now located. 6-8 appliances were stationed there for calls to any fires on the moors, these fires needed to be kept under control to ensure the Germans were not using them to lead them to Sheffield.

We were told there was an experimental raid site at Houndkirk, and also at Toad’s Mouth in Derbyshire up on the moors there are a lot of old foundations and bullet strikes can be seen. Training took place on the moors. Pat told us about when she went picking bilberries near Avenue Farm and came across soldiers practicing with live ammunition. At Redmires there are piles of earth and this is where training took place for the trenches for the 1st World War. Also, there are building remains here from WW2 where soldiers were marched across the moors. The Italian prisoners were walked around Crosspool and local residents would invite them home for a cup of tea

Ann told us about her memories. Her grandmother lived on Totley Rise at number 37 where the greengrocers is now situated. Her grandmother had 10 children who were all raised in this house. Ann lived in Sheffield on The Moor near to where British Home Stores now stands, this area had terraced housing and small workshops at that time. The raids came in from the south following the railways and rivers and the first bombs dropped on The Moor which were then people’s homes. When the red alert siren went off the wardens came around knocking on house doors advising people to go to the air raid shelters. Ann’s father was an ARP warden and he kept leaving the shelter to see what was happening outside where he saw their house on fire, there was nothing that could be done to put these fires out as the water mains had been hit, he saved a framed

picture of Ann and that is all they had from their home. They went to the nearby school to see what accommodation could be acquired and then they walked from the City Centre up Abbeydale Road to Totley, they had only their clothes they were wearing, nothing else. She had an auntie who lived on Lemont Road and they lived there for 6 months. They were then found accommodation at Nether Edge, there were many empty properties here and the government requisitioned these during the war for people who were made homeless. They stayed here for 10 years until they moved to a council house at Southey Green. They were given some money as compensation for the value of their house. Her dad sadly died not long after they had moved to Southey Green, he had a heart attack probably from the all the strains of the war. There were 2 raids on Sheffield on 12 and 15 December 1940, it is believed they aimed for the industry but this was never hit, however, it destroyed the heart of the city. The Moor area remained a bomb site for many years.

The Sheffield Town Hall and Sheffield Library were not damaged and the library was used as a centre for people needing help. The Marples Hotel had the largest casualties during the bomb raids in Sheffield, where people hid in cellar but the cellar was not strong enough to take the force of the blast.

Mavis told us about living in North London in the war, her first memory of the blitz was at school and the first landmine landed on a cemetery nearby where soldiers laid from WW1. She remembers going under the stairs to hide and towards the end of the war heard the V1 rockets known as dooglebugs. There were only 2 of these in Sheffield and they landed in Hesley Woods. She remembers seeing the V2s, and on D-Day watched the planes in their 1000s in the skies, she said it was a wonderful site as people knew the invasion of Europe was beginning. She also saw all the docks on fire in London, all burning, incredible sight.

There were lots of very interesting stories and information that people shared, if anyone has anything else they want to tell us about please contact us. This information is very valuable.

Everyone then had refreshments and looked at the exhibits, books and memorabilia that were on display.

Future Programme

25 Nov	The Mystery Box – Leo and Malcolm Leader
16 Dec	Spitewinter Concert at Ecclesall Church at 7.30pm, an evening of winter songs and music, old and new, Sheffield Folk Chorale with guests York Waits

- 27 Jan The Dore to Chinley Railway – The Hope Valley Line, with
emphasis on the Dore and Totley area – Ted Hancock
- 24 Feb A – Z of Sheffield – Mick Spick
- 23 Mar Open Meeting – A chance to talk about recent research.

All meetings are at 7.30 pm at Totley Library apart from December's meeting.

**Totley History Group
At Totley Library
Wednesday, 23 November 2015**

Present:

21 People

General Items:

Our December meeting is at Ecclesall Church to see the Sheffield Folk Chorale perform a selection of winter songs with special guest York Waits who use medieval instruments. Anyone who has ordered tickets for this event needs to see Pauline to collect them from her

Our meeting on 27 January is a talk by Ted Hancock about the Dore to Chinley railway, Ted has recently published a book on the subject and has visited our Group before to give us another of his interesting talks.

Pauline has been looking through our archive cupboard and has found an album of photos, everyone is welcome to have a look and let Pauline know of any names they can identify from the pictures.

The Mystery Box – Leo and Malcolm Leader

We had a very entertaining and interesting time with the mystery box, we all had to identify the antique artefacts that were described to us and handed around for everyone to take a look. They were made from iron, wood, silver, glass and after we had a chance to think about what their use was in history we were advised of their purpose which included an iron paperweight, silk flower press, pins and needles holder for a lady to hang from her dress belt, ice cream penny lick glass, tea infuser, spittoon amongst other interesting objects.

Future Programme

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| 23 Mar | Open Meeting – A chance to talk about recent research. |
| 27 Apr | AGM followed by The Cathedral – 900 years of Sheffield in one building |

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