



March 2019

Dear Member

Meeting Report Robin Jenkins “The Tigers Caged”



Robin Jenkins

I have been looking forward to this lecture since it was booked last May. The Tigers caged, of course, tells the story of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment and the Siege of Ladysmith. I have hesitated to mention Ladysmith before as nearly everyone I have mentioned it to has said they know of the events and I did not want to spoil this lecture. Robin told the story of the Siege of Ladysmith, how the Boers had out manoeuvred the army and that they then had to return to Ladysmith. But more, he shared the thoughts of those there at that time. Robin explained that following the education Act in 1870 many more people were literate and that many of the soldiers could read and write. Robin was able to use a rich source of letters home and diaries to let us enter the minds of those present at that time. It became clear that they were little different to us sharing very similar hopes and dreams. We were also able to see some photographs of the soldiers who were doing the writing, this made it feel so much more personal and special. Things looked pretty hopeless, even with the big naval guns until the relief arrived in the form of Sir Redvers Buller and his troops. This ended a siege which started on the 2nd November 1899 and lasted 118 days until the 28th February 1900. Some 3,000 British troops lost their lives during the siege.

Whilst researching his lecture Robin looked into the celebrations when news of the breaking of the siege was released. The technology of the time meant that, via underwater cables telegrams could be sent and it was in the early hours of the 1st March 1900 that England became aware that the siege was over. Throughout Leicestershire factories sounded their hooters in the early hours of that morning. The nearest he could find to Market Bosworth was the sounding of the horn at Stoney Stanton Quarry. I wonder if the Timber Fireproof or any other Market Bosworth business joined in?

Thank you Robin for an excellent, informative, moving, and fascinating insight into a battle we all know.

Next Month’s Lecture Margaret Barrett “Holy Wells – Three Coins in a Fountain”

25th April 2019 at the Free Church Barton Road. Lecture starts at 7:30PM

I have to admit to being intrigued and am eagerly awaiting this lecture. The title alone bears investigation. Margaret is an accomplished speaker and is very knowledgeable on a number of subjects. I expect most of you will know her as she has lived in Market Bosworth for a number of years. Do please come along and support Margaret. If you have any friends’ neighbours or relatives, bring them along to. As you know we welcome guests subject to having room and a small donation of £3.00 is not a lot for an evening’s entertainment in excellent company.

I hope to see you there.

Questions (and therefore hopefully, some answers)

Yes, we do have some answers! Last month I asked about the lion's head on the hand rail leading to the Main Street Entrance of the Red Lion. This was posted on Bosworth News Facebook page and went unanswered. I just knew you would not let me down!



Like all good mysteries the answer is simple, or is it? Glynis Oakley contacted me. Glynis told me that the lion's head had been added to the railing by her husband Brian. Brian had found it in his workshop and thought it would go well on the railing. How true that is. Brian could not remember where it had come from. I then had an email from my old friend and member Harry Whitehead. Harry emailed me to say "While having a drink in a pub in the Lake District over the weekend I noticed that one of the old fashioned small round cast iron pub tables had a lion's head identical to the one on the Red Lion hand rail. I guess someone removed the relevant bit from a table that was going for scrap at some time". Mystery solved, thank you very much for your help!

Harry also suggested a possible link to the Thornley question (why is one of the saloons in the Bosworth Hall called the Thornley Suite?). Harry went on to say, "There was a Roy Thornley who had a leather shop, where Alexanders Estate Agents now stands". Is there a connection? Perhaps a family name. My own research has not turned up much of any use. There is a small village called Thornley in County Durham and I believe a much smaller village in Yorkshire. When I bumped into Richard Knox I asked him if he had any ideas. Did a contingent of troops come from a place called Thornley during the Wars of the Roses? Richard has promised to look into it. Could it be connected to the Harcourts? Please do get those thinking caps on.

No information on the Old Rectory stones so in truth we are still only one from three, but I know we can do better!

Natsopa Holmes

Some time ago I wrote about the Natsopa Homes as we had been asked to help research what may have been written on the missing plaque. We had confirmed that it would not have borne the names of the fallen members of NATSOPA in World War One, but we would still like to know what it did say. I was contacted by a member, David Mellor who had seen some photographs for sale at a local event of the NATSOPA Homes. David put me in touch with the vendor, Mark Brown and I called him up. We had quite a chat about the NATSOPA Homes but sadly Mark did not have any pictures of the plaque. Thank you David for thinking of the Society's quest for knowledge and for following it up with me. I am very grateful to you.

This Month's Question



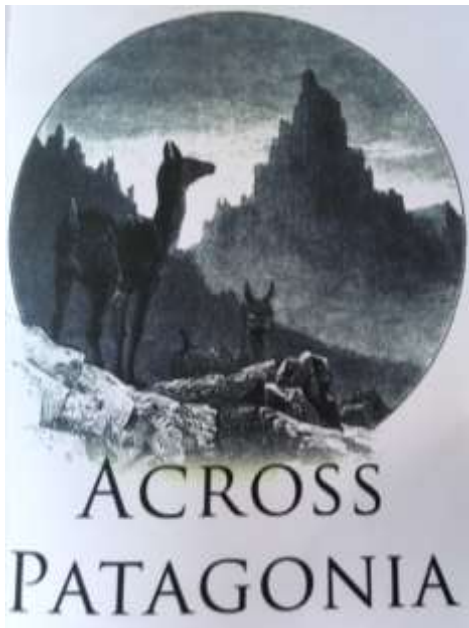
I have no idea what Robert will say when he finds out that we are rivalling "Ask Aspect" Peter Liddle OBE, has contacted me, asking about the archaeological survey behind 48 Barton Road, at the Roman Villa Site. Peter has asked if we can help with any information about the excavation which was carried out in the 1960's. A local school took part in the excavation and Peter would like to hear from anyone with any photographs or who actually took part in the excavation. Peter attached this picture which we believe came from that excavation. Did any member take part? Does any member remember the dig? Has any member an attic full of photographs and data from that dig? I hope so and would not be surprised. I hope we can help Peter and at the same time

increase our knowledge of the Roman Villa.

Across Patagonia ... following in Lady Florence Dixie's footsteps

Last month our member Heather Broughton went on a trip to Patagonia, retracing the very steps of Lady Florence Dixie. Heather has written a report for us with illustrations. And I am delighted to include it here.

Readers might recall that the Market Bosworth Society was successful last year in securing a commemorative Green Plaque for Lady Florence Dixie, launched by Caroline Dixie at Bosworth Hall, to mark the life of Lady Florence (1855-1905) as a prominent author and campaigner for women's rights.



Lady Florence set off in December 1878 on an adventure to explore the vast wilds of South America at its southernmost tip "wearying of the shallow artificiality of modern existence" and to be the first to see as a tourist "Patagonia, the chosen field of my new experiences". Her exploits are recorded in her illustrated book "Across Patagonia" and so Chris and I decided to start our South American holiday by retracing as far as possible her journey to this region of the Chilean Antarctic.

Florence's first taste of Patagonia was a former penal colony called Sandy Point, (now Punta Arenas) a dreary place then and indeed not too much to commend it now, despite a bracing sea front overlooking Tierra del Fuego and the Strait of Magellan, where Florence's ship

Britannia had anchored.



From there Florence took the journey of 250 kms and many days ("the monotony of the plains") on horseback up to the area known as "Ultima Esperanza" (The Last Hope) and now known as Puerto Natales. Chris and I arrived here after three hours by coach from Punta Arenas and having taken the essential step of researching gin from the world's Southernmost Distillery, The Last Hope, we then tracked down the local hotel named in Florence's honour for our stay in town.



A modest establishment, the Hotel Lady Florence Dixie proudly shows a couple of images from her book in the reception area - the only evidence of our

intrepid explorer! The owner, Alfredo Farinna, was surprised but highly delighted to meet us, never having met anyone who knew about Lady Florence before, or about her home. They thought we had travelled the 13,000 kms specially!

Puerto Natales is the gateway to Torres del Paine, which was Florence's goal- "The Cleopatras Needles" as she called them, the granite giants modelled by glacial forces and standing over 2,500 metres high. Now a major tourist destination attracting 250,000 people a year, what is so special about our Florence is that she led the first ever tourist expedition here; through forest, scrub, plains, ravine, bogs, following wild horse paths and often no paths at all, catching guanacos for food. Below the Torres del Paine lies the Blue Lake (Paine means blue in the native Tehuelche language) of which Florence said, "we were the first who burst onto that silent sea".



Sadly, however, the terrain ahead proved too much for Florence and her party, and they had to turn back without entering the mountains. "We were compelled to abandon this seductive plan" she wrote. The party was hungry, the packhorses exhausted, all were wet, tired, and cold. So, they returned "after eating the last biscuit" to Sandy Point where "how we feasted need not be told".



Thankfully for Chris and me, twentieth century improvements enabled us to experience close at hand the glorious landmarks which Florence had yearned for, thanks to modern roads, services, cafes and tourism provision, expert guides, and the skills of national park rangers.

Returning to The Lady Florence Dixie Hotel after our day trip, we presented a copy of "Across Patagonia" to Alfredo and Hilda, plus the photograph of Caroline Dixie at the Green Plaque launch. The book and the photograph are to be framed and put on display in the hotel, thus promoting the story of Florence's achievements to future visitors and renewing the link after 140 years between Market Bosworth, the Dixie family and Patagonia.



Nutwood Pastures Community Tree Planting

When Judy Buckell told me of plans to plant 800 trees in one afternoon I thought it was impossible. Between 14:00 and 16:00, not even a full afternoon. That calculated to one tree every 9 seconds, no chance I thought, but then we live in Market Bosworth. Assembling at the Under Masters House, opposite the Doctors Surgery, now used by the Dixie Grammar School Sixth Form, I realised that in Market Bosworth all things are possible. As you can see the event was very well supported by Market Bosworth Society, Rotarians, teachers, parents, uncles, aunts, grandparents et al.



And so, it begins.... Instruction!



Well under way

Not only was the planting of the trees completed, it was completed early. If anyone has any doubts about the power of teamwork this is a splendid example of what can be achieved. If you are interested I am in the first picture, honest! This is a wonderful legacy for the people of Market Bosworth and hopefully will be enjoyed for hundreds of years to come. As I said to my young helpmate, “when you are my age, you will be able to sit under one of these trees and read a book on a summers afternoon” Always assuming books are still available. Maybe I should have said Kindle? Or Tablet? I was very pleased and proud to have taken part. Well done to the teachers and pupils of the Dixie Grammar School and the Woodland Trust, who provided the trees.

Nutwood Pastures Metal Detecting

Roger Thomas, a colleague on the Bosworth links Committee suggested that a metal detecting sweep might be done before the trees are planted. As usual Richard Lynne was very positive, and Roger was granted permission to sweep the field. Here are some of the items he found.



General metal items



Musket Ball - 17th Century



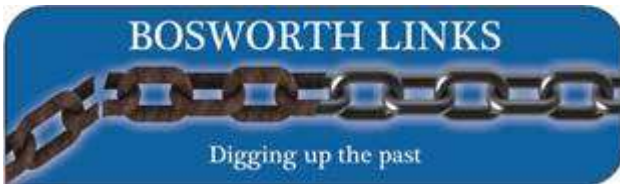
Trade Weight George 1st 1714 -1727



There was not, sadly a ‘Nutwood Horde’ but what was interesting, and you may well be able to help with this. Two Royal Leicestershire Regiment Cap Badges were found.

How did they get there? Was the land used for exercises at some time? Did one of the schools have a cadet corps or were some soldiers helping with the harvest? If you know please get in touch. Details at the end of this article. All finds have been registered with the Portable Antiquities Scheme and can be found here

<https://finds.org.uk/>



You may already know that there is a suspected ring ditch on the Country Park. Certainly, the ground is worthy of investigation. Thanks to Ivan Ould OBE who put me in touch with Steve Grant, Head of Operational Property & Facilities Management Leicestershire County Council and Nick Fell Leicestershire County Council Parks and Open Spaces Manager. Roger and I met with them and discussed what we would like to do. We found Steve and Nick to be very helpful and enthusiastic and they agreed that we can start our research. The first step is to carry out a Resistivity Survey over the piece of land. The area to be investigated will be marked out into sections and around 40 square metres will be surveyed. Once this has been done we will then be able to get an idea of what lies beneath the ground. If test results are favourable, fingers crossed, we will then decide to excavate the site. The survey will be carried out on the morning of March 20th and I will report on the findings in next month's newsletter.

Example of the equipment used to conduct a Resistivity Survey

We are also in negotiations with local landowners with the intension of carrying out some more test pits this summer, in areas where we left gaps over the last two years.

I can also confirm that whilst Bosworth Links is ended it is far from finished. We are still in the planning stages, but we have agreed on a very ambitious and exciting project which will take us through 2020 to 2023 and will be equal to the work done in 2017/18. As soon as I am able I will share with you the details (as long as I am re-elected at our AGM on the 21st March. News! Relax the members present saw fit to give me and your committee another year) but, as I have said it is early days and very exciting.

As soon as we have formalised our plans and made progress with permissions we will of course share with you all of the details. To do so now would be jumping the gun and with such a worthwhile and exciting project within our grasp we do not want any false starts.

For the time being, sharpen those spades, clean out those riddles and give your boots a good polishing so that you are ready to get involved.

Getting in Touch

Please see the website www.marketbosworthsociety.com for information and please feel free to email us at info@marketbosworthsociety.com or if you would like to call me then 07930149408 or 01455290160

Nigel Palmer
Chairman