



April 2019

Dear Member

## Meeting Report: Holy Wells Margaret Barrett.

This is where it all started. Margaret was visiting the village of Madron in Cornwall and saw all of these



### Holy well cures

- SORE EYES. SKIN DISEASES. RHEUMATISM. GOUT.
- FERTILITY AND INFANT PROBLEMS. HEARTBURN. COLIC.
- LAMENESS. CONSUMPTION. VENEREAL DISEASE. FITS.
- KINGS EVIL (swollen glands). AGUE. GRAVEL. HEADACHES.
- SCURVY. JAUNDICE. EPILEPSY. SPRAINS. BROKEN BONES.
- BLOOD POISONING. URINARY PROBLEMS. TOOTHACHE.
- RICKETS. WARTS. INDIGESTION. DEAFNESS. SCROFULA.
- MENTAL PROBLEMS. DRUNKENNESS, MELANCHOLY. COUGHS
- BALDNESS. STERILITY. PARALYSIS. CANCER.

pieces of cloth hanging in trees. Intrigued, she learned that this was a ritual around a holy well. There are a lot of rituals surrounding holy wells, many of which have to be carried out in complete silence, as we were to learn. In this example, cloths are dipped into the well and then used to anoint whatever part of the body needs to be healed. The cloths are then hung up to dry in neighbouring trees. Once the journey began, Margaret went on to research many holy wells. Holy wells were so named as the 'well' part was an old name for a spring where water flowed (and later became any hole with water in it, potable or not). Holy, because many of the wells were believed to have magical healing powers, some people still believe in them and it is a definite relief for sufferers of Rheumatism to bath in warm mineral waters (Bath Spa water has no less than 47 minerals in it!).

was a Celtic place of worship. There are several holy wells in Leicestershire, a number of them beneath churches as churches were built close to wells in an attempt to lure the Celts towards Christianity. There was a lot more to the lecture than I can include here. It was a very interesting evening and interesting to know that Leicester cathedral was built on a holy well. Oh, and of course Leicester has a holy well buried under a car park!

There may well have been a holy well in Market Bosworth. It is believed that the site of St. Anne's Chapel was nearer to Barton Road (which was widened in the C18) in which case it is likely that any vestige was destroyed when the road was widened. Sadly, Bosworth Links did not find evidence of the Chapel in Harcourt Spinney. Thank you Margaret for a fascinating, entertaining and in parts, amusing lecture.

## Next Month's Lecture



Leicestershire Fire Service (or should that be Brigade?) will be coming to lecture us about a number of aspects of their role. From putting out fires, rescuing people (and a few cats I suspect) to fire prevention and precautions. There will be equipment on show for you to see and handle and a PowerPoint presentation. What could we ask for?

As usual we will be in The Free Church, Barton Road and the lecture will commence at 7:30pm. Please bring along guests, as they are always welcome.

I look forward to welcoming you there.

## Lead False teeth found in Market Bosworth?

You will recall that Roger (he is a busy man) carried out a survey of the Nutswood Pastures, the area where the trees were planted in March. It appeared that there was not much of interest, but further analysis has changed that.

These items were discovered.



They look a bit like lead false teeth, but they are not. They are actually casting waste from the lead 'comes' that were used to connect the glass in medieval windows. These pieces are residue from the gutter at the top of the stone mould where the molten led would have been poured in. Later 'comes' were produced using a milling process and so we know that these items are pre1650.

The question is, who was making them? And why did they choose that site? I recall that other lead items were found nearby and were later identified as loom weights. The items pictured were found in the ridge and furrow part of the field, which is in itself, quite unusual. I wonder if there was manufacturing taking place or someone was collecting scrap metal? It could be that the lost monastery lies below Nutswood Pastures? If you have any ideas or know anything about comes, please get in touch.

## On the Subject of Questions..

You will recall I asked about the dig at the Roman Villa site off Barton Road. I have been able to find out



Two members of the Market Bosworth Grammar School Archaeological Society uncovering Roman tiles in the garden of a house in Barton Road, not far from the school.

## ROMAN VILLA SITE FOUND AT MARKET BOSWORTH

**BOYS** and girls from the Dixie Grammar School, Market Bosworth, Archaeological Society, have uncovered what is believed to be the site of a Roman villa or farm.

They started digging this term in the back garden at 48, Barton Road, Market Bosworth, where bits of Roman pottery were dug up by Mr. A. L. Dolby, while making a trench for his celery.

About two feet down they found part of a tiled floor.

Said Mr. C. J. Long, who with the senior master Mr. B. Unwin, helped pupils in their search: "Mr. Dolby had dug up various

things, and we got on to it very quickly.

"A number of pottery pieces have been identified as Roman, but the floors is still indefinite. It could be a Roman villa or farm or it might even be medieval.

"The members of the society have been extraordinarily lucky to be able to work on such a site and it has been very good of Mr. Dolby to let us do it".

About 30 pupils took part in the search, and yesterday some of them returned to the garden to give the site its covering of soil back with what lies underneath carefully noted.

Mr. Dolby, manager of the proving ground at the Motor Industry Research Association, Watling Street, found some Roman coins in the garden, which is on a slope with a good view northwards, about seven years ago.

some information. The cutting below, taken from the Leicester Mercury gives a report of the dig and I have also managed to discover some more information including a geophysical survey and a report in the year book of ARCHÆOLOGY IN LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND (1966/67)

### MARKET

**BOSWORTH.** 406035 A restivity survey on the site of a presumed Roman villa showed the presence of a large ditch with at least three structures to the east of it. A test section confirmed the edge of the ditch and found pottery of 1st- to 4th-century date, and roof tiles. The work was carried out by the Leicestershire Archaeological Excavation Group. K. C. CLARKE, 1967

There is also, a hand written report of the dig

written in 1968 by Donald Mackreth, together with an article from the Wolstonian in September 1967 by S. G. Ballas, sent to me by Walter Baynes. I am still interested in finding anyone who took part and to hear their recollections and experiences. So, if you know anyone who might know someone.....

## Society Annual General Meeting.

The AGM took place in March and I have attached the minutes to this newsletter for you. Suffice to say I have been offered another year as chairman. Furthermore, your committee remains unchanged, from last year. Much to my relief and great delight. When I attend meetings where we share the activities of our groups and societies I am always proud to represent the Market Bosworth Society. We are busy all of the time and are always happy to help local clubs, societies, businesses and of course individuals, when looking into the history of Market Bosworth or their own family or business history. I will leave you to read the minutes but don't forget that it is now time to renew your membership, if you have not already done so. You

can post your fee to me or to Glynis at The Forge on Park Street or should you prefer then you can pay directly into the bank account. The Account Number is 91001108 and the Sorting Code is 40-32-03. Please ensure that you put your surname (and if room, initials) in the reference section. If you are unsure, send an email or give one of us a call. We all have some great lectures and visits to look forward to.

## **Bosworth Walks**

I am certain that you will have noticed the new button on the Society webpage. But just in case it slipped your attention, it leads to the page specialising in guided tours around Market Bosworth. There are now 5 walks (with an offering for a bespoke service should that be desired). The walks have been put together over the winter by your guides, Marion, Sally Ray, and me. We would like to recruit one or two more guides so if you are interested (full training will be given, and the Society does have Public Liability Insurance), get in touch, details below.. Please go over to the page and have a look. It is under construction but is almost complete. Just some snagging to be done. Later, I am hoping to host the details on a sister website which will give more flexibility and better graphics. The walks are designed for groups, friends, family (or both) clubs, societies, businesses anyone who would like to be shown around either our beautiful town or our equally beautiful countryside. Check it out and let me know what you think. I am always willing to listen to feedback and suggestions. By developing this aspect of the Society's activities, we will provide entertainment and education to residents and visitors whilst realising most welcome revenue for our other activities, supporting local groups for example, and preserving the Archive. You will see that Bosworth Hall Hotel have been very supportive.



We will be advertising locally and nationally and have a brand-new Town Trail Guide and Souvenir coming out very soon (not too dissimilar in looks to this one) Most of the work was completed by Marion and Ingrid with me providing refreshments at our sub-committee sessions. The MBS committee have all helped to proof read and Dean at The Graphic laid it out and designed it for us. Dean also drew the map for the centre pages. Whilst the other four walks are not in the guide, yet, we are considering including them, it really depends if the walks are a success. You never know we might bring out another guide for the countryside walks. What do

you think?

## **Digitising the Archive**

We have been having a little breather over the Easter break, for very good reasons. The company advising us on our equipment is in the process of developing a new scanner capable of 4K quality. The difference is that 4K uses far more pixels and packs them together much closer and so the image is clearer and brighter. Whilst this is important to us, it is more important that this helps to future proof our work and whatever comes next will be backward compatible with 4K for a long time to come. iBase who are providing help and advice on the software side of the project are also upgrading their programmes and will themselves be 4K compatible shortly. We have been spending the time making sure that the many items making up the archive are properly stored and protected. If anyone has an interest in this type of work then do get in touch. We will certainly be needing volunteers when the projects starts properly.

## **A new Resident at Bosworth Hall**

Have you seen the latest resident at Bosworth Hall? He is certainly a good-looking specimen and stands proudly in front of the Hall. He can be seen from the Country Park and whilst he is a stag with no name, for the moment at least, I dare say he will have a name before too long.

The stag was made by Ed Robinson, who made the star for us recently. Whilst Ed is a Farrier he enjoys working with metal and is a very talented. You will have seen him at work during some of the Forge open days.



*Ed and the stag in The Forge*



*Settling in to his new home*



*A magnificent beast*



This is part of the Bosworth in Bloom theme for this year, “Art in the Landscape”. Chris Hooker tells me that the response to their request from local artists was great. I think the stag is worthy of a Gold Award alone, well done to Edd and all involved. Thanks also to Ruth for sharing the details and to David Neave for use of the photographs. I am thinking of asking Edd to do a smaller version (a hind and a fawn for my garden) that would look fantastic.



Left, is how the Hall may have looked in the C17th with horses providing the motive power and deer frolicking in the deer park. There are still deer around the park. Not the Black Deer we see above but smaller deer called Reeves Muntjac (*Muntiacus reeves*) originate from China. They get their name from John Reeves an employee of the East India Company in the nineteenth century. They were introduced to England, via Woburn Abbey and it is believed some managed to escape and populate the country.

Here they were introduced as decorative but elsewhere they have been introduced for game shooting. Muntjacs are also known as barking deer

as they make that peculiar noise. They do damage young trees and as they breed all year round (no rutting season) they tend to spread rapidly. They can be seen along Sutton and Cadeby Lanes at dusk and dawn and also in Carlton. Ruth tells me she saw one at the hall, visiting its larger relative.

Do keep your eyes open for the Muntjacs and have a walk in the Country Park to see Edd's handywork.



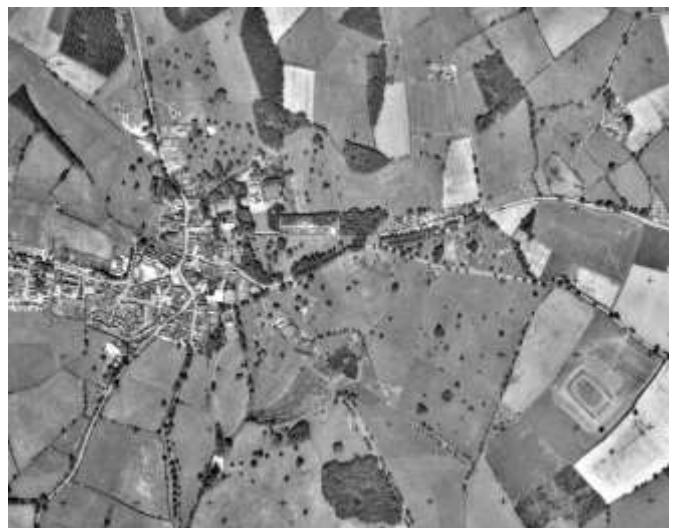
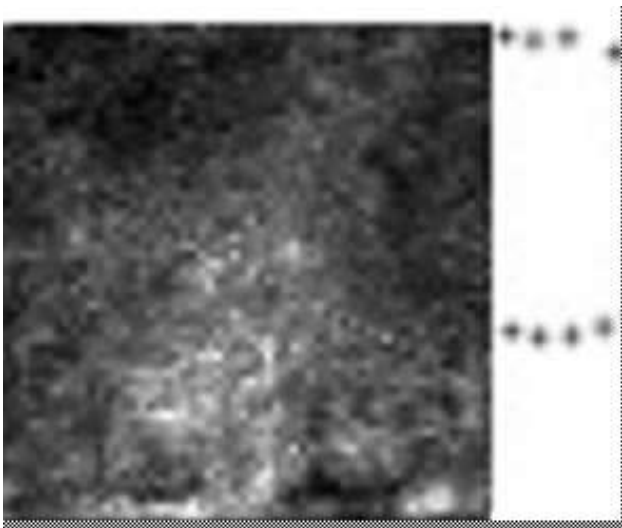
## When is a Ring Ditch....?



I promised to let you know what was happening with the resistivity survey of the suspected ring ditch on the country park. Well the survey was conducted as planned and we are very grateful to Roger for organising it, together with Keith and Barbara Foster and Adrian Farnsworth who all got stuck in. Seen here is Roger (on the left) and Keith (hiding under his hat).

The frame detects electrical current from a midway point (powered by a 12-volt battery) and the clever part is that the gadget on the top of the frame then saves and interprets the different resistances. It is much more complicated than that but that will suffice for now.

When we then have is a picture showing, via light and dark the different resistances that were sensed by the probes. This enables us to see below the surface as any disturbed earth will offer a different resistance to undisturbed earth. With practise it is possible to differentiate between underground features, tree stumps and foundations for example. It is not a wholly accurate process but does give a reasonable picture of what lies below.



On the left, above is an image taken from the software which interprets the different voltage signals returning to the probes. It is not a great picture, but I hope you will just make out that there is a lot of dark activity to the top right of the search grid. Roger has helpfully circled it. Next to that picture on the right is an aerial picture of that area of the Country Park taken in 1945. If you look at the bottom right, this time you can see the cricket pitch and also the pavilion. The pavilion appears to sit over the circled area on the first

picture. We are not, for the moment at least, certain that we have found a ring ditch. There will be a smaller investigation of the area around the circle in the first photograph. We will keep you posted.

We are also making excellent progress with our plans for this summer and beyond. We have contacted most of the land owners and have now sorted out around 4/5 of the sites we want to dig this year. Once we have them all lined up I will let you know.

## **Getting in Touch**

Please see the website [www.marketbosworthsociety.com](http://www.marketbosworthsociety.com) for information and please feel free to email on [info@marketbosworthsociety.com](mailto:info@marketbosworthsociety.com) or if you would like to call me then 07930149408 or 01455290160

Nigel Palmer  
Chairman