

## University Ensures Future of VCH in Derbyshire and Notts.

Thanks to very generous support from the History Department at Nottingham University, the future of the County Editor's post has been secured for another twelve months.

Philip Riden, who has been a research fellow in the department since 2003, has been appointed to a fixed-term lectureship at Nottingham from 1 October this year. The teaching post is half-time, leaving the other half of his time free to work on VCH in both Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. The department will also continue to provide the full range of office, library and IT facilities needed for a large-scale academic project like VCH. Even without including this essential support, this decision by the department represents a cash contribution to VCH in the two counties of nearly £30,000.

The Derbyshire VCH Trust is hugely indebted to the History Department, and in particular to the former head of the School of History, Professor Liz Harvey (who has now become head of the larger School of Humanities of which the History Department is a component), for this generosity. At a time when other universities are withdrawing support from VCH (Staffordshire is the only other county where the editor is a member of the academic staff of a chartered university), this is a tremendous boost to the project. It is also further evidence of Nottingham's continuing commitment to public engagement in the region.

For the last two years the County Editor's post has been sustained by the VCH Trust's own funds and money from Nottinghamshire Archives. During that time almost all the text for Volume III of the Derbyshire hardback series, on Bolsover and adjoining parishes, has been drafted, and a volunteer research group has been established in Nottinghamshire. In the coming year the Derbyshire Trust will only have to meet incidental expenses, such as room hire for the various research groups and travelling expenses for research at the National Archives or elsewhere in London. In Nottinghamshire severe cuts in county council spending means that no further money is available for VCH, but Nottinghamshire Archives has remained supportive and has been able to offer some help in kind.

### New Trust Chairman

**The Trust has a new Chairman, following the June AGM.**

David Lathrope has stepped down as chairman to be replaced by Stephen Bounds (right).

Stephen, a history teacher at St Benedict Catholic School in Derby, has been active in the Derbyshire Archaeological Society for many years. He is currently Vice-Chairman of the Local History Section.

Stephen paid tribute to David Lathrope's work saying; 'The Trust had a hard act to follow when David stepped into replace David Hey as our Chairman, but he has helped deliver the final stages of the EPE project and started the process to look at the sustainable future we all need for VCH. His leadership has also brought new people into the Trust which will hopefully bode well for the future.'

Stephen has a BA in Economic and Social History from Hull University and a MA in Local and Regional History from Nottingham. He is an active member of the Wirksworth research group

- There were other changes at our AGM. For full details see page four.



### Talks mark start of autumn programme

**After a successful summer walks programme (see page 3), our autumn session will start with talks by the County Editor at Chesterfield and Wirksworth.**

A talk at Chesterfield Library at 7 p.m. on Wednesday 5 October (the first meeting of the well established evening research group at the library) will see Philip review progress over the first ten years of the VCH and set out objectives for the future.

Some work has now been done on almost every parish in north-east Derbyshire and draft text for a second hardback (on the villages around Hardwick Hall to the south of Bolsover) is well advanced. There is still scope for more work on Staveley, Dronfield, Eckington and other places to the north of Chesterfield, and less has so far been done on Clay Cross and villages to the south of the town.

At Wirksworth, Philip will make a short contribution to a presentation by Adrian Farmer on 'Making the most of World Heritage status', which is taking place at Wirksworth Heritage Centre at 7.30 on Tuesday 20 September.

The Wirksworth VCH group has already done a good deal of work on some of the parishes within the World Heritage Site, including Cromford. Philip will explain how this can be taken further over the next twelve months.

Both talks are intended to raise awareness of what VCH has achieved in Derbyshire in its first decade and to encourage more people to become actively involved with the project.

All existing trust members are very welcome to attend and we hope also some newcomers will decide to join us.

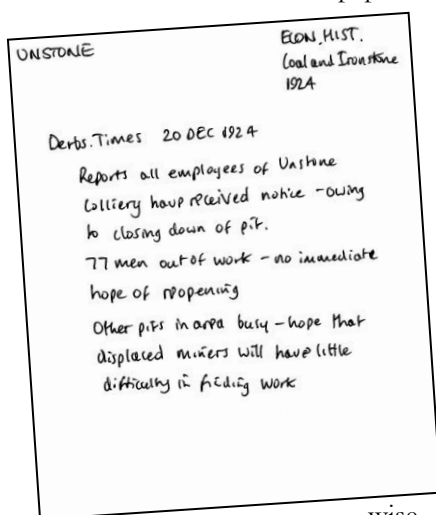
# How does VCH Research?

How does VCH actually carry out its research? How is everything brought together into readable text? Answers to these questions are, perhaps, well-known to members of our local history groups, but not so well-known to our supporters who are not directly involved with VCH research.

VCH has been using the 'slip' method for many years. Recently our research groups have been rediscovering the work Ciceley Wilmot did in Edwardian times—so flexible is the slip method she used, that her work has been relatively easily integrated with that of today's VCH.

VCH uses A5 pieces of paper (the slips). Onto each slip goes information from the particular source being used for research. This could be a primary or secondary source. Sources are generally, though not exclusively, those listed in the County Editor's 2005 *Derbyshire Victoria County History Handbook*.

Each slip has a heading; detailing the parish to the top left. To the top right is the subject heading (which follows VCH chapters); with the date to which the information refers under this. Then follows a description of the source and page (or folio number, if present). A typical slip is illustrated here for a secondary source—in this case a newspaper.



This method means, of course, that there will, most-likely, be multiple slips for parishes from each source. Trade directories, for example, may entail many slips, as the information they contain crosses many VCH subject headings. Like-

wise, authoritative church histories will require multiple slips—one for each time an event needs recording.

Once the slips are completed they are filed in parish, subject and date order. In Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire slips are finally filed in slip boxes. The slips are easily re-filed or copied for use in other parishes or subjects, if need-be.

Then comes the job of the County Editor, or other VCH member, to gather all the information together contained in the slips and write the narrative. Each piece



of information is rigorously referenced, using standard VCH protocols.

Although the slip method may seem to be somewhat old fashioned in today's world of personal computing, it has major advantages. Anyone, so long as they follow basic VCH rules, can work on sources either as a group or singly, with no IT knowledge or support. Many people can also work on different sources, just as in our local history groups. But all slips are ultimately brought together, in subject and date order. It is also possible to simply cut photocopied information from sources on to slips—a regular trick employed, for example, when looking at Jayes' Derbyshire Charters.

Slips can be readily filed and sorted without being entered into a computer. They are also readily accessible to other researchers without fear of today's IT database being unreadable in tomorrow's fast developing world of programme updates.

Witness Ciceley Wilmot's work at the beginning of the 20th Century—still readily accessible for researchers some 100 years later.

## Research Group Meeting Dates

**Chesterfield:** the first meeting will, as described elsewhere in the Newsletter, be on Wednesday 5 October; after this introductory talk working sessions will begin the following week in the meeting rooms at Chesterfield Library, commencing 7 p.m.

**Matlock:** this fortnightly group will resume on Tuesday 27 September, meeting between 2 and 4 p.m. in the Local Studies Library in County Hall.

**Wirksworth:** after the talk on 20 September, working sessions will begin on Tuesday 27 September and continue fortnightly, with meetings from 7 to 9 p.m. at Wirksworth Town Hall.

**Nottinghamshire:** the group will resume meetings at Nottinghamshire Archives on Tuesday 7 October, meeting from 10.30 to 12.30 in the morning.

# Summer Activity Round-up

Our summer walks have again been a great success—thanks to the efforts of our County Editor and the VCH members who helped out with the series.

The first walk of the six, on 25 May, looked at **Idridgehay**—a scattered settlement to the south of Wirksworth. Included on our itinerary was Alton Manor, formerly the home of Sir Peter and Lady Hilton, but recently sold. Thanks to the efforts of Sue Woore and to Andrew Hilton we are able to gain access and reunite building plans, made by the architect Sir Charles Gilbert Scott, with the building. Our photograph (right), shows the plans being examined by members of the group. We also visited the outside of other historic properties in the area thanks to Sue's and Mary Wiltshire's efforts.

A week later saw us at **Wensley and Snitterton**, where we walked up through the former, before wandering down Wensleydale to the latter. Our able guide was Irene Wright, from the Matlock research group. On this walk we witnessed the sad decline in rural services. We observed closed public houses, shops and the recently sold Wensley Methodist Chapel.

Our visit to **Horsley** was probably the best attended of all our walks, though all had good attendances. After a walk through Horsley village we walked some distance, by way of Coxbench railway station, on the now moth-balled Denby Branch, to Horsley Castle. Here (left) we see Eric Foulkes, pointing out remaining masonry to this 12th century castle—surely one of Derbyshire's least known landmarks and made available to us by kind permission.



Our new Secretary, Dudley Fowkes, led the walk round **Alfreton**—an area not currently being researched by VCH. Dudley pointed out many buildings of interest in the town on our walk from Rodgers Lane car park. The group were impressed by the contrast between the present town centre and the area around the Hall and church. Part of our group intently listens to Dudley outside the latter (bottom left).

**South Wingfield** saw Dudley supporting our Editor on this walk, which started in the Church. Visited, from the nearest available public footpath, was South Wingfield Manor, where our group reflected on the access problems which appear to dog this historic property. Another property with some issues—the Francis Thompson designed South Wingfield Station—was last on our itinerary.

Rounding off our walks, **Duffield** saw another castle visited, but by way of the church and village centre. Pictured below is Philip Riden outlining the history of Duffield Hall, at the time of our visit still the headquarters of the Derbyshire Building Society. Duffield is another community actively under study by VCH.



# Duke of Devonshire is new Trust President

A number of officers retired at the June AGM, including our President Professor David Hey and Secretary Robert Gent. The Duke of Devonshire has very kindly agreed to become our new President.

Speaking at the meeting the Duke said that he was looking forward to becoming involved with VCH. After formal business had closed the Duke stayed to listen to Cherry Ann Knott deliver a very interesting talk on Sudbury Hall—as previewed in our last newsletter. The Duke is pictured with Cherry Ann Knott.



In addition to David Lathrope retiring as our Chairman (see page one), Robert Gent, our Hon. Secretary, has also retired, to be replaced by Dudley Fowkes. Dudley is no stranger to VCH affairs, having been one of the founding members of the Derbyshire Trust, and variously Chairman and Treasurer.

Robert's contribution to VCH was marked by a presentation made, on behalf of the Trust, by Dudley, who paid tribute to Robert's outstanding contribution. Dudley is pictured with Robert (centre) making the presentation, with Philip Riden (County Editor) right.



## Lottery Application Update

The Trust is continuing to pursue a possible Heritage Lottery Fund application for work in the Derwent Valley World Heritage Corridor.

A pre-application was made earlier this year, with a follow-up meeting held at the beginning of August, at the HLF's Nottingham Office. This was to explore the potential of the project and its strengths and weaknesses. Stephen Bounds, Cathrin Wharton and Philip Cousins all attended the meeting with an officer from the HLF.

Stephen comments; 'The pre-application—'Discovering the Derwent Valley'—was generally seen as having great potential, but there is clearly a lot of work to do on it, along with commitment needed to reach a successful conclusion. We now aim to form a small group to look in detail at working the bid up into what is called a first stage application. Part of this will involve extensive consultation with stakeholders.'

### Derbyshire VCH Contacts

**Please note: there are changes to email addresses for our Chairman, Treasurer and Publicity Officer.**

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Derbyshire

## News in Brief

### Winners

Congratulations to recent winners of our prize draw.

March - Barbara Foster; April - Rod Gent; May - Mrs B.Harvey; June - K.Pearson; July - Sue Woore and August - Ann Price.

### VCH national newsletter

The VCH National newsletter continues to be published regularly. It is available via the following link:

<http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/publications-projects/newsletters>.

### Electronic issues

An increasing amount of VCH members are opting to receive this newsletter electronically. This saves costs and also means you receive a newsletter in colour). To receive an electronic version and occasional updates on VCH activities (for example copies of our news releases) please email [membership@derbyshirevch.org](mailto:membership@derbyshirevch.org). Please also note that the email addresses of our chairman, treasurer and publicity officer have changed.

### Award for VCH Work

The Derbyshire VCH Trust has been awarded £500 by the Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund, the charitable arm of one of the Crown's two highly successful estate management businesses (the other being the Crown Estate itself). The Fund mainly helps community projects in the Palatine Counties (Lancashire, Merseyside and Greater Manchester) but will give grants to voluntary bodies in other areas where the Duchy has strong historic or present-day links. The award to the VCH Trust is earmarked for work on Appletree hundred, the whole of which belonged to the Duchy from 1266, and Wirksworth, where the Duchy still holds a barmote court every year. In particular, we hope to use the money to complete the work begun on many of the Appletree parishes by Cicely Wilmot in 1908, at least to the stage where draft text can be mounted on the Derbyshire VCH website.

### Draft text update

Remember to keep checking for draft text mounted on our website at <http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/derbyshire> (look for work in progress). Recently we have mounted text for Bolsover to add to those from Glapwell, Clowne, Elmlton and Barlborough