

News

May and June meetings

Susan Watts brought an impressive collection of feeding aids for babies to our May meeting to help make the point about why infant mortality was so high in the past. Not only failure to clean the various containers properly but also the dubious quality of the contents were hazards faced by babies. One of the earliest feeding bottles is shown left, about 10cms high. It is similar in design to ones, with traces of milk inside, found in Roman burials.



We had a special treat for our additional meeting in June when Lesley Smith, in a magnificent black costume, gave a moving performance as Anne Boleyn on the eve of her execution reminiscing about her life, all the time hoping for a reprieve. Lesley recalled the happiness of Anne's childhood with an older sister and younger brother, her refusal to be Henry VIII's mistress, her subsequent ennoblement to the Marquessate of Pembroke before marriage to the King and then the disappointment that her first child was a girl. Subsequent failure to give birth to a healthy son sealed her fate. Three years after being crowned queen she faced a trial then execution. Members look forward to seeing Lesley again in October during the visit to Tutbury Castle.

Sales of Occasional Papers and History Profile Papers

During the summer, sales of our Occasional Papers and History Profile Papers passed 3,000. The sales have been helped considerably by the support given by staff at Castlegate Cards and its predecessor KSM. To show our appreciation Lindsey, Claire and Linda were presented with a bouquet. Claire and Lindsey are shown, right, with the bouquet.



Our second full colour Occasional Paper, this one featuring 'Tickhill in the 1980s', will be published at the October meeting. It deals with a wide range of aspects in the life of a rapidly growing community from housing and shops to health and leisure interests, for example. There are many photographs in the OP thanks not only to George Read but to many people who have allowed their own photographs to be reproduced here. The Paper will be on sale at Castlegate Cards (once again thanks to Lindsey, Claire and Linda) and at our meetings price £2.

Stone breakers

Following publication of a picture of stone breakers in the Summer Newsletter, Valerie Oxley has provided details of payments for stone breakers listed in Mrs Miles' Account Book. Mrs Miles was the owner of Firbeck Hall and estate which had its own quarries. In November 1866 a Firbeck estate labourer, Stephen Cooper, was paid 9 shillings for stone breaking, then 10 shillings for similar work the next month. Another estate labourer, Joseph Desforges, received £2/18/- for stone breaking over three months from January to March 1870. Cold work but no doubt welcome employment over winter months.

Family and Local History Fair

This Fair, arranged by Doncaster & District Family History Society, will be held on Saturday, 13 October, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Doncaster School for the Deaf. As well as a variety of stalls there will be two talks: 'Doncaster via York – Doncaster's scattered history' by Gary Brannon and 'What's tha playing at nah' by Martyn Johnson. Admission costs £2; there is free on-site parking.

Snippets

The following sections were included in this Newsletter:

- The ruddle pit
- George Colbeck 1813-1897: tailor then ironmonger and local preacher
- Art and Soul and a 50th anniversary by Sally Tyas (*A short history of the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies – NADFAS*)