



Moretonhampstead History Society

Newsletter

March 2007

Visit to Tyntesfield:

Date of visit 30th May 2007

The Coach has now been booked! So now we need you to fill it! Please find enclosed a booking form (or in the case of email Recipients- a separate attachment) that needs to be completed and given or sent to Wendy Coombes. We need £7 per person to cover the cost of the coach, if you are National Trust members, that is all you will pay, otherwise another £9.90 per person (children £5) will be collected from you . It will be a fairly short visit; we will be at the property from 10.30am to 1.30pm, so we should be back in Moreton by no later than 3.30pm, if we do not stop elsewhere.

The closing date for booking this trip is Friday 23rd March

Tyntesfield is an old manor house remodelled in 1864 in the Victorian gothic revival style. It survives intact with an unrivalled collection of Victorian decorative arts, decorated private chapel and extensive Servants' quarters. There are formal gardens, a walled kitchen garden with conservatories and an orangery. The site is sloping but most of the house and gardens are easily accessible. The entrance to the chapel is by a steep gravel path. Entry to the house is by timed ticket. There are interpreters in every room who explain the most interesting points. There are no guided tours. There will be an initial introduction to the property on board the coach. There is a catering kiosk where sandwiches and drinks can be bought and eaten. If the day is wet, packed lunches will have to be eaten where shelter is available. There is also a gift shop.

Book early This is a visit not to be missed!

February Meeting:

This took place on 21st February in the Community Club at 7.30pm. 32 members & guests attended, on yet another rainy evening! Edward Pike gave us a very informative and amusing insight into the workings of the Railway, which he joined as a telegraph clerk in 1947. At that time it was the Great Western Railway, just prior to nationalisation. Edward retired from the railways in 1989, during his 42 years he worked in many other departments in and around this area. He explained how the Telegraph was used and developed before it was eventually replaced by the telephone. Edward said it was like one big family, and gave a very personal service to its customers. On the early morning train from Moreton, for instance, the guard would check with passengers that all the regulars were there. If someone was missing he would leave the train and trot up Station Hill to see if the person missing was coming! There were many other examples given of this type of customer care, and we thank Edward for giving such a wonderful flavour of a bygone age.

March Meeting:

This will be held as usual in the Community Club on the 21st March, at 7.30 pm.

'The Military and Dartmoor'

Lieutenant Colonel (RTD) Tony Clarke OBE is the Commandant of the Dartmoor Training Area. He will give us an illustrated talk on the history of the military uses of Dartmoor. Tony would like those attending to bring along any photos or reminiscences with regard to the military on Dartmoor.

Non members of the Society are very welcome to attend for a donation of £2 payable at the door.

March Picture Puzzle:

What is this curious construction? What is it called and what was it used for?
Finally can anyone say where this particular example is located?

Answers in April's Newsletter



New Members:

We have 2 new members this month, **Sarah Vincent**, who lives in Court Street, and **Mike Stewart** from Bowring Park. We welcome Sarah and Mike, and look forward to seeing them at our meetings.

Moretonhampstead fair-July 1830

There follows an account of number of incidents showing that the fair did not always attract bona fide visitors!

'At Moretonhampstead fair last Thursday last, the show of Bullocks & sheep was small, and with but little business doing at quotations similar with those of neighbouring marketsthere was an unusual share of, for this place, doing in another way, for the town was infested by a numerous and most daring gang of thieves, who under the pretence of *'going the thimble rig'*(1), were prepared for every species of mischief; to such an extent were their acts carried out during the course of the afternoon that several of them were secured, and on the following day three of them (Wm Lewis 27;Richard Goss,17; and John Owen, 15) were by the Rev G Gregory committed to the Devon County Goal for a month. Exasperated at the detention of their comrades, and being foiled in various attempts, the remainder grew desperate and a large party were expelled *vi et armis* late at night; enough however it appears remained to do mischief, as either late on that night or early on Friday morning the White Hart Inn was entered through a window from the yard, and two pair of boots, the property of gentlemen sleeping in the house, and several articles of silver the property of Mrs Cann the landlady, carried off, whilst there was pretty clear evidence of the thieves being disturbed, as other articles had been removed to the window and there left. In assisting to secure one part, and ridding the town of others, Mr M W Harvey, the solicitor had been most active, and such was the state of the neighbourhood that those whose business called them late abroad considered if necessary for their safety to be provided for defence by firearms; in this way, on the Saturday morning, between 3 & 4 o'clock, whilst returning with others to his house at Langhill, they found, in a *linhay* (2) on the roadside at Forder, three men and a woman, part of a gang, and very properly took them into custody, Mr H accompanying the peace officers on the way to the Rev Gregory at Dunsford. In passing through the Churchyard, However, a pistol, which Mr Harvey had in his coat pocket, by some accident exploded, the ball entering his thigh. He was immediately taken back to his office in the town, and medical assistance procured. Mr Barnes (3) was also sent for, from this City, but according to the latest intelligence they have been unable to discover in which part of the thigh the ball is lodged, and *the consequences are doubtful*. Mr H. is a fine, high -spirited young man, and held in great esteem by all who know him, and the utmost anxiety, as to the issue, prevails in the neighbourhood'.

Editor's Notes:

Did Mr Harvey recover from this very serious injury? Well, I think he did. The 1851 census records a Moses Woolland Harvey living in Cross Street, aged 51. He also appears in the census records here for 1841, 1861 and 1871. The trade directories also list him in 1856, 1857 and 1866 as a solicitor in Cross Street.

A headstone in the churchyard reads as follows:

'In memory of ELIZABETH wife of Moses Woolland HARVEY Solicitor of this parish born July 27th 1807 died October 31st 1854. Also of SELINA their daughter born March 3rd 1838 died June 21st 1857. Also of the said MOSES WOOLLAND HARVEY born October 11th 1799 died November 28th 1871 aged 72 years. Also of AMELIA GEORGINA HARVEY second wife of the above born August 28th 1809 died February 19th 1872'.

This is pretty conclusive evidence of his survival; I expect he died with the pistol ball still in situ!

Where did I get all the information about Moses Harvey? Well it all came from our own History Society website: www.moretonhampstead.org.uk - why not visit it yourself?

(1) **Going the thimble Rig**- A game of chance, similar to 'find the Lady' but using three thimbles, rather than playing cards.

(2) **Linhay**- A double-storied open-sided structure comprising a cattle or cart shelter on the ground floor with a hayloft above. Most common in South West England.

(3) **Mr Barnes**-the newspaper article does not say who he was, presumably the writer felt there was no need as everyone would know. I expect he was a surgeon. We know Mr Harvey was a Solicitor, the writer tells us, but everyone in Moreton would know that. This account was penned in Exeter, and is therefore written from that perspective.

Anyone can contribute; please send articles to: christopher.pilkington@tesco.net