

**Combe Lancey,
Sandford
Mike Maddock.**



50 members and friends of Crediton Area History & Museum Society attended a talk by Mike Maddock on the history of Combe Lancey, a manor house between Crediton and Sandford, and the families who have owned and occupied it. Mr Maddock has spent the last 12 years examining legal and other documents relating to the property and the people concerned. He explained that the house, in a valley, hence 'Combe', got its name from the Lancelles family who originated from near Bude in Cornwall. It appears more a Devon Longhouse than a manor but in order to qualify for that title it is necessary for it to have been used as Manorial Court and the earliest lease dated 1614 indicates that it was. Earlier records were lost in the 1915 fire that destroyed Creedy Court nearby, then home of the Davey family who then owned Combe Lancey. A study by Plymouth University found that it was one of only 3 pre 1300 houses in the area.

Immediately after the Conquest in 1066, all land was taken by the Crown. Gradually leases were granted to favoured individuals, usually as a result of military service, or the church. Combe Lancey became part of the 'Honour' of Bradninch, held by various knights benefitting from 'Knights' Fees'. Mr Maddock showed how ownership had changed over the centuries and had compiled comprehensive and very impressive family trees of the landed families involved. The first of these, William de Tracey in 1170 was one of the four knights who assassinated Thomas Beckett, Archbishop of Canterbury. A boss at the west end of Exeter Cathedral illustrates the scene.

Subsequent families owning the manor included the Wilfords, two branches of the Davys, the Peryams and the Tuckfields, most of these exceedingly wealthy wool merchants from Crediton or Exeter. Because the property was part of the Honour of Bradninch it became part of the Duchy of Cornwall. Robert Stone, who built Newcombes House, since demolished, owned it for a period, as did the Lake family from Sandford. Often run as a farm, buildings on the site have been frequently altered and Mr Maddock showed photos of the layout and significant construction features such as the magnificent roof timbers.

Mr Maddock has written a large volume detailing this history (seen in the photo), copy of which he is depositing in Crediton Museum archive. In thanking him for this and his talk Chairman Mrs Sandra Cooper said "This is an amazingly erudite and learned piece of work which students will be absorbing for many years to come. We are fortunate to have an owner and local resident with the skills and knowledge to have been able to complete such detailed research."

February coffee morning.

Our first coffee morning of 2016 is planned for the 27th February in the museum. There will be cakes, coffee and tea, and secondhand books.

**Chairman's
chatter**

I am writing this just before Christmas on a very sunny and mild morning – I hope we have many more, but I suspect that, just when the plants and fruit trees have decided it is spring, we will get the true winter. At least the cold and wet make us appreciate the sunshine when it comes! By the time you read this it will be 2016 – Happy New Year to you all! We are halfway through our winter programme but still some interesting talks to look forward to: The City of London by Richard Adams, Family History by Eric Rodd, Myths and Tall Tales of the Moor by John Stuart, and in April the Moistown Archaeological Project by Janet Daynes. Since 2008 the ACE Archaeology Club have been researching the medieval and post-medieval settlement at Moistown near Broadwoodkelly and Winkleigh, undertaking fieldwork and excavation. It will be interesting to find out what they have discovered.



At the end of November we held a Christmas bazaar which was well attended and made £174 for Museum funds. These are always sociable affairs where

Sandra Cooper

Sandra Cooper
Society Chairman.

Our Corporate Friends

Please don't forget to support the local firms whose logos appear in our literature - see below. Without them we would not have a museum. Our income is insufficient to cover the expenses.

Crediton Museum & Heritage Centre



Supported by:



**Crediton Area History
& Museum Society**



**Members
and Friends
Newsletter**
January 2016

Who sank the Mary Rose?

Peter Marsden

The October meeting in the Boniface Centre saw Peter Marsden, a professional archaeologist from Bovey Tracey, who has been intimately involved with the restoration of the Mary Rose, talk on the subject "Who sank the Mary Rose?"

Mr. Marsden began by setting the scene, with the newly protestant Henry VIII arraigned against the Catholic Charles V of Spain (also the holy roman emperor) and the Catholic Francis 1st of France, and also Suleiman the Magnificent who headed the Ottoman Empire that had aspirations to control the Mediterranean.

Thus Henry needed a large, modern navy and one of his first acts when he became King in 1509 was to order the construction of the Mary Rose and her sister ship the Peter Pomegranate. These were known as caraques and had high "castles" at the bow and stern and carried many guns. In 1544 Henry decided to seize Boulogne and unsurprisingly Francis 1st was enraged at this action, and assembled a huge armada (far bigger than the infamous Spanish Armada) with tens of thousands of soldiers.

The armada crossed the channel to Portsmouth, and on July 19th 1545 the English fleet set out to confront the French. At lunch just before the battle, the Captain of the Mary Rose – Sir George Carew who lived in Exeter at Polsloe Priory was promoted by Henry to Vice Admiral. Perhaps surprisingly, in Tudor times the ship's captain was not a naval man, and the master was in command

It was when the Mary Rose was battling with a French ship that she turned away, was caught by a gust of wind that heeled her over to such a degree that water flooded in through the lowest gun ports that were only 16" above the waterline, and the Mary Rose sank with the loss of more than 400 lives and barely 40 saved.

It was in the 1960's that Alex McKee a local man and amateur diver, assembled a team of divers and they located the Mary Rose, and eventually she was raised in 1982. There then commenced the painstaking process of restoring



the salvaged timbers, continually spraying them with chilled water to disperse the centuries of accumulated salts and prevent mould building up. Many artefacts and the remains of the crew were found buried in the mud that encased the ship. An examination of the crews' teeth showed that 50% of them came from southern Europe.

Henry was keenly interested in ship design and in 1536 he modernised the Mary Rose, and against the advice of his shipwrights he ordered additional heavy guns to be fitted in the bow. Necessary structural alterations weakened the bow structure, and the additional weight high up increased the ship's centre of gravity and also lowered the waterline closer to the lowest gun ports. To make matters worse, the gun ports were not opened and closed by the gunners but by sailors on the main deck 3 levels up, which in the heat of battle seems a very silly idea.

Thus Henry's changes severely compromised the Mary Rose's stability and seaworthiness, which is why she heeled over and sank in circumstances that should have been no threat to her. Henry being Henry there was nobody to challenge him. The answer to the question therefore is that Henry sank the Mary Rose and perhaps that is why there was no inquiry to her loss.

Thanks are due to Peter Marsden for a most interesting talk.

LAPFORD ARCHIVE. Lapford now has a compact and fascinating archive, constantly being updates. On June 6th it mounted a history of the village at the Devonshire History Day at Chulmleigh, and as a feature of the village's historic Revel it put on a history of the village school. This involved acting out the school's history from entries in its log books of 1865, 1895, 1935 and 2015. Head teachers, Rectors and their children took their appropriate parts, and with original registers, photos and contemporary documents it proved to be a fascinating and vivid picture of village life over those 150 years



Edited by Keith Mortimer 01363 776150
Email keithmortimer@eclipse.co.uk



Downes archive

Each week a group of members is working on our archive at Downes (in the museum over the cold winter months!) to better organise the storage and cataloguing of our collection. Apart from the practical benefits of this in that it helps researchers and others to locate relevant material, our helpers find learning more about what we hold quite fascinating. If you can spare a few hours most weeks to help, please let us know because this is a huge job!

Law breaking 1908/9 style.

| Date | Offender's Name | Offence | Result of trial |
|----------|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 26-2-09 | Oliver Webb Painter London | Being a pedlar without a certificate | Discharged on promising to leave town |
| 11-5-09 | Henry Jefford Horrell Ironmonger Crediton | Obstructing foot/path | Fined 1/- + costs 6/- |
| 26-5-09 | Albert Bennett Publican Crediton | Drunk on his licensed premises | Fined 2/- + costs |
| 2-6-09 | Walter Osborne Labourer Crediton | Using obscene language | Fined 5/- + 5/6 costs |
| 10-9-09 | James Conway Tramp | Drunk & Disorderly | Sentenced to 14 days hard labour |
| 14-10-09 | George Elston Private & Dragoon Guards | Keeping a dog without a licence | Fined 1/- + 5/6 costs |
| - | John Freemantle Tramp | Begging | Sentenced to 7 days hard labour |
| - | William Farmer Pedlar Torquay | Peddling without a certificate | Sentenced to 7 days hard labour |
| - | Thomas Nicholls Tramp York | Begging | do |
| 9-11-09 | William Bennett Tramp Crediton | Using a spring trap without a licence | Fined 10/- |

Nothing changes. Recently Jeff Horrell of Stoke Canon loaned us a fascinating diary written by his grandfather Henry Horrell who owned an ironmongers at 19 High Street (now Lifestyle Chemists) in the early 1900s. We will report more on this later but Jeff also loaned us a copy of a page from the Crediton Police register from 1908/9. Jeff's father acquired this many years ago from a contact in the police, identity unknown! The list of offences and penalties is interesting and the reason Jeff's father was given it becomes obvious when you see that the second case down is the said grandfather and ironmonger being fined one shilling, with six shillings and sixpence costs, for 'obstructing

footpath', presumably by displaying his wares outside the shop!

Some of the other entries make interesting reading:

Oliver Webb a painter from London was prosecuted for peddling without a certificate, and his sentence was to promise to leave the town! (A pedlar from Torquay got 7 days hard labour)

Albert Bennett was a publican in the town (which tavern John?) and he was charged with being drunk in his own licensed premises!

Thomas Nicholls a tramp from York got 7 days hard labour for begging; perhaps he should have offered to leave town!

AUTHUR RICHARDSON CREDITON VIOLIN MAKER



Exeter violinist Keith Fulford presents a framed picture of his violin made by the Crediton violin maker Arthur Richardson in 1935, on the 50th anniversary of his death. Richardson trained to be a woodcarver and eventually moved to Crediton to work for Dart & Francis around 1914. A violinist since his schooldays, he had begun to make violins as a hobby in 1912. He made over 500 violins and violas which are now highly sought after. In 1961 Arthur Richardson received an MBE for services to music. A plaque commemorating his achievements is mounted on the rear wall of Crediton Library.

CAHMS WEBSITE CONTRIBUTIONS.

John Kelsey

Acquiring material for CAHMS's excellent website is still proving quite difficult, and I suspect it's not yet on a lot of members' radars. I want to encourage contributors to submit information as soon as it becomes available. If we are constrained by the quarterly cycle of the newsletter, we lose some of the benefit of having a website. I have in mind news items, event notifications and amendments, and event reports. You may also have a favourite subject on which you want to write an extended article; it could be too long for the newsletter, but wouldn't be a problem on the website.

The format you send doesn't matter, but please send pictures. If you don't use a computer then I'm quite happy to receive longhand material and do the typing myself. Contact me by email on jonathankelsey@btinternet.com, or leave hardcopy material at the museum marked for my attention. please send pictures separately, not embedded in the text'.

2015 A.G.M.

A good turnout of society members attended the Annual General Meeting in October at the Boniface Centre, and afterwards society member Peter Budd gave a very professional slide presentation about bygone industries and events in the Westcountry.

The Brendon Hills mineral line

was constructed between 1856 – 1861 to carry iron ore from mines there to Watchet Harbour, and from there to the steelworks at Ebbw Vale. Peter shower slides of the ruins of the industrial workings, railway buildings and workers' cottages, and other buildings still in use today. Also the 1km long inclined plane and the remains of its winding house.

At the bottom of the incline another stretch of track extended to Watchet Harbour where some of the railway buildings can still be seen, and on the quay itself a section of the original track is exposed to view. The line was closed in 1910 and the rails taken up for scrap to help the war effort.

The gunpowder mills of Dartmoor

were remotely located on the road between Postbridge and Two Bridges. For a short period in the 19th century the mills supplied "black powder" to the local mining industry, various quarried and farmers who were clearing their land.

Seven water wheels provided power to grind the ingredients, which were mixed in "incorporating mills" that were well spaced out and had very thick walls and a lightweight roof so that should there be an explosion the roof would blow off limiting any damage!

With the invention of dynamite in 1867 and a decline in mining, the mills closed in 1897.

Granite paving setts

were produced at Middle and Great Staple Tor on Dartmoor in the late 1800's. they were used to pave the streets of Plymouth and Tavistock that had hitherto been compacted earth. This industry flourished in the 1870's, and in 1875 nearby Merrivale Quarry opened to increase production. Making setts was backbreaking work carried out using rudimentary tools and men were paid one penny per sett, which in present day terms equates to about £10.50 per day!

By the late 1890's production of setts had almost ceased because of cheap imports and the increasing use of tarmacadam.

Rabbit warrens on Dartmoor.

During the agricultural revolution that began in about 1750, marginal land on Dartmoor was used for farming rabbits in warrens. Because the thin cover of soil over rock was not suitable for rabbits to burrow it was necessary to create mounds for rabbits to live and breed in, and these were often referred to as "pillow mounds". There are about twenty sites on Dartmoor, with many in the Upper Plym Valley. Warrens were bounded by rivers and streams, and often by rabbit-proof walls. Boundaries with the open moor were not always fenced since it was felt rabbits would not stray far from their food source. Stoats and weasels that preyed on rabbits were trapped in stone vermin traps, although these were superseded by guns towards the end of the 19th century. Most of the buildings associated with the warrens have long since fallen into disrepair, although Ditsworthy and Trowelsworthy Warren Houses (which were the only warrens to survive into the 20th century as the demand for meat and fur declined) remain, although derelict.

The Prayer book rebellion

took place in Devon in 1549. Following the death of Henry VIII in 1547, the Duke of Somerset and the Archbishop of Canterbury ordered that Henry's 1st Book of Common Prayer (written in English not Latin) be compulsorily introduced on the 9th June. This caused much resentment in Cornwall where many people spoke Cornish, and on the 6th June three thousand disgruntled Cornishmen set out for London to air their grievances, joined by others at Plymouth and meeting at Crediton to make more plans. The introduction of the new prayer book in Sampford Courtenay caused much unrest, that resulted in the death of a farmer loyal to the new book. Fearing retribution, the villagers armed themselves and joined the Cornish rebels who were passing through on their way to Crediton. News of the unrest reached London, and the Duke of Somerset sent two local knights to put down the insurrection. The townspeople were confronted at a barricade they had erected between two barns on the outskirts of the town, and government forces burnt them down. There then ensued battles between the rebels and government forces at Clyst St. Mary and other sites and villages around Exeter, the massacre of nine hundred men at Clyst Heath and a siege of Exeter when the city was encircled by rebels for several weeks. The unrest finally came to an end at the battle of Sampford Courtenay in August 1549 when the rebels were routed.

Thanks are due to Peter for a very informative and skilful presentation about long forgotten industries and events.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

All commencing at 7.30pm at the Boniface Centre. Unless otherwise shown.

To keep right up to date visit "Whats On" at www.creditonhistory.org.uk

Monday 11th January. "The City of London" by Richard Adams

Wed 20th Jan. "Broadsheet ballads" by Ian Maxstead. (Newton St. Cyres village hall.)

Monday 8th February. "Family History" by Eric Rodd

Wed 17th Feb. "Animals in Warfare." by Lynda Pearce. (Newton St Cyres village hall.)

Monday 14th March. "Myths and Tales of the Moor" by John Stuart.

Wed 16th March. "Histories of Hayne and Coldharbour." by Isobel Hepworth and Jean Wilkins. (Newton St Cyres village hall.)

Monday 11th April. "The Moistown Archaeological Project" by Janet Danes.

Monday 9th May. Village tour. (Details to be announced)

CAHMS entry 50p members, £3.50 non members
NSCHG entry £2.00 BHS entry £3.00 non-members