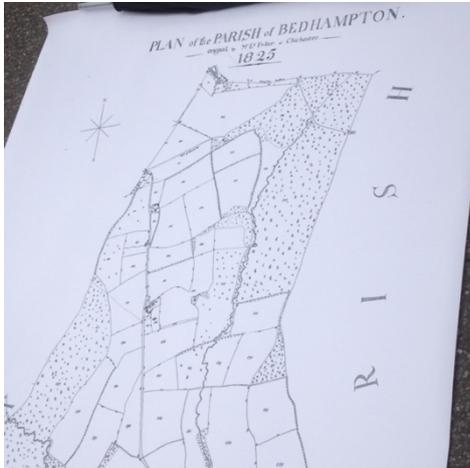


Local History Group 2 – Tour of Old Bedhampton

Sixteen of us enjoyed an excellent guided tour of Old Bedhampton on Thursday 19th August given by Nigel Gossop, a member of the Bedhampton Historical Collection Group.



Nigel began by showing us a replica of a map from 1825 which showed the extent of the then parish of Bedhampton, stretching six miles from the shore in the south to current-day Padnell in the north. This illustrated the importance of Bedhampton over the years and Nigel gave us an insight into the history of the village and some of the interesting occupants of the large houses, many of which buildings still exist today.



Old Bedhampton still has several freshwater springs around the area of the Mead, with one surfacing in the garden of a nearby house. Much of the area was Mediaeval hay meadow, harvested by the villagers and then grazed by their animals. From the end of the 1800s Portsmouth Water Company diverted the water from the springs to supply the whole of Portsmouth.

One building housed a biscuit factory during the mid 1850s making hardtack biscuits for the military during the Crimean War. This was set up by a local resident, John Snook, who built an impressive bridge consisting of seventeen arches to transport the biscuits to his private railway siding. This bridge is wide enough for two vehicles to pass and also has a sharp bend at one point.



In 1819 the poet, John Keats, stayed with friends at The Mill House and finished his poem, "The Eve of St Agnes".

We completed our tour with a delicious cream tea in the Waterloo Room at The Elms.



Originally a farmhouse, The Elms was converted into a gentleman's residence at the beginning of the nineteenth century, imitating the design of Strawberry Hill House with the addition of a façade and false windows. The Waterloo Room and tower were added later in the hope that Wellington might visit!

Libby & Jane

