

Ketton History Group Meeting – 10 January 2017

The main focus of the 10 January 2017 meeting of the Ketton History Group was on *Festivities in Ketton* during the period 1901 to 1937. This was based on media entries recorded in the Ketton Village History Website.

During that period a week long Ketton Feast was regularly held in the summer, with events including Band concerts, dances, itinerant amusements such as a steam merry-go-round, swing boats and shooting saloons, plus skittles, coconut shies and many stalls. There were also sporting activities and races. In the 1937 Feast Week here was a Boxing tournament with one fight won by a Ketton man on a disqualification. People came from a wide area and in 1930 there is a record of a letter to the Grantham Journal proposing that cheap excursion privileges be granted for those who wished to attend Ketton Feast week.

May Day was celebrated regularly with the crowning of the May Queen and a procession, and also a May Treat for children, with a high tea and sports and games.

Many fund raising events took place. In 1923 a whist drive was held in aid of the Midland Hotel Sick and Dividing Club. These clubs were a safety net for the working man before the welfare state took off. The worker would pay a small amount from his wages into the club each week. Then, if he was ill and unable to work, he would be able to make a claim on the club funds for financial assistance. There were also fundraising events in aid of the Village Hall, and the Cricket team.

Theatrical and other entertainments were much enjoyed. In 1909 a comedy was performed at the Northwick Hall by members of Ketton Institute, and the following year there was a General Entertainment in the Mission Room. Quoits was a very popular game and the English Quoits Association held the Championships on the Quoits beds of the Village Club. Mr Arthur Knox of Ketton the existing English Champion retained his title. This was repeated in 1920 and '100 persons' celebrated Arthur Knox's winning the English Quoits Championship again, and also the Ketton Cricket Club winning the Stamford and District Cricket League.

A lively discussion of these and other events led to recollection of village events from the 1950's onwards. It was decided that the topic for the 14 March 2017 meeting would be 'Village Events in our Lifetimes' (1940's/50's onwards). Members of the group would be invited to share memories and to look out photos etc of events, and record oral histories at the meeting.