

LOCAL HISTORY TALKS

By Peter Ibbett

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THE SPEAKER. Peter Ibbett was a founder member of the Potton History Society and has acted as its programme secretary since its formation in 1977. He was born in the town and grew up on its historic Market Square from which his interest in Local History developed. He has lived in Little Paxton, Eynesbury and Buckden before moving to his present home in Eaton Ford. His career in science teaching has taken him from Bassingbourn and Melbourn to Chatteris in Cambridgeshire and Elstow in Bedford. He currently is the Director of the [Kip McGrath Education Centre](#) at Eaton Ford in St Neots providing after-school tuition in Maths, English & Science for 6 to 16's and is working with the St Neots Town Centre Initiative to help raise awareness of its heritage.

THE TALKS. All are illustrated and will need the use of a good screen. Projection equipment can be supplied.
A speakers fee of £25-£35 is normally charged.

THE DESERTED MARKET. Potton has a fine example of a Market Square which was one of the most active in its county. Its buildings remain. What caused its decline?

THE IRONMONGERS SHOP. The local shop has become an endangered species. Two talks trace the development of the Ironmongers on Potton Market Square over the last 170 years. [The Victorian Ironmongers Shop + Behind the 20thC Ironmongers Counter.](#)

Mr PUNCH GOES TO THE GREAT EXHIBITION. The 1851 volume of Punch magazine combines factual detail and humorous insights into Victorian life.

AT THE PARISH BOUNDARY. The boundaries of a parish can provide a fascinating insight into its development.
* [Buckden & Potton versions*](#)

A WALK INTO HISTORY. The St Mary's Street area in Eynesbury shows how to find clues about past changes and how to leave material for future historians to use.

RETURN OF THE TURNPIKE. This talk uses the examples of the Bury (near Ramsey) to Stratton (near Biggleswade) & the Potton to Eynesbury Turnpike roads.

A-Z OF VICTORIAN FARMING. A 2500 page agricultural cyclopedia gives a fascinating insight into the lives of progressive Victorian farmers.

LONG MAY SHE REIGN! Newspapers and magazines provide an insight into life at the dawn of the new Elizabethan era 50 years ago.

ON THE ROAD in 1910. Volume 1 of 'The Motor' reveals a wealth of information both mechanical and social as the motor car began its grip on daily life.

WHAT WAS A MANOR? The story the effect of the Manor on Parish life as illustrated by the four Manors of Potton. (Burdetts; Regis; Rectoria & Much Manured)

THE SOUND OF THE ANVIL. The changing scene around five generations of the Ibbett Agricultural Engineering family at South Street in St Neots.

St NEOTS:- JEWEL OF THE OUSE VALLEY. Three talks:- [The Mystery of the Priory of St Neot;](#) [St Neots Market Square;](#) [1905 Guide to the Spa & Houseboats.](#)

OKLAHOMA SKIES. The WW2 experiences of a St Neots boy at the No3 British Flying School in the USA as seen through the 'Open Post' magazine of the times.

EAGLE SCHOOLDAYS. A collection of Bedford Modern School magazines from the 1930's reveals much about inter-war life and attitudes towards education.

ROUND BRITAIN IN 1951. Thirteen Festival of Britain guidebooks reveal a past era.

Also available are :-

FIRE! The effects of fire in one Bedfordshire town over 200 years.

THE POTTON SHAMBLES. The story of a unique market building.

LOCAL HISTORY QUIZ. Instructional and fun for small teams.

GAS, WATER & SEWAGE. How your ancestors dealt with the basics of life.

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