

"Exploring Heraldry" Interest Group - March to July 2017

Our Spring and Summer sessions saw us ducking in and out of a fascinating variety of topics, as we sampled ways of starting and tackling such sources of Heraldry as the Lords Lieutenant of Middlesex - for example, ...



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... the 4th Duke of Portland's coat, showing his family's Bentinck *cross moline* and his mother's Cavendish arms.

Starting in the same session, we began exploration of a historical theme on the display of the arms of four of the Great Houses, major players in late medieval Europe, exhibited in a former monastery, founded in honour of a deceased husband and son, now secularised as a Museum:



The Abbey-Church of Brou, Bourg-en-Bresse, site of the armorial windows.

This France-based theme still continues into our 2017-18 season, but broken into smaller sections, and modified as we go on for customer-friendliness, as the amount and nature of historical detail was proving too much for lengthy examination or study. Each section centres on the marriage of Duke Philibert II, “le Beau”, Duke of Savoy, whose union early in the 1500s with Margaret of Austria ended with his premature death within three years. The Monastery founded in his memory by his widow and mother displays the arms of most of the key figures, over several centuries, in the major Houses of Savoy, Austria, the Bourbons, and Burgundy



Amadeus V, an early Head of the House of Savoy, before the Counts became Dukes – the arms became those of Piedmont and of what is now Switzerland.

The next two sessions (April and May) were enlivened by a spectacular presentation shared by two of our group, on the heraldry of British Commonwealth countries. four Caribbean-area examples are shown here:

<i>Clockwise from Top left</i>		
Bahamas		
Belize		
Barbados		
Grenada		

Other smaller topics and mini-quizzes (*the latter at first based on an annoyingly garbled form of "Only Connect"*) separated the continuing exploration of the French theme, and also revised some information because of the difficulties for a number of group-members in getting along to all our monthly Feignies Room sessions. Our emphasis in June was the annual outing, this time to the Church of St Oswald in Ashbourne, where on the majority of our group (plus partners) set about a Quiz which certainly exercised the little grey cells ...and feet, as we moved about the large church):



Here, getting to grips with some tasks based on the magnificent East Window.



A group of questions centred on the Boothby Chapel and surrounds,

much of which concentrated on the ubiquitous Derbyshire Cokayne family – a major monument in the North Transept faces you above, but there are other tombs and panels in the **Boothby Chapel to your right**, ...



...where, in one effigy, you can see arms known as “canting”(the Cockerel emblem in this coat puns on or alludes to the family name).



In the same chapel, the life-size tomb effigy of Penelope Brooke Boothby,

while not heraldic, formed a touching diversion by one group-member about a girl who died tragically young.



The Group Leader also made a diversion in his July follow-up and “Answers” to the Ashbourne outing Quiz by slipping in one of his French holiday snaps, featuring **the fleurs-de-lys decorating this unusual altar to Joan of Arc in Domfront, Normandy** (*she is not dressed in her usual battle-armor or fleur-de-lys surcoat*)) linked to a task about that same iconic symbol in a personal plaque to the Jelf family in St Oswald’s. The group were very forgiving of the Leader by humouring his obsession with that heraldic emblem, and perhaps forgetting it amongst memories of a very good lunch to round off our day in Ashbourne at the “Lamplighter” restaurant.

Our thanks are due to John Titterton of Ashbourne, a nationally-acknowledged expert on Heraldry, for his assistance in preparing the visit to this most interesting venue.

A great end to our sixth year as a smashing group -
our 2017-18 year begins in October!

Vic Taylor

*(Forever-Grateful and Forever-Amazed Leader,
K&D U3A “Exploring Heraldry” Interest Group, 2011 -onwards)*