At our August meeting, Rev’d Dave gave a talk on the history of “the Church of Christ in Cockey otherwise Ainsworth” . Thirty one people attended, with one person meeting his cousin for the first time in a good number of years!

He started with a brief summary of Christianity’s spread in Britain in Roman and Anglo-Saxon times. Here in Ainsworth we were in a chaotic border region, nominally under the control of the kings of Mercia but very close to the Kingdom of Northumbria. When the first chapel was built is not known. The earliest mention of the church building that we know of is in an old court document dating from 1514 or 1515. It is thought that the church at the time was a Chantry Chapel built by the Lord of the Manor, who then allowed his tenants to use it. in 1586 the Elizabethan writer William Camden mentions seeing Cockley, a wooden chapel set round with trees Since then there have been many changes and Rev’d Dave described the replacement of that wooden chapel, by a stone building (described as a plain building with a small ornamented bell tower), its rebuilding in the 1830s and the subsequent changes until we have the church as we know it today. He also mentioned that one of his predecessors (Revd Richard Heslop) was suspended in 1842 for drunkenness!  (a more detailed description of the talk, with photographs,  is contained in the articles section of this website)

This talk was followed by a slideshow of our archive photos of Church Street from 1900 to 1990.  A photo from 1900 appears to show a pub sign above one of the houses on Church Street and this provoked some discussion.  Following a query about the quarry off Delph Lane, a few photos of the quarry were shown.  A request for photos of the football team, shown at a previous meeting, meant that a number of people saw the photos for the first time and were able to supply more information

The next Meeting will be on Tuesday 10th September at 8:30 in the Old White Horse pub on Church Street.  There will be a short talk on "The History of a House" (1 Church Street), a short DVD film (taken by George Parker) and we will be showing some of the photos we have collected for the Archive.