

February Meeting:

We began by looking at some census records sent to us by David, showing that a brickmaker had lived in the village, as well as a schoolmistress, who ran a Boarding School, and a pupil teacher. The meeting then turned to the topic for the evening - water in the village.

Using current maps, Dave explained how the water drained from the hills and fields around the village into reservoirs, lakes and ponds, all of which were man-made, usually as a result of the need for water power etc during the industrial revolution. We also looked at how the village has got its water in the past – originally from wells and pumps. There were about 60 of these marked on various maps, and this did not include the wells which were in the kitchens in some of the older houses.

In the wording of the Enclosures act of 1809, Steve found some information about the best known of these wells – the one on Well Street: - and how the Chapel had permission to create a slough – and how the public had the right to draw water from that well. And there was the tale of a lady who had fallen down the well, though thankfully she had been rescued. We also saw photos of a nearby well, which is about 40 feet deep to the surface of the water, and the water itself is about 40 feet deep.

The village wells were used until about 1900 when Bolton Corporation built a water tank on a rise in the land behind Brownhill farm. Water from the tank was then piped around the village, making the wells redundant and therefore removing them from future maps. When the water tank became inadequate for the needs of the village, a water tower was constructed in 1940 and this can be seen still, although it is no longer used to store water. Eventually, the water tower also became too small to supply the village and now water is piped into the village.

