

STEDMAN COUSINS



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Dear Cousins.

A warm welcome to all the new Cousins. I must apologise for not sending a Spring newsletter. My only excuse is the arranging of the Reunion and the reprinting of the book, so, I am sorry not to have sent one.

For those who were unable to come to the Reunion in August, I thought I would tell you a little of what we did over the two days.

Day 1 - began with us meeting at St Mary's Church in Bucknell, complete with macs and umbrellas. Thankfully the rain held off long enough for us to walk around the village looking at former Stedman homes. At the old farm where John Stedman (1759) and his family lived and farmed, we were confronted by three fierce looking German Shepherd guard dogs, so quick photos were taken here. Fred had prepared a booklet for the Reunion, which gave everyone some background information on the places we were visiting over the two days. I would like to take the opportunity to thank Fred for all the work he put in to producing this, and to say how delighted everyone was to receive a copy.
[Arrangements will be made when Tom and Ruth return home after their trip to the UK, to put this booklet onto the website for people to download, or if you would prefer to purchase a copy, we'll make arrangements for these to be sent by post. Check the website for more information.]



After a lunch stop at the Baron of Beef, and a brief General Meeting, we went on to the Judges Lodgings at Presteigne where we were met by Gabriella the Curator, and given a brief history of the Lodgings before we were free to wander complete with audio-guides. The museum were delighted to receive the photos of Clive's grandfather Thomas Stedman, who had been a policeman with the Radnorshire Constabulary, and these were displayed on the gallery wall in the museum. We were thrilled to see them in place too. What was especially pleasing and unusual in a museum, was that we were free to touch exhibits and look in cupboards and drawers... and most of us did ! Amongst the papers we found was something dated 1861 which was the 'Inland Revenue Hereford Collection - A list of licences' to kill game issued up to the 30 Sep 1861. The licences cost £3 each and expired on 5 Apr 1862. Amongst those listed we found a Stedman - Richard Steadman of Pipe and Lyde in Herefordshire.

The first day was 'rounded off' with a family meal at the Horse and Jockey in Knighton, for 24 of us. Amongst dishes on offer were "Sizzling chicken" which was very carefully carried in by the waiters amongst clouds of smoke and noise from the chicken sizzling on the platter.



Day 2 - began at Stokesay Castle which everyone enjoyed immensely. In Fred's booklet he talked of a story about giants and of a hidden chest and a lost key in the (now dry) moat. Dave's two sons ran off to try to find this key, sadly without success! Ah well, better luck next time!



Stokesay Castle

During the afternoon we joined the English Civil War Society who were re-enacting the Seige of Brampton Bryan (at Brampton Bryan). What was interesting was the Society (in costume) carrying out their daily tasks as they would have done in the mid 17th century. Tasks such as whittling different types of green wood to make spoons, knives etc; preparing lighters for igniting the cannon balls, muskets. This was made by boiling pieces of rope in a mixture of saltpetre and water on an open fire; ladies making clothes explaining the dyeing of the woollen cloth, the quality of fabric



depending on the status of the wearer etc.

The Seige

That evening, those of us who were able to, met again at the Horse and Jockey for an impromptu meal together.

As you can gather, we had a fun filled and lively weekend, not to mention all the chattering and sharing of family stories/memories.

New pieces of information are continually being found and the most recent came from New Zealand when Paul discovered that George Edward Steadman (b.1859) son of *James (1824) and Jane Farmer*, did not die with his second wife (Celia) on board the Wairarapa on its journey from Australia to New Zealand after all. The last contact the family in New Zealand had had from him was that they were bound for New Zealand on the Wairarapa . This ship sadly did not

complete its journey because it struck the Great Barrier Island in the Hauraki Gulf in October 1894, and many were drowned in the tragedy.

For some curious reason, George and his wife decided to settle in Australia where they had three children. No contact was ever received by the family again, hence the belief that they had drowned. Prior to this, he had regularly kept in contact with the family. It seems that George died a pauper in September 1938.

There are still many stones to be overturned to discover more about our family. Dave Stedman who was elected to the position of Genealogist at the Reunion, is also keenly researching the DNA side of things too, as you may know. He will no doubt be telling us of some of his findings.

With best wishes to you all

Sandra