

# STEDMAN COUSINS



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**Newsletter No. 10**

**From the President**

**Autumn 2013**

Dear Cousins,

At least we can say (in the northern hemisphere) that we had a proper Summer this year, despite having to wait for it!

Early Summer brought confirming results that John Stedman Probert was definitely the love-child of John Stedman (b.1759), when one of our new cousin's, David Probert received his DNA results, and we were delighted that David joined the "Cousins". Since then, we have two more 'new' cousins who have joined us : Brian Steadman from Maesteg in Wales and Bryan Steadman in the US. Welcome to you all.

For our Reunion in August, we decided to include some places associated with the children and family of John Stedman Probert and began in Bishop's Castle, where his son George had a prosperous grocery business. David showed us his ancestor's former grocery shop, and where he had lived at Blundens Hall, a place David remembers very well from his childhood. It was good to hear some of his early memories of the house and the people living there.



We were fascinated to see lots of the street furniture as well as windows, doors etc. bedecked with knitting and crochet work all around the little town. In this photo you can see a street sign complete with multi-coloured muffer. No-one seemed to know the reason for this.

Saturday was our Corvedale trip, starting at Broadstone Church, where we were met by the Vicar of the five Corvedale Churches, Rev'd John Beesley, who told us about this little church which lies in the middle of a field just down the hill from Broadstone Farm, where our Thomas and then his son Samuel, farmed in the 1500s.



Broadstone Farm



Broadstone Church

The church is still in use and has a service once a month. From Broadstone we went in convoy to Abdon via some very narrow lanes where we had to negotiate with a sheep dog to allow us to pass his farm. He was reluctant to let us pass! At Abdon Rev'd Beesley introduced us to the Church Warden, Mr Barrie Wilson, who told us some of Abdon's and the Church's history. (Mr Wilson had previously lived at New House Farm, where once Phoebe Page and her family had lived.) During some restoration work on the church, a Norman window was uncovered. Fortunately they managed to photograph it before it all collapsed due to the Norman plaster crumbling.



After a welcome break for lunch at the 'Tally Ho' pub in Bouldon, we went on to find Broncroft Parks, another Stedman house/farm once home to Widow Stedman and Arthur Stedman.



Our evening meal together at the Horse and Jockey was great fun and a good time to catch up on everyone's news. Clive and Julie had news of their daughter Ceri's new baby, Phoebe, a welcome addition to their family as well as Dave and Alexia whose daughter Melody and her partner Luke, were celebrating the safe arrival of their first granddaughter, a welcome sister for Archie.

Sunday morning we all met in the lay-by of the road between Knighton and Bucknell to follow Clive (who knew the way) up to Lower Woodhouse farm on the former Stanage Estate, where we were able to look around the

former home and farm of Edward Probert (another of John Stedman Prober's sons). Mr Black, the current owner of the house, talked about the additions and changes to the house. There was a fascinating array of different windows and brickwork from different periods in its history, as you can see from this photo -



The view along the valley towards Bucknell was really beautiful, as you can see here – Imagine waking up to this view each morning!

Next stop was Coxall Farm, near Bucknell, where Caleb and Phoebe, followed by their son Caleb and his family and subsequently my 4x gt grandparents Thomas Sheriff lived and farmed. The present owner and farmer, Andrew Whiteman and his wife, were very hospitable and pleased to show us around this large farm. I believe there were something like 430 acres or more.



Before stopping for lunch, we had another look around Bucknell churchyard, and Dave uncovered the grave of the Rev'd William Watkins, the uncle of John Stedman's (1759) wife, Ann Jones, who had been the vicar of Bucknell until his death in 1816 at the age of 92.



I hope you have enjoyed reading some of the newspaper articles recently uncovered. They give a little insight into the daily lives of our ancestors, even though some might appear to be "skeletons in the cupboard". Don't worry about them – they just add colour to our family story!

Best wishes to you all.  
Sandra