

The Lives of the Common People (2012 and on-going)

Castleton and Hope's Hidden Medieval History

A joint project by Castleton and Hope Historical Societies with Heritage Lottery Fund support

Castleton and Hope Historical Societies have received £26,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for this exciting new project, led by volunteers from the local community, the project aims to discover where the common people lived and worked during the medieval period. The project is due to end in March 2013.

The project will try to find out about the 'hidden history' of Castleton and Hope villages between the Norman Conquest of 1066 and the Civil War in 1642. While history can often tell us about kings, lords and landowners, it is more difficult to track down the ordinary people who lived and worked in the Peak District's villages. This is because they don't appear in as many historical documents, most of which are about property, and their history can remain hidden.

Di Curtis of Hope Historical Society says "We are grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund who have awarded the Society a grant to look into the medieval history of Hope and Castleton. This means we can undertake documentary research, dig archaeological test pits and survey the old routes between the two villages."

Angela Darlington of Castleton Historical Society says "The test pits will be dug in people's gardens in both villages during the first two weeks in July. We are looking for finds such as old pots that can show where people lived during the medieval period. Each test pit will be a metre square. We hope to dig each one and back fill in a single day."

Finds from the test pits will be shown at an open day then some will be put on display in Castleton Museum. Pupils and students from Castleton and Hope primary schools and Hope Valley College will also join in a range of activities to learn about their medieval ancestors.

If you would like to find out more about the project or volunteer to get involved in the archaeology or documentary research, or are happy to have a test pit dug on your garden please get in touch with Di Curtis, 01433 620724, dicathope@aol.com or Angela Darlington, 01433 620281, amstafford@hotmail.co.uk.

The project is managed by the two societies with the help of Bill Bevan, and the archaeological assistance of the University of Sheffield.

Explaining the importance of the HLF support, HLF Grants Officer in the East Midlands, Greg Pickup, said: "We were delighted to support this exciting volunteer-

led project. It will provide opportunities for the whole community to gain new skills whilst exploring a hidden part of the Hope Valley's fascinating heritage. The project will uncover stories that have been buried for centuries, allowing people to discover how the lives of common people shaped the history of Hope and Castleton in Medieval times."