

Nanpantan Hall and the Paget Family

Anne Speight is the leader of the Charnwood U3A Local History Group and a well-known local historian. She found herself speaking to an audience some of whom had their own reminiscences of both the Nanpantan Hall and the people who lived and visited there.

The Hall was built in the 1870s for Edward Warner, who gave his name to Cartwright and Warner's hosiery mill off Nottingham Road Loughborough. The Warners were wealthy and well known in Loughborough, but despite the completion of Nanpantan Hall Edward Warner continued to live in Quorn Hall.

The Warner family emblem (in the form of a stone squirrel) sits above the door of Nanpantan Hall. A hall, stabling, coach houses and an entrance lodge all appear on Land Tax Records of the late 1870s.

The first recorded resident was a Miss Harriet Egremont, who later moved to Great Malvern. Later Warner's son and family moved into the vacated hall, before selling it to William Byerley Paget of Southfields Hall (now part of the offices of Charnwood Council).

William Byerley Paget – like Warner before him – was Master of the Quorn Hounds. The Pagets had held prestige roles as bankers, hosiers, surgeons and MPs. William did not immediately move into Nanpantan Hall but let it out to a number of tenants including Thomas Everard the well-known brewer.

The Pagets eventually moved into the hall during the early 1900s. William Paget's son William Edmund married and had two children there – Peter and Joan, the latter of whom would remain there until the 1980s.

In the First World War the hall served as a hospital and was involved with the Army Remount Service, a body responsible for training and providing horses for combat. When hostilities ended Peter went to boarding school where he befriended the actor David Niven, who in his biography recalled Summers spent as a visitor to Nanpantan Hall.

Anne then described two sad occasions in the Paget family history. Firstly in 1928 William Edmund died after a fall during a hunt at Groby, then in 1944 Peter died whilst serving as a soldier with the Royal Armoured Corps.

When Peter's mother died the house passed to Joan Paget who was quite reclusive but well liked locally. She was attended by her chauffeur and his wife who both lived in the entrance lodge to the hall.

When Joan died in 1986 she left the hall to her cousin Joanna Herbert-Stepney, who bequeathed it to the School of Economic Science (SES), and the contents of the hall were auctioned. An article appeared in the Loughborough Echo at the time which brought Nanpantan Hall – until then virtually unnoticed – into the headlines. The SES was described as a philosophical organisation, with which Joanna was said to have had some connection.

Tony Jarram