

Prestbury Past and Present, by Michael Cole. Published by Prestbury Local History Society, 2016. £10.00.

It is hoped that this will be the first of many histories of the village of Prestbury giving deep insights into its heritage, relating the legacy of past centuries, something that has not been done in detail before.

The content of the book, based on talks given to the Prestbury History Society in recent years, is divided into four sections:

Introduction

Lost Buildings

Masters, Servants and Tradesmen

Prehistoric Prestbury

The first section discusses the problems felt in Prestbury by occasional floods, leading to an explanation of the geology of the area, the local scenic landscape, the diversity of building materials, each of which helps to create the picturesque village we know and love today.

The history of ten lost buildings is given, from the Moated Manor House at one end of the village to Upper Mill and Hall Place at the other end. Despite the fact that no trace of the Moated Manor House remains, it is treated to four pages in this well-resourced book. John Leland, in his travels in 1540, described it as a 'fair place', 'well motid' and 'with a Parke hard by'. Still in existence in 1643 when Roundheads sheltered there during the Civil War, the manor house was not mentioned in Atkyns' *Ancient and Present State of Glostershire*, which was posthumously published in 1712.

The next section in the book concentrates on Prestbury in Victorian times, based upon the ages and occupations found in each national census, particularly those which were taken every decade from 1841 until the end of Victoria's reign. The author compares the limited working life in Prestbury today, when most people leave the village to work, with the thriving activity there in the nineteenth century. In 1841, most men were agricultural labourers. Over the years, this occupation grew less and the labourers became gardeners instead, as market gardens developed in the neighbourhood. Working life for the women remained basically unchanged over the same period, with most being in domestic service.

The final section of the book takes a long step back in time and looks at prehistoric Prestbury, recording that the Prestbury area was inhabited by farming communities from mid or late Stone Age onwards. The author discusses the flint tools discovered in the area, accompanied by photographs of the artefacts. Also mentioned are the round barrows and Iron Age fort located in and just outside the parish.

This publication, denoted as Volume 1, is a black and white, 140 page, A5 book, with over 30 photographs and maps, a full index and a bibliography. Also included are several appendices containing transcripts of house sale documents and letters written to and by Mary Attwood of Cakebridge.

For anyone specifically interested in Prestbury or in the area in general, this small book is a source of interesting and useful information. We look forward to the production of Volume 2. At £10 a copy, the book can be purchased from the Prestbury Post Office or Library or at the

local history meetings. Details of the publications and meetings can be found on:
prestburyhistory.com/publications