THE LEICESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

152nd ANNUAL REPORT 2006–2007

2006
Thursday 5 October
Ancient rivers, archaeology and aggregates: the National Ice Age Network in the East Midlands
Mark Stephens
Project Officer for National Ice Age Network

Thursday 19 October
Excavations on the site of the Medieval church of St Peter, Leicester
Tony Gnanaratnam
University of Leicester Archaeological Services

Thursday 2 November
John Throsby: a man of natural genius
Jess Jenkins
Assistant Keeper of Archives
Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland

Thursday 23 November
Annual General Meeting
At the Guildhall, Leicester

Thursday 7 December
Members’ Evening

2007
Thursday 11 January
Saints in the Landscape: the religious dedications of Leicestershire
Graham Jones
St John’s College, Oxford, and Centre for English Local History, University of Leicester.

Thursday 25 January
Leicester’s Town Hall: a Victorian jewel
Derek Seaton
Civic historian and author

Thursday 8 February  
*Curses, coins and collapsed walls: excavations in advance of the new Shires development*  
Jon Coward and Tim Higgins  
University of Leicester Archaeological Services

Thursday 22 February  
*Putting Traprain Law in its context: excavations and fieldwork in East Lothian 2000–4*  
Colin Haselgrove  
Professor of Archaeology, University of Leicester

Thursday 15 March  
*W Alan North Memorial Lecture*  
The return of Romulus: Archaeology and the origins of Rome  
Peter Wiseman  
Professor Emeritus, University of Exeter

Thursday 29 March  
*Sileby and scandal: the trials of a Leicestershire village in the early 17th century*  
Bernard Capp  
Professor of History, University of Warwick

Thursday 12 April  
*Monasteries in the East Midlands: recent research and where it is taking us*  
Glyn Coppack  
English Heritage

**The Annual General Meeting**

This was held on Thursday, 23 November, 2006, at the Leicester Guildhall, by courtesy of the Leicester City Council. The chair was taken by the President, Professor Rosemary Cramp, CBE, MA, BLitt, DSc, FSA.

**The Committee**

The Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr Gerald Rimmington, has met four times during the year, one less than usual. Usually there is a meeting in July, but this had to be cancelled, holidays determining that there was unlikely to be a quorum. There was an average of eight members present at the meetings which were held.

The sesquicentennial celebrations of the Society have now been concluded. Last year we were preoccupied with the publication of *Leicester Abbey*, an important project, which was completed very successfully, to the credit of all of those who were involved, especially the editors, Joanna Story, Jill Bourne and Richard Buckley. We were also delighted that our long-term project, the *Cumulative Index to Transactions*, compiled by Auriol Griffith-Jones, at last had come to fruition. Now we have the latest history of the Society, entitled *The
Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society 1855–2005, ably written by Robert Rutland, who, to his wife’s consternation, spent many hours incommunicado immured in his study. The cost of producing this book was kept to a minimum as Alan McWhirr did all the layout and design work at no cost to the Society.

The Society’s lecture programme for 2006–7 was, as usual, excellently well-organised by Mrs Sybil Rutland, the Honorary Lecture Secretary, whose efforts were rewarded by good attendances from the membership. We were treated to such intriguing topics as ‘John Throsby: a man of natural genius’ by Jess Jenkins, ‘Sileby and Scandal: the travails of a Leicestershire village in the early 17 century’ by Bernard Capp and ‘Coins, curses and collapsed walls: excavations in advance of the new Shires Development, Leicester’ by Jon Coward and Tim Higgins. Peter Wiseman maintained the quality of the W. Alan North Memorial Lectures with his presentation of ‘The return of Romulus: Archaeology and the origins of Rome’. We were delighted also to listen to our President, Professor Rosemary Cramp, speak about her Anglo-Saxon researches at the AGM. All lectures were concluded with refreshments served by Janet and Richard Lawrence, whose service in this capacity is much appreciated.

We had hoped to be able to make firm plans for the intended Record Series. For a number of reasons, however, this has been delayed. This is true also of Dr Graham Jones’s suggestion of the preparation of a historical atlas of Leicestershire.

The Society’s regular publications have appeared once again, with much credit to the editors. Volume 80 of Transactions, edited by Jill Bourne and Joanna Story, was a bumper edition of 260 pages long. Among the papers were Lynden Cooper’s important ‘Archaeological Assessment of the Trent-Soar Confluence Zone’, Patrick Boylan’s ‘Four Handel Oratorio Libretti, published by John Gregory of Leicester, 1759–1774’, and John Beckett’s ‘Leicester becomes a City, 1919’. Joyce Lee has continued the process of making the Leicestershire Historian a popular yet historically respectable publication. The Newsletter has continued to appear twice yearly.

One of the problems faced by a Society which has published journals over many years is what to do with the surplus copies that have accumulated over the years, gathering dust and taking up storage space. We have reached the point where it is essential to take action. Mr Aubrey Stevenson, our long-suffering Honorary Librarian, reports that 304 volumes of Transactions have been disposed of to local historical and archaeological societies. Mrs Caroline Wessel had previously circulated these societies offering them free copies of our surplus stock. Altogether seven societies collected volumes. The Committee agreed to keep a maximum of ten copies of each back volume but this still leaves about 3,000 copies for disposal.

During the year the Society’s website has been updated by Mr Richard Buckley. He has arranged for 86 volumes of Transactions to be scanned at a cost of £185 and placed on the website. Any comments about the website, particularly about its continued improvement, would be appreciated by the Committee.
The Committee has been much concerned to develop a relationship with other local societies in the county. Mrs Caroline Wessel and Dr Graham Jones devised and sent a questionnaire to local historical, heritage, archaeological and similar societies and were pleased to receive 47 replies indicating an interest in developing links with us. Following this up a History and Heritage Fair was held at Vaughan College on Saturday, 27 October, 2007. We will analyse this and decide what further action needs to be taken. In the meantime we can record the remarkable success of the day, with over 700 people attending and more than 50 stall holders.

Some attention has been given to the question of a public address system to be used at lectures. The Committee agreed to give £500 to the museum as a contribution toward a new system it was intending to install.

Throughout the year we have continued to function as a Committee without a Minute Secretary, so that Dr Alan McWhirr, our Honorary Secretary, has had to do double duty again. A volunteer to take minutes would be appreciated.

One is reminded that some of our members have given long-service on the Committee. Kay Gowlan has completed 22 years as Honorary Editor of the Newsletter. Geoff Clark-Monks has been Honorary Membership Secretary for 22 years. Aubrey Stevenson has been Honorary Librarian for 25 years. Alan McWhirr has been Honorary Secretary for 27 years. I would like to thank them on your behalf for their past services and the work that they continue to do, which together with the work of newer members of the Committee, has contributed much to the smooth running of the Society, whose membership has increased slightly over the year to 407, 371 of whom are single members, paying £16 annually, while 36 are family members, paying £20 annually.
OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE
2006–2007

President
Professor Rosemary Cramp, C.B.E., M.A., B.Litt., D.Sc., F.S.A.

Vice Presidents
The High Sheriff of Leicestershire
The Chairman of Leicestershire County Council
The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Leicester
P. J. Boylan, B.Sc., Ph.D., F.G.S., F.M.A., M.B.I.M.
R. J. B. Keene, Dip.Arch., R.I.B.A.
O. D. Lucas
Joan F. M. North
G. De Lisle
R. A. Rutland, M.A., F.M.A.
L. Tharp M.A., Hon.D.Art F.R.S.A.
Kate M. Thompson, M.A., Ph.D., D.A.A., D.M.S.
D. L. Wykes, B.Sc., Ph.D., F.R.Hist.S

Honorary Secretaries
Sybil Rutland, B.A. (Lectures)
G. Clark Monks, (Membership)
Kay E. Gowland, (Newsletter)
Hon. Treasurer
M. H. Johnson
Hon. Editors, Transactions
Jill Bourne, M.A.
Joanna Story, B.A., Ph.D.
Hon. Editor, Leicestershire Historian
Hon. Librarian
A. W. Stevenson, M.C.L.I.P.
Hon. Co-ordinator, Historic Buildings Panel

Trustees of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society
M. H. Johnson
A. W. Stevenson, M.C.L.I.P.
D. L. Wykes, B.Sc., Ph.D., F.R.Hist.S

Trustees of the Leicestershire Archaeological Research Fund
P. J. Boylan, B.Sc., Ph.D., F.G.S., F.M.A., M.B.I.M.
R. J. B. Keene, Dip.Arch., R.I.B.A.
Marilyn Palmer, M.A., Ph.D., F.S.A.

Representatives on other bodies
Council for British Archaeology

Conservation Advisory Panel, Leicester City Council
University of Leicester Court

Committee
G. T. Rimmington, B.Sc. (Econ.), M.A., M.Ed., Ph.D., F.C.P. (Chairman)
Hon. Secretaries (Minutes, General, Membership, Historic Buildings, Lectures and Newsletter)
Hon. Treasurer
Hon. Editors
Hon. Librarian

R. Clark, M.A., A.I.F.A.
R. F. Hartley, B.A., A.M.A.
R. P. Jenkins, B.A., M.A., DAS
G. R. Jones, B.A., Ph.D.
Marilyn Palmer, M.A., Ph.D., F.S.A.
D. A. Ramsey, B.A.
Caroline Wessel, M.A., A.L.C.M., O.St.J.