THE LEICESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

154th ANNUAL REPORT 2008–2009

2008
Thursday 9 October
Grace Dieu Priory, Leicestershire Conservation & Archaeology
Ernie Miller
Local Historian and Archaeologist

Thursday 23 October
12th Century Manor to 19th Century Farm: Excavations on the site of the former Space Foods Factory, Wymondham
Alex Pickstone
Project Officer, Oxford Archaeology East

Thursday 6 November
Passing Muster: the Leicestershire Militia and its records
Robin Jenkins
Keeper (Collections) Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland

Thursday 20 November
Annual General Meeting

Thursday 11 December
John Flower: Topographical Studies in Leicester and Leicestershire
Neil Finn
Project Officer, University of Leicester Archaeological Services

2009
Thursday 8 January
Time Team and the Stonton Wyville survey
Peter Liddle
Community archaeologist
Leicestershire County Council

Thursday 22 January  
**First Farmers Revisited: changing perceptions of the Neolithic and Bronze Age of Leicestershire and Rutland**
Patrick Clay
Director of University of Leicester Archaeological Services

Thursday 12 February  
**Presidential Address**
**New directions in the study of Anglo-Saxon sculpture with special reference to the East Midlands**
Professor Rosemary Cramp
President of the Society

Thursday 26 February  
**Thirty years of investigating Leicester’s Victorian and Edwardian buildings**
Rowan Roenisch
Architectural historian and conservation adviser

Thursday 12 March  
**W. Alan North Memorial Lecture**
**Eagles on the Euphrates: Life and death of the Roman garrison at Dura-Europos, Syria**
Simon James
Reader in Archaeology
University of Leicester

Thursday 26 March  
**Members’ evening**
Thursday 2 April 2009
**Churchyard Memorials: What do they tell us about the past?**
Keith Snell
Professor of Rural and Cultural History
Centre for English Local History
University of Leicester

*The Annual General Meeting*
This was held on Thursday 20 November 2008, at the Leicester Guildhall, by courtesy of the Leicester City Council. The chair was taken by the President, Professor Rosemary Cramp, C.B.E., M.A., B.Litt., D.Sc., F.S.A.

*The Committee*
The Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr Gerald Rimmington, met five times during the year.

The Society’s lecture programme for 2008–09, arranged, in the absence of a Lecture Secretary, by our busy Honorary Secretary, Dr Alan McWhirr, was well received. We were honoured with a lecture on ‘New Directions in the study of Anglo-Saxon sculpture with special reference to the East Midlands’ by our retiring
President, Professor Rosemary Cramp. This was much enjoyed by the membership. The members’ evening was stimulating. Stephen Mitchell gave an illustrated presentation on a lost Roman canal, a fascinating hypothesis that seemed to hold water, while the Reverend Alan Betteridge talked about the licensing of seventeenth-century Nonconformist meeting houses.

During the new season, 2009–10, we have been grateful for the efforts of Neil Finn, our new Lecture Secretary, who has done an excellent job in preparing an interesting programme.


In the absence of an editor, Alan McWhirr worked hard to put together the Newsletter. We now have a new editor, Stephen Butt, who put together the Autumn 2009 edition, containing valuable information, *inter alia*, on the village of Nailstone, the East Midlands Oral History Archive, background material on the lecture programme for the 2009–10 season, and the last curtain call at the Leicester Gaiety Theatre.

We have had a great deal of discussion concerning the future of the Society’s library. There was a time when this was an invaluable asset for anyone involved in researching local archaeology and history. It was lovingly put together by our forebears, and is full to overflowing with journals and other invaluable printed materials. When Brian Bilson, one of our faithful members, died recently, he left us a sizeable portion of his own library. Unfortunately we had no option but to sell many of his books, invaluable as many of them were, as we just had nowhere to shelve them. There is also another problem. Aubrey Stevenson, our long-serving Honorary Librarian, notes that the library is now seriously under-used, having been steadily superseded by university libraries, as well as the Bishop Street Reference Library, the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, the Family History Society’s facilities, and, increasingly in recent years, by the internet. We have agonised about the future of our book collection and have decided for the present to dispose of journals that have no reference or relevance
to Leicestershire and Rutland. There is an obvious next step and we would like to hear the views of the Society’s members on this.

To help in the task of determining the future of the library, Linda Butt, Archivist at De Montfort University, has developed a database, listing the contents of the library. This will be invaluable to the Committee in helping with its decision-making.

Two years ago an excellent History and Heritage Fair, organised by Caroline Wessel, was held at Vaughan College. Since then, Caroline has kept in touch with our sister societies across the county. We decided to have a Networks History Day at the Sir John Moore School in Appleby Magna on 31 October 2009. Caroline organised it as an examination of the history of education, with talks on village schools, school patrons, canal-boat children’s education and a nineteenth-century reform institution.

The Committee is pleased to be associated with the Leicestershire Victoria County History Trust. Work on the Leicestershire volumes ceased in 1964, leaving the histories of 300 towns and villages still to be researched and written up. It is hoped to rectify this. The cost of publications will be funded nationally, but the local Trust will provide financial support for gathering and editing of the material. The Committee has several of its members involved in the Trust and has decided to donate £1,250 towards this work.

During the year, the Society’s website has continued to be developed by our Webmaster, Richard Buckley. Our thanks go to him for his work in this respect. We are also grateful to David Smith, Honorary Administrator of the Historic Buildings Panel, to Michael Johnson, Honorary Treasurer, who manages to fit his work for the Society around his responsibilities as a Leicester City Councillor, to Geoff Clark-Monks, Honorary Membership Secretary, and especially to the Society’s Honorary Secretary, Dr Alan McWhirr.

This year we turned to one of our Vice-Presidents for a new President. We are honoured to have Squire Gerard de Lisle in the post, and we wish him well as he begins in that office.
OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

**2008–2009**

**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
Jean E. Mellor, B.A., F.S., M.I.F.A.
Joan F. M. North
G. De Lisle, F.S.A.
R. A. Rutland, M.A., F.M.A.
L. Tharp MA (Cantab) HonDArt FRSA
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**
N. Finn (Lectures)
G. Clark Monks (Membership)
Hon. Treasurer
M. H. Johnson

**Hon. Editor, Transactions**
Jill Bourne, M.A.

**Hon. Reviews Editor**
G. R. Jones, B.A., Ph.D.

**Hon. Editor, Leicestershire Historian**

**Hon. Editor, Newsletter**
S. Butt, M.A. (from 2009)

**Hon. Librarian**
A. W. Stevenson, M.C.L.I.P.

**Hon. Co-ordinator, Historic Buildings Panel**

**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**

**Hon. Secretaries (Minutes, General, Membership, Historic Buildings and Lecture)**

**Hon. Treasurer**

**Hon. Editors (Transactions, Leicestershire Historian, Newsletter)**

**Hon. Librarian**

**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