THE LEICESTERSHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
156th ANNUAL REPORT 2010–2011

2010
Thursday 7 October
The Victoria County History in Leicestershire
John Beckett
Professor of English Regional History, University of Nottingham, and Director and General Editor of the Victoria County History

Thursday 21 October
Medieval Houses in East Leicestershire and Rutland: Recent Research
Nick Hill
Project Director, English Heritage

Saturday 23 October
Memorial Tribute to Alan McWhirr BSc., M.A., Ph.D., F.S.A., M.I.f.A.

Thursday 4 November
Feeding the Roman Army: a View from Oxfordshire
Richard Thomas
Senior Lecturer, School of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Leicester

Thursday 25 November
Annual General Meeting
Followed by a slide show of recent Time Team excavations

Thursday 9 December
The Slums of Leicester
Ned Newitt
Former Leicester City Councillor and Local Historian

2011
Thursday 6 January
Medieval Pilgrimage in Leicestershire
Peter Liddle
Community Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council Museums Service

Thursday 20 January
Goings on with Grooved Ware: Recent Discoveries from Rothley, Leicestershire

Gavin Speed  
Senior Supervisor, University of Leicester Archaeological Services

Thursday  
10 February  
*Everyday Life in Roman and Medieval Leicester: Finds from the Highcross Project*  
Nicholas Cooper  
Post-Excavation Manager, University of Leicester Archaeological Services

Thursday  
24 February  
*Projections from the Past: Digitisation and Managing Digital Files: the Glass Lantern Slide Collection at the Record Office, Wigston Magna*  
James Ryan  
Photographic Digitisation Officer, Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland

Thursday  
10 March  
*W. Alan North Memorial Lecture*  
*Elephants and Camels: Roman Emperors on the Laurentine Shore*  
Amanda Claridge  
Professor of Roman Archaeology, Royal Holloway, University of London

Thursday  
24 March  
*The Hemington Bridges*  
Lynden Cooper  
Project Officer, University of Leicester Archaeological Services

Thursday  
7 April  
*Members’ Evening*

*Annual General Meeting*  
This was held on Thursday 25 November 2010. The Chair was taken by the president Squire Gerard de Lisle.

*Committee and officers*  
Between May 2010 and April 2011, the committee met four times under the chairmanship of Mr David Ramsey and once with Mr Richard Buckley in the chair. During this year, our longest-serving committee member, Mr David H. Smith, decided to stand down after a remarkable 41 years service to the Society, having been elected in 1969. During his time on the committee, David was minutes secretary, a member of the editorial board of *Transactions* and a member of the Historic Buildings Panel. He also represented the Society on the Leicestershire Archaeological Advisory Committee and on the Conservation Advisory Panel, Leicester City Council. We
owe David a considerable debt of gratitude for supporting the Society over so many years, and for sharing with us his extraordinary depth of knowledge of the historic buildings of Leicestershire and Rutland.

Another long-standing committee member, Mr Geoff Clark-Monks, who had ably served the Society as Membership Secretary for 25 years (since 1985–86), indicated that he wished to stand down this year. Richard Buckley took over the role in an acting capacity in the summer of 2010 and was elected to the position at the 2010 AGM. Geoff did an excellent job not only in maintaining the private and institutional membership records, but also in organising the distribution of membership cards, newsletters, Transactions and the Leicestershire Historian. We are indebted to him for the many years of service he gave to the Society. Geoff had recommended to the committee that the Society needed paid part-time administrative support to reduce the not inconsiderable burden placed on the honorary secretaries. We were pleased to welcome Dr Jasmine Kilburn-Small to this role in January 2011.

Our Honorary Secretary, Dr Alan McWhirr, died suddenly in April 2010 having been a member of the committee since 1964, serving the society in a variety of roles and as Hon Sec for 30 years (from 1980). He will be remembered very fondly indeed as a man who, with characteristic good humour, promoted the archaeology and history of the county, campaigned on many fronts to preserve our heritage and provided support and encouragement to younger archaeologists. A celebration of his life was held at the University of Leicester on 23 October 2010, and included presentations by a number of speakers – that the event was fully booked (120 places) shows the esteem in which Alan was held by his colleagues and friends.

A grant was made by the Trustees of the Research fund to Charlotte Behr for the preparation of a drawing of a gold bracteate found at Scalford. An article on this find appeared in the 2011 Transactions. The committee also authorised grants towards the restoration of a portrait of the historian William Burton in the ownership of the Society of Antiquaries of London and to Leicestershire County Council to help with the organisation of local events as part of the CBA Festival of British Archaeology.

Membership
Membership remains strong at around 400.

Library
Aubrey Stevenson continues to manage the library, including cataloguing new acquisitions and maintaining access for members. Useage was very slightly down in 2010–11, with 32 LAHS members and 22 non-members visiting the library during the 15 Sunday afternoons it was open. No-one came on four of the days. Searchable lists of the Society’s books and periodicals are now available on the LAHS web pages.

Aubrey also organised the sale of the remainder of books bequeathed to the Society by our late Treasurer, Steve Billson.

Lectures
The 2010–11 lecture series which was organised by Neil Finn, the Lecture Secretary, covered a variety of topics to suit all interests, including history, historic buildings
and archaeology: attendance has been good. The W. Alan North Memorial lecture, given by Professor Amanda Claridge was well received, and discussed the results of recent archaeological research west of Rome. Professor Claridge showed how a combination of geophysics, field survey and limited excavation has revealed a remarkably rich archaeological landscape of the Roman period, including ostentatious villas on the Mediterranean coast (the Laurentine Shore), one of which was almost certainly owned by the emperor, and had its own harbour and menageries of exotic animals to be used in hunts.

Following the AGM, Neil Finn presented a slideshow of recent *Time Team* excavations in Leicestershire at the Norman Castle and medieval manorial site at Groby Old Hall, and the Anglo-Saxon cemetery and Roman villa site at West Langton.

**Publications**
The usual high standard of the Society’s publications continued to be maintained in 2010–11, to the credit of the respective editors. *Transactions* vol. 84, edited by Jill Bourne, was published in November 2010 – a bumper edition of 380 pages containing a wide variety of historical and archaeological articles, book reviews and the presidential address ‘New Directions in the Study of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture’, delivered by our retiring president, Professor Rosemary Cramp, at the 2009 AGM. The archaeological articles included a presentation of the results of two important central Leicester excavations at Castle Street (V. Score) and 9 St Nicholas Place (R. Kipling). The former produced environmental and animal bone evidence to suggest the presence of a second-century establishment on one of the main streets of Roman Leicester trading as what we would today recognise as a delicatessen. The latter, the site of the BBC Radio Leicester building, was principally the excavation of a series of medieval plots and included the well-preserved twelfth-century undercroft first recognised by antiquarians in the first half of the nineteenth century. The rural sites included the important enclosed Iron Age settlement at Hallam Fields, Birstall (G. Speed); a late Romano-British settlement at Appleby Magna (with rare examples of what could be Roman sunken-featured buildings; S. Clarke); the medieval site of the Hospital of John the Baptist at Mill farm, Lutterworth (V. Score); and medieval plots along Sutton Road, Great Bowden (J. Brown). The historical articles comprised ‘The minute book of the Arnesby particular Baptist church’ (R. Hunt); ‘The Return of owners of land and the Transformations of the 1870s’ (D. Postles); ‘The Smeeton Westerby Suffragette’ (J. Jenkins); ‘Leicester and the growth of footwear distribution 1850–1914’ (D. Holmes); and ‘Methodist Churches in Leicester (GT Rimmington).

Of particular significance in this volume were the obituaries for two Honorary Secretaries of the Society – David T.-D. Clarke (by Robert A. Rutland) and Alan McWhirr (by Marilyn Palmer). David Clarke was Hon Sec from 1954 to 1963 and revived the fortunes of the Society considerably, increasing membership and encouraging local archaeological and historical research amongst the membership. As already noted, Alan had been Hon Sec since 1980 and worked tirelessly to ensure the smooth-running of the Society.

The *Leicestershire Historian*, edited by Joyce Lee, has also gone from strength to strength. Volume 46 came out in the autumn of 2010 and contains articles on
a considerable variety of subjects, principally historical, including the Harpers of Ashby (K. Hillier); balloon flights in Leicester in the nineteenth century (C. Brown); Desford Industrial School (C. Wessel); Print in Radical Leicester (J. Hinks); The Burton Brothers of Lindley (Bob Gibson); a glimpse into the life of an Inspector of Nuisances in nineteenth-century Leicester (E. Statham); Belmont House School – class of 1883 (Shirtly Aucott); the Stoney Stanton Tympanum (Bob Trubshaw); Rothley School (T. Sheppard); and an article on guide books (J. D. Bennett). The volume also contains a series of tributes to Alan McWhirr and reviews of recent publications by John Hinks.

An article in an earlier edition of the Leicestershire Historian (vol. 45, 2009) won an award in 2010. The article, ‘Do it with pride’, was written by Edna Blake and Erica Statham and charted the history of Joseph Johnson’s department store (now Fenwicks) in Market Street, Leicester. It was declared ‘clear winner’ of the Short Articles category in the British Association for Local History awards out of 150 entries.

Also, during the year, members received two newsletters, Spring 2010 (no. 81) and Autumn 2010 (no. 82), which contained a wealth of news of the society, book reviews, summaries of recent archaeological work and shorter articles, such as one on the artist ‘Elmer Ezra Keene’ (no. 81), and another on Pilgrim flasks and badges (no. 82).

**Web**

The project to digitise back copies of the Society’s Transactions and make them freely available on the web continues, and the committee agreed to fund the scanning of vols 1–20 by a firm in Leeds using a high-tech page-turning machine. We are very grateful to member Mr Andrew King, who not only allowed his own copies of vols 1–20 to be used for this, but also delivered and collected them from Leeds. It seems especially apt that the volumes were once owned by former Hon Secretaries of the Society: S. H. Skillington and Dr A. D. McWhirr.

Richard Buckley
ERRATUM:
THE LEICESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL
AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
155th ANNUAL REPORT 2009–2010

The list of lectures in the Annual Report of Volume 85 (2011) was, unfortunately, supplied as the 2010–2011 list, which appears again in this issue. Below is the correct list of lectures for the 2009–2010 Annual Report.

2009
Thursday 8th October  
*Early Roman Leicester: Iron Age Transition*
Lynden Cooper
Project Officer, University of Leicester Archaeological Services

Thursday 22nd October  
*A promise Unfulfilled - the rise and fall of the Coleorton Railway*
Fred Hartley
Keeper of Collections Resources Centre Leicestershire County Council

Thursday 5th November  
*Leicestershire’s Topographical Artists and what they tell us about the past*
Alan McWhirr
Honorary Secretary of the Society

Thursday 26th November  
*Annual General Meeting*
Followed by a selection of old cine films of Leicester

Thursday 10th December  
*The Village People? Two Iron Age ‘Aggregated’ Settlements in the hinterland of Leicester*
John Thomas
Project Officer, University of Leicester Archaeological Services

2010
Thursday 7th January  
*Members’ Evening*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21st January</td>
<td>Not quite a village ... the archaeology of the Domesday Book</td>
<td>Paul Courtney, Freelance archaeologist and historian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th February</td>
<td>Making History: working with communities to create archives of the future</td>
<td>Margaret Bonney, County archivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th February</td>
<td>The Welland Valley Project</td>
<td>Jeremy Taylor, School of Archaeology and Ancient History, University of Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th March</td>
<td>W. Alan North Memorial Lecture: Imperial Possession? Changing perceptions of Britain in the Roman Empire</td>
<td>David Mattingly, Professor of Roman Archaeology, University of Leicester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th March</td>
<td>Mills, Millers and Milling</td>
<td>Susan Tebby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th April</td>
<td>Taking the ‘pre’ out of prehistory: the Third Radiocarbon Revolution</td>
<td>Alex Bayliss, Scientific Dating Co-ordinator, English Heritage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY
2010–2011

President
Squire Gerard de Lisle, 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
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., Ph.D.
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 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.
D. M. O’Sullivan, B.A., M.Phil.
Marilyn Palmer (Chair), 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
D. A. Ramsey, B.A. (Acting Chairman)
Hon. Secretaries (Minutes, General, Membership, Historic Buildings and Lecture)
Hon. Treasurer
Hon. Editors (Transactions, Leicestershire Historian, Newsletter)
Hon. Librarian
R. P. Jenkins, B.A., M.A., DAS
Marilyn Palmer, M.A., Ph.D., F.S.A.

Networks Project Officer
Caroline Wessel, M.A., A.L.C.M., O.St.J.

1 The Networks Project was set up by Caroline Wessel in 2007. It provides a forum for all groups involved in archaeology and local history within Leicestershire and Rutland and from time to time organises county-wide history events. Membership is free; if you wish to join please contact Caroline at cmwessel@aol.com.