

**LEICESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The Guildhall, Leicester LE1 5FQ

President Sir Timothy Brooks, K.C.V.O., LL.D., D.Litt., J.P.

# NEWSLETTER

Number 72



Autumn 2005

Editor Kay Gowland

## Continuing to celebrate ... ..

Members are invited to continue to celebrate our 150th Anniversary and to receive additional publications produced to mark the occasion. Some of these **require you to respond** as indicated elsewhere in this *Newsletter*. There are also two events being held in Leicester to coincide with our 150th Anniversary.

### Council for British Archaeology (CBA)

The CBA are holding their annual members' meeting in Leicester. This will take place on 23-25 September at the main campus of the University of Leicester and at Vaughan College. In addition there are trips planned for the Saturday afternoon. See page 5 for more details.

### Society of Antiquaries

Each year the Society of Antiquaries holds an 'out-of-London' meeting and this year they have chosen to mark our anniversary by holding this meeting in Leicester. It will take place on Thursday 10th November at 5.45pm when, after the usual Society business, a lecture will be given by Vicki Priest (ULAS) and Jeremy Hill (British Museum) on

the latest research relating to the south Leicestershire hoard. Again see page 5 for details.

### Publications

In addition to the usual editions of the *Leicestershire Historian* and *Transactions* members will be able to obtain a free copy of a monograph devoted to Leicester Abbey. In order to save posting members will be asked to collect their copy and those living out of the county will be asked to pay for the postage. Please return the form if you want to reserve a copy.

During the latter part of the year we will also be publishing the new history of the Society for which there will be a charge.

By the time you read this *Newsletter* we hope that the index will be published. Members were asked to reserve their copy by returning a slip which accompanied the last *Newsletter*. If any member still requires a copy and has not placed an order, they should contact the Honorary Secretary as soon as possible.

### Thank You!

It has been a pleasure to receive several letters and phone calls giving congratulations on the Spring *Newsletter*. Thank you very much.

It is sad that in this 150th Anniversary year we have lost five of our hardworking and much loved members - Rupert and Babette Evans, Jim Pickering, Peter Neaverson and George Frow. We miss them all.

K. E. Gowland

### Annual General Meeting

Please remember the Annual General Meeting of the Society which will be held on Thursday 24th November 2005 at 7.30pm in the Guildhall.

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# Our President retires

Our President, Sir Timothy Brooks, has been in post since 1994 and now feels that it is time to retire. He indicated his intention to relinquish his office at the past two AGMs and so it comes as no surprise to learn that this year's AGM will be his last.



Sir Timothy followed Col Sir Andrew Martin as President and in the time he has been in post he has regularly chaired our AGM and worked behind the scenes to help the Society. Along with the Honorary Secretary he was responsible for a significant increase in membership by writing many personal letters to potential members. He also gave a great deal of help in connection with the Duke of Gloucester's recent visit to the Society in October 2004.

Over the past year the committee has given a great deal of thought to a successor to Sir Timothy and following the example of many other societies of making the

Presidency a fixed term office, has decided that in future Presidents should be asked to serve for a period of three years. The committee agreed to ask Professor Rosemary Cramp, a former President of the Society of Antiquaries of London and a native of the county, to become our President from



November 2005 and she has graciously agreed. In last year's *Newsletter* there was a report of her receipt of an honorary degree from the University of Leicester.

The Society is indebted to Sir Timothy for all he has done to promote our activities and we know he will continue to be there as a long standing member, to give us advice and help when needed. On most occasions when Sir Timothy attended our AGM he was accompanied by his wife, the Honorable Lady Brooks, and we are most grateful to her for her support and encouragement.

## Death of Dr A. K. Babette Evans

Six months after the death of Rupert Evans his wife Babette died after a short illness. Within the space of half a year the Society has lost two of its most loyal and devoted members. Dr Evans joined the Society before even Professor Jack Simmons, who appointed her to the history department at the University of Leicester. Our minute book records Dr Evans's election as a member occurred at the committee meeting held on 25th November 1946 in the following entry:

*Miss A K B Roberts, University College, Leicester.  
prop. F Cottrill, sec. Dr Hoskins*

Dr Evans was elected a vice-president of the society at the AGM in November 2004 the day after the death of Rupert.

Dr Evans served as Assistant Lecturer from 1946, then Lecturer (1948-62) and Senior Lecturer (1962-82). Babette was the first woman lecturer to stay on in the University's employ after marriage, just as she was the first woman to be appointed Acting Head of Department (1953 and 1962) and Sub Dean and Dean of the Faculty of Arts (1975-78 and 1978-81 respectively). She was Head of the History Department between 1973 and 1975.

In the Society Babette will be remembered for her recent work as one of the Lecture Secretaries and the meticulous way she chaired lectures. This was not her sole contribution and the Society has lost a stalwart and enthusiastic supporter.

An obituary of Dr Evans, detailing her academic life and work, will be published in this year's volume of *Transactions*.

## Dr L. A. Parker, former County Archivist dies

Leslie A Parker died on 12th July 2005 aged 88. He came to Leicestershire as assistant county archivist in 1948 and when C H Thompson was appointed county archivist for Surrey in 1951/2 Parker became county archivist for Leicestershire. He retired in 1979 and during his time in office he planned a new record office at 57 New Walk and saw the use of the service mushroom.



He contributed two important papers to our *Transactions*, based on his PhD, which were published in 1947-8. He also wrote the section in volume 3 of the *Victoria County History for Leicestershire* on the hosiery industry. He does not appear to have held office in this society although he was a member for a time.

He was particularly interested in the history of the early church and said on his retirement that he intended learning ancient Greek so that he could read original Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. He was a member of the Blessed Sacrament Roman Catholic church in Braunstone.

## Library

Work is still taking place in the Jury Room at the Guildhall and so for the time being the library is unavailable to members on a regular basis. If you require a book or journal urgently then do please contact our Honorary Librarian.

# Collections online

Some of the most popular museum collections in the County are now accessible on the Internet, thanks to County Council support and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Collections included in the Open Doors project are coal mining, toys, Auster aircraft and highlights from the fashion collections comprising the designer fashion, Symington and NEXT collections.

These collections are accessed through a series of informative exhibitions on-line, plus images and detailed information about the collections. Members of the public will also be able to contact Museum staff directly to enquire about the objects featured on the website, and extensive glossaries and other sources of information are provided on the site. Of particular interest to schools will be the specially developed education resources to support key stages one, two and three of the National Curriculum.

Open Doors was officially launched at Glenfield Library, Station Road, Glenfield, Leicestershire on Tuesday 5th July by the Chairman of Leicestershire County Council, Mr David Bill.

Mr Bill said: "This Heritage Lottery-funded Open Doors project has enabled the creation of an innovative service that will provide information about the County's most popular museum collections to local people and to a worldwide audience."

The web pages can be found at:

<http://www.leics.gov.uk/collections>



*Some of the items which can be found online. The images are all copyright of Leicestershire County Council and are of one of our Auster aircraft c.1945, a 1900 corset from the Symington collection and a miner's tally 1900-1947.*

**For more details see this year's edition of the *Leicestershire Historian***

# New Curator in post

Laura Coats has joined Leicester Museums Service in a newly created post of Senior Curator of History. Laura introduces herself to you:

I am 22 years old and am on the way to completing my MA Museum Studies with the University of Leicester. Previously, I studied History at Newnham College, Cambridge. Although I am not an archaeologist, I did study the subject at A level and it is certainly one of my passions. Of course, my knowledge and understanding will continue to grow as I settle into my new post. There is certainly a steep learning curve ahead of me!

In terms of museum experience, I worked as a voluntary museum's assistant at Warrington Museum and Art Gallery for nearly 5 years during my vacations from study. I have also volunteered for Kettle's Yard and the

Coins and Medals department of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

I consider myself an Ancient Historian, and my interests lie predominantly with Roman and Anglo-Saxon History - perfect for Jewry Wall! I am particularly interested in ancient religions, although I hope to build up many specialisms in time.

Although it will take me some time to settle in to my new job, I am hoping that we can all work together to make Jewry Wall all the more successful in the future. I hope I can live up to your expectations!

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me if you have any comments or questions.

You can reach me on 0116 225 2455.



## Blue Plaques

English Heritage is calling on everyone in the East Midlands to nominate their favourite famous person for a Blue Plaque. In July they launched an appeal across the region for nominations for the first English Heritage Blue Plaques to appear in Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland.

Lloyd Grossman, Chairman of the English Heritage Blue Plaques Panel, said: "We are thrilled to be launching the Blue Plaques Scheme in the East Midlands. There's a great variety of historic figures connected with the region – from D.H. Lawrence to John Dryden, Robin Hood to Thomas Cook. We hope everyone will become involved and nominate a famous person for a Blue Plaque."

Lloyd Grossman, Stephen Fry and historian David Starkey are among the English Heritage Blue Plaques Panel members who will consider the first round of nominations for the East Midlands later this year. The first Blue Plaques, designed and manufactured by hand, will be erected in the region in 2008-9, once historical research has been carried out and consent has been sought from property owners and local authorities.

The Sheriff of Nottingham, Councillor Derek Cresswell, said: "Blue Plaques will give an added insight into the culture and history of the East Midlands, commemorating a range of the region's most famous and accomplished residents, for local people and visitors to take an interest in and enjoy. We are delighted that English Heritage is launching the Blue Plaques Scheme at the Council House in Nottingham today."

Among the important historical figures connected with the East Midlands are: John Dryden (1631-1700), poet, who was born in Aldwinkle, Northamptonshire, and raised in nearby Titchmarsh; Joe Orton (1933-1967), playwright, who lived in Leicester; Titus Oates (1649-1705), informer and inventor of the 'Popish Plot', who was born in Rutland; Catherine Booth (1829-1890), evangelist and co-founder of the



Salvation Army, who grew up in Ashbourne, Derbyshire; Richard Arkwright (1732-1792), inventor and cotton manufacturer, who lived and worked in Cromford, Derbyshire; Jesse Boot (1850-1931), retail chemist, who lived in Nottingham; Dame Laura Knight (1877-1970), painter, who came from Long Eaton, Nottinghamshire; Isaac Newton (1642-1727), scientist, who lived in Woolsthorpe Manor, near Colsterworth, Lincolnshire; and, textile designer, Anna Maria Garthwaite (1688-1763), who lived in Grantham, Lincolnshire.

English Heritage would like to encourage as diverse a range of nominations as possible. All proposals must meet English Heritage's selection criteria: the person to be commemorated must have been dead for at least 20 years or have passed the centenary of their birth, whichever is earlier. This allows a person's reputation to mature and ensures that their fame is long-lasting. They must have a national reputation, have gained outstanding recognition through their life and work, and have made a positive contribution to human welfare or happiness. At least one of the person's addresses must survive unaltered in order for the proposal to be considered.



### Leicester's Blue Plaques

For several years Leicester City Council has had its own Blue Plaque scheme and there are around the city some thirty plaques commemorating people and buildings. The list includes The Clock Tower, Leicester's Roman and Medieval Gates, William Carey, Mary Linwood, Joseph Hanson, Leicester and Leicestershire Maternity Hospital (Bond Street Hospital), The High Cross, Thomas Cooper, Arthur Colahan, The Conduit, Francis 'Tanky' Smith, Dr Benjamin Burrows, Thomas Cook, C.P. Snow, E. Phillips Oppenheim, Joe Orton, Lawrence Wright, Charles Bennion, Site of a Saxon House in Oxford Street, Fox's Glacier Mints, Mary Royce, Alice Hawkins.

*Your committee would welcome ideas from members of other people and sites which should be commemorated.*



*The top illustration is English Heritage's publicity plaque and below that is Lloyd Grossman officially launching the scheme at Nottingham Council Offices. The third illustration shows Lloyd Grossman the Sheriff of Nottingham at the launch ceremony. At the bottom is Leicester's plaque which commemorates Mary Linford.*

## Council for British Archaeology weekend in Leicester

### Venue

The main sessions will take place at the Main Campus of the University of Leicester (Friday and Sunday) and at The Jewry Wall Museum/Vaughan College in Leicester (Saturday).

### Draft Programme

#### Friday 23 September

University of Leicester, Main Campus

6.00 – 7.00pm Registration

7.00 – 8.00pm De Cardi Lecture on Community Archaeology by Peter Liddle

8.15 – 9.30pm University Vice Chancellor's Wine Reception (and finger buffet)

#### Saturday 24 September

morning (Vaughan College)

9.00 – 9.30am Registration

9.30 – 12.30am Presentations: Glenn Foard - Battlefield Archaeology; Vicky Priest - The East Leicestershire Hoard [Iron Age coins]; Richard Buckley - Roman Leicester; Prof Marilyn Palmer - Homes as Workplaces in the East Midlands

#### Saturday 24 September afternoon tours

1.00 – 5.30pm County tour of NWLeics by coach (Donington-le-Heath medieval manor house/museum, Moira Furnace. Grace Dieu Priory, Breedon Church and hillfort-venues/itinerary subject to time constraints)

1.30 – 5.30pm Leicester tour on foot (concentrating on Roman and Medieval core, with excavation visit, subject to availability)

#### Saturday 24 September evening Jewry Wall Museum

5.30 – 7.00pm Wine reception hosted by the Leicestershire Archaeological & Historical Society and view of Jewry Wall Museum and site

7.00 – 10.30pm Meal at local restaurant

#### Sunday 25th September

University of Leicester, Main Campus

10.00am Presentation by Julian Richards of the BBC's Meet the Ancestors and Blood of the Vikings series

10.45am Annual General Meeting of the CBA

11.15am 'Archaeology & Inclusivity' – presentation by Jocelyn Dodd

11.45am 'The Future of the Past' – thoughts on current developments in archaeology by a panel of leading archaeologists chaired by Dr Francis Pryor

1.15pm Close

Members of the LAHS are being offered a special rate of £15 to attend all the sessions on the Saturday, but it is essential to book beforehand. The address is, Peter Olver, Council for British Archaeology, St Mary's House, 66 Bootham, York, YO30 7BZ. Tel: 01904671417. Email [admin@britarch.ac.uk](mailto:admin@britarch.ac.uk)

## Society of Antiquaries meeting in Leicester

Every year the Society of Antiquaries of London holds an 'out-of-London' meeting and this year the Society has chosen to come to Leicester to take part in our celebrations. The meeting will form part of the Antiquaries usual series of meetings and so will begin with some formal business, e.g. admitting Fellows etc, and then there will be a lecture followed by comments. It will take place at the University of Leicester on Thursday 10th November 2005 and will begin at 5.45 in a lecture room to be confirmed, but likely to be in the Bennet Building. There will be tea at 5.00pm in the School of Archaeology and Ancient History and afterwards there will be a reception provided by the Vice-Chancellor of the University.

The title of the lecture is:

### *'Rituals, hoards and helmets: The East Leicestershire Shrine and the Corieltavi'*

and will be given by Vicki Priest and Dr J D Hill. Vicki spoke to the Society about the hoard in January 2004, but since that date a great deal more research has been carried out on the finds and much more can be said about the site. Vicki Priest is a Project Officer with the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) and Jeremy Hill is at the British Museum.

Members are invited to attend the lecture and to take tea beforehand if they wish. Notices will direct visitors to the appropriate lecture theatre.

**MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW OVER DUE  
PLEASE PAY YOUR SUBSCRIPTION BY BANKERS' ORDER AND ALSO  
GIFT AID YOUR SUBSCRIPTION**

## Recent fieldwork by ULAS

The University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) has had a busy period over the past year or so particularly in Leicester in connection with the major redevelopment of the Shires along Vaughan Way. In some cases the contractors do not wish too much publicity and so some of the exciting discoveries have not been reported in any detail. ULAS has also been busy in the county and further afield. Here is a small selection of some of the projects with the name of the project leader attached.

### **Cotesbach (Neil Finn)**

I've had my eye on The Old Cottage, Main Street, Cotesbach for a while as a possible example of the so-called 'Mud and Frame' buildings which occur in south Leicestershire, but had not been able to get inside to have a good look around. A planning application proposing demolition of the house and construction of a pair of houses on the site was approved with an archaeological condition. It is depressing that the demolition of timber-framed buildings is still happening in Leicestershire. The cottage was not listed, not in a conservation area and so had no statutory protection as far as the local planning authority was concerned. The archaeological condition provided the opportunity to thoroughly examine the building before demolition and a detailed record was made, which confirmed that it was indeed a 'Mud and Frame' structure. Tree ring dating by Robert Howard of Nottingham University was very significant as, with only one certain construction date for this type of building (1677 for Fargate Farmhouse, Tur Langton) and another tentative one (c.1666 for Hunter's Cottage, Husbands Bosworth) the chronology of the 'Mud and Frame' tradition is still very much up in the air. The date came back at c. 1733 – later than I had dared hope (I'd guessed at around 1700), but in keeping with a previous 'outlier' dendro date of about 1740 for a building in Cosby. Many of the timbers at the Old Cottage could not be dated because they were of elm rather than oak, another indication of the late date of the house. The use of timber other than oak for principal structural members has been noted in other buildings of this type, for example Onion Cottage at Dunton Bassett.

### **Launde Abbey, (Neil Finn, David Smith)**

Launde Abbey is a substantial country house located in east Leicestershire, close to the Rutland border. Since the 1950s it has functioned as a retreat house and conference centre for the Church of England. An Historic Building Assessment produced in respect of an application to update the facilities has provided the first opportunity to examine the grade II\* listed building in any detail. Launde was the site of an Augustinian priory (not abbey), which was dissolved in 1539. It was granted to Thomas Cromwell at the dissolution and then to his son Gregory after Thomas's execution in 1540. Gregory Cromwell was responsible for the first gentry house on the site, attributable to the mid-late 16th century. This was substantially remodelled in the early 17th century

and much of the present house is of this date. Various 18th and 19th century additions and alterations are also apparent. It is clear from the assessment that various priory buildings were retained and incorporated into the 16th century mansion house. The south transept of the church lies within the footprint of the present house and a 12th century crossing arch is embedded within the north wall. A 15th century chapel, on the south side of the chancel, was retained as the private chapel. The south wing of the house is based on the refectory range of the priory, which had been substantially repaired or rebuilt in about 1530, shortly before the dissolution. The dormitory range was also apparently retained as part of the 16th century house, but was replaced in the early 19th century by a new wing. Launde Abbey lies at the centre of an extensive historic landscape which includes a fine 18th century stable block, early 19th century walled kitchen garden with heated glasshouse, a 19th century icehouse, formal gardens and ha ha, parkland and a series of fishponds.

If the current development proposals are approved then a fair bit of excavation is likely to be required, with excellent prospects for the survival of well-preserved remains.

### **Leicester Abbey (Andy Hyam, Steve Jones)**

2005 saw the sixth season of the research and training excavation at Abbey Park. As with last year the main focus of investigation was the kitchen complex and surrounding areas. This year the south-east corner of the kitchen was excavated to reveal a rather well-preserved oven which gave us the opportunity for limited excavation and environmental sampling. The excavations revealed a number of phases within this corner with an early wall structure being cut by a capped drain which replaced an earlier drain that had been diverted following the construction of the large rectangular kitchen. At a later date a completely new kitchen appears to have been built slightly to the north of the older one. Outside the kitchens, areas of cobbling were exposed along with a number of phases of drainage and water management. Further removal of the 1930s backfill revealed more post-dissolution robber trenches and the indication of possible walls east of the kitchens.

Limited excavations also took place by the eastern precinct wall where the main drain passed through an archway into the river. Again a number of phases were identified with some carved stone being reused in the sidewalls. A second stone archway was also identified along with a later and smaller capped drain from which environmental samples were taken.

Consolidation work by stonemasons on the 1930s walls also recovered numerous architectural fragments which give an impression of the richness of Leicester Abbey.

### **Leicester, 52 Grange Lane (off Bonners Lane), (John Thomas)**

Following an evaluation undertaken earlier in the year a small scale excavation was started mid-way through June.



## Recent fieldwork by ULAS

The site has proved to contain a vast amount of information regarding the occupation of the south suburbs of Roman and medieval Leicester, including an unexpected depth of stratigraphy. Potential medieval occupation is evident in the presence of possible plot boundary ditches, a well and a cess-pit – possibly relating to rear yard activity to properties that fronted Oxford Street. A medieval industrial feature, of uncertain function, has also been recorded.

Roman activity is evident in the presence of a large area of cobbling, originally thought to be part of the Tripontium Road. Numerous ditches post holes and gullies have been recorded indicating possible structures on the site. A stone-lined well associated with the cobbled surface has also been uncovered. Much of the activity recorded would appear to be of later Roman date, with an earlier area of redeposited clay that seals even earlier features. Four early Roman cremations have been excavated at the site – there is still some potential for more – one of which has survived as an almost complete vessel.

### **Leicester, Highcross Street: Free Grammar School (Neil Finn)**

Detailed recording of the Free Grammar School building, following the removal of the 1960s interior, was undertaken at the beginning of June by Neil Finn, Matt Hurford, Andy Hyam and Sophie Clarke. Tree ring dating of the roof timbers was also carried out by Robert Howard of Nottingham University. This indicated that the nave of St Peter's church (see below for the location of the church) – from which the timbers were derived – was re-roofed in the 15th century, some time between c. 1462 and 1487. Several of the roof timbers returned dates in the late 16th century, after 1565, which ties in nicely with the documentary evidence for the school having been built in 1573/4.

The building recording programme clarified the arrangement of the original fenestration of the east elevation of the school, which is being used to inform the design process in seeking to 'undo' some of the nasty alterations that were done on this side of the building in the 1960s. The original stone-mullioned windows of the west (Highcross Street) elevation, which were coated in concrete in the 1960s, have now been uncovered and will be restored as part of the development programme. This can be claimed as a particular success of the project as, prior to our assessment, it had been assumed that all of the stone surrounds on this elevation had been replaced with sections of cast concrete, as occurred on the east elevation, and wholesale replacement of the windows was envisaged. Although a fair bit of replacement of decayed stone will be necessary, we now have complete profiles of mullions, jambs, sills and hoodmoulds to provide templates for the replacement work.

### **Leicester, Shires West (Tony Gnanaratnam)**

Excavations in this area have now located the site of St Peter's church and revealed its the full length and whilst the south aisle extends beyond the development area the major

part of the church's ground plan has been recovered. It has a narrow north aisle and a much wider south aisle, a possible chapel or vestry on the north side of the chancel (or perhaps even the Anchorite's cell mentioned known from historical sources). Whatever the reason for its disuse, it was of a respectable size, and seemingly not the impoverished hovel that might have been expected.

Part of the churchyard has been examined and a large number of burials recovered. There appear to be few burials within the church (presumably high status); those which survive may make for interesting comparison with those in the graveyard around the church.

Highlights of the excavation include a possible Saxon sunken building – first inside the town walls and a Saxon brooch, a peculiar pre-cemetery (pre-Conquest?) burnt feature, with a possible flue and much well preserved burnt daub in backfill and a burnt layer containing a mass of probable cereal grains.

Small wall fragments (pebbles and cobbles in mud) keep turning up inside the cemetery, hinting at boundaries and expansion, together with a nice little medieval charnel-pit, stuffed full of human bone, including the small bits that seem absent from our other charnel assemblages. To the north of the cemetery was a large medieval hall-sized building, quite possibly that predicted by Dr Paul Courtney.

Interesting finds include a late Saxon coin of Eadgar dated to around 940, a probably later Saxon fastener, a bone skate, much medieval floor tile, the odd ring and an arm of a small bronze crucified Christ, possibly hinged.

### **Leicester Vine Street (Shires) (Tim Higgins; Martin Shore, Jon Coward, Dan Stone)**

An interesting Roman building, details of which were included in the Spring Newsletter, continues to be excavated and it is hoped to have a more detailed report and plan in a future edition. A small portion of a mosaic floor was lifted on 21 July by Graham Morgan/Theo Sturge and other members of UKIC.

### **Leicester, 72 St Nicholas Circle/Castle St (Vicki Priest)**

Excavation has now been completed on the site of the former auctioneer's building of Heathcote and Ball and St Mary de Castro vicarage. The site is deeply stratified and extremely complex, due to the large number of intercutting pits and structural features of both the Roman and medieval periods. A medieval building or buildings, a sequence of yard surfaces and possible Roman structures have been excavated, together with the possible line of a Roman street. Three column bases were also recorded along the line of the road, suggesting a portico or colonnade.

**Apologies to other ULAS staff whose work has not been reported above, but space does not permit! Many other sites have produced interesting and significant archaeology.**

# News from the library

Unfortunately, since the Spring *Newsletter*, there is no news from the Library. This must have been the quietest period on record since the Library originally opened because it has not been possible to open to members at all. The further repair work referred to in previous *Newsletters* has still to be carried out in the Guildhall and there is currently no date when it is to take place. Your Librarian is as frustrated by this unhappy state of affairs as any of the members wishing to make use of the resources.

Some books and periodicals continue to be acquired and these are listed below as usual. It is regretted that they can not yet be made available.

## Books

- Brown, C. *Leicester Voices*. 2002  
Moon, H. *Henry Walter Bates 1825-1892: explorer, scientist and Darwinian*. 1976  
Palmer, R. *Folklore of Leicestershire and Rutland*. rev. ed. 2002 (First pub 1985)  
Roe, N. *Osgathorpe parish registers and bishop's transcripts 1583-1891*. 2002  
Shaw, J. & Trubshaw, B. eds *2000 years of the Wolds*. 2003  
Woodward, S. *Swithland Wood: a study of its history and vegetation*. 1992

## Periodicals

The latest issues of the following titles have been received. None were recorded in our Spring 2004 *Newsletter*.

- Ancient Monuments Society Transactions*. Vol 49 2005  
*Archaeologia Cantiana*  
*Conservation Bulletin*  
*Derbyshire Archaeological Journal*  
*Essex Archaeology and History*  
*Hinckley Historian*. The histories of Potters Marston and

the Leicestershire Imperial Yeomanry continue from earlier issues.

- Historical Research*  
*Shropshire History and Archaeology*  
*Thoroton Society Transactions*

## Newsletters

A range of Newsletters is sent to the society and placed on the Library table. They include:

Ancient Monuments Society Newsletter – The Winter/Spring 2005 issue reported on the sad demise of Hathernware, world renowned local manufacturers of architectural ceramics.

- Branchline  
Community History Newsletter  
The Dustsheet  
Images of England  
Network News  
Shropshire Archaeology and History Newsletter  
Society for Medieval Archaeology Newsletter  
Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain Newsletter  
South Derbyshire Heritage News  
Worcestershire Recorder

To end on a happier note, it is appropriate to record the generous donation of a book by a well-known local author and friend of the Society, which has been widely and favourably reviewed. This should be on the desk of all carrying out local research, so that they know what to do with it once it has been written up.

Trubshaw, Bob *How to write and publish local and family history successfully: books, booklets, magazines, CD-ROMs and web sites*. 2005 ISBN 187288359 1zx  
Heart of Albion Press, 2 Cross Hill Close, Wymeswold, Leics. LE12 6UJ.

Aubrey Stevenson

## Great Glen

Great Glen, lying between Leicester and Market Harborough, in the heart of the Midlands, is a village with a long history.

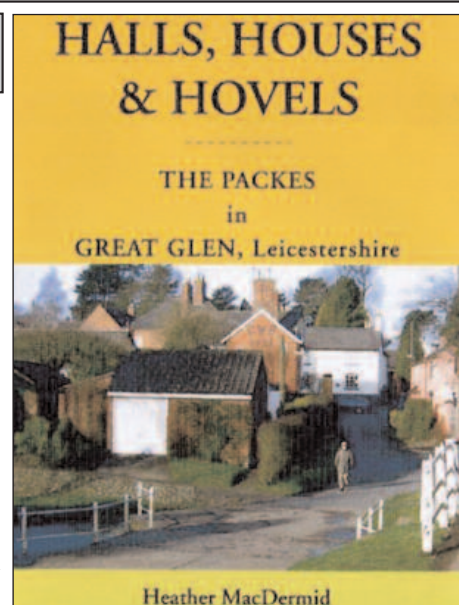
*Halls, Houses andhovels* concentrates on the recent past and on buildings which have a connection with the Packe family, Lords of the Manor from 1846. Most of these buildings are still standing and are here illustrated with modern pictures, old photographs, maps and documents and memories of residents.

The book begins by introducing the five members of the Packe family. It goes on to show their various halls in Leicestershire and the part they played in the village and the houses they bought, built and sold.

The reader is given an Upstairs/Downstairs view of the world of the wealthy and that of the poor framework knitters, told in their own words and in contemporary documents.

A look at the housing highlights the different living conditions in one small village, during a period of great change

There is a richness of story and a wealth of anecdote here for anyone interested in the history of English villages and the people who lived in them.





## The Great Chair Hunt

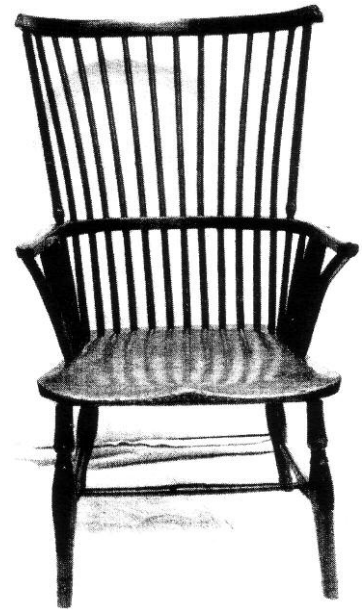
In May this year the Society was invited to the **Great Chair Hunt**, a two-day event held at Oakham Castle being the first stage in an investigative enterprise by Dr Bernard Cotton, Director of the Regional Chair Furniture Study Centre based at High Wycombe Museum, and Christopher Payne, probably best known for his contributions to *The Antiques Roadshow* on BBC1. The Chair Hunt, which is sponsored by the auctioneers Tennants, is a scholarly endeavour to identify examples of chairs made by chair-makers of the mid/late 18th and 19th centuries known to have lived and worked in Leicestershire or Rutland. The event proved hugely popular and during the course of the two days over 400 chairs were examined by Bernard Cotton. Christopher Payne and other members of the Regional Furniture Society (RFS). Material from the event is currently being processed and will hopefully provide informing details for the next 'fieldwork' stage of the Chair Hunt to focus on.

On Wednesday 27th July, Dr Cotton and other members of RFS spent a long day combing through material in the form of old newspaper advertisements, trade directories, decennial census returns and photographic collections at the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland in an endeavour to expand knowledge of the extent of chair-making in Leicestershire and Rutland. In his book *The English Regional Chair*, Dr Cotton lists one hundred and sixteen chair makers having been active in Leicestershire and Rutland during the second half of the 18th and much of the 19th century. For much of that time the most popular domestic chair forms were of the stick-back, comb-back, ladder back or splat back, Windsor forms. Dr Cotton gives quite succinct reasons for choosing

Leicestershire and Rutland as a focal point for the Chair Hunt: "When it comes to identifying chairs actually made within them, they have proved the most intractable." At present only one named and stamped chair has been identified, that was made by William Rowe, a chair maker recorded in Hallaton during the 1840s (see picture A). Stylistically the Hallaton chair has many features associated with the Lincolnshire chair-making tradition. In the neighbouring county of Northamptonshire the chair maker John March of Geddington is known by two named and stamped chairs, one of which shows similarities with chairs from south Lincolnshire; the other has features linking it with Buckinghamshire chair-making traditions (see pictures B and C), causing Dr Cotton to speculate that: "This bridging of styles between two prominent Windsor chair making areas, the Chiltern Hills in the south of England and the North East Midlands, perhaps indicates the outer boundaries of design influence for these two major traditions".

In the next few weeks we hope to have run a few 'pilot' investigations within the county and to be in a stronger position to provide details of what features might possibly indicate a Leicestershire provenance for a chair. The next practical stage in the Chair Hunt will be to enrol support in the form of two or three small groups of three or four people willing to undertake visits to a group of churches in Leicestershire and Rutland to record any chair of the types described that may have survived. If any member is interested in taking part in this 'hunt' or knows of any chairs that might be of interest to the research team, as local co-ordinator of this project I would be pleased to hear from them.

David Smith



Picture A



Picture B



Picture C

Any member who wishes to help with this research project or has information which might be of interest, they should contact David Smith on 0116 2862833.

# Agenda for Annual General Meeting 24th November 2005

The 150th Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on Thursday 24th November 2005  
at 7.30pm in the Guildhall, Leicester

## AGENDA

[Please bring this agenda with you to the AGM]

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 149th Annual General Meeting held on 25th November 2004
3. Presentation of the 150th Annual Report for 2004-2005 – The Chairman, Dr G. T. Rimmington
4. Adoption of the Annual Report
5. Presentation of the Accounts for the year 2004-2005 – Honorary Treasurer Mr M. Johnson
6. Adoption of the Accounts
7. Appointment of Auditors
8. Retirement of Sir Timothy Brooks as the Society's President
9. Election of President
10. Election of Vice-Presidents
11. Election of Officers
12. Election of Committee
13. Honorary Secretary
14. Any other business (to be communicated to the Honorary Secretary by 1st November 2005)

### Officers of the Society 2004-5

Honorary Treasurer	Mr M. Johnson
Honorary Secretary	Dr A.D. McWhirr
Honorary Librarian	Mr A.W. Stevenson
Honorary Membership Sec	Mr G. Clark-Monks
Honorary Newsletter Sec	Mrs K.E. Gowland
Honorary Buildings Panel Sec	Mr D.H. Smith
Honorary Lecture Secs	Dr A.K.B. Evans+
	Mrs S. Rutland
Honorary Minuting Secretary	Vacant
Honorary Editors Transactions	Ms J Bourne
	Dr J. Story
Honorary Editor Leics Historian	Ms J Lee

### Vice-Presidents of the Society 2004-5

The High Sheriff of Leicestershire	
The Chairman of Leicestershire County Council	
The Lord Mayor of Leicester	
Professor P.J. Boylan	Dr L. Fox
Mr R.J.B. Keene	Squire G. de Lisle
Mr O.D. Lucas	Miss J.E. Mellor
Mrs W.A. North	Dr K.M. Thompson
Dr D.L. Wykes	

### Members of the Committee 2004-5

Mr R.J. Buckley	Mr R. Clark
Professor C.C. Dyer	Mr R.F. Hartley
Mr C. Harrison	Professor M. Palmer
Mr D. Ramsey	Dr G.T. Rimmington
Plus the officers	

## Minutes of the 149th Annual General Meeting of the Society held at The Guildhall, Leicester, on 25th November 2004

Sir Timothy Brooks, President, took the chair.

Sixty-four members of the Society were present.

Members stood for a minutes silence to commemorate the life of former chairman Rupert Evans who died on 23rd November 2004.

### 1. Apologies:

Professor M Palmer, Dr D L Wykes.

### 2. Minutes of the 148th Annual General Meeting held on 25th November 2003

The Minutes of the meeting were approved as a correct record of that meeting and signed by the President.

### 3. The 149th Annual Report for 2003-4 by the Chairman of the Committee, Dr G Rimmington.

The Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. Gerald Rimmington, has met five times, an average of ten members being present at the meetings.

During the year, the membership secretary, Geoff. Clark Monks, has conducted a drive to recover outstanding and unpaid subscriptions, which resulted in an increased additional income in the region of £3,000.

Concern about membership resulted in the development of some ideas relating to a new membership drive. Dr. Alan McWhirr, our secretary, produced an attractive coloured leaflet advertising the work of the Society, an improvement on the previous monochrome application form. Some of these were sent to potential members in the hope that they would make a commitment to membership.

The lecture programme, arranged by Dr. Babette Evans and Mrs Sybil Rutland, continued at the same high level for which the Society is well-known. Especially popular were Vicki Priest's presentation on the south-east Leicestershire hoard of coins, with samples of the coins available, and Professor Alan Bowman's W. Alan North Memorial Lecture on 'the Vindolanda. Writing Tablets'.

We do have a problem with the venue for some of our lectures. For some of them the Council Room at the New Walk Museum is adequate. However, we predicted accurately that the larger seating capacity of the Victorian Gallery would be necessary for the W. Alan North Memorial Lecture. There are times though when we are unable to predict a much greater demand for seats than the Council Room can provide, and some people are disappointed. On the whole we have felt that a well-filled room is better than a larger room that is less than half-filled. Members' views would be appreciated on this matter.

The Society's publications have had another good year. We felt the loss of Mrs. Helen Edwards as editor of the Leicestershire Historian. The 2003 publication was particularly interesting. Most of the editing work for the 2004 publication has been done by Alan McWhirr, but in the final stages there was the welcome help of Joyce Lee, who has now agreed to become the editor.

Kay Gowland has continued as editor of the Society's Newsletter, produced twice a year. It continues to be valuable source of information about activities of members. Particularly interesting for researchers is the information about library acquisitions written by our honorary librarian, Aubrey Stevenson.

Dr. Joanna Story and Jill Bourne edited the 2003 volume of *Transactions* which maintained the scholarly tradition of this particular publication. Although Richard Buckley has retired from

the editorship he continues to edit the section on Archaeology in Leicestershire.

The Historic Buildings Panel, now headed by David Smith, handled over sixty referrals for comment on works to Listed Buildings in Leicestershire. Members of the Panel were also instrumental in obtaining Grade 11 listed status for Eastfield Hall, Stanley Road, Leicester, a mid-nineteenth century house (1848) with a series of additions undertaken in 1867, 1887 and 1904.

The 150th anniversary of the Society's foundation, under the original name of 'Leicestershire Architectural and Archaeological Society', is imminent. It occurs on the 10th January 2005, when the Committee has arranged a reception to mark the occasion at the Guildhall. The Committee has been much involved in making other plans too for the anniversary year, in particular for a special monograph on 'Leicester Abbey'. In addition there will be the publication of Robert Rutland's research on the history of the Society, as well as the publication of the index of *Transactions*, which has been available on the Society's website for some time. We have also discussed the possibility of an excursion to Breedon-on-the-hill. This will be the first year too when the lecture programme will be extended by two additional lectures. It promises to be an exciting year in the history of the Society.

The 149th Annual Report was approved unanimously and adopted.

### 4. Annual Accounts for the year ended 30th April 2004

Copies of the audited accounts were available for members on arrival at the meeting and the Honorary Treasurer explained them to members before taking questions.

The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mr D H Smith and seconded by Mrs J North and unanimously approved.

### 5. Honorary Auditor

The Honorary Treasurer proposed, and Dr A D McWhirr seconded, that Messrs K P M G Peat, Marwick and McLintock in the person of Mr Michael Lane, be invited to continue to serve as the Society's auditors. This was unanimously approved by the meeting.

### 6. Election of President of the Society

It was proposed by the chairman that Mr T G M Brooks be invited to continue to serve as President of the Society.

This was unanimously approved.

### 7. Election of Vice-Presidents

It was proposed by the Honorary Secretary that the existing vice-presidents as listed on the agenda paper, be re-elected with the addition of Dr A.K.B. Evans. The proposal was seconded by Dr G T Rimmington and unanimously approved.

### 8. Election of Officers

It was proposed by Mrs J North that the existing officers as listed on the agenda paper be re-elected with the addition of Joyce Lee as Editor of the *Leicestershire Historian*. This was seconded by Mr R Rutland and approved by the meeting.

### 9. Election of Committee

The president proposed the re-election of all members of the committee as listed on the agenda paper. This was agreed.

### 10. Other Business

None

Following the formal part of the Annual Meeting members partook of refreshments and collected their copy of *Transactions*.



# Lectures 2005-6

**LECTURES TAKE PLACE IN THE COUNCIL  
ROOM, NEW WALK MUSEUM  
Entrance from Princess Road West**

*Council for British Archaeology Members' Weekend in  
Leicester to mark the 150th Anniversary of the Society*

23-25 September 2005 at University of Leicester  
and Vaughan College  
*See page 5 for the programme*

Thursday 6 October 2005 at 7.30pm  
*The Whittlewood Project: Landscapes and Settlements  
in the Middle Ages*  
Christopher Dyer  
Professor of English and Regional History  
University of Leicester

Thursday 20 October 2005 at 7.30pm  
*Recent Tree Dating Analysis in Leicestershire*  
Robert Howard  
Tree-ring dating laboratory  
University of Nottingham

Thursday 3 November 2005 at 7.30pm  
*A newly uncovered Doom painting  
in Coventry and its context*  
Miriam Stevenson  
Department of Art and Film History  
University of Leicester

*Society of Antiquaries meeting at the University of  
Leicester to mark the Society's 150th Anniversary*

Thursday 10 November 2005 at 5.45pm  
*'Rituals, hoards and helmets: The East Leicestershire  
Shrine and the Corieltavi'*  
Vicki Priest and Jeremy Hill  
University of Leicester Archaeology Services and the  
British Museum

Thursday 24 November 2005 at 7.30pm  
**Annual General Meeting**  
At the Guildhall, Leicester

Thursday 8 December 2005 at 7.30pm  
*"Excessively pleasing to the English eye": British  
reactions to Florence in the eighteenth century*  
Rosemary Sweet  
Assistant Director of the Centre for Urban History  
University of Leicester

Thursday 19 January 2006 at 7.30pm  
*The Archaeology of Leicester Abbey*  
Richard Buckley  
Director, University of Leicester Archaeological Services  
University of Leicester

Thursday 9 February 2006 at 7.30pm  
*Going, going, almost gone: The Historic English Pub*  
Geoffrey Brandwood  
Chairman of the Victorian Society

Thursday 23 February 2006 at 7.30pm  
*An overview of archaeological projects in Leicestershire*  
Richard Clark  
Archaeological Planning Officer  
Leicestershire County Council

Thursday 9 March 2006 at 7.30pm  
*The W. Alan North Memorial Lecture*  
**Roman Syria**  
Jim Summerly  
Radley College

Thursday 23 March 2006 at 7.30pm  
*Anglo-Saxon Place Names in the Midlands*  
Margaret Gelling  
President of the English PlaceName Society

Thursday 6 April 2006 at 7.30pm  
*The Work of the Portable Antiquities Scheme*  
Wendy Scott  
Finds Liaison Officer, Leicestershire and Rutland  
Leicestershire County Council

## WANTED!

The committee is in need of a minuting secretary. If you have the necessary skills and preferably have your own computer and would like to help the Society, do please contact Alan McWhirr. You would need to attend 5-6 meetings a year, usually on a Wednesday between 5.30pm and 7.00pm.