

# **THE THOROTON SOCIETY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

**THE COUNTY'S HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
FOUNDED 1897**

## **ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015**



**North Muskham Parish Church – photo courtesy of Geoff Buxton**

**THE THOROTON SOCIETY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE  
OFFICERS JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2015**

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Penny Messenger BSc Med (3)

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Barbara Cast BA Hons \* (3)

Little Dower House, Station Road, Bleasby, Notts NG14 7FX

**HONORARY TREASURER**

John Wilson BPharm MPhil FRSPH \* (3)

**HONORARY TRANSACTIONS EDITORS**

*History* - Martyn Bennett BA PhD FRHistS \* (1)

*Archaeology* - Christopher King BA MA PhD \* (from April) (2)

**CONSULTANT EDITOR AND RECORD SERIES EDITOR**

Adrian Henstock BA DAA FRHistS \* (2)

**HONORARY NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

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**HONORARY EXCURSION SECRETARY**

Alan Langton BA \* (2)

**HONORARY MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

Judith Mills BA MA PhD \* (3)

*\*Ex-officio members of Council*

**TRUSTEES FOR THE CHARITY**

John Beckett, Barbara Cast and John Wilson

**PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE (TRANSACTIONS AND RECORD SECTION)**

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Professor Martyn Bennett BA PhD FRHistS

David Crook MA PhD FRHistS FSA OBE

Lee Elliott BA PgDip (Archaeol.Sci)

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Christopher King BA MA PhD

Gavin Kinsley BA

Chris Robinson BA PhD

John Wilson BPharm MPhil FRSPH

(Honorary Treasurer, Record Section)

Barbara Cast, Honorary Secretary of the Society - ex-officio



# **THE THOROTON SOCIETY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

## **TRUSTEES REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2015**

### **LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

The full name of the society is the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire and it is governed by a constitution known as the 'Rules of the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire'. These rules are registered with the Charity Commissioners under number 237755.

### **OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY**

Under the rules of the Society, its objects shall be to promote and foster the study of the history, archaeology and antiquities of Nottinghamshire for the public benefit and to promote and foster public knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Nottinghamshire's history generally.

### **ADDRESS FOR ENQUIRIES**

Barbara Cast, Honorary Secretary, Little Dower House, Station Road, Bleasby, Nottinghamshire NG14 7FX

### **TRUSTEES**

The members of Council are considered to be the Trustees of the Society. Details of membership of Council are shown on page 2.

### **MAIN ADVISORS**

Bankers – HSBC Bank plc, 26 Clumber Street, Nottingham NG1 3GA

### **FUNDS**

The General Fund can be used for the general furtherance of the aims of the charity. In order to achieve the aims of the Record Section, the Society has the power to print original historical materials, records and manuscripts. The income from the Maurice Barley, Nora Witham, Myles Thoroton Hildyard and Neville Hoskins Funds is used for lectures. The Coddington Fund is for the William Senior Record Series volume, the Centenary Fund for the Heritage Gateway and the Davis Bequest to digitise the Nottinghamshire Bibliography.

## **REPORT OF COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2015**

### **INTRODUCTION AND CHAIR'S REPORT**

I am grateful to all those who have made this another successful year for the Thoroton Society. As the report shows, in addition to the lectures and excursions which are so familiar to members, the Society also plays a significant role in a range of other areas, including research and heritage conservation. We have an excellent website, a regularly updated county bibliography, and a Heritage Gateway which provides a remarkable range of material for researchers interested in Nottinghamshire's history. This year we were able to make the first two Geoffrey Bond Research Awards, while the remarkable success of our Record Society volume on Newstead Abbey (edited by Rosalys Coope and Pete Smith) has demonstrated that there is still considerable interest in this great house with its Byron connections – one reason why Nottingham was recently successful in bidding for UNESCO Creative City Network membership as a City of Literature.

Of course, there is, inevitably, change. For the October lecture I was able to walk to the end of the road on which I live and catch a tram which dropped me close to Nottingham Mechanics. Trams were a nineteenth century invention, abandoned in Nottingham in 1936, so that Jesse Boot's plan for a tram route to Beeston along his newly built University Boulevard was never carried out. Yet here they are again, this time displacing the buses which had displaced the trams in the 1930s! What next? Trolley buses? The suburban railway line? I have learned not to make predictions! But there are some important developments ongoing in the county which we look forward to monitoring in the months to come. Of these, I would single out the Nottingham Castle project, which we heard more about from Ted Cattle at the Annual Luncheon, but the list of archaeological work ongoing in Nottinghamshire at present (see further on in this annual report) suggests that a real appetite remains to find out more about our collective past. The Thoroton Society continues to monitor and to contribute where it can to this work, and long may we continue to be involved.

John Beckett, Chair of Council

## PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL

As required, the Society's Council met three times in 2015, meeting as usual at Lenton Grove, courtesy of the University of Nottingham. Council has responsibility for overseeing the Society's business, finance and development. Officers and those representing the Society on various organisations report to Council at each meeting. The Standing Committee, appointed by Council and consisting of the officers, meets on a regular basis and reports to Council at each meeting. It has responsibility for day to day work, detailed consideration of developments such as the Geoffrey Bond Research Grant and the planning of the programme. Members of Council and its officers are elected at the AGM for a period as set down in the Constitution: it is anticipated that all members will be involved in the business of the Society and, to this end, most of them take on specific roles.

Barbara Cast, Honorary Secretary

## HONORARY TREASURER'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR TO 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2015

I am pleased to report once again that the Society's finances are sound and I have no concerns. Subscription receipts have remained steady; an indication that our membership is being maintained.

This year, we have seen a considerable increase in book sales. The legacy of books from the late Bryan Churm raised an additional £502 and sales of *Transactions* increased to £576, up from £467 in 2014. However, the largest increase in sales was that of *Newstead Abbey: A Nottinghamshire Country House 1540-1931* by Rosalys Coope and Pete Smith. The first printing of the book sold out and we had a second print run, which has continued to sell well. In addition to the shop at Newstead Abbey, the volume is available in a number of bookshops, including one in Herefordshire. Sales on our own bookstall at the Saturday lecture meetings have also increased this year, from £229 in

2014 to £292 in 2015. I would particularly like to thank the staff of the bookstall - Margaret Trueman, Penny Messenger and Philip Jones - for their sterling work.

The Excursions did very well this year, showing a surplus of £1,100 - thank you to Alan Langton for all his work in organising them. The Society's policy of encouraging members to bring their friends along on Thoroton excursions has proved very successful in helping to fill the coaches.

Gift Aid raised £1,301 and interest on our reserves in National Savings and Investments came to £464.

On expenditure, the cost of printing of *Transactions* was slightly down (£3,926, compared with £4,193 in 2014). The cost of printing the Newsletter was also down slightly (£2,036, compared with £2,220 in 2014). Since taking over the role of Editor of the Newsletter I have endeavoured to keep each edition to a maximum of twenty pages, with three or four pages in full colour.

The General Fund of the Society at 31<sup>st</sup> December totalled £25,428. The total assets of the Society at the start of the 2016 financial year amount to £70,785.

John Wilson, Honorary Treasurer

## MEMBERSHIP

	2014	2015
<b>Comparative membership numbers</b>		
Individual members	221	213
Individual members with record series	80	88
Associate members	58	57
Life members	7	7
Student members	5	6
Honorary members	4	5
Record series only	4	3
<b>Total individual members</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>379</b>
Institutional members	12	10
Institutional members - with record series	49	58
Institutional members - record series only	4	1
<b>Total institutional members</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Final total</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>448</b>
Total record series	140	150

Overall membership of the Thoroton Society has remained static during 2015. The analysis above shows that while Individual (Ordinary) memberships fell; this was

compensated for by the number of new members who also subscribed to the Record Series. There has also been a small increase in the number of Institutional memberships, the majority of which also subscribe to the Records Series.

Judith Mills, Honorary Membership Secretary

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **Transactions**

Volume 118 (2014) of *Transactions* was published and presented at the Annual General Meeting in April 2015 at Thurgarton. The print setting and publication was undertaken by *4word* of Bristol who again provided an excellent service to the two editors during the publication process. This was the last edition of the journal in which Keith Challis served as the archaeology editor and the history editor and the Publications Committee took several opportunities during the year and publications process to thank Keith for his hard work as an editor. Keith has been succeeded by Dr Chris King of the University of Nottingham.

Volume 118 included two archaeology articles; one covering the Tuxford Hoard, whilst the other was an architectural and archaeological study of St Mary's Church in Nottingham. Both articles were well-illustrated, containing the chief illustrative adornments to the issue. There were three history articles including an account based on the Nottinghamshire History Lecture. The periods covered embraced the late medieval period and the nineteenth century and the subject matter ranged from the county's wapentakes, women and the law and the transformation of old and new Nottingham.

By the end of the year 2015, the Publications Committee had seen a range of proposed articles for the Volume 119 of *Transactions* received, sent to readers and, where appropriate returned to their authors with suggestions for minor alterations and major revisions. One otherwise estimable article was deemed unsuitable for *Transactions* and the author advised of other potentially more suitable journals to contact. At the end of the year the editors had received all of the revised articles required for Volume 119 and were able to complete the editing process in a timely manner. It is expected that the finished edition will be more copiously illustrated than Volume 118, and there have been a few minor alterations to the organisation of the content.

In November the publications committee dedicated a substantial part of its meeting to discussing the future publishing plans for the journal *vis a vis* the printing and publication of *Transactions* and other society publications. A series of proposals regarding asking for tenders from a number of printers were discussed and a plan agreed upon. This plan will be carried forward after the publication of Vol. 119. A report on the outcome will be contained in the annual report for 2016.

Martyn Bennett, Honorary History Editor

## Record Series

The long-awaited edition of the estate maps of William Senior, 1600-1640, will finally be published during this next year. This will comprise full colour reproductions on an interactive Compact Disk of some seventy maps of the Earl of Newcastle's estates - mainly in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Northumberland but with some in Gloucestershire and Somerset. It will be accompanied by an illustrated book containing detailed catalogue entries listing the names of all settlements, farms and fields, etc recorded on the maps, transcripts of the few surviving fragments of a now-lost written survey, and a scholarly introduction by the editor Stephanos Mastoris.

An additional future volume - *The Nottinghamshire Churches Notes of Sir Stephen Glynne 1825-1874* - is also in active preparation. This is an edition of the architectural notes compiled by Glynne (1807-1874), a landowner and dedicated antiquarian from North Wales, on his extensive travels throughout England. The notes - in 'Pevsner' style - cover over 100 of the ancient parish churches of the county and are invaluable for recording features now lost during later Victorian restorations and rebuilding. They were transcribed and edited by Dr Lawrence Butler, who unfortunately died before he had completed a full introduction, but enough material survives to merit publication.

*Important note to Subscribers.* The William Senior edition will be Volume 47 but because its publication was delayed it has been overtaken in the programme by Volume 48 which appeared last year - *Newstead Abbey: a Nottinghamshire Country House: its Owners and Architectural History 1540-1931*.

Adrian Henstock, Honorary Record Series Editor

## Newsletter

I took over the role of editor of the Thoroton Newsletter during 2015, and have edited three issues during the year. First, may I pay tribute to Howard Fisher, who edited the Newsletter for a number of years and left a very high standard for me to follow. I hope my efforts will be as pleasing and satisfactory as Howard's.

I have made a few small changes to the layout of the Newsletter, one being that the Society information is now on the back cover. Because of the high cost of colour reproduction, and because we often receive very fine pictures to which monochrome does little justice, I have instituted a double-page spread with colour pictures in the centre of the Newsletter. This is useful for those issues that carry reports of excursions, for instance.

The Newsletter sometimes receives reports of research carried out by members. I have therefore included a section headed "Members' Research". As it is hoped to re-launch the Thoroton Research Group in 2016, the 'Members' Research' column could become a regular forum for members to report on their findings.

Because of cost, I have attempted to limit each issue to twenty pages. However, should we have a significant amount of material that justifies a twenty-four-page issue, then this can be done.

John Wilson, Honorary Newsletter Editor

## **PLANNING AND CONSERVATION IN THE CITY OF NOTTINGHAM**

Planning overshadowed development in Nottingham in 2015. Few major buildings were completed, one notable exception was the completion and opening of the new Basford Hall College building for New College Nottingham.

The completion of the long awaited and anticipated improvements to the transport network were civic highlights - the widening of the A453, most of which of course is outside the city, and the final opening of the delayed Phase Two of NET (Nottingham Express Transit). Nottingham's new expanded tram network opened to the public on Tuesday 25th August 2015, when the first trams headed out on the new lines to Clifton South and to Toton and Chilwell. Tempting passengers to use the 17.5km of the new lines is the availability of more than 2,000 free spaces at new park and ride sites. In addition a new tram and bus interchange has been created in Beeston, and at Nottingham Midland Station the tram stop has been relocated above the station. The apparent success of these new lines has revived talk and interest in further lines to Kimberley and, more recently, Gedling.

The two *intu* shopping centres were constantly in the news. The work at the Victoria Centre has largely been the transformation of the interior, although illuminated cladding now 'graces' the Parliament Street entrance and the Milton Street clock tower is skirted with restaurants.

The plans and artists' impressions for a new look Broadmarsh Centre have recently been linked into the City Council's wide-ranging plans to dramatically transform and regenerate the Broadmarsh area of Nottingham city centre. The Council has suggested that their proposals to redevelop the Broadmarsh car park and bus station, pedestrianise Collin Street, together with the £24m transformation of Nottingham Castle, the building of the so called Skills Hub, a technical education college jointly run by NCN and Central College, plus the investment in the Broadmarsh Centre will collectively represent a £250m investment in the city. Publicity says "it will transform the southern end of the city centre into a top-class destination for retail, leisure and education".

A £1.375m scheme is underway to turn Station Street into a new public open space, which will greet those arriving by train. In fact this is linked to the £1.4m Townscape Heritage programme to transform Carrington Street into Nottingham's Southern Gateway.

As part of a programme of works to support access to, and economic growth in, the Creative Quarter there has been further investment in improving Derby Road from Chapel Bar to Canning Circus. Although I have not checked progress the scheme entailed widening and resurfacing the pavements with new paving for their entire length, introducing new trees, redesigning the street lighting and retaining parking spaces on both sides.

There have been a number of planning applications for the conversion of the upper floors of buildings of various sizes into student accommodation. Other conversions of interest include the listed Grade II former Costume Museum, Castle Gate and the nearby Georgian buildings into luxury accommodation, and the former Boots' shop and clubhouse, Arkwright Street, Trent Bridge into *The Embankment*, a pub with restaurant. The Nottingham Playhouse has been refurbished internally.

There are a number of small Council housing developments nearing completion scattered around the city. The Council recently announced its plans to build 2,500 new affordable homes to rent or buy over the next four years. The first 100 will be erected on or around the Arkwright Walk area in the Meadows. This is a major development for the area.

Ken Brand, City Planning Representative

## **THOROTON RESPONSE GROUP**

There have been three matters on which representations have been made in 2015, two of them on sites which have already been brought to the attention of the Society by members. The first relates to Kirkby Hardwick Manor, the site of an ancient manor house of which some fabric remains, with other hidden evidence of the property yet to be fully explored. Further archaeological exploration has been undertaken this year (see the Archaeology Report) but the future of the site is still uncertain – no responses to the Society's letters sent in May and October to the County Council have yet been received.

The second representation was again to Newark and Sherwood District Council about the site of the former Minster School on Church Street, Southwell, which had been revealed as having rich archaeology but was, at the time of the representation, in a deplorably neglected state. A response on the current situation regarding the approved development of the site was received from the Planning Officer. However, as members will be aware, in a surprise development, the area was given to the Minster by an unnamed benefactor under terms which will ensure its future as an open and well-interpreted site. This was really good news for Southwell and the County.

The final representation of the year was regarding the fragile state of the railings and gate at St Mary's Church in the Lace Market. The major problem in making sure that this ironwork has a secure future is a lack of clarity on which organisation is responsible for the repairs; this appears to lie with Nottingham City Council. A letter was sent to Historic England seeking their advice and support – we await a response.

Members of the Society are strongly encouraged to draw the group's attention to matters concerning them. There are instances where our input has made a real difference to the outcome for our county's heritage.

Barbara Cast, Coordinator, Response Group

### **THOROTON RESEARCH GROUP**

The Research Group was set up some years ago to allow members who were active in historical research to meet and discuss their findings. The group met at the Nottingham Mechanics two or three times each year. Sadly, attendance at meetings has declined and at the last meeting, in May 2015, only five members were present. The Society is anxious not to let the Research Group disappear, so it is planned to re-launch the Group later in 2016, in a different format. Full information will be given in the summer edition of the Thoroton Newsletter.

John Wilson, Coordinator, Research Group

### **THE THOROTON SOCIETY WEBSITE AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BIBLIOGRAPHY ONLINE**

Problems with the webserver have unfortunately resulted in the corruption of most of last year's website activity logs and consequently only statistics for December 2015 are available.

Website statistics for December show that 1,180 unique visitors viewed a total of 6,675 pages. The most popular times for viewing the website over the month were mid-morning, early afternoon and 10pm.

The most viewed sections of the website continue to be 'Events' and 'About us' and the most popular individual page accessed was the article on The General Lunatic Asylum, Nottingham, 1812-1902, (Sneinton Asylum) by Terry Fry.

Most people found the website by using an Internet search engine such as Google. One of the most unusual searches made was for 'chiverton hartopp' - a splendid name belonging to Major Chiverton Hartopp who is mentioned in an article on the website about the owners of Stanford House in Nottingham by Elizabeth Robinson.

*The Nottinghamshire Bibliography Online* continues to grow and now holds around 11,600 entries (Michael Brook's original bibliography published in 2002 has around 8,700).

Andy Nicholson, Thoroton Society Webmaster

## THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE HERITAGE GATEWAY

There were two new entries at the beginning of 2015, namely on James Arthur Woodford and on the Polish Community. During the rest of the year I have been researching hospitals, an entry which will hopefully be put on the website in early 2016. This has been a substantial task and has taken up a lot of time. Another entry to go on in early 2016 will be on the Nottingham Society for Organising Charity now known as the NCVS. Other research and work has been undertaken during 2015 to get other entries put together which again hopefully will go up in 2016. Although Andy Nicholson has left the area he is continuing to manage the website, for which we are most grateful.

Dr Denise Amos, Heritage Gateway

## SOCIETY EVENTS IN 2013

### Excursions

Overall 2015 has been very encouraging; there has been an increase in the numbers wishing to participate in the excursions, and it has been good to welcome some friends of members on these visits.

The outing on 19<sup>th</sup> May was to Warwick with its tower of the collegiate church of Saint Mary which dominates the landscape around. The present building dates from the seventeenth century after a massive fire demolished most of the town. Queen Anne contributed a fifth of the cost of rebuilding the church. In the crypt, however, are the bases of the massive pillars of the original twelfth century building, founded by the earl of Warwick as a non-monastic collegiate church with a dean and seven canons. The famous Beauchamp chapel is currently being restored. After lunch we moved on to Baddesley Clinton, originally a moated medieval hall turned into a fine Tudor residence. The home of the Ferrers family for twelve generations, it was used as a secret Roman Catholic centre after the Reformation, with fascinating 'holes' to hide the priests. On 18<sup>th</sup> June we had a lovely journey into Lincolnshire to the twelfth century church of Saint James in Louth where we were greeted with coffee and delicious home-made cakes : if members do not remember the church, they will certainly remember the cakes! The building has a fine history, with a spectacular Georgian roof decorated with angels and bosses, the sunburst emblem of Edward IV on the tower ceiling, and some fine old chests and oak 'Corporation' pews. After lunch we moved to Heckington which boasts the only eight-sail windmill in the country: with some trepidation members were able to climb through the three floors to see the milling process to turn grain into flour (rumour has it that the Wilsons have made some excellent bread with it!) We crossed the town to the church of Saint Andrew, a building with some outstanding windows, an Easter Sepulchre in remarkable condition, a wealth of carvings, and three mass dials. Tea here included cake!

The excursion which followed the trail of the Pilgrim Fathers took place on 4th August, and was organised by Derek and Ceril Little, and knowledgeably led by Valerie

Henstock. At Babworth we were given an excellent outline of the emergence and development of the Puritan aspect of faith which ultimately led to the Pilgrim Fathers 'separating' themselves and moving to North America. The beautiful small church at Austerfield has a claim to fame in that it was in this village that William Bradford was born and baptised, and he eventually became the Governor of the colony of New Plymouth. Scrooby was the birthplace of William Brewster, who joined Bradford in founding the colony of New Plymouth. The village hall here had a most interesting display of Pilgrim Fathers' memorabilia. The last stop was Gainsborough Old Hall, home of the wealthy Hickman family, who helped finance the Pilgrim Fathers' voyage across the Atlantic.

The last outing in 2015 was to Wentworth Woodhouse, much famed since our visit because of its subsequent sale for £8 million, and then its reappearance on the market yet again. On the journey there we stopped at the twelfth century church of Saint Mary, Ecclesfield, once known as the 'Minster of the Moors'. More coffee and cake greeted us. (You could be forgiven if you thought that the reputation of Thoroton excursions seems to revolve around coffee and home-made cake!). After an enjoyable tour of the church and viewing some interesting tombs in the graveyard, we travelled to Wentworth through the beautiful parkland around it. Fortunately, we only toured 23 of the 365 rooms of the mansion built in 1630 by the first Marquis of Rockingham. Later members of the family added to the original house in both Palladian and Baroque styles, creating a palace where entertaining high society, including the king and queen, was a regular accepted activity.

Alan Langton, Honorary Excursion Secretary

### **Lectures and Presentations**

Once again, our year started with the *Nora Witham Lecture* and Gwylim Dodd giving us an insight into England's Hollow Victory at Agincourt. Gwylim gave us a well-illustrated account of the strategies and mistakes made by both sides, leading to what is often described as a French loss rather than an English victory. In February, Paul Everson gave us a well-illustrated presentation on early Anglo-Saxon stone sculptures found in Nottinghamshire. This *Maurice Barley Lecture* looked at the wide range of material from studies by many historians, including Maurice Barley, and some of the examples that are still visible today. The winter season closed with the *Myles Thoroton Hildyard Lecture* and our own Richard Gaunt telling us how Nottinghamshire had welcomed the Great Peace that occurred at the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815. Celebrations in Nottinghamshire were much muted but Richard managed to find a number of episodes from the last battle that he referenced to events happening more locally.

The *Spring Meeting* was held in the village hall at Thurgarton and closed with local resident and historian, Ellis Morgan, giving us a short history of the Priory Church followed by a visit up the hill to the site of the Priory and its undercroft.

Our Summer Special Lecture was held in the Music Room of Kelham Hall where our

speaker was broadcaster and architectural historian, Jonathan Foyle. Jonathan used illustrations from his new book to tell the story of his explorations of Lincoln Cathedral and how he came to write what he now calls “the biography of a great building”. Once again, the evening closed with refreshments which stimulated more socialising and general hubbub of members whilst they waited to buy signed copies of Jonathan’s book.

The new winter season opened with the *Archaeology Lecture* given by James Wright and Andy Gaunt, leaders of the King’s Clipstone Archaeology Research Project. They showed us how the site had been explored over a number of years to reveal the remains of a Royal hunting palace that was used by the Plantagenets for entertaining many noble guests throughout the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Later in October Elain Harwood gave the *Keith Train Lecture* to the Civic Society on the theme of modern historical buildings in Nottingham.

Our Annual Luncheon was held at Basford Hall, known locally as the former home of Basford Miners’ Welfare but recently turned into a conference venue. Our speaker on this occasion was Ted Cante MBE who gave us an excellent presentation on plans for the future of Nottingham Castle.

The following week, Daniel O’Neil, a PhD student at Nottingham University, gave us the *Nottinghamshire History Lecture* covering the development of the John Player manufacturing industry and its use of advertising at a time when smoking was increasingly being seen as responsible for many illnesses. The presentation included references to the No6 girls, two of whom were in our audience! As always, the year closed with the *Neville Hoskins Lecture* where another Council member, David Crook, marked 800 years since the first Magna Carta was drawn up. David used linkages to a number of local sites and characters to illustrate the progress of the several versions of Magna Carta that were drawn up through a sustained period of tension between King Henry III and his countrymen, ending with the definitive Charter of 1225.

David Hoskins, Honorary Lecture Secretary

## **VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

Work has continued during the year on several parishes around Nottingham and also Mansfield. In addition, a first draft of Volume III dealing with the thirteen parishes of Rushcliffe Hundred Southern Division (i.e. the area centring on East Leake and Sutton Bonington) was sent to the VCH General Editor in September 2015. A response was received in December and the text is now being revised in the light of Professor Hoyle’s comments.

During the year, the Society received an award of £1,000 from the County History Trust (the central funding body for VCH), which it kindly augmented by £200 and placed the total sum in the hands of the University of Nottingham to administer. This will facilitate further research, mainly at the National Archives, for Volume III.

As county editor, I remain extremely appreciative of the efforts of a small group of Thoroton members in continuing with research for VCH in the county, of support from Nottinghamshire Archives and the Manuscripts and Special Collections section of the University Library, and of useful comments on the draft of the Rushcliffe volume from members of the East Leake and District Local History Society and others in that part of the county. After several years' work, we are now within sight of the publication of the first addition to the History for Nottinghamshire since Volume II was published in 1910.

Philip Riden, County Editor, VCH

## **ARCHAEOLOGY**

2015 has seen the usual wide variety of archaeological investigations by archaeological contractors, the Nottinghamshire County Council Community Archaeology Team and community groups across the County. Brief details of the main projects are provided in this report, which has been compiled in consultation with Ursilla Spence of Nottinghamshire County Council and Dr Christopher King, Honorary Editor (Archaeology) of the Society's Transactions. Further details of all of these projects will be found in the forthcoming volume of the Transactions.

### **Beauvale Priory**

Field investigations of the Carthusian Priory site were conducted by MOLA Northampton, following a scheme designed and monitored by Glyn Coppack and commissioned by Peart Bradley Architects. Work focused on two areas excavated by the Thoroton Society in 1908 but not fully backfilled: a range of chapels to the south of the church and an area immediately to the east of the south-eastern monk's cell. The aim was to expose sufficient masonry to enable the conservation and presentation of the two areas as part of a conservation scheme funded by Historic England. Removal of backfill from the chapel range revealed well-preserved walls of the church and the later chapel. In the second area, the walls had been robbed for building stone and were less well preserved.

### **Clipstone: King John's Palace**

Mercian Archaeological Services CIC conducted further fieldwork on the site of this medieval palace complex as part of a long-term research project conducted with the assistance of HLF funding. Extensive test-pitting and geophysical survey in the summer of 2015 elucidated further the boundaries of the site and shed important light upon the variety of preserved structural and artefactual remains that survive in the vicinity of the standing ruins. Further surveys are planned in 2016 and 2017.

### **Cuckney: Castle and Churchyard**

Geophysical and earthwork surveys of the graveyard associated with St Mary's Church in Cuckney, together with a graveyard survey, were conducted by Mercian Archaeological Services CIC with the assistance of an HLF grant. Geophysical anomalies beneath the church have been interpreted as possibly burial pits relating to the multiple skeletons reported in 1950-51 by builders working to underpin the building - and have been interpreted by some as evidence of burials associated with a battle

preceding construction of the church. In addition, topographic and magnetometer surveys of the earthworks in and around the churchyard have recorded a number of banks and ditches which have contributed to understanding of the possible castle site.

### **Elton-On-The-Hill: Elton Solar Farm**

Investigations by *Oxford Archaeology East*, funded by SunEdison and Prosolia, uncovered two closely spaced Early Iron Age settlements. Both were fully excavated. One comprised a small sub-rounded enclosure, linked to a drove way, with no traces of internal structures. Finds included a ring-headed swan-necked pin, Early Iron Age pottery and animal bone (including a cattle femur dated to 761-429 cal BC at 95% probability). The second settlement comprised two curvilinear ditches, part of a third ditch and a few postholes. Finds included an impressive collection of Early Iron Age pottery and animal bone (including a cattle tibia dated to 411-354 cal BC at 95% probability).

### **Kirkby Hardwick Manor, Kirkby in Ashfield**

Work was undertaken by Kirkby & District Archaeology Group and Trent & Peak Archaeology on the site of a Tudor house at Kirkby Hardwick, with funding from a NCC Local Improvement Scheme grant. The house was largely demolished in the 1960s, but part of the courtyard wall still stands. A laser scan and photogrammetric survey of this wall by Trent & Peak Archaeology provided a detailed record of the preserved standing remains.

### **Newark: Church Walk**

Minor works by the Highways Department on Church Walk, next to the parish church of St Mary Magdalene, uncovered part of a human skull and other skeletal remains. These were inspected and recorded by the NCC Conservation Team. The bones derived from at least one adult and one juvenile and, in view of the mixed nature of the finds, it was argued that they had been disturbed previously. The most likely interpretation is that these represent redeposited fragments from an area of the churchyard that was in use in the 12th and 13th centuries.

### **Nottingham: Pre-Conquest Borough**

Work continued with securing and enhancing the documentary and material archives compiled during excavations directed by Charles Young in the Lace Market between 1969 and 1980 at Boots Garage, Drury Hill, Fisher Gate, Goose Gate, Halifax Place and Woolpack Lane. Work focused in 2015 upon enhancement of the digital resource created during earlier stages of the project, development of a museum curation strategy and enhancement of Nottingham's Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) by the addition of digital data generated during earlier stages of the project. Funding has been provided principally by Historic England, with additional financial assistance from Nottingham City Council.

### **Nottingham: Lenton Priory**

Monitoring of groundworks by Trent & Peak Archaeology continued during the final stages of work on Nottingham's new tram network, on behalf of NET-2 and Vinci

Construction UK. This included observations of intrusive work in Gregory and Abbey Streets on the site of Lenton Priory. Many areas were truncated by later disturbances, but it was suggested that a short length of undated sandstone wall could have formed part of the priory gatehouse. Unstratified finds included a significant collection of 12th-century architectural stone, which it was suggested might derive from the chapel of the priory hospital.

### **Nottingham: St Ann's Allotments**

The St Ann's Allotments Association, working with Trent & Peak Archaeology, received an HLF grant in 2015 for the 'Dig For History!' project, which aims to understand how patterns of occupation and cultivation changed from the medieval period onwards. This involved the construction of a GIS database of known heritage structures, a pilot shovel-pit survey and trial excavation of a 19<sup>th</sup> century summerhouse and water management system. A final report on this work is in progress.

### **Nottingham: St Mary's Church, Arnold**

A watching brief was undertaken by Trent & Peak Archaeology for the parochial church council during the construction of a new porch. This identified several grave cuts and a Victorian coffin burial within the churchyard, close to the northern wall of the church. All human remains were left *in situ*.

### **Papplewick: Moor Pond Woods**

Nottinghamshire County Council, the Sherwood Forest Trust and the Friends of Moor Pond Woods, supported by HLF funding, have for the last 15 years been uncovering a complex system of ponds, leats and sluices that supplied water to a number of 18th century cotton mills owned by the Robinson Family. Work has focused recently on Grange Cottages Wood, where excavations have revealed the end of a north-south leat and a c.4m-wide stone sluice containing a later central brick culvert. These structural remains were surveyed with a laser scanner in 2015 by Trent & Peak Archaeology.

### **Radcliffe-On-Trent: Shelford Road**

A programme of trial trenching and geophysical survey, commissioned by CgMs Consulting, was conducted by Wessex Archaeology on behalf of William Davis Ltd in advance of housing development. This revealed two large, regularly maintained and intersecting ditched enclosures dating from the Late Iron Age to earlier Romano-British period, together with associated features. Traces of ridge and furrow cultivation were recorded across most of the site.

### **Rufford Abbey**

NCC community archaeologists supervised excavations by volunteers as part of a programme of investigations into the archaeological resource of Rufford Abbey. This was carried out with guidance from the County Archaeologist and Historic England, and focused in 2015 upon the remains of an ornamental water feature that appeared to have been built upon medieval masonry courses that might relate to a mill. Further investigations were carried out by the NCC Heritage and Conservation team during the excavation of a pipe trench linking the Rufford Abbey Wildlife Pond and the River

Rainworth. Construction work revealed sandstone flags that were interpreted as probably the remains of an ornamental garden walkway.

### **Scrooby Top: Lodge Farm Fisheries Angling Lakes**

An archaeological strip, map and record excavation was commissioned by RPS Planning and Development Limited on behalf of Rotherham Sand and Gravels Company Ltd prior to the development of two angling lakes. Fieldwork by Wessex Archaeology revealed three north-south and two east-west ditches that were interpreted as elements of a rectilinear ditched field system visible on air photographs. The only dating evidence comprised two Romano-British greyware sherds that were retrieved from ditches in the north-east part of the site.

### **Southwell: Burgage Green**

Southwell Community Archaeology Group began a two-year HLF-funded investigation of the Burgage Green in collaboration with Trent & Peak Archaeology and ceramics expert Jane Young. Geophysical surveys in the Green and adjacent gardens identified three areas for evaluation excavations. Two trenches on the Green revealed cobbled surfaces and a medieval ditch and post-holes, together with numerous sherds of medieval pottery and other finds. A trench in a private garden revealed the remains of Georgian or Victorian garden buildings and drainage features.

### **Stanford on Soar: Stanford Hall**

Historic building recording of this early 18<sup>th</sup> century brick mansion was commissioned by Arup and carried out by MOLA Northampton. As well as the main house and the extension for its 1937 theatre and air raid shelter, the recording included greenhouses, a walled garden, lido, games-house, tennis pavilion, sea lion pool, penguin pool and grotto. MOLA Northampton also carried out archaeological monitoring in advance of new amphibian ponds, bat houses, and services within the associated grounds. A trackway of crushed and broken limestone and gravels, possibly relating to the construction of the original pond, was found during stripping for the amphibian pond.

### **Thynghowe, Hanger Hill: Budby, Edwinstowe and Warsop Parishes**

This important site, placed prominently on an elevated location where the boundaries of Budby, Edwinstowe and Warsop parishes converge, has been extensively investigated over several years by Mercian Archaeological Services CIC as part of a major HLF project. In 2015, Mercian Archaeological Services conducted a magnetometer survey on the site of a possible circular enclosure next to the summit of Hanger Hill. This confirmed that earthworks comprising a bank and flanking ditch formed part of a circular enclosure. The survey also detected several sub-rectangular magnetic anomalies within and around the enclosure that could represent archaeological features. Further work is planned in 2016 to investigate further this enclosure and to establish its relationship to the Thynghowe mound and the converging parish boundaries.

### **Toton: Toton Manor**

Members of the Friends of Toton Fields, in collaboration with Trent & Peak Archaeology, focused in 2015 upon analysis, interpretation and reporting of HLF-

funded survey and excavation work on the site of Toton Manor House, established in the medieval period, and a medieval to 19<sup>th</sup> century mill structure with associated water management system on the River Erewash. Supported by Broxtowe Borough Council, interpretation boards were erected at the mill and manor sites.

David Knight, Archaeology Rapporteur

## **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION**

NLHA has been extremely active during 2015, holding three (one more than usual) Day Schools. The Spring Day School, entitled 'A Medieval Miscellany' and AGM was held in March 2015; in July an additional Summer Day School was held at Beauvale Priory, and the Autumn Day School (An Archaeological Miscellany) took place in October. In addition there have been a number of Angel Row Forums held at the Local Studies Library, Angel Row. In November 2015 there was a Youth Heritage Conference and the NLHA HistoryFest.

NLHA has an active recruitment programme which has attracting many new members, particularly organisations, friends groups, churches, public houses, a parish council and companies associated with local history, amongst many others.

Its monthly newsletter and on-line calendar advertises events and news from local history groups from across the county and *Nottinghamshire Historian* continues to be published twice a year, under the Editorship of Sarah Seaton. The Association is also helping local history groups to develop their own websites and can offer website hosting.

On behalf of its members, NLHA has arranged Corporate Membership of University of Nottingham Libraries which allows its members to join the University Libraries for £30 (compared to full cost of £60 per year).

Judith Mills, NLHA Representative 2015

## **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUST**

For much of the past two or three years, the group of buildings at the site of the old Robin Hood Hotel, Newark, has occupied the majority of the NBPT's time and energy. A grant worth £15,000 was obtained from HLF to cover the cost of a feasibility study to determine the building's future. In late August 2015, the owners revoked their offer to sell to NBPT, thus negating the many hours of work by officers of the NBPT, and leaving the future of the site still undecided.

On a more positive note, the old Minster School site in Church Street, Southwell, has been given to the Minster by a local benefactor to be developed for archaeological, educational and environmental use.

Ceril Little, NBPT Representative

## **NOTTINGHAM HERITAGE STRATEGY**

In 2015 Nottingham City Council launched its Heritage Strategy, setting out its objectives for heritage and leisure services in Nottingham for the next fifteen years. Day-to-day responsibility for the strategy lies with a new Council post of Heritage Officer (with interviews conducted in January 2016) together with oversight from a voluntary panel of local stakeholders and representatives of heritage organisations, including the Thoroton Society. To date, the panel has met a number of times to discuss its objectives, review possible areas of activity and conduct site visits to buildings which might usefully be brought within the remit of the strategy. The Society looks forward to playing its part in the achievement of the Heritage Strategy as it moves towards a more active phase.

Richard A Gaunt, NHS Representative