

THOROTON

Number 28: Summer 2002



Annual General Meeting – 27 April 2002, East Markham

The 105th Annual General Meeting of the Thoroton Society was held at East Markham Village Hall on 27 April 2002 at 2.45 p.m. The Society's president, Neville Hoskins, welcomed 90 members to the meeting, and the business was conducted by the chairman of the Council, Professor John Beckett. Professor Beckett thanked the officers for their work over the past year, and the editors for successfully producing volume 105 of *Transactions*, which was distributed to members at the meeting. Gwen Turland, who did not stand for re-election to the Council, was thanked for her work



over past years. Peter Reddish and Robert Creates were elected to the two vacancies on Council (one caused by the elevation of Neville Hoskins to President last year). Geoffrey Oldfield thanked members for their congratulatory messages on his recent appointment as MBE. A motion to accept the Annual Report was moved by the President. Muriel Ogle and her team of helpers provided the tea, after which members were shown around the church by Dr Ian MacIntyre and Mrs Margaret Beard. The visit ended at 5.45 p.m. Thanks were also expressed to Mrs Barbara Cast, Hon. Secretary, for organising the day's events.

Picture: the Chairman and President with Peter Reddish (left) and Robert Creates (right), who were elected to Council at the AGM (see p4 for their personal profiles)

Nottinghamshire Bibliography

The *Nottinghamshire Bibliography*, which is due to appear as the next volume in the Record Series, was due to be launched during local history week (4-11 May 2002), but printing delays meant that this had to be postponed. It is hoped the *Bibliography* will appear in the next month or two. It will be distributed free to members of the Record Section, and offered at a discount to members of the Society. Further details will be made available as soon as possible.

~ The Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire ~
~ The County's Principal Historical Society ~
Visit the Thoroton Website at: www.thorotonsociety.org.uk



Picture left: Terry Fry and Geoffrey Oldfield, deep in conversation at the Annual General Meeting (see p 1).

Nottinghamshire Heritage Gateway

This initiative, prepared with funding from Awards for All, is intended to extend the Society's website by including information of help to potential researchers, teachers and students of Nottinghamshire. Work commenced in March, and the first entries are expected to be on the Society's website early in May. Steph Mastoris outlined the nature and aims of the Gateway to members attending the AGM, and more details will appear in the newsletter as sections of it are completed.

Picture right: Neville Hoskins, President, with Dr Ian MacIntyre and Mrs Margaret Beard, who showed members around East Markham Church, following the AGM on 27 April (see p 1).



The Thoroton Society's 64 pence burning issue!

Due to an administrative oversight the last mailing to members, which included the AGM papers, was sent out with insufficient postage. For most people this led to a surcharge of 64 pence and the inconvenience of an unscheduled visit to the local postal sorting office. Our apologies for this error, and for the problems it may have caused you. We will endeavour to ensure that there is no repeat.

Calling all Archaeologists

The Society has not been as actively engaged in archaeological matters in recent years as was once the case. Since the subject is booming (Time Team, Meet the Ancestors etc.) this seems a shame. However, in the past year Dr Sarah Speight has been appointed to a post in the Continuing Education Department at the University of Nottingham, and has also taken up the position of Archaeology Editor for the Society's *Transactions*. Dr Speight is looking to develop links with Thoroton archaeologists,

perhaps to help supply volunteers to the Trent and Peak Archaeology Unit, or for other fieldwork projects run through Continuing Education. If there is sufficient interest, we will try to run the occasional visit to sites where fieldwork is ongoing. Meantime, any members of the Society who would like to be more involved with field archaeology should contact Sarah directly - telephone 0115-846-6465 or email sarah.speight@nottingham.ac.uk.

Midland History - Leisure in the Midlands

Our Chairman, Professor John Beckett, is convening a conference on behalf of the journal *Midland History*, to be held at Vaughan College, Leicester, on Saturday 16 November 2002. The subject is leisure in the Midlands, and papers will be given on 'Hare-Pie Scrambling and Bottle-Kicking in Hallaton, Leicestershire'; 'Hunting in the Midlands during Henry VIII's reign'; 'Youth Leisure in Nottingham and Coventry 1920-60', and 'Industrial Welfare and Recreation in the Boots Company, 1883-1945'. For further details write to janice.avery@nottingham.ac.uk, or telephone 0115-9515929.

Skills Audit

From time to time the Society receives requests for help on all manner of historical, archaeological and antiquarian interests. Enclosed with this newsletter is a questionnaire which asks you about yourself, and your views on the Society. We would appreciate the latter to make sure we are going in the right direction. We would also like to hear about you in the hope that we may be able to call upon members, and their skills, when we asked for information and help. Please spare a few moments to fill in the questionnaire, and return it to Barbara Cast.

EXCURSIONS

Members are reminded of the following excursions, details of which are included with this Newsletter. Send your booking form and cheque off now to Keith Goodman to avoid disappointment!

Saturday 8 June: North Nottinghamshire Churches (Leader - Jean Nicholson)

Saturday 6 July: Northamptonshire (Leader - Steph Mastoris)

Thursday 8 August: Great Nottinghamshire Gardens (Leader - Philip Jones)

(For the visit to **Welbeck Gardens on Saturday 18 May**, anyone wanting further information should contact Jean Nicholson on (0115) 9312998)

New Book by Member of Thoroton Council

John Fox, *People of Vision* (published by Nottingham Council of Churches, St Nicholas Church Office, 79 Maid Marian Way, Nottingham, NG1 6AE, £5)

John Fox's book was originally published in 2000, but it quickly went out of print. It is now back in print, fully revised and with a great deal of additional information. The book, which is illustrated, explores the unique Christian heritage of Nottinghamshire through the lives

and work of *people of vision*. It reminds the reader of a local Christian heritage, which is almost certainly more than 1700 years long, and it includes a postscript looking at Christianity in the county today as it moves into the 21st century.

Report on The Maurice Barley Lecture Saturday 9 March 2002: Trevor Foulds

This year's Maurice Barley Lecture was given by Dr Trevor Foulds using the intriguing title "**'This great House so lately begun and all of free stone': William Cavendish's Italianate palazzo called Nottingham Castle**".

Dr Foulds' lectures are invariably entertaining and informative, and this was no exception. He used (for the first time, I believe, at a Thoroton lecture) a PowerPoint presentation, ie a computer projector rather than a slide projector. Dr Foulds illustrated his talk with a wide range of well chosen illustrations - starting with the all-too familiar castle logo formerly used by Player's cigarettes and progressing through Jan Sieberechts' 'Nottingham from the East'.

These pictures helped in our understanding of the way this fine example of an early baroque palace, completed in 1679, has been altered over the years. In this respect Dr Foulds thoughtfully used enlarged portions of paintings familiar and unfamiliar to show the progression of change.

Over fifty years of indifferent use followed abandonment by the Newcastles of the ducal palace around 1776, before the interior of the building was gutted by fire in October 1831. This 'blackened ruin' was then left to the ravages of the weather, until it was leased to Nottingham Council in 1875 and local architect T.C. Hine was engaged to convert it into the Midland Counties Museum & Gallery of Art.

Hine found the structure of the building had suffered little, and produced a well-executed adaptation of three storeys into two. This inevitably made a floor line visible through the original windows, an alleged insensitivity that was unfairly blamed on the architect.

Dr Foulds' stimulating lecture left us reassured that Nottingham's much maligned Castle is a building of merit and integrity, and perhaps has even more secrets to reveal.

Ken Brand

STOP PRESS!

This year's University of Nottingham Barley Lecture entitled '**Houses in Nottingham, 1688-1750**' will be given by Professor John Beckett on **Thursday 6 June, 5pm, Room A41, Geography/Economics Building (formerly Law & Social Sciences), on the University of Nottingham campus.**



Picture left: Editors Sarah Speight and Adrian Henstock handing out copies of Transactions to members attending the AGM.

PLANNING

Members with access to the web and an interest in planning may care to contact www.plan4nottingham.com the City's recently launched 'interactive on-line Planning Service'. It is claimed to be 'easy to use and intuitive', it certainly contains a vast amount of information. You can receive guidance about the need for planning permission, the process of applying and can even download the necessary forms. Plans and details of current applications can be viewed (it

helps if you know the ward concerned) and comments can be sent via email directly to the officer concerned. Planning applications back to January 1996 are listed together with the decision in each case. Neville Hoskins

NEW MEMBERS OF COUNCIL ELECTED AT THE AGM

ROBERT CREATES Already familiar as the man who makes the amplifier work at lectures. Bob was born at Lewisham in 1933, his family home was in Eltham (in the road where Bob Hope lived!) Later he played football in the same school team as Roy Dwight (whom Forest fans will remember scored the first goal in the 1959 cup final!) Bob did his National Service with the Royal Artillery as a Physical Training Instructor, this led to him qualifying as a physiotherapist at the North London School of Therapy. In 1960 he married Vera, also a physiotherapist and they moved to Nottingham in 1966 where their daughter was born. For 27 years he was manager of Rehabilitation at The Cedars, retiring in 1993. He joined the Society in 1987. Bob's other interests include music from Big Band to Chamber Music, cycling and ballroom dancing.

PETER REDDISH Born in Nottingham in 1937, Peter spent his childhood and school years in Carlton. He joined the East Midlands Gas Board as an apprentice fitter; perhaps it was then that he learned the skills which now enable him to erect big projection screens without doing himself and others an injury! In 1958 he and Ann married, National Service with the RASC took him to Germany for almost two years, and on his return he joined the EMGB Marketing Department based in Nottingham, but from 1978 -1993 they lived in Mansfield. His work brought him into contact with Local Authorities, Building Contractors and Architects.

After early retirement in 1993 Peter and Ann, who have two daughters, returned to Nottingham; they joined the Society in 1996 and pursue their interests in Local and Family History.

Southwell Workhouse and the Rev J.T. Becher

In March this year the first visitors were admitted to the National Trust's refurbished Thurgarton Incorporation workhouse. Members will know a good deal about this project, not least from Susanna Smith's stimulating lecture to the Society in 2001. It is open 12-5 Tuesday-Sunday, and well worth a visit. Tel. 01636-817250 for further information. The inspiration behind the workhouse was the Rev. John Thomas Becher, and he is the subject of a new book, written by local historian Julie O'Neill. Julie writes that

'Reverend John Thomas Becher was a well known figure in Nottinghamshire in the first half of the nineteenth century, He is best known as one of the county's poor law reformers whose experimentation in stopping the payment of outdoor relief to the poor and introducing the workhouse test became a model for the rest of the country through the New Poor Law. However, Becher's work as a Poor Law reformer has been misrepresented and misunderstood. He was involved in a wide range of activities as magistrate, clergyman, advocate of self help, botanist and friend of Byron, and the book presents a view of the Rev Becher as a social reformer, humanitarian and superb administrator who could be relied upon to get things done.'

The Life and Times of J.T. Becher of Southwell, by Julie O'Neill, is available, price £4.95 from bookshops in Southwell and Lowdham, or direct from Julie (p+p inc.) at 11 Wellington Road, Burton Joyce, NG14 5GQ.

Please send contributions for *Newsletter* No. 29 by 10 September 2002 to Janice Avery, Department of History, University of Nottingham, Nottingham NG7 2RD (telephone 0115 951 5929, fax 0115 951 5948, or e-mail janice.avery@nottingham.ac.uk). The views expressed in the *Newsletter* are not necessarily those of the Editor, the Society or its Council.