

# THE THOROTON SOCIETY

Nottinghamshire's History and Archaeology Society



NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 74

WINTER 2013



*Scrooby Manor, 2013 (see book review)*

*Photo: Howard Fisher*

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*The Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire  
The County's Principal Historical Society*

*Visit the Thoroton Society Website at: [www.thorotonsociety.org.uk](http://www.thorotonsociety.org.uk)*

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## OFFICERS

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Membership Secretary:	Judith Mills BAHons MA PhD (email: membership@thorotonsociety.org.uk)

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Individual Ordinary membership	£24.00
Associate member (at the same address)	£ 6.00
Student/Under 21	£ 6.00
Individual Record Section membership	£15.00
Combined Ordinary and Record Section	£34.00
Institutional Ordinary membership	£24.00
Institutional Record Section	£20.00

## RESEARCH GROUP

Meets twice a year. Contact for details: John Wilson (email: wilsonicus@btinternet.com)

## RESPONSE GROUP

The Society seeks to respond to matters of historical and conservation concern which arise in the County.  
If members become aware of such matters please contact the Group Co-ordinator, Barbara Cast - contact details above

## VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY

A group of researchers working to update the VCH of Nottinghamshire. For information and to join the group contact the coordinator, Philip Riden at philip.riden@nottingham.ac.uk.

## PUBLICATIONS

The Society publishes an annual Transactions volume which is distributed to all members.  
The Record Section volumes are published from time to time and are distributed to members paying the extra subscription for this Section and are available for purchase by other members and the general public.  
Quarterly newsletters are circulated to every member.

## LECTURES

Lectures, unless stated otherwise in the programme booklet, are held at the Nottingham Mechanics, 3, North Sherwood Street, Nottingham, NG1 4EZ, commencing at 2.30 p.m. with the bookstall open from 2 p.m.

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

We are delighted to welcome the following new members:

Keith Barton	Maureen Gordon
Sheila Barton	Margaret Knowles
Peter Brooks	Dr. Tom Smith
Alexander Fitchett	

*DEADLINES for Newsletter items are 1 February, 1 May, 1 August and 1 November.*

*COPY should be sent to the EDITOR, Howard Fisher, 21 Brockwood Crescent, Keyworth, Nottingham, NG12 5HQ or by email to: editor@thorotonsociety.org.uk*

*Items can be handwritten or typed in Word format, either suffix .doc or.docx. Pictures diagrams and maps are all most welcome to illustrate an item. Images can be submitted on CD, DVD, as an email attachment or sent for scanning. Preferred size 300dpi JPEG. Images will be adjusted to suit the publication.*

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## Little Morton Hall and Cheadle Outing Report

By Alan Langton who lead the day; photography by Josephine Burgess

Forty members attended this summer outing of the Society.

After a stop for a most refreshing coffee break near Uttoxeter, we travelled through delightful countryside to Little Morton Hall, first begun during the reign of Elizabeth I by the very wealthy local land-owning Moreton family. It is a very fine example of timber-framed architecture, and despite the occasional rather uneven floors and walls, which can encourage a certain dizziness for the visitor, the structure has been significantly strengthened and preserved by the careful work of the National Trust.

Jane, our excellent guide, gave us a full hour's tour of the Hall to display examples of the highest quality of Tudor carpentry, plasterwork, painting and glazing in the various rooms, including more recent discoveries of painted panelling and silverware, hidden away from sight for centuries.



*Little Moreton Hall*

Jane's presentation combined significant knowledge with gentle humour, and an obvious dedication to this historical gem.

After lunch and the opportunity to enjoy the gardens and grounds, we travelled to Cheadle and the famous Roman Catholic Church of Saint Giles, a masterpiece of Pugin creation. Here we were welcomed by Mr. John Smith who's association with the church as headteacher of the Primary School, and whose obvious love for the holiness of the place, enabled us to hear and view the very special history and treasures of the church. It became clear to us that every part of this Victorian construction demonstrated the bonds between faith and architecture in Pugin's plans and the work he achieved. Not surprisingly, Saint Giles draws many hundreds of visitors, and is clearly a considerable asset to Cheadle.



*St. Giles, Church, Cheadle*

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## October Lecture -David Strange-Walker; The Nottingham Caves Project. *Barbara Cast reports.*

We were very pleased to welcome again Dr. David Strange-Walker, the Project Manager for the Nottingham Caves Project currently being undertaken by Trent and Peak Archaeology, now a part of York Archaeological Trust.

David is described as TPA's Archeomatician and Geomatics Manager, impressive job descriptions which belie the clarity of his presentation and talk on this exciting project, which he has project managed since its inception. His enthusiasm for his work was very evident and, indeed, the number of questions following his lecture showed equal enthusiasm for the project which will put Nottingham's caves firmly on the map, in every sense of that phrase.

David informed us that there are 543 caves which are known and probably still a good number yet to be discovered. Most

of them cluster around the city centre but stretch northwards up as far as Mansfield. The rare Triassic Nottingham Castle sandstone is an excellent medium for cave creation: it is easily carved but structurally very strong, and we were informed that incidents of cave collapse are scarce.

The list of uses caves have been put to is very long - beer cellars are common, along with storage areas and various different industrial uses such as tanneries and maltings. David speculated that the ability to malt throughout the year because of the constant conditions in caves may well have given Nottingham an advantage over other places. He also reminded us that small medieval factories are rare finds but we have numbers of them here in Nottingham. Caves have been used as dungeons, dwellings, 'lounge' caves, air raid shelters, chapels,

stables and garages. Maybe the best known are Lenton Hermitage, known as the Rock Chapel of St. Mary's in 1239, and those at the Castle which are still very visible. Another interesting use we heard of was sandmines - although the sandminer, James Rouse, who created the vast labyrinth under Peel Street in the 18th century died a pauper - so not much money in sand mining! These caves later became Robin Hood's Mammoth Cave, a tourist attraction, and then put to use as a second World War air raid shelter. Those under the Guildhall are kitted out as training for the police and fire personnel. David told us that the most recent caves were created in the 1960s for use as garages in The Park and that another recent use for a local cave was as a cannabis factory!

Dr. Strange-Walker said that caves fall into three categories - passage caves which are used for access - an example of this kind is Mortimer's Hole; caves under properties, the most common kind, generally used for storage; and those cut into exposed cliff - these tend to be the earliest and it is likely that Asser in 893 was referring to this kind when he wrote of the cave dwellings in the settlement of Tigguo Cobauc; such early dwellings could be found at the Castle, Cliff Road and Sneinton.

In 18th and later centuries caves also became places for leisure and entertaining, and for carved art. Examples are the 'lounge' caves under Willoughby House built by Rothwell Willoughby, and the Columns Cave in The Park, created for Alderman Thomas Herbert.

The technique for the fast automated scanning of the caves was explained, as was the way realistic images were created.

Surveying is undertaken from inside the caves but the images show the caves from outside. So far 76 caves have been scanned. The visuals created by the scanning processes are amazing - flythrough and flyround videos which take you on a rapid tour of these wonderful places which are often under our feet as we walk through Nottingham's streets.

Funding for phase 2 is now being put into place and it is hoped that this will lead to access via smart phones and QR code use to caves for which there is no other way to view them. It is also hoped that further caves will be found by a systematic tramping of Nottingham streets and knocking on doors - volunteers wanted!

As well as bringing the Nottingham cave map up to date, recording and scanning as many as possible, David said that the project aims to produce a management document which will identify the most important caves and those most at risk, and to put forward good policies to protect as many of them as possible.

An excellent presentation and lecture from David. How wonderful it is that, at last, the caves are subject to a high-profile project and are receiving the kind of scientific investigation and evaluation that they so much deserve. As David said, this project builds on the work of others such as the British Geological Survey Register of Caves and of individuals and organisations which have worked tirelessly to excavate and record our caves. Let us hope that it all leads to a greater knowledge and appreciation by local people and authorities and to greater protection in the future.

There is to be a workshop on caves preservation and exploitation shortly - more information when we have it.



David Strange-Walker

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## Launch of the Nottinghamshire Online Bibliography

Compiled from reports by Adrian Henstock and John Wilson

The new Online version of the Bibliography of Nottinghamshire History was launched in, appropriately, the *Thoroton Room* at Bromley House Library, Angel Row, Nottingham on 18 September 2013.

In 2002 the *Thoroton Society* published the first comprehensive bibliography of 8707 books, articles and pamphlets on Nottinghamshire history prior to 1998, compiled by Michael Brook and published as volume 42 of the Society's *Record Series*.

The Society was fortunate to receive a bequest of £5,000 from the estate of a former member, Dr. Davis, and the Society's Council agreed that this money should be spent on digitising and updating the *Bibliography*.

The work on the new site has been undertaken by Andy Nicholson with assistance from Corinne Fawcett and the University of Nottingham's Department of Manuscripts and Special Collections.

The *Bibliography* now includes over 11,000 bibliographical sources for the history of the city and county of Nottingham, and also includes brief summaries of the contents of those publications with more cryptic titles. It will form an invaluable and universally available resource for all types of local historical research.

It is now available on the Society's website at [www.thorotonsociety.org.uk](http://www.thorotonsociety.org.uk)

At the launch the guests were welcomed by Victor Semmens, chairman of the directors of Bromley House, and introduced by our chairman, Professor John Beckett.

Andy Nicholson provided a demonstration of the site and answered questions.

Would members please check that any local history publications with which they are familiar are included and if omissions are found and with details of new publications, please advise Andy Nicholson at [apnicholson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:apnicholson@yahoo.co.uk).

## Welbeck Abbey Excursion

Barbara Cast reports on the excursion of 10 September 2013

A small group of members visited Welbeck Abbey on 10 September - a small group because the owners limit the number visiting at any one time - several more would have gone had it been possible. There may be a further opportunity in the future.

It had not been possible to visit Welbeck Abbey for many years because of various other uses the house has been put to. However, it was worth the wait. It is an amazing house with an amazing history.

We reached the house by coach to avoid a long walk through the heavily treed and shrubby grounds. Tantalising glimpses of gardens to each side were seen and gardeners were busily at work as if the 5th Duke was still around. It is this reclusive Duke that most people know about, but we were not able to see his tunnels which would have been very interesting.

But to return to the building itself. The former Premonstratensian abbey was surrendered to Henry VIII and by 1597 it was in the hands of Charles Cavendish, second son of Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury. Robert Smythson drew up plans to rebuild Welbeck incorporating the monastic cloisters. Charles' son William, famed for his horsemanship, inherited Welbeck and called in John Smythson to undertake his ambitious building programme. At this time some of the monastic buildings were demolished; the house was extended with a new south-west wing, a west wing and an indoor riding house and stable block. Over the years there have been many alterations to the house - Pevsner is rather uncomplimentary about the resulting appearance of the house, but he wasn't allowed to see all of it. However, inside it is a very different

story. Of the earliest fabric, the old abbey buildings, little remains, but you can still visit William's riding school of 1622, which was converted to a library and chapel in 1891, and Smythson's work can be seen in the so-called Bursar's Study. Alterations came thick and fast from the 18th century under the influence of the widowed Countess of Oxford, Henrietta Cavendish Holles, whose family home Welbeck had been.

The overall appearance of much of the interior is Victorian, work continuing throughout the 19th century, much of it changing the earlier 18th century work. Much has been written about the 5th Duke whose work was substantial and somewhat eccentric. However, after he died it was Lady Bolsover, the new Duke's stepmother, whose hand can be seen on Welbeck. Much of the work at that period was in the hands of Henry Wilson and his realisation of the chapel in what Pevsner calls a Byzantine style is a must-see: it has many well-executed details which reflect the current Arts and Crafts movement. The adjoining library has a fireplace which is very attractive Art Nouveau. Externally the 6th Duke engaged Sir Ernest George to undertake reparations following a disastrous fire and this includes a new gothic style wing.

For me, the highlight is something which Pevsner and his informants apparently did not see - the wonderful overmantel depicting St. George and the Dragon: the dragon's body and tail stretch around the little ante-room which leads on to a much more modern corridor connecting the main house to the library and chapel area.

Welbeck is well worth a visit - even a second visit!



Welbeck Abbey from a Valentine's postcard which was posted at Worksop at 6.30 p.m. on 26 June 1907 to an address in Scarborough with the words "Having a lovely time Ethel".

Collection of Howard Fisher

# The Thoroton Society Research Group

Meeting report by John Wilson

The Research Group met on Saturday, 28 September 2013 in the Boardroom of the Nottingham Mechanics.

Ted White gave an account of the Boots Company magazine *Comrades in Khaki* which was published between 1915 and 1916. Some twelve issues were published and sold at 2d per copy to raise money for the *Sick and Wounded Fund*. By 1918 the fund had raised £13,000, much of it from the 2d sales.

The magazine was a line of communication between Boots and members of their staff who were serving in the Forces. All issues included the *Boots Roll of Honour* - not a list of those killed but a list of staff members who had volunteered. The first issue had 1,000 names beginning with that of Lt. J. C. Boot, Jesse Boot's only son, who was an officer in the Sherwood Foresters.

One of the purposes of the magazine was to print letters from those serving. These included *Letters from the Lads* on the Western Front; *Epistles from the East* - mainly Gallipoli; and *Ashore and Afloat* from those in the Navy.

There were some poems, some rather terrible, such as one ending:-

*The flower of Britain's brave recruits  
Yes, these are the lads from Boots*

The care of the wounded at the Front by Boots' dispensers in the Royal Army Medical Corps was highlighted, with pictures showing Boots' staff in a dispensary.

Sadly there were many obituaries, some quite lavish, with photographs and biographies of those who had been killed.

Overall, the magazine showed the extent of the support that Boots provided, both for those members of staff serving in the forces and for their families at home.

Few copies of *Comrades in Khaki* have survived, although there is a set in the Boots archive and some in the University of Nottingham's Department of Manuscripts and Special

Collections.

John Wilson described church mass dials, also sometimes called scratch dials. These are small sundials, carved or scratched onto the south walls of medieval churches. It is thought that they might have been used by priests to determine the time of mass or other services. Some are very crude, whilst others seem to have been expertly carved. Each mass dial has a central hole for a pointer or *gnomon* which lies horizontally and casts a shadow onto the lower part of the dial. Most such dials have either a series of radial lines, or a series of holes, which could be used to show the time. Many of the mass dials are very badly eroded by weathering, and it is possible that those on some churches may have simply disappeared altogether.

Re-building work at Holy Trinity Church, Lambley, some ten years ago, resulted in the discovery of a well-preserved mass dial behind some old stonework. The Lambley dial has three radial lines. John described an ongoing study he is carrying out using a model of a mass dial, to see what clock times are indicated by the three lines on different dates throughout the year.

Some fifty three medieval churches in Nottinghamshire are known to have mass dials. However, no systematic survey of the county has been carried out. John suggested that members of the Society might be encouraged to visit churches in the county, or to report from churches that they know well, to see which have extant mass dials and which do not.

There is to be a joint Day School involving the Thoroton Society and Nottinghamshire Local History Association, on Saturday, 25 October 2014, on the subject of *The Home Front in World War 1*. The next meeting of the Research Group would involve a trial run of presentations for this Day School.

The next meeting of the Group will be held at 10.30 a.m. on Saturday, 3 May 2014 in the Boardroom of the Nottingham Mechanics.



*Mass dial at St. Swithun's Church, Woodborough*

Photo: John Wilson



*Mass dial at Holy Trinity Church, Lambley*

Photo: John Wilson

# Lenton Priory Update: A Community Geophysical Survey

By Paul Flintoft

Up until the recent excavations which were undertaken by Trent & Peak Archaeology as part of a programme of utility diversions for the NET2 project, it was widely believed that much of Lenton Priory had been almost completely demolished (McAree, D.2003). However, as reported upon in the last newsletter, direct observations from the investigative slots have now shown that structural remains of the main Priory church have survived, at least along Old Church Street and on the peripheries of Priory Street (Hobson, M and Flintoft P. 2013). These unexpectedly positive results have been excitedly received by the Lenton Local History Society, city councillors and local residents alike, who have recently participated in tours around the areas around the former priory as part of the CBA Festival of Archaeology ([www.archaeology/festival.org.uk/events/636](http://www.archaeology/festival.org.uk/events/636)).

Subsequently, Trent & Peak Archaeology were contracted by Nottingham City Council and the Lenton Local History Society, with the support of English Heritage, to undertake a geophysical survey of the churchyard, green spaces and parks on the site of Lenton Priory (Figure 1). Very little is known about the preservation of the priory and other remains in these areas, and it was hoped that the surveys would be of great use for assessing not only the potential levels of physical preservation, but also the organisation of space within the wider monastic complex. Furthermore, positive results could also be used to establish a burgeoning project of archaeological research and heritage management for the Priory, which is expected to include a partnership between academic institutions and interested members of the local community.

A total of 22, 20m x 20m grids were surveyed across five separate areas with a Geoscan FM36 gradiometer and a Geoscan RM15 resistivity instrument. The work was co-ordinated by TPA and carried-out by students from the University of Nottingham Department of Archaeology and members of the Lenton Local History Society. The five surveyed areas include the churchyard of the Chapel of St. Anthony, Priory Park, two green areas to the east and west of Old Church Street and the garden of the Boat Inn public house.

The surveys within Priory Park and the churchyard revealed a great deal of anomalies believed to represent buried features of archaeological interest (Figure 2). The resistivity survey (which detects changes in electrical conductivity in the ground) identified a series of north-west aligned linear anomalies which may form at least three enclosures.

A collection of anomalies towards the western extent of the churchyard are thought to form an enclosure ditch (Enclosure 1) with potential internal partitions (Figure 4).

A series of anomalies on the same orientation as Enclosure 1 - but to the north east - are believed to represent a second ditched enclosure (Enclosure 2). This may have been intended to surround the Chapel of St. Anthony. Both of these anomaly groups align well with the majority of medieval features identified in the recent excavations on the corner of Abbey Street and Gregory Street. It is therefore suggested that both of these enclosures are medieval in date.

A further enclosure identified towards the northern extent of the churchyard (Enclosure 3) may post-date the two medieval enclosures (Figure 4). This anomaly not only appears to truncate the earlier anomalies, its north east aligned arm also

seems to run through the site of the Chapel of St. Anthony. This feature may therefore post-date the partial demolition of the chapel.

The magnetometry survey (which detects changes in the magnetic properties of the ground) largely corroborated the results of the resistivity survey. As well as the previously discussed anomalies, anomalies extending from the southern limit of the churchyard may reflect demolished stone structures of uncertain date and function (Figure 4).

The surveyed areas to the east and west of Old Church Street and the garden of the Boat Inn revealed further anomalies. These may relate to buildings at the east end of the main Priory church, or activities associated with earlier excavation trenches (Green, H. 1936 and Bishop, M. 1977).

The results from the community-led geophysical surveys present us with a wealth of new information. Using these results, we can now help English Heritage and the City Council with their ongoing management of this important but enigmatic site. We can also begin to pose new research questions which, in future years, might be addressed by professionals and volunteers alike. Moving forward, we hope that the concerted efforts of this new partnership of local volunteers, heritage professionals, the City Council and academics will formulate a valuable programme of archaeological research and heritage management at Lenton Priory which might include further exploration and certainly interpretation of the site.

As an initial next step, there will be a presentation and public consultation in association with Lenton Local History Society where any interested parties can put forward ideas for the future involvement of the Priory. Details of this meeting will be available on the Trent & Peak Archaeology website once a date is finalised.

## Bibliography

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- McAree, D. 2003. *An Archaeological Evaluation at Priory Street, Nottingham*. Northampton: Northamptonshire Archaeology, 2003.

[Ed: the figures are reproduced on the following page. The originals are in colour]

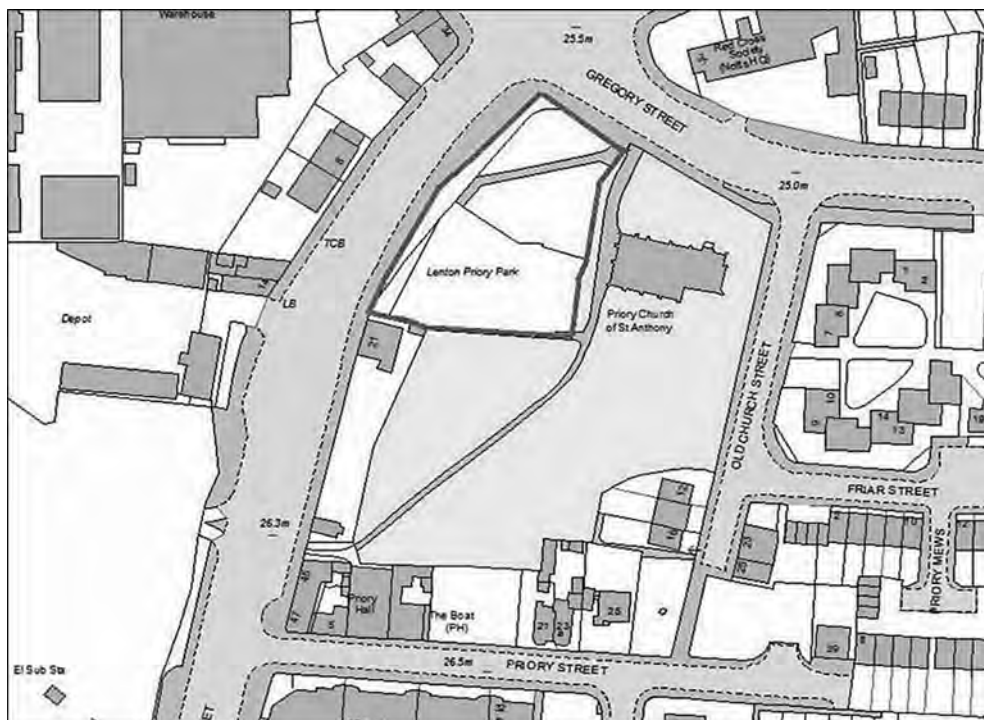


Figure 1. The five survey areas



Figure 2. Interpreted resistivity survey





Figure 3. Interpreted magnetometry survey

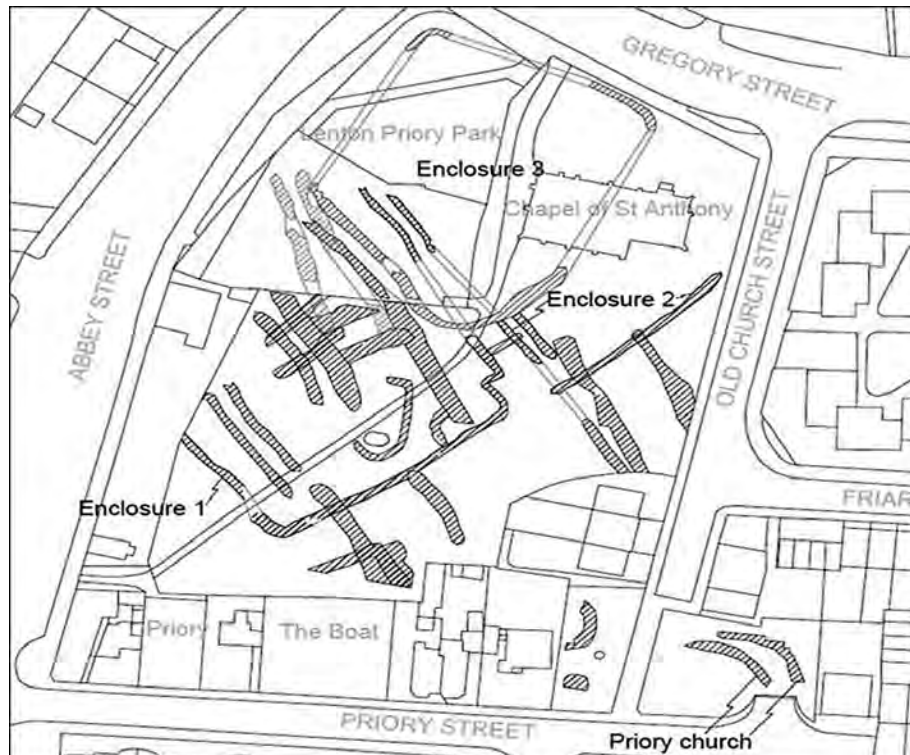


Figure 4. Composite plan of major anomalies (un-hatched lines added)

## Newstead Abbey - the Future

*A paper presented by Alexis Chema to a meeting at Newstead Abbey on 5 August 2013.*

*The meeting was a follow-up to an earlier one whose purpose was to discuss the formation of a 'Friends of Newstead Abbey' group. The meetings were co-ordinated by the World Monuments Fund.*

*ALEXIS CHEMA is an American student at Yale University who was visiting the U.K. to study and research historic environments.*

*Alexis' paper is reproduced here in full and contains some interesting observations and suggestions for the future of Newstead Abbey. At the meeting a steering committee was formed to take forward the Friends Group project and it is understood that a first meeting of the Steering Committee has been held. We look forward with anticipation for further information when available.*

For the past couple of months I've been working with the staff of the WMF and Newstead in the capacity of researcher and consultant with the aim of helping contribute to a vision for Newstead that will give a rationale to how the site is developed in order to best present its most important features.

I'm here to share with you some of my observations, assessment, and some general recommendations about how to unlock the very great potential that I believe Newstead has.

Before coming to Newstead I spent some time visiting other literary and historic houses to observe the different ways that they presented their sites, and their strategies for interpreting their materials and engaging visitors. I wanted to find out what worked and what didn't, and under what circumstances. What can Newstead learn from techniques already in place elsewhere?

And these experiences did give me lots of ideas about interpretive procedures that improve or detract from a visit. But the most important thing I took away was something bigger and more general: a conviction that a successful site is essentially aspirational: it aspires to do something important, to teach, to open up the world, it believes in its own relevance and makes it part of its mission that its visitors leave believing too.

Jeff Cowton, the curator at the Wordsworth Trust, which runs Dove Cottage and the Wordsworth Museum and collections in the Lake District, put it this way: it's no longer enough to be a place of pilgrimage, we've had to become a place of discovery.

This has become something of a mantra to me since then. Now, there are choices and decisions to be made when it comes to the future of Newstead and what it should look like, but I believe very strongly that a vision for Newstead ought to be guided by this principle: more than a pilgrimage, a discovery.

When Jeff said this to me we were talking about a decision the Trust made in the 1980s to significantly transform the site for the first time in decades from a humble historic cottage with a small museum attached with a display about Wordsworth that had been there for years, to the world-class center for studying and learning about Wordsworthian Romanticism that it is today.

Already in the 1980s the great age of literary pilgrimage was over. Now, as you all know, Newstead still stands today largely thanks to how powerful the literary pilgrimage impulse was culturally in the 19th century. But, as you all also know, precious few are the contemporary visitors who come to Newstead to see the view Byron describes in the 13th canto of *Don Juan*, or to stand in the room where he and his friends passed around the skull cup dressed in monks' robes.

This shift away from literary pilgrimage has deeply impacted Newstead's self-identity. For some time Newstead has been standing at this crossroad. For better or for worse the way things worked in the past won't work anymore—that much, at least, seems clear. But what can be done instead? So far it's a question that has yet to be answered satisfactorily. And as long as Newstead's self-identity and sense of cultural value are uncertain, so will its future be uncertain.

So, here we all are together, at the crossroad. At the crossroad you can get lost, or stand still for a long time trying to make a decision, but crossroads are uniquely energized with opportunity, as well. From my vantage point I see two paths stretched before us, each representing an alternative "way forward" for Newstead. I'll sketch them.

The first sees Newstead adapting to be "about" lots of other things besides or in addition to the association with Byron, and developing a number of these features simultaneously, evenly and without too much reference to one another. This is the path of site diversification. There are things to recommend this "way forward": Newstead does have a lot of different kinds of attractions to offer—there really is something here for everyone. Also, developing in this direction doesn't require significant conceptual changes: this is more or less how a visitor experiences the site right now.

Ultimately, though, I believe that Newstead has every reason to have far greater ambitions. In order to make the most of the opportunities Newstead presents it must establish a strong and coherent identity that the "site diversification" model simply can't supply.

To that end my recommendations are oriented toward recognizing and celebrating the association with Byron as a foundation of Newstead's identity. After all, Newstead's "literary riches" and associations are deeply important—to use the language of the 2006 conservation plan, "Newstead Abbey is considered to be of international significance because of its association with the Poet Byron, a major literary figure, an icon for the Romantic movement in Europe, America, and beyond, and a key figure in the struggle for Greek independence."

Furthermore it's worth noting that in spite of his important contributions to literature and culture, no museum and center of learning about Byron currently exists.

So, the vision for Newstead that I recommend would combine the attitude and aim of promoting exploration, discovery, inspiration, and creativity, with the subject of Byron's life, writings, and impact.

And just to be clear: using Byron to focus Newstead's identity need not be at the expense of sensitive appreciation of other significant aspects of Newstead. These aspects, in particular its architecture and architectural history and its formal and landscape gardens, can be appreciated independently and, uniquely at this site, in relation to its particular significance in literary and cultural history. Alternatively, the Byron association might serve as an entry-point into exploration of other aspects of the site that are interesting and significant in their own right.

I'd like to say a bit more about the opportunity Newstead has to become a place where people discover Byron's life and writings and their relevance in contemporary culture. What might that look like?

The discovery-based model operates successfully elsewhere. I propose that Newstead look to the Wordsworth Trust and the

Robert Burns Birthplace Museum in Ayrshire, Scotland, for examples. These 2 exceptionally-managed sites demonstrate the contemporary appeal of well-presented and interpreted “literary historic cultural centers”: since opening in 2010 the Burns Museum has averaged more than 300,000 visitors a year.

I use the somewhat cumbersome and not-quite-right term “literary historic cultural center” because both of these places are, like Newstead, more than literary houses. They both feature period houses alongside museum displays and collections, and use all of these resources to run both educational and contemporary arts programming. Each has a specific focus and strong identity which it uses diverse means of presenting.

Newstead possesses the potential to join the Wordsworth Trust and the Burns Museum as an internationally-important leader in supporting public benefit through the advancement of education and heritage, culture, and the arts.

This potential has to do with the material strengths of the site and it also has to do with the nature and concerns that we associate with Byron, and that he, then, brings to Newstead.

Byron’s writing is characterized by its heroic ambitions to reinvent the past in order to engage the emerging concerns of the present. In his day Byron saw and presented familiar aspects of the English literary and cultural tradition in fresh ways, in turn inspiring his contemporaries to read, write, and engage in political life with gusto. It would seem only fitting, then, to adapt Byron’s own attitude toward the past and tradition, things his writing has come to represent, to Newstead’s interpretation of its significance and goals.

Newstead, I would propose, should focus on telling the story of Byron as a cultural force and should be guided by this dimension of his legacy.

To this end, I would suggest that the following themes be emphasized:

Passion for exploration and adventure  
 Critique of power  
 Personal and political freedom  
 Performance of identity and self-creation

Potential of the written (and spoken) word to shape the world

These themes should guide the presentation of Byron and his works, and provide a rationale for the kinds of contemporary arts and culture programming that Newstead should support.

In doing so I would encourage that Byron’s own words be privileged, words from his letters, journals, and poems. This will provide an important means of facilitating discovery.

In addition to historic and literary house and gardens, Newstead has the potential to develop as a center for contemporary thought and creativity. Newstead could bring together writers, artists, and scholars who could share their creative and intellectual pursuits with members of the public through the establishment of a variety of short, medium, and long-term programs. Newstead could house the “Newstead Byron Center for Poetry and Political Life” (or something along those lines), supporting the following:

Creative writing: programs could include day-long creative writing classes, a poet-in-residence, creative writing retreats  
 Public lecture series  
 Poetry reading and discussion series  
 Book clubs/reading groups  
 Scholarly workshops: on both thematic topics and practical skills (paleography, working with manuscripts, conservation, bibliography and history of the book, etc.)  
 Contemporary art exhibitions and “art talks”  
 Periodic symposium/academic conference

Such a center would establish a tangible “through-line” connecting past and present and emphasizing the contemporary relevance of Byron and Newstead.

If Newstead’s need for adopting a strong vision for the future is great it is because its potential is also so great. This meeting today and the dedication and talent of all of the people here, and others who couldn’t make it, should give us, I think, good reason to be hopeful.

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## *Tornado Over Nottingham in 1785*

*By John Wilson*

A tornado caused considerable damage in the Nottingham area in 1785. Fortunately, we have a very full account of the incident<sup>1</sup>.

The 31<sup>st</sup> of October had been overcast with some thunder in the evening. The morning of 1<sup>st</sup> November was clear with a south-westerly wind, but about 11 in the morning the sky became overcast and there was heavy rain at intervals until the afternoon, when the wind dropped. At about 4pm, there was the first sighting of what Laird describes as a ‘waterspout’. He is technically incorrect here, as a waterspout only forms over an expanse of water. What was seen, from the descriptions, was undoubtedly a funnel-cloud. A funnel-cloud consists of a rapidly rotating patch of cloud which then descends in the shape of a funnel. If the funnel-cloud reaches the ground, it is usually then referred to as a tornado. A water-spout is a funnel-cloud that touches down over water.

The funnel-cloud ‘proceeded from a dense cloud, apparently about a quarter of a mile to the southward of the Trent, and moving slowly towards it’. It was observed that trees were bent right over as the funnel-cloud passed over them.

‘As the cloud came nearer to the river, it appeared to be strongly attracted by it, and when it crossed did not seem more than 30 or 40 feet from the surface of the water, which was violently agitated and flew upwards to a great height in every direction’.

Some people, standing on Trent Bridge, mistook it at first for a column of thick smoke, possibly from a fire in a warehouse by the river. At this point, the funnel-cloud was about 300 yards from the bridge. However ‘..they were soon undeceived, and now beheld with astonishment a large black inverted cone, terminating nearly in a point, and in which they perceived very plainly, a whirling spiral motion whilst a rumbling noise like thunder was heard at a distance.’ After passing the river, the

column rose 'slowly and majestically in a NE direction; and nothing coming within the limits of its electric power, until it came over Snenton[sic]'. At Sneinton, there was considerable damage. The thatch was torn from several barns and cottages, and apple trees were torn up by the roots. One tree was said to be nearly four feet in circumference but it was broken off near the ground. A barn 'nearly 30 yards long' was demolished and the adjacent house was severely damaged. 'In short, nothing could resist the impetuosity of its action; and the rain falling heavily at the time, joined to the roaring noise of the spout, produced among the spectators a scene of terror and confusion which, they acknowledged, was not easy to be described.'

A tavern on the edge of the village had part of the roof torn off by the storm. The people within 'were almost all of them seized with a painful sensation in the head, which lasted some hours'. [This may have been caused by a violent change in air pressure, such as one gets if an aeroplane descends too quickly]. A local market place was thrown into confusion, with people hurled with great violence against the hedge. A 14 year old boy was carried over the hedge into the adjacent field, fortunately without injury. There was much lightning seen around the tornado and as it passed over the hill opposite the tavern, 'it was observed to contract and expand alternately, as if it had been attracted, and repelled, by some extraneous force. The phenomenon continued for some twenty minutes'.

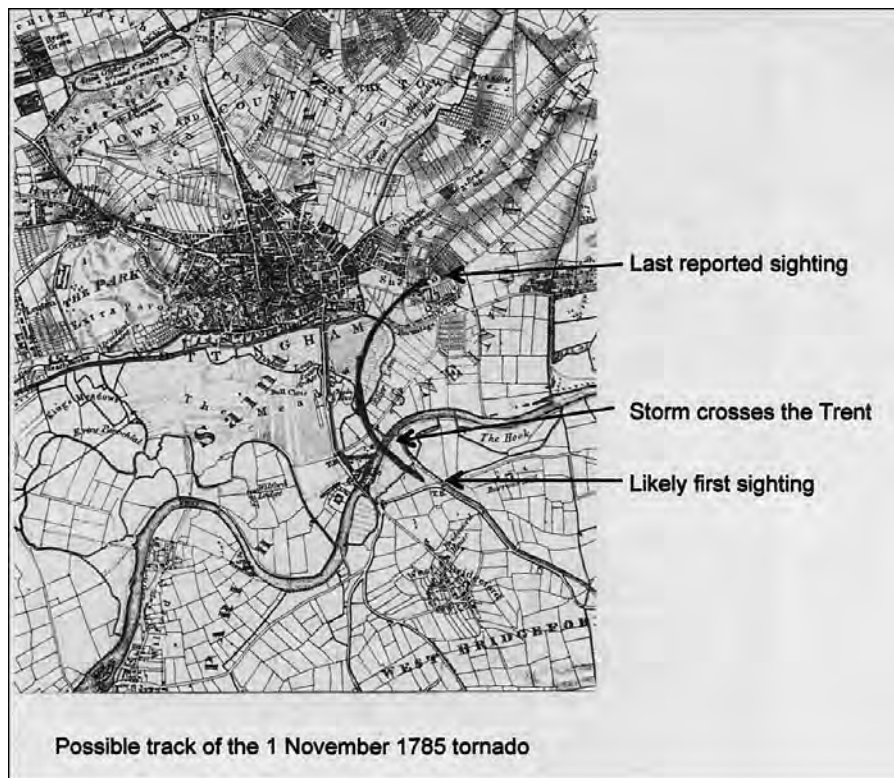
I have attempted a simple analysis of the track of the tornado, for such it proved to be. It is difficult to be sure of the location of the storm at its first sighting. A witness said 'quarter mile south of the Trent'. Using Sanderson's map of 1835<sup>2</sup> I have located the first sighting somewhere near the north of the then village of West Bridgford. The tornado then crossed the river about 300 yards from Trent Bridge. I suggest that this point

is downstream of the bridge, which is where warehouses may have been situated at that time. The storm then swung to the northeast and over the small village of Sneinton where most of the damage seems to have occurred. It was last reported passing over the hill behind the tavern (probably the hill on which Green's Mill now stands). The measured track on the map is some 1.3 miles. Of course, the tornado may have travelled much farther, but there are no further eye-witnesses, as the land beyond Sneinton may have had few inhabitants. It may also not have been seen from the land near West Bridgford, before the first sighting, again because of the low population of the area. With the phenomenon being visible for some 20 minutes, this puts the movement of the tornado and its associated clouds at around 4mph, a brisk walking pace, which would be consistent with the account of the wind dropping (it is rare for there to be a dead calm). Although tornados are not unknown in the English Midlands, this is most unusual weather for November!

I am unaware of any similar incident in the Nottingham area causing so much structural damage, although fortunately no-one was seriously hurt and there were no fatalities.

I thank Nottinghamshire County Council for permitting the use of the map, and Bromley House Library for permission to quote from Mr Laird's book.

- 1 Francis Charles Laird *A topographical and historical description of the county of Nottingham* c.1813. Local History Collection, Bromley House Library. Accession number Cc1290
- 2 Sanderson's map 'Twenty Miles round Mansfield' 1835. Facsimile edition Notts County Council 2005



## *Setting up of a Newstead Abbey Friends' Group Press Release*

Newstead Abbey is an important location in Nottinghamshire and needs the support of a group which will take an interest in this historic monument with its close connections with the poet Lord Byron.

In March 2013, the World Monuments Fund held a seminar at Newstead abbey to promote the idea of a *Friends of Newstead Group*. Over sixty people, representing a number of different bodies, attended, and heard talks on several historic buildings in which Friends' Groups had been instrumental in promoting the buildings as successful venues.

A further meeting was held in early August at which twenty-eight people met, along with representatives of Nottingham City Council and the World Monuments Fund. Alexis Chema, a Yale Scholar working with the World Monuments Fund, gave her impressions of Newstead, and together with an appraisal of other existing literary houses in the UK gave recommendations

for the improvement of Newstead and exploiting the Byron connection.

As a result of this meeting, a small steering group was set up, charged with taking forward the concept of a Friends' Group for Newstead. The group is presently examining the most appropriate organisational arrangements for such a group, including establishing a draft constitution and arranging for a bank account to be set up.

Once these initial discussions have been completed, it is intended that there will be a more formal open meeting at which these are agreed. The Steering Group is also planning a Vision Day for early spring and more details about date, time and programme will be made available as soon as possible.

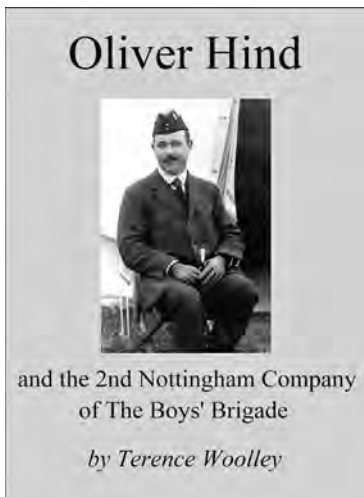
In the meantime, if you are interested in becoming involved in the Friends' group please do not hesitate to contact the Secretary, John Wilson on 0115-926-6175 or by email at [wilsonicus@btinternet.com](mailto:wilsonicus@btinternet.com).

## *Book Reviews*

### OLIVER HIND AND THE 2ND NOTTINGHAM COMPANY OF THE BOYS BRIGADE

Terrence Woolley; 2013; ISBN 978 0 9576599 0 2

This timely book by Terence Woolley on one of Nottingham's prominent 19th century philanthropists and the organisation he promoted and supported is a welcome account. Timely, because 2013 marks the 125th anniversary of one of the most significant organisations of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Boys Brigade, with which Hind was closely involved.



The BB, preceding by some years the Scouts, brought much valuable

and valued teaching, structure and opportunities to generations of boys and young men.

The book commences with sections on the dire situation for children of the poor during the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries and outlines some of the individuals and projects which aimed to better their lot. We learn about the beginnings of the BB in Glasgow in 1883 and its founder, William Alexander Smith. In 1888 the BB came to Nottingham with the formation of the 1st Nottingham Company.

Oliver Hind, a leading Nottingham solicitor, was one of those who had grave concerns about the young lads he saw in the city and he determined to try to do something to improve their lives.

In 1907 he established the Dakeyne Street Lads' Club, renamed later to the Oliver Hind Boys' Club. In his club Hind combined the ethos of the Boys' Brigade with wide educational facilities, and established a centre of recreation and learning that enriched the lives of thousands of working class boys from the Sneinton area of the city over many decades. Eventually Dako, as it was popularly known, became the 2nd Nottingham Company of the Boys' Brigade.

This book tells the story of Oliver Hind's life and the unique boys' club he founded and its association with the great Boys Brigade movement.

BC

**WORKSOP THROUGH TIME** Sally Outram  
Amberley Publishing; 2013. ISBN 978 1 4456 1620 9  
£14.99

This book of 96 pages is another of the 'then and now' style with older images contrasted with current scenes. The author, Sally Outram, is a Nottinghamshire born freelance photographer working for the *Retford Times* with a passion for writing and photography.

Worksop is widely known as 'The Gateway to the Dukeries' and the town pre-dates the Norman Conquest. There is a rich and varied history in the town and, of course, it is adjacent to the ducal estates of Welbeck, Clumber and Rufford, all part of the ancient Sherwood Forest.

The images in this book provide a fascinating story of the changes which have occurred over time; some show greater changes than others and, of course, the earlier pictures are in monochrome (mostly sepia toned) whilst the later ones are in colour. Each set of images (set rather than pairs because some

have small detail images inset) has an explanation and potted history of what is depicted. I like the fact that quite a few of the early pictures depict people, as in the Worksop Town football team (page 84), the Kilton Forest Golf Club (page 83), the Old Fire Stations (pages 65 and 68) and Kilton Hospital (page 60). However, a serious criticism of the captions is that the earlier images are rarely dated - an unfortunate omission

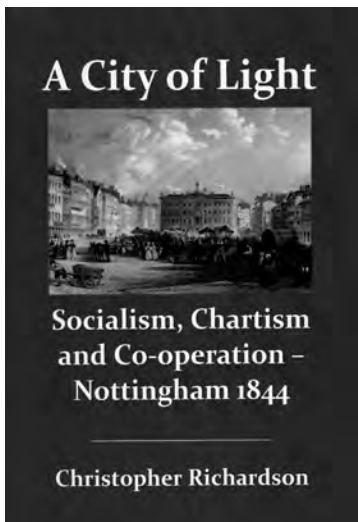
which sadly devalues the whole point of the book.

This book will, however, appeal to residents of Worksop and its surrounding district but will also have an interest for others from further afield. Useful for comparison with other towns of the county, the book will be of interest to all local historians, subject to the caveat of the undated photographs.

The book is obviously aimed at a general public rather than serious local historians but I can see no reason why both users could not be catered for by dating the interesting images contained within it.

HF

**A CITY OF LIGHT: Socialism, Chartism and Co-operative - Nottingham 1844** Christopher Richardson  
Loaf on a Stick Press; ISBN 978-0-9569139-4-4 £7.99



This is an A5 perfect bound book with soft covers, 243 pages and a few illustrations which is very reasonably priced and printed on paper from responsible sources.

I found the font used to be not very easy on the eye, possibly a point or two too large and because the margins are rather narrow it was not easy to read because the print curves away into the binding. In other words I found the presentation to be less than

pleasing.

The book is very well researched, is excellently referenced with an extensive bibliography and index. Another excellent element is a map showing the positions of various places in Nottingham which are mentioned in the text although I would have preferred the map to be at the front of the book rather than placed at the back as appendix 5. There are 24 illustrations which are quite small and I feel could have been reproduced at a larger size for better effect.

These are, however, minor criticisms although a well printed and laid out book does add to the pleasure of reading it.

This book examines many original sources to illuminate and inform on the political situation in Nottingham in 1844 which was the time of the decline of Owenism and the turning to the land plan of the Chartist movement. It was a period of opposition to compulsory church rates and the New Poor Law. A period of the seeking of freedom of association, for a Worker's Hall, libraries, Chartist Co-operation and the Chartist Co-operative Land Society. Christopher Richardson deals with all these aspects of the time in excellent detail. He sets the situation in Nottingham into the national and regional context which greatly aids the understanding of the local movements and agitations. The book considers the influence of the Salford socialists on those in Nottingham, emigration in 1842 to establish communities in the USA (Illinois in particular), the treatment of Susannah Wright upon her return to Nottingham from Newgate prison, the Democratic Chapel (whose location is discussed without being definitely placed although suggests that it was previously known as Salem Chapel which had been a Primitive Baptist and Methodist chapel; there is a nice illustration of the building on Barker Gate on page 123) and the Operatives' Hall Society.

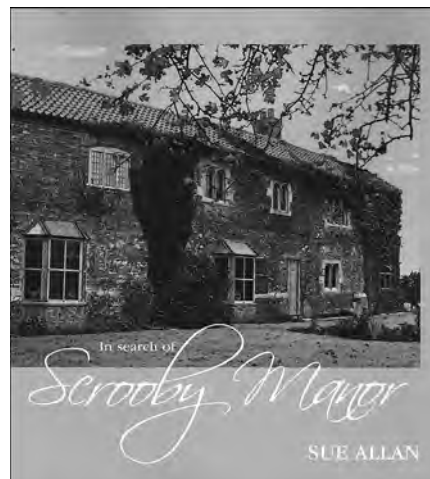
Emma Martin's expulsion from the Assembly Rooms is dealt with as is the Blidworth birthplace of Co-operation in England and the influence on Co-operation in Nottingham of the Newcastle Chartists.

The book adds significantly to our knowledge of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Nottingham and deserves a place on the book shelf of any Local Historian with an interest in the town and, indeed, for anyone with an interest in the history of the labour movements of the UK, of Chartism, Owen socialism, Co-operation and Feminism. It is highly recommended.

HF

**IN SEARCH OF SCROOBY MANOR:** Sue Allan: 2013;  
Domtom Publishing Ltd.  
ISBN 978-1-906070-20-5

In search of Scrooby Manor is a beautifully illustrated 25 x 21cm soft backed publication of 108 pages that tells the story of an historic building. By her own admission, author Sue Allan might not be a trained historian, but together with the current owner of Scrooby Manor, she sets out to discover as much as possible about the building and its past, lending the book the enjoyable air of finding out, with the author, more about this historic building. The fact that she works as a guide to the Mayflower Pilgrim Trail gives her real authority and puts



the research into historical context.

Where the book succeeds as both a guide for the casual visitor and anyone more interested in Scrooby Manor is in its generous use of illustrations, plans and quotes from the period and from other historians. As she continues to delve into the history, they help her text come alive and give you a genuine feeling for a building

that witnessed some of the pivotal events in history.

Allan uses a variety of historical sources, including the

extensive research carried out by Dr. Henry Martyn Dexter of Massachusetts. Dexter investigated the site and its connection with the Pilgrim Fathers between 1851 and 1887. His son, Morton Dexter, published the research in 1906. Such is Allan's understanding of the site that she is able to take issue with both Dexters and her questioning of their research helps throw more light on our understanding of the history of the building.

The most important aspect of the book is an inventory of Scrooby Manor 1536 and taken after Henry VIII's separation from Rome. This helps give an impression of what Scrooby Manor may have looked like, and Allan's excitement at seeing the inventory for the first time is almost palpable. Pictures of Gainsborough Old Hall, a similar property, are used to illustrate this section, and it creates a possible impression of the Manor during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Some genuinely interesting historical aspects are discovered by Allan's research. In 2013 a section of oak roof beam from the existing Manor farmhouse was sent for dendrochronological dating, indicating that the tree it was cut from was calculated as

growing in 1470. This proved invaluable in at least providing an indication of a date for part of Scrooby Manor.

Other chapters look at wider aspects of Scrooby's history, from the key figures that visited it to its role in the nascent postal system, but it is here that Allan's grasp on the narrative starts to falter. Her focus frequently shifts, and the reader is catapulted backwards and forwards in time, almost at random. The author's enthusiasm for the subject is hugely beguiling and one of her book's strongest aspects, but allowed free reign, it asks too much of the reader and it is too easy to set the book aside wondering which point of the research you were in.

*In Search of Scrooby Manor*, for all that its narrative needs a touch less enthusiasm and slightly more cohesion, is a hugely welcome addition to our understanding of both place and period. Vital for anyone who plans to walk the Pilgrim Mayflower Trail, it should also be read by anyone with an interest in the period. As the author says in one memorably worked line, 'The closest image to the truth will be the picture conjured up in the mind by each individual visitor'.

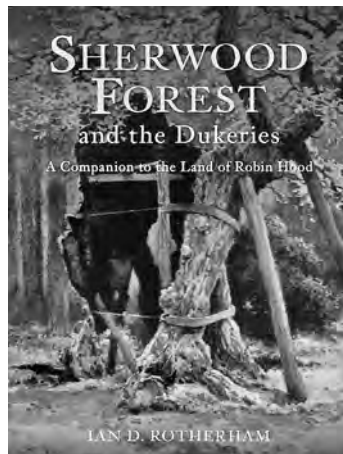
### SHERWOOD FOREST AND THE DUKERIES: A COMPANION TO THE LAND OF ROBIN HOOD:

Ian D. Rotherham; Amberley Press. ISBN 978-1-1474-8

Internationally famous, if only by name and myth, Sherwood Forest is one of the county's iconic areas. But it has often been a disappointment to visitors as the modern version of a forest is, for them, densely wooded. However, Sherwood Forest, a Royal Forest, was, as we know, never densely wooded. As the author of this new publication points out, the countryside and landscape of this area is influenced by the underlying geology, creating many varied and diverse environments but ideal for royal hunting purposes. As we learn from this most useful and interesting book, *Sherwood Forest was an extensive and expansive heathland, with wide open vistas and large numbers of giant oaks, open-grown trees widely spaced apart.* The poor soil protected it over the generations from being turned to cultivation.

The book gives us an excellent introduction to forest laws, rights and courts and their purposes right up to the 20th century. The concept of 'forest' Professor Rotherham tells us, was brought to England by the Normans and was a continental legal system for the management of land, designed to protect hunting interests and resources of large tracts of land - ideal for the hunting mad Norman kings and nobles! It was the punitive Forest Laws that are often remembered:

the Normans introduced these and they made life difficult for Anglo-Saxons who were used to exploiting the resources of the surrounding land, treed and untreed, without too much hindrance from their Anglo-Saxon overlords. The author does point out that, though punishments could be cruel and unjust, cash-strapped kings (as they often were) were more interested in getting income from fines than inflicting pain.



The book gives good coverage of the ducal estates which followed the break-up of the Royal Forest. Chapter three contains descriptions of the key houses and places of Sherwood and the Dukeries and includes some most interesting illustrations, mainly old photos. Chapters four and five act as a gazetteer of the remarkable trees, many now lost, and of the Ducal buildings, again well illustrated by pictures of them in their heydays. The author also covers rural life and the impact of industrialisation on the area, especially of deep-coal mining.

For over two centuries the forest has been a major visitor attraction, with the ancient oaks much admired and now noted for their conservation importance. It is famous for the story of Robin Hood which has inspired story-tellers and film makers alike and this book gives a realistic, but still romantic, view of this wonderful area.

For us today, this book gives a round-up of places to visit - it is an excellent, readable history and guide book in one.

BC

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## Framework Knitters Museum, Ruddington

The Museum holds its Christmas Event on Saturday, 14 December 2013 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The attractions will include:-

- Roasted Chestnuts
- Carol singers
- Morris dancers (weather permitting)
- Tombola

Refreshments

and for the children, Santa Claus

The event is free apart from Santa where there is a charge to see him and pre-booking for Santa is essential.

Details are available on the Museum's website or by phone on 0115-984-6914

## Robert Dodsley: a Mansfield Lad Made Good

Robert Dodsley was born at Mansfield on 13 February 1704. His father was Master of the Free School in Mansfield.

Robert was apprenticed to a Stocking Weaver in the town but ran away from his Master and gained work as a footman in London. During this time he published a poem *Servitude: a poem written by a Footman* (1729) which had a preface and postscript attributed to Daniel Defoe and in 1732 a collection of short poems entitled *The Muse in Livery: or, the Footman's Miscellany* which was published by subscription.

He became friends with people like Alexander Pope, who loaned him £100, and was able to establish himself as a publisher at the Tully's Head in Pall Mall in 1735. He became one of the leading publishers of the period. One of his very early publications was Samuel Johnson's *London* (1738), for which he paid ten guineas and he went on to publish many of Johnson's works and suggested and backed Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language*. His patrons were comprised of many high ranking people.

Alexander Pope made over to Robert his interest in his letters but in 1738 Robert experienced a short imprisonment after publishing Paul Whitehead's *Manners*, which the House of Lords voted as scandalous. In 1751 he published Gray's *Elegy*.

There was a satirical farce, *The Toy Shop*, in 1735 in which the toymaker has moral comments on his wares, possibly influenced by Thomas Randolph's *Conceited Pedlar*.

Robert Dodsley founded several literary periodicals; *The Museum* (1746 – 1767), with three volumes; *The Preceptor*

(1748, two volumes) which contained a general course of education with an introduction by Dr. Johnson; *The World* (1753-1756 in four volumes) and *The Annual Register* in 1758 with Edmund Burke as editor. Contributors to these works included Horace Walpole, Akenside, Soame Jenyns, Lord Lyttleton, Lord Chesterfield and Edmund Burke.

Robert was probably best known as editor of two collections, *A Select Collection of Old Plays* (1744 in twelve volumes) and *A Collection of Poems by Several Hands* (1748 in three volumes). In 1745 he published a collection of his dramatic works together with some poems which had been separately issued, in one volume entitled *Trifles*, then came *The Triumph of Peace, a Masque occasioned by the Treaty of Aix-en-Chapelle* (1749), a long poem in blank verse, *Public Virtue* (1753), *The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green* which was performed at Drury Lane in 1739 and issued in printed form in 1741, an

ode *Melpomme* in 1751. The tragedy *Cleone*, had a long run at Drury Lane starting in 1758 with 2,000 copies being sold on the day the text was published with four editions being required within the year.

In 1759 he was able to retire and left the running of the business to his brother James who had worked with him for many years. During retirement he wrote *The Select Fables of Aesop translated by R.D.* (1764) and the *Works of William Shenstone* (three volumes 1764 -1769).

Robert Dodsley died on 23 September 1764 whilst visiting his friend Reverend Joseph Spence in Durham.



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## Excursion to Rufford, 1898

This photograph, supplied by David Hoskins, is a print from a Thoroton outing to Rufford Abbey in 1898.

The figure on the extreme left (in the hat) is Cornelius Brown, historian of Newark; next to him is Colonel Mellish of Hodsock, and the fourth figure from the left (above the bicycle wheel) is Robert Mellors; the noted Nottingham antiquarian.

The bearded figure near the centre is W.P.W. Phillimore, and

on his left (wearing a clerical collar) is the Rev. John Standish. The young man with a coat on his arm in the centre of the picture is T. M. Blagg.

The man on the back row with a black moustache is the Rev. R. Jowett Burton. Other figures are identified in *Transactions* L (1946), 21.





## WW1 Commemorations 2014 - BBC Appeal

BBC Radio Nottingham producers, Sarah Julian and Celia Kellett have made an appeal for help.

'We have been asked to look at stories linking people and places in Nottinghamshire in the the First World War, as part of a huge National project by the BBC to map its influence and affect around the country. The stories will eventually be broadcast on BBC Radio and online and we are working closely with BBC East Midlands Television.

We are looking to reflect a whole range of stories, from heroes like Captain Ball VC to looking at letters and the Nottingham Tannery to the explosion at Chilwell.

We are keen to use the expertise of local historians to tell some of these stories, which is why we are very keen to get in touch with people who are already involved in researching local stories.

At this point we are exploring a whole range of ideas but we particularly need help with these stories:-

The escape from the POW camp at Sutton Bonnington  
Food and its importance in the expansion of land given over to allotments in the City.  
The Tannery, anyone who has been researching its history

Players cigarettes and how the factory supplied cigarettes to the troops  
More about Boots and its war time contribution  
Day nurseries  
Hosiery and the collapse of the Lace industry after the war  
The Duke of Portland and his role

We would also value any other ideas or contacts which would be useful to us. Our contact details are:-

Celia Kellett  
celia.kellett@bbc.co.uk  
BBC Radio Nottingham  
0115 902 1896  
07707 354467

Sarah Julian  
sarah.julian@bbc.co.uk  
BBC Radio Nottingham  
0115 902 1896  
07505 843294

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## *Cuckney Church: possibility of site of a king's death*

*As reported on the BBC Nottinghamshire web site in October 2013*

A full excavation of a Nottinghamshire church's grounds could prove where an Anglo-Saxon king was killed in battle, a team of historians has said.

The Battle of Hatfield Investigation Society believes St. Edwin died at Cuckney, near Mansfield in AD 632 and not in Yorkshire as has been claimed.

Their theory is based on 200 skeletons found beneath St. Mary's church at Cuckney in 1951.

Society chairman Joseph Waterfall said a dig could "re-write English history".

History books have previously stated Edwin, the first Christian king of Northumbria, was killed on a battlefield north east of Doncaster in Yorkshire.

Mr. Waterfall said while English Heritage believed the skeletons found in a mass grave at the church were from a medieval massacre, the Society believe they belonged to King Edwin's

army from the Battle of Hatfield.

"From 1951 to the present day, there has been no excavation at the church, he said. It has just been left for 62 years and we just don't know for definite which of the sites was the location of the battle. King Edwin was the first Christian King of Northumbria and no-one knows for definite where he was slain. We need to know this. Certainly for Nottinghamshire, this will re-write English history. It should be corrected."

He said an application was being submitted to the Parochial Church Council for permission to excavate at the church. Mr. Waterfall is certain a study of the bones can provide evidence that Cuckney was where King Edwin died and where his son was buried.

The Society is to work with Mercian Archaeology on the project and is currently in the process of sourcing up to £60,000 in funding.

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## *Reminder*

**AS FROM THE JANUARY 2014 LECTURE ALL LECTURES AT THE NOTTINGHAM MECHANICS WILL COMMENCE AT 2.30 P.M.**

**The book stall will be available from 2 p.m.**

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## Winter Lecture Programme

Lectures at the Nottingham Mechanics now start at 2.30 p.m. and the book stall opens at 2 p.m.

Saturday 11 January 2014

*Norah Witham Lecture:*

### **New Thoughts on the Construction of the Great Pilgrimage Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela**

Jenny Alexander  
University of Warwick



*The Cathedral Nave at Santiago de Compostela*

Santiago de Compostela was the destination of the pilgrimage routes from medieval England, France, Italy and Spain, and since the revival of the camino in the 19th century is once again thronged with pilgrims. The cathedral itself was built in the Romanesque period, begun at the end of the 11th century and subsequently altered to suit the needs of the pilgrims and clergy. The sequence of its construction has been much debated since the early 20th century, and it was soon noted that the building has a bewildering number of masons' marks on its stone surfaces. The marks were put there by the stonecutters who shaped the blocks of granite from which it is built and provided the means of identifying output and authorship.

The development of computers means that it is now possible to use the masons' marks as part of the analysis of the building fabric and by recording and studying them new discoveries about the building can be made. As part of a larger project funded by the regional government of Galicia my team and I have carried out a rigorous survey of the marks and can now reveal a great deal more about the ways in which the medieval masons achieved this tremendous undertaking. The lecture will look at the building as a whole, including its fabulous carved Portico de al Gloria, as well as demonstrate how we got our results and what they reveal.

Saturday 8 February 2014

*Maurice Barley Lecture:*

### **Port wine, Patronage and a Provincial Architect The early work of Watson Fothergill**

Darren Turner Architect and Author

Watson Fothergill\* is the most famous architect from Victorian Nottingham, lauded today for a series of magnificent commercial buildings and fine houses in and around the centre of the city. His legacy is embedded in the public consciousness through such signature buildings as the former Jessop's store on King Street, Queen's Chambers at the corner of Queen Street and Long Row, the former head office of the Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Banking Company on Thurland Street and his own fabulous office building on George Street. The Black Boy Hotel, a job that spanned most of Fothergill's career, is commonly held as his lost masterpiece.

Besides these popularly known buildings there exists a wider portfolio, often overlooked, showcasing the skills and variety of this provincial architect. This is the story of Fothergill's early career and his works outside of Nottingham. It looks at the origins of his client base, his quest to become established, his activities as a surveyor and collector of rents, his role as a proto-building inspector and his successes (or lack of) in a series of architectural competitions. Revealed, for the first time, is a tale of family connections, patronage, allegations of fraud and negligence, a fortune amassed and the ruthless side-lining of an architectural mentor.

\*Or, depending on date and personal preference, Fothergill Watson.



Moss Hall, Westgate, Mansfield

Saturday 8 March 2014

*Myles Thoroton Hildyard Lecture:*

**The Southwell Union Workhouse:  
It's role in central Nottinghamshire and on the lives of individuals connected with it.**

Derek Wileman, Local Historian

Rachel Harrison, National Trust

The guardians of the Southwell Poor Law Union managed a workhouse and staff to provide social benefits both inside and outside the building. It employed people to work with the poor; medical staff for local health services, tradesmen to provide goods and services - which helped the local economy; and soon added the administration of the registration service, supervised the censuses, planned water supplies and drains, and by 1894 was also the Southwell Rural District Council.

The talk will look at the structure of the workhouse, its design, and the purposes for which it was used. The role of the Guardians will be discussed in all the matters given above. Did democracy really have a place in the organisation? There will be in depth studies of one of the inmates and a Master and Matron.

The final section will look ahead to how some of the later buildings might be developed as a national and international centre for the study of all workhouses and as a centre for wider issues of social conscience.



*Southwell Union Workhouse*

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## *The Harley Gallery*

QUENTIN BLAKE: As Large As Life

13 November 2013 to 12 January 2014

Sir Quentin Blake has been commissioned by hospitals and health centres, in the UK and abroad, to produce works which have a therapeutic effect on their residents.

This exhibition brings over 50 prints from the much loved artist to the Harley Gallery, for visitors to experience these restorative effects for themselves.

WANDERLUST

Tapestries by Jilly Edwards

22 January to 23 March 2014

Jilly Edwards is one of the UK's leading tapestry weavers. Over the course of her 40 year career, she has exhibited internationally and has tapestries in collections in the UK, USA and Japan.

These tapestries tell stories about Jilly's journeys through different landscapes. This exhibition will include new works which, unusually for Jilly's work, feature a vivid yellow colour palette. Jilly distils the designs for her tapestries from vast quantities of notes and sketches before weaving the finished work. A tapestry 10 x 12 feet in size can take over a year to complete.

## Articles in Print

A new feature included to help member's locate articles of interest.  
The editor will be pleased to receive notification from other sources for inclusion in future issues.

### **The Nottinghamshire Historian** - issue 91, Autumn/Winter 2003

Bell Founders & School Founder: The Mellers family in early Tudor Nottingham - Adrian Henstock  
The Loverseed Family of Excavators - David Dunford  
Thomas Lowe of Nottingham, Arkwright's Millwright - J. C. Lowe  
Curate Fathers Bastard then Does a Runner - Keith Hodgkinson

### **Nottingham Civic Society Newsletter** - issue 152, September 2013

Howitt's Housing - Ken Brand  
Nottingham Queen of the Midlands - Quo Vadis? - Ken Brand  
The Rise and Fall of Clifton St. Francis, Nottingham - Terry Fry  
Medicine to the Mind A Quintet of Libraries (Part 1) - Stephen Best  
Nottingham Expo 1914 - Ken Brand  
The Nottinghamshire Fire Fighters' Memorial - Kevin Powell  
NCT - Nottingham City Transport - Ken Brand  
Civic Society Commendations June 2013: Nottingham Outlaws BMX Club; The Lodge on the Forest  
Nottingham's First Civic society - Geoffrey Oldfield  
Henry Moses Wood (part ii) - Ken Brand

### **The Local Historian** - Volume 43, No. 3, August 2013

Lonely Day Without News: the confiscation of wireless sets in the German-occupied Channel Islands 1940-1945 - Graham Smyth  
The House Building Cycle: a neglected aspect of local history - Kenneth C. Jackson  
Rebuilding St. Mary's Church, Cheadle: gentry patronage in East Cheshire - Charles Saccani  
Long-playing Record Societies, but how long? - John Chandle  
The British Record Society 1960-2010: a personal view - Peter Spufford

### **Local History News** - Number 108, Summer 2013

Schools in the First World War - Tim Lomas  
Women and Wartime Charitable Work - Simon Fowler  
Leeds Legacy of War Project  
History for Arts Sake - Steven Hobbs  
Signatures from the past - Jan Shephard (*browsing church visitor's books*)

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## Nottinghamshire Archives - programme of events

### INTRODUCING ARCHIVES

15 January 2014	3 p.m.	Mansfield Library	01623-651337	Free
10 February 2014	3 p.m.	Southwell Library	01636-812148	Free
6 March 2014	2.30 p.m.	Arnold Library	0115-920-2247	Free

### LUNCHTIME TALK

29 November 2013 1 p.m. Nottinghamshire Archives - Changing Landscapes of Nottingham - Chris Weir £4 booking essential

### ASK AN ARCHIVIST

9 December 2013	1.30 to 3.30 p.m.	Bircoates Library	20 January 2014	2 to 4 p.m.	Balderton Library
20 February 2014	2 to 4 p.m.	Stapleford Library	12 March 2014	10 a.m. to 12 p.m.	East Leake Library

All free and no booking required.

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## Nottingham Libraries - events

3 December 2013	Angel Row Forum	10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.	Nottingham Central Library	
5 and 12 December 2013	All of a Twitter	10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.	Bilborough Library	Free
15 January 2014	House and Place History Workshop	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Nottingham Central Library	£15.00
11 February 2014	Library Quest: Theatre	10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.	Nottingham Central Library	Free
18 February 2014	Spring into the Library: Half Term Fun	Time TBC	Aspley Library	Free
21 February 2014	Spring into the Library: Half Term Fun	Time TBC	Southglade Park Library	Free
11 March 2014	Library Quest: Maps	10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.	Nottingham Central Library	Free

For more information contact the individual library or the Ground Floor helpdesk at Nottingham Central Library, Angel Row, Nottingham 0115-915-2825

Places can also be booked at the Gound Floor helpdesk as above.

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## *The Social World of Nottingham's Green Spaces: Invitation to two conferences in January 2014*

During 2013, a team from the Department of History at the University of Nottingham led by Professor John Beckett and members of community groups, including the Friends of Nottingham Arboretum, Friends of the Forest, Nottingham Women's History Group and the Very Local History Group, have been investigating the 'green spaces' created by the 1845 Enclosure Act. In January 2014 we are holding two events to celebrate the collaboration and share what we have discovered.

### **10 January 2014: Highfield House, University Park, University of Nottingham**

#### **The Cultural History of Urban Green Spaces in Britain and Ireland during the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.**

In addition to presentations on the work of the project, the programme will include a programme of talks:

- Mark Johnston MBE (Myerscough College): *A Cultural History of British Urban Street Trees*
- Jan Woudtstra (University of Sheffield) *Weston Park: a critical assessment of the HLF-funded restoration of Sheffield's first municipal park*
- Katy Layton-Jones, (University of Leicester) *Parks and Childhood*
- Robert Lee (University of Liverpool) *Crime and Policing in Public Parks*
- Carole O'Reilly, (Salford University) *'Where Open Immorality Takes Place': Subverting the Moral Authority of the British Public Park 1880 - 1940*

### **18 January 2014: Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham**

#### **The Social World of Nottingham's Green Spaces**

The focus of this meeting is the work of community groups from across Nottingham on its green spaces. It will feature poster displays and video presentations, as well as some informal talks, and is an opportunity to share information about the green spaces as well as hear about the work of the last year.

Both events are free and a light lunch will be provided, but for catering reasons you will need to register to ensure there is a place for you. **Deadline for Registration is no later than 15 December 2013.**

If you would like to come to either or both of these, please email Judith Mills at [judith.mills@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:judith.mills@nottingham.ac.uk), or complete the registration form on the flyer mailed to you with the Newsletter. Joining instructions and more details of the programme will be sent out nearer the dates.

## *Creswell Crags - new exhibition*

### *The Secrets of the Baltic 'Gem'*

Visitors at Creswell Crags have the exciting opportunity of exploring one of the items from the main gallery in more detail: a small amber pebble. The new, temporary exhibition, 'A Baltic 'Gem' has opened its doors and will be on show until March 2014. Admission is free.

Creswell Crags is hosting a brand new, temporary exhibition which explores one of the most unassuming Ice Age artefacts found at the site. Although at first glance, the rough amber pebble seems to be nothing special – the mysteries that it holds are quite fascinating.

The small, amber pebble is a unique find to the Crags and is thought to have been brought to this location during the Ice Age. The 'gem' was found by Victorian archaeologists in the largest cave at Creswell Crags, Robin Hood Cave.



"We have enjoyed the opportunity of bringing the amber pebble out of the permanent exhibition and exploring its significance in more detail", explains Hannah Boddy, Exhibitions Officer at the Crags. "Why it was brought here by visiting Ice Age tribes is uncertain, and it just makes the 'gem' all the more intriguing."

The exhibition explores possible uses of the amber including medicinal and decorative purposes and was funded by a grant from Museum Development East Midlands.

Visitors have until March 2014 not to miss this intriguing, free exhibition.

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## *Anniversaries and the Society* by Barbara Cast

The team which draws up the programme of lectures, excursions and other events uses a register of events relating to Nottinghamshire to guide its planning.

Each year major centenaries or 50th anniversaries are, wherever possible, marked by lectures, articles in the *Newsletter* visits or speakers at our annual luncheon.

Sometimes we do have to miss some of the anniversaries so I thought I would let you know how our dates register has been used (or not) in 2013.

- A lecture was given to mark the foundation of Nottingham High School in 1513
- George Africanus was born in Sierra Leone in 1763, 250 years ago - a freed slave who is buried in St. Mary's churchyard, Nottingham

- In 1813, T.C. Hine, the notable Nottingham architect was born. There is to be a lecture in next year's programme
- Our Society's promoting founder, Hon. Secretary and Vice-President, William Phillimore Watts Phillimore, died in 1913. He was an editor and publisher, known especially for publishing parish records. Noel Osborne, who has brought the Phillimore name back into the publishing world, spoke about him at our annual luncheon.
- In 1913 Nottingham saw action by suffragettes
- The old playhouse on Goldsmith Street closed in July 1963 and the new one on Wellington Circus opened the same December.

If you have any dates you think might have been overlooked for forthcoming years, do let me know.

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## *The Annual Thoroton Luncheon 2013*

by Barbara Cast

The Carriage Court at Kelham Hall was our venue for lunch on 2nd November and we were very pleased to be back in familiar surroundings, although it is a long time since we were there.

After a welcome from our Chair, Professor John Beckett, in which he was able to announce that Sir Andrew Buchanan has accepted our invitation to become an Honorary Member of the Society, we were led in the Grace by Alan Langton. The lunch was then served and was very enjoyable; lovely food and served by friendly and courteous staff. After lunch we raised our glasses for the toasts, John Beckett proposing that to the

Queen and Adrian Henstock, one of our Vice-Chairs, that to the Society. Adrian, bearing in mind that the 1913 centenary of W. P. W. Phillimore's death was being remembered at this event, focussed on the excellent history of publications produced by the Society from early days, including Phillimore's contribution as a founder member, Honorary Secretary and Vice-president of the Thoroton Society. President Dr. Rosalys Coope responded to the toast and at the same time informed us that she intended to step down as President at the next AGM; she has been an excellent President and we will be sorry to lose her.

We then enjoyed a most interesting talk by Noel Osborne,

who was attending with his wife, Sarah, as our guests. He is the Chairman of Phillimore Ltd. and follows in the footsteps of William Phillimore of that company. Phillimore was the subject of his talk and we learned much about his life, including that, had his father not changed the family name, he would have been called William Stiff. Born in Sneinton in 1853, WPP studied law at Oxford and was awarded a degree in jurisprudence. As Noel informed us, his abiding interest was, however, historic documents and their preservation. He was concerned to see the deterioration or destruction of many ancient documents. Active in the work of preservation, the great work for which he is probably most remembered is the transcription and publication of parish records. To ensure preservation on a national scale he advocated the formation of Local Record Offices, and to that end he prepared Bills to be put before Parliament. As well as founding the Thoroton

Society he was the founder of several other organisations which dealt with records and related historic matters. He was also a genealogist and he wrote a renowned book in 1887 entitled *How to Write the History of a Family*. He did, of course, establish the publishing house of Phillimore which published many volumes of great interest to historians.

We also heard about the Company's history since Phillimore's time and what it was doing in the present straightened times.

Following luncheon, the Managing Director of Kelham Hall Ltd., Jonathan Pass, gave members the opportunity to look around this splendid building. Our thanks to him and his staff for their welcome and good service.

Once again we had a most enjoyable, sociable time together. Do make a note in your diaries for next year - 1 November 2014 and we are planning to hold our luncheon at the Forest Lodge Hotel at Edwinstowe.

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## *Request to All Members*

We try to move around the county for our annual luncheon, as we do for our Spring Meeting and AGM. I would be most grateful for your suggestions for venues, especially hotels or restaurants for the lunch - they need to accommodate between 80 and 100 people, and not be too expensive!

Also if there are lunch venues we have previously been to which you would like to re-visit, please let me know.

Barbara Cast

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## *Sir Andrew Buchanan*

Sir Andrew was Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire for many years before his recent retirement. The Society's Council agreed that it would be a fitting gesture to his years of service locally to invite Sir Andrew to become an honorary member of the Thoroton Society. I am pleased to be able to say that Sir Andrew has accepted our offer.

In accepting he has added:

*I would like you and the members to know that we have committed ourselves to further work on the Gatehouse [at Hodsock Priory] and are applying for a HLF Grant to give access and get publicity for the documented visit of Henry VIII to Sir Gervase Clifton at Hodsock on 9 August 1541 to see the newly completed Gatehouse and the visit by Ben Johnson on his walking tour in August 1681.*

John Beckett

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## *All Change in the World of Archives*

As members of the Society are aware, Dr. Dorothy Johnston retired last december as keeper of Manuscripts at the University of Nottingham.

Dorothy has now been replaced but her successor is a familiar face because it is Mark Dorrington, currently County Archivist of Nottinghamshire. Mark takes up his new position at the university on 18 November.

Meantime, the County Council have interviewed for a replacement for Mark, and have appointed Ruth Imeson, currently a Records manager at Nottinghamshire Archives. Ruth will formally switch role at a date still to be decided, but we shall certainly hope to work with her in the future.

However, if you are visiting the Department of Manuscripts and Special Collections, do not be too surprised if you see a familiar figure.

John Beckett



*Noel Osborne talks about Phillimore the Company and its founder*



*Adrian Henstock proposed the toast to the Thoroton Society*



*The top table*