

THE LEICESTERSHIRE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY
THE GUILDHALL · LEICESTER · LE1 5FQ



NEWSLETTER 106 Spring 2020

Welcome to the latest edition of the LAHS Newsletter. Contributions to future editions are welcome at any time. Send them to the editor, Cynthia Brown, at newsletter@lahs.org.uk or by post c/o Honorary Librarian, Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society, The Guildhall, Guildhall Lane, Leicester, LE1 5FQ.

LAHS NEWS

LECTURE PROGRAMME

The lecture programme up to May 2020 is below. All lectures take place at New Walk Museum, and start at 7.30 pm. To ensure sufficient space for everyone attending, lectures will be held in the Victorian Gallery. Please use the main entrance to the Museum on New Walk, and arrive in good time to avoid disruption once the lecture has started.

Thursday 5 March 2020

The Alan and Joan North Memorial Lecture

Experiencing the catacombs: from Roman burials to early medieval pilgrims

Professor Neil Christie, School of Archaeology & Ancient History, University of Leicester

Thursday 26 March 2020

The archaeology of domestic innovation in country houses

Professor Marilyn Palmer, School of Archaeology & Ancient History, University of Leicester

Thursday 30 April 2020

The real King Arthur: a sixth century North British hero

Professor Andrew Bruce, University of Navarre, Pamplona

Thursday 21 May 2020

The Hallaton Treasure: typical rituals?

Dr Frank Hargrave, Colchester and Ipswich Museums

LAHS HISTORY FAIR 2020

Preparations are continuing for the 2020 History Fair to be held at Beaumanor Hall on 31 May, with over 30 local history groups, projects and museums confirming their attendance as exhibitors. Unlike the 2018 Fair there will be no theme for what will be displayed, allowing exhibitors to showcase the broad variety of work going on in Leicestershire's active local history scene. In addition to exhibitors, the Record Office will be providing a dramatic introduction to the internationally significance Thomas Cook Archive, recently acquired for the people of Leicestershire. Talks will also be held on the day, and details of these plus more information about the event itself will be available nearer the time.

CAN YOU HELP?

LAHS needs a volunteer to help with the catering arrangements for lectures and allow Yolanda Courtney, the Hon Lectures Secretary, to concentrate on organising the lecture programme itself. People really appreciate the catering side of things, so this is an important but not too demanding a role that will help everything run smoothly. There are 11 lectures each year (September to May). Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided at eight lectures, when people serve themselves – so this is simply a case of making sure that these refreshments are available at these normal meetings. Three lectures have buffets catered by Fingerprints, including the AGM at The Guildhall (all other lectures are in the Victorian Gallery at New Walk Museum). We need someone to make sure that Fingerprints deliver their food and are paid, and to sort out wine for these occasions. Yolanda can provide more details of what needs to be done – and there is scope for changing some of the arrangements if you wish. If you are interested, please contact her – email yolanda.courtney@ntlworld.com, phone 0116 2120271, or speak to her at a lecture.

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

Members may be interested in a letter received from King Island (situated in the Bass Strait between Melbourne and Tasmania) giving details of the planned 175th anniversary commemoration of the 'Catacaqui' shipwreck on 4 August 1845. This was Australia's worst civil maritime disaster, when the ship from Liverpool to Port Phillip was totally wrecked: 399 British emigrants and crew died, and nine survived. We have been informed of this as nine of the emigrants came from Ashby-de-la-Zouch, seven named Rowbottom and two named Buck. We have been invited to join the commemoration in August. Any members in that part of the world then would be welcome.

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

BOOK and PAMPHLETS, all published in 2019 unless otherwise noted.

BROOKE, C. & SUTHERLAND, F. Excellence through independence: the history of Everards Brewery. 2008 ed. (1st pub. 1999). There are many illustrations of people (Everard family) and buildings.

GIMSON, J., RUSSELL, B., WADDINGTON, R. Leicester Ivanhoe Cricket Club 1873 – 1923. 1923. Includes list of members with some well-known local names.

Both these books kindly donated by Adrian Weston.

JAMES, M. Abbeys. 1925. Includes 'Monastic life and buildings' by A. Hamilton Thompson (well-known to readers of Transactions). This interesting book including photos, drawings, and plans was published by the Great Western Railway. It covers the area it served, so there are no Leicestershire abbeys, but neighbouring Warwickshire is included. This is a further donation from the estate of Terry Cocks.

CARRUTHERS, A., GREENSTED, M. & ROSCOE, B. Ernest Gimson: Arts & Crafts designer and architect. Chapter 1: Growing up in Leicester 1864 – 1886. Annette Carruthers was curator of decorative arts for 14 years at Leicestershire Museums.

COX, B. Place-names of Leicestershire Part 8 rivers, roads, folk, analyses, overview, index. English Place-Name Society Vol. XCIII for 2016. This volume completes the survey of this county of which publication began in 1998. It includes a combined index to Vols. 1 – 7, all of which are in stock.

MITCHLEY, M. William Flint: Leicester's classical architect. Donated by the author. Copies are £12.99 post-free from M.M., 557 Welford Road, Leicester, LE2 6FN.

St. Aidan's New Parks Leicester 60 years.

PERIODICALS

Latest issues of:

Antiquaries Journal, British Archaeology (1 -2 2020 has a 2p. article on Kirby Muxloe Castle), Church Monuments XXXIII 2018 (a further donation from the estate of Terry Cocks), DMU Special Collections Newsletter (includes Green Bicycle Mystery exhibition), Hinckley Historian (includes Homes for heroes, by Paul Griffiths [see also Leicestershire Historian 2019], Elmesthorpe from earliest times to 1939), Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Transactions, Leicestershire Historian, Leicestershire VCH News (includes Public health in Loughborough, Ellistown colliery, and information on the next book 'Ibstock' to be published later this year), Rutland Record, SPAB Magazine (Autumn 2019 includes Ernest Gimson and the SPAB; Winter 2019 mentions six free publications on the Society's website, one of which is 'Slating in the East Midlands for those repairing old buildings'. SEE: www.spab.org.uk/advice/technical-advice-notes).

NEWSLETTERS

Current copies only:

Ancient Monuments Society Newsletter, CBA Newsletter, Essex Society for Archaeology and History Newsletter, Friends of Friendless Churches Report, Lincoln Record Society News Review AND Trustees' Report, SPAB What's On (replaces Regional Events), Worcestershire Recorder.

EXCHANGE JOURNALS

Cambridge Antiquarian Society Proceedings. This mutual exchange has now been cancelled by the Cambridge Society.

ADVANCE NOTICE

I regret that the Library will NOT be open on May 3 and 17 as I have to be away.
Aubrey Stevenson. Hon. Librarian.

OTHER NEWS

LEICESTERSHIRE VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY TRUST

Pam Fisher reports on a busy few months for the Leicestershire Victoria County History Trust:

Our third paperback, a history of Ibstock, will be published in 2020. Neighbouring place-names indicate that the parish was once fringed by heathland to its north and west, while Ibstock's own place-name references an early dairy farm on this land. Garendon Abbey, near Loughborough, received gifts in the 12th century totalling over 500 a. in Ibstock, and created a large sheep farm on their enclosed estate. Unusually, the medieval church stands at the lowest point of the modern village. Framework-knitting had become important by 1811, when trade and manufacture employed almost as many families in the parish as agriculture. Ibstock's character changed more dramatically in the later 19th century, when the coal deposits which lay beneath its soils began to be

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exploited. Two collieries were sunk within the parish by different owners, Ibstock colliery in 1825 and Ellistown colliery from 1873, and rapid population growth was seen between 1861 and 1931. This was accompanied by the growth of Nonconformity, already well-established in the parish, and the establishment of numerous sports teams, clubs and other societies.

Never quite a town, and eclipsed from the 1890s by its younger neighbour (Coalville), Ibstock has changed and adapted again following the closure of the mines. The renovated early cinema is now a thriving community venue, and much of the undermined farmland has been planted with young trees, to become part of the National Forest. There is therefore much in this book to interest many people. Please email pjf7@le.ac.uk if you wish to be informed of the launch event, which will probably be in the autumn.

Charnwood Roots Database

This database, containing over 6,000 pieces of information collected by volunteers, will shortly be made available to the public. They relate to all the places covered by the project (the unshaded part of this map, taken from Robert Morden's county map of 1722). It will be possible to search for information by place, topic, keyword or any combination of these, and the data can be used by anyone for their own or a group project, we only ask for acknowledgment. The databank is now entering the final phase of testing, and should be available in the next few weeks through the updated Charnwood Roots website, at



<https://www.charnwoodroots.org/databank/>.

Lutterworth

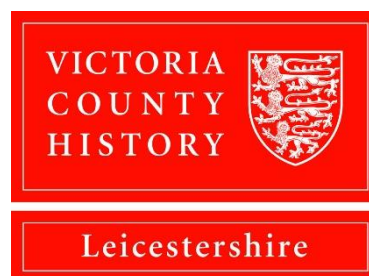
Research and writing up continues on our history of Lutterworth, which is currently on course for publication in 2021. We are very grateful to LAHS for their financial support.

Loughborough

We have ambitious plans to publish a history of Loughborough. This will be a major piece of work, building on some of the research done as part of Charnwood Roots. We need to raise over £80,000 to complete the research, writing and publication, but with the help of three small grants we have made a start. A volunteer project on public health improvements in Loughborough from 1840 is under way. We will also shortly be starting a piece of research on Loughborough's medieval markets and fairs, which will tie in with the town's planned celebrations in 2021 of the 800th anniversary of the market charter. After Easter, when our work on public health is complete, we will be recruiting further volunteers to help us to research Loughborough's industries. In July and August 2020, some of our research into public health improvements will be on display in Loughborough's Local Studies Library, to mark the 150th anniversary of the introduction of piped water into the town, the opening of the Fearon Fountain in Loughborough's market place and the opening of Nanpantan reservoir. There will also be a display and event at Loughborough's Old Rectory Museum, where Reverend Henry Fearon was living when he was stirring up Loughborough's Guardians, Sanitary Committee and Local Board to take some action to provide clean water and sewerage to Loughborough's inhabitants.

VCH 120

As some readers will know, we have also marked the 120th anniversary of the founding of the VCH project by filling a 'Big Red Box' with objects representing the county's histories. You can see details of what we chose in our September 2019 Newsletter at https://www.history.ac.uk/sites/default/files/file-uploads/2019-10/LVCHT_Newsletter_2019.pdf



NEW PUBLICATION

LAHS members interested in religious minorities may like to know of a new publication by Dr David Beeston of the University of York. Entitled *Momentous Years: the rise and fall of the Derby Hebrew Congregation, 1899-1986* it represents 'a unique attempt to record and analyse the history of the former Derby Jewish community'. It is published by Birchwood Publications, ISBN 9780951253540, £8.00. It is also available on ebay.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ATTENBOROUGH ARTS CENTRE

Common Salt – exploring trade, colonialism and culture through performance

Lancaster Road, Leicester, LE1 7HA, Friday 6 March at 4pm or 7pm

The colonial, geographical history of England and India is explored in *Common Salt*, a work by artists Sheila Ghelani and Sue Palmer. This 'show and tell' is a performance for a small audience around a table, using objects, words and laments to tell stories about nature, empire and memory. It explores the act of collecting, how stories become hidden in layers of history, and the disappeared 'Great Hedge of India'. For more details, see <https://www2.le.ac.uk/hosted/attenborougharts>.

LEICESTER GROUP VICTORIAN SOCIETY

All lectures are held on Tuesdays at Bishop Street Methodist Church, opposite Town Hall Square, Leicester at 7.30 pm. Meetings are open to all, but attendees are asked to make a contribution of £2.50 per person towards the cost of room hire and other expenses.

Tuesday 7 April 2020

The Restoration of Darnall Works, Sheffield

Andrew Shepherd

THE ELGAR SOCIETY – EAST MIDLANDS BRANCH

**Saturday 7 March 2020, 2 pm, Garden Room, Unitarian Chapel,
East Bond Street, Leicester, LE1 4SX**

Elgar's Homes

Pauline and Barry Collett

WOLDS HISTORICAL ORGANISATION

Tuesday 17 March 2020, Wymeswold Memorial Hall, Clay Street, LE12 6TY, 7. 45 pm

Buildings, Burials and Bones: the lost chapel of St Morrell

Vicki Score, Deputy Director, University of Leicester Archaeological Services

For further information, tel 01509 881342 or email bobtrubs@indigogroup.co.uk.

AT RISK WAR MEMORIALS OPEN DAY

Saturday 21 March 2020, 11 am – 4 pm

The Chancel, All Saints Church, Highcross Street, Leicester, LE1 4PH

Further details at www.atriskwarmemorials.co.uk.

BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY – LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2020

Saturday 6 June 2020, 10.30 am - 4. 30 pm, 6.30, Senate House, London, WC18 7HU

This event will include the BALH Annual Lecture on 'The Human Costs of the British Civil Wars' by Professor Andrew Hopper, University of Leicester. Cost: £25 members £30 non-members, including refreshments and sandwich lunch. Book online at www.balh.org.uk/events.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Wendy Scott, former Finds Liaison Officer for the Leicestershire Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS), contributes another article in her series about objects on display in local museums that were acquired under the Treasure Act 1996.

BOSWORTH EAGLE OR FALCON BADGE



This splendid bird is part of a silver-gilt livery badge, which would have been worn by a high ranking member of a household of one of the main players in the Battle of Bosworth. Along with the Bosworth Boar and the lead shot scatter, it was one of the key objects found during the Bosworth Survey that helped us locate the Battlefield. Members of the survey team have been working since it was found with experts trying to identify it. It was originally identified as an eagle with a snake in its mouth, a symbol of good over evil used since Roman times. Kevin

Schürer (Leicester University) believes that it is a fettered falcon and is part of the livery of Arthur Plantagenet. He was the illegitimate son of King Edward IV, and the falcon's head facing right (the wrong way) is a symbol of illegitimacy. Edward IV was king before his brother Richard and was the father of the 'princes in the tower'. There is no record of Arthur being present at Bosworth, but he could have been of fighting age, being born between 1461 and 75 - or perhaps one of his close household fought in his place?

We know he survived and served in the court of his half-sister Elizabeth of York, and became an Esquire of the King's Bodyguard to his nephew Henry VIII, to whom he was a close companion. He died of a heart attack in 1540, two days after being released from the Tower, after being held (incorrectly) on suspicion of treason over Calais, where he was born and had been Constable. Found by the Bosworth Survey team 2006, the badge can be seen at Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre. PAS Ref No. LEIC-4405A7, Leicestershire Museums Accession Number X.A244.2007.

A HISTORICAL FOOTNOTE

In September 1862 the French high rope walker and acrobat Charles Blondin made two appearances in Leicester, on land in Campbell Street where a platform accommodating 2000 people was erected. According to the advert in the *Leicester Journal* on 5 September 1862, entrance cost 1s. 6d. or 1s., or 6d. for the fireworks and concert after the performance. As well as the 'HERO OF NIAGARA' himself, this featured Monsieur Tournain, 'The great Dragon Tamer', who:

'will make his Terrific Flight across the Ground at an elevation of 70 feet. The Illumination of the Grounds will of the most novel and brilliant description during the evening. There will, at intervals, be given Vocal and Instrumental Concerts, Balloon Ascents, &c., &c. Four MILITARY BANDS are engaged for the occasion. Arrangements have been made by all the Railway Companies to run Cheap Trains. Excursionists admitted at half price on showing their Railway Ticket. No Train will leave Leicester until after Blondin's performance.

The *Journal* reported on 13 September that Blondin 'went through a number of astounding feats with wonderful courage and daring. The rope, which was of about the thickness of a man's wrist, and about eighty feet long, was attached to timbers at each end of the ground, at an elevation of about twenty feet, and kept steady by guys and sandbags. About half-past six o'clock Blondin ascended the platform, and walked quickly along the rope, and, on returning, stood on his head midway, and went through a number of other antics. He then bound a handkerchief over his eyes, and enveloped himself in a sack, and thus proceeded to re-cross the rope, every now and then dropping one leg over the side of the rope, which at first caused some slight expressions of alarm, but was soon succeeded by cheering.

'A barrow was next wheeled across, and he then proceeded to the accomplishment of the last and greatest of his feats — carrying a man across on his back, which he did amid the silence and anxious expectations of the lookers-on, which burst forth in a prolonged cheer on his arrival at the end of his perilous pathway. Blondin then descended, and the curious gathered round him in crowds to get a glimpse of this extraordinary man. There was a fair attendance of spectators, who manifested their satisfaction and delight, by repeated rounds of applause. Young Wilder [on the Flying Trapeze] and Monsieur Tournain also exhibited their fantastic performances with great success. Military bands were in attendance and played during the evening, and a magnificent display of fireworks, by Professor Wilder, brought the evening's entertainment to a close'.

In 1859 Blondin had become the first person to walk a rope across Niagara Falls. In 1861, at the request of the Prince of Wales, he recreated his Niagara 'stunts', including walking on stilts and somersaults, at the Crystal Palace, and performed there another 12 times in the following year. Shortly after his appearance in Leicester he left for Russia to perform at the Court of St Petersburg. He survived every danger and died peacefully in 1897 at the age of 75.

This newsletter is edited by Cynthia Brown and published by Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society. Further information about the Society, its publications and other activities can be found on its website at www.lahs.org.uk

**THE LEICESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL &
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