

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



NEWSLETTER 107 Summer 2020

Welcome to the latest edition of the LAHS Newsletter. We hope you are keeping well during these unusual and challenging times. The Newsletter will take a rather different form this time due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the cancellation of the LAHS lecture programme and other public events – but we wanted to maintain our contact with members, and hope you will still find it interesting and informative. Contributions to future editions of the Newsletter are as always welcome at any time. While The Guildhall remains closed we will not be able to pick up items sent by post, so please email them to the editor, Cynthia Brown, at newsletter@lahs.org.uk. LAHS Committee meetings are continuing 'remotely'!

LAHS NEWS

LECTURE PROGRAMME

We hope that the lecture programme may be able to resume later this year, and the Hon Lectures Secretary, Yolanda Courtney, has accordingly identified some *provisional* dates from September onwards in the event of that being possible. You might like to pencil them in your diaries, but we must emphasise their provisional nature. If they do go ahead, they will all take place in the Victorian Gallery at New Walk Museum unless otherwise stated.

Thursday 24 September 2020

Scarborough Lecture: Henry III – a simple and God-fearing king - Dr David Carpenter, Kings College London

Thursday 5 November 2020

Wednesday 25 November 2020

LAHS Annual General Meeting at The Guildhall, followed by a lecture

Thursday 3 December 2020

Thursday 14 January 2021

Thursday 11 February 2021

Members' evening, with short lectures in the Lord Mayor's Room at New Walk Museum

Thursday 4 March 2021

Alan and Joan North memorial lecture: Roman/classical subject

Thursday 25 March 2021

Thursday 15th April

Thursday 29th April

Thursday 13th May

NEW LAHS HON SECRETARY

We are very pleased to announce that Nigel Atter has been appointed as the new LAHS Hon Secretary. Nigel is a very experienced administrator, and a co-founder member of the Leicestershire and Rutland Western Front Association. He is also the author of *With Valour and Distinction: the actions of the 2nd Battalion Leicestershire Regiment 1914-1918* (Helion and Co, 2019), which will be reviewed in the *Leicestershire Historian* later this year.

PUBLIC HERITAGE FUND

The April application round for the LAHS Public Heritage Fund has recently come to a close, with two grants being awarded. The first was for £595 to help secure speakers for the 'Local History Café Online'. This project by Crafting Relationships began as wellbeing get-togethers for over 50s at risk of, experiencing, or looking to keep at bay, social isolation and loneliness by discussing and learning about local history. With current social distancing rules, this has now been moved online and comprises live talks via Facebook. The second grant was £655 towards Desford & District Local History Society's 'Desford Heritage Trail' project. When fully funded, 16 heritage information boards will be installed around Desford, mainly in the village's conservation area. A trail leaflet will also be produced.

The Public Heritage Fund began in 2019, and has so far provided grants of various sizes to help promote Leicestershire's history to the general public. To find out more, or to see if your project may be eligible, please contact Joe Hall on phfund@lahs.org.uk

MEMBERS' SUBSCRIPTIONS

Another LAHS Membership year began on 1 May - a little item of certainty in our sea of uncertainty. Thank you to all of you who have paid your subscription by Standing Order - and extra special thanks to those of you who have adjusted the subscription to the new rate. If you have paid by cheque, then it may be a little while before I receive it, but thanks in advance. This is the second year of the new rates which are £30 for an individual and £40 for family memberships, while students (who receive no publications) still have free membership.

Of 432 current members, 327 of you have paid your sub for this year. Unfortunately 128 of those payments have been made at the old rates. For the 2019 subscription year, 55 members still owe the balance on an underpaid subscription while five members have not paid at all. I have written individually to members and emailed on many occasions, chasing up underpaid and unpaid subscriptions: I'm sure you can appreciate that all of this does take quite some time to administer and chase up. If you pay by standing order, please increase the standing order either by using an online banking app, or contacting your bank and requesting they make the change. I am unable to adjust a standing order on your behalf. If you are reading this, and have perhaps a nagging doubt on whether you did or didn't send that top-up cheque, or adjust your standing order, please do get in touch with me and make my role just a little easier! I wish you all good health.

Matt Beamish, Hon Membership Secretary

RURAL LIFE PAST AND PRESENT

Out-of-Print and Difficult-to-Find Books

Local history, rural and agricultural history, recollections, country characters, farming reminiscences, canals, folklore, traditions and customs, rural occupations and skills, rural architecture, including wind and water mills, country living in the past, Gypsies and other Travellers, etc.

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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.

WELBY HOARD

An important Bronze Age hoard containing rare object types, the Welby Hoard did not qualify as Treasure when it was found by a farmer digging a trench in a field in 1875. Prehistoric base metal hoards have only been Treasure since 2003, a fact that has already revolutionised our knowledge of Bronze Age metalwork. Unfortunately, only a proportion of the hoard has survived, as the farmer took it to be melted down at a local foundry. Luckily a local resident Mr W.S. Barnes witnessed this, and purchased the remaining finds, kindly loaning these to the Museums Service. Recently his descendants, now living in Australia, donated the hoard to the Leicestershire Museums Service, and visited it on display in our Treasure Exhibition in 2012.

The hoard material dates to around 1000-800BC, and is very important. It contained many objects of continental origin, demonstrating that the inhabitants of Bronze Age Leicestershire were engaged in long distance trade or exchange. The remnants of the hoard contain three socketed axes, a small bowl, a sword and probable sword fitting, a spearhead, five circular (harness?) mounts, cauldron mounts, and a few other unknown objects. One of the axes is of a type which came to be known as a 'Welby Axe', as its form was previously unrecorded. This type of axe is now known across Southern and Eastern England. The Rothley Hoard, which was found in 2009, has a very rare complete axe mould which would have made a Welby type axe - so they were being made locally). The bowl is also very unusual, as most of that date would be ceramic: it was described as unique by archaeologists a few decades ago. Found in 1875 this hoard can be seen at Melton Carnegie Museum.



Melton Carnegie Museum is currently closed to visitors due to the lockdown, but it has put its Archaeology collection online at www.meltonmuseum.org/digital-shelf.

SOME ONLINE RESOURCES

You may all be finding plenty to occupy you while staying at home, but if you'd like to explore some archaeological or historical sources online, you might like to dip into a few of these. Many thanks to Mathew Morris of ULAS for his contributions to these suggestions.

LAHS publications online

Why not start by browsing some back copies of *Transactions* and the *Leicestershire Historian* online - www.le.ac.uk/lahs/index.html and www.le.ac.uk/lahs/publications/historian.html.

Local historical resources

Across Patagonia. Free ebook of Lady Florence Dixie's 'six months' wanderings over unexplored and untrodden ground', published in 1880. Lady Florence lived at Bosworth Hall from 1875 until 1883 - www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/42666

East Midlands Oral History Archive. Online exhibitions including extracts from recorded interviews - www.le.ac.uk/emoha/community/resources/index.html.

Image Leicestershire. Images from images of material from the collections of Leicestershire County Council's Museums, Libraries and Archives services - <https://imageleicestershire.org.uk/>.

University of Leicester Special Collections Online. Includes collections relating to oral history, Leicestershire industry, archive materials digitised by the Rothley Heritage Trust, and historical directories - <https://www2.le.ac.uk/library/find/specialcollections>.

Aerial and historic photographs

Britain from above. Images from the Aerofilms collection, which includes 1.26 million negatives and more than 2000 photograph albums dating from 1919 to 2006 - <https://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/>.

Historic England image archive. Searchable collection of photographs and other images. A recent addition is 'Breaking New Ground', the photographic archive of the John Laing construction company which built (amongst many others) Coventry Cathedral, the Barbican, and some of the country's first motorways <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/photos/>.

Historic Environment Record (HER) & Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS)

Heritage Gateway. Enables cross-searching of over 60 resources, offering local and national information relating to England's heritage www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/

Portable Antiquities Scheme. Searchable database plus a range of information on specific aspects including coins, and Bronze Age objects - <https://finds.org.uk/>.

Historic films

British Film Archive. Includes *Edwardian Britain on Film*: films by Mitchell and Kenyon of everyday life, including factory workers, church congregations, schoolchildren, street scenes and sport - <https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/collection/edwardian-britain-on-film>.

Media Archive for Central England. Extracts from films across the Midlands, including preserved amateur films - <https://www.macearchive.org/mace-themes>.

National Library of Scotland. Over 2300 films, including Edinburgh Temperance Day celebrations in the 1930s; the Queen Mary leaving the Clyde on her maiden voyage; and archaeological sites in Shetland and Orkney, filmed in 1937; and students on a dig in 1970 in Stirlingshire which was part of the Antonine Wall - <https://movingimage.nls.uk/search>.

Other online resources

Archive of the Irish in Britain. Digital documents, audio and video recordings, books, photos and ephemera on the history of the Irish in Britain from the late 19th century to the present day, many downloadable - <http://repository.londonmet.ac.uk/lists/2>.

Accents and dialect. 'Do you call a "bread roll" a cob, batch, bread cake, a barm cake or scuffler? How do you pronounce the words cup and plant? And are you sitting or sat while reading this?'. Explore the diversity of British accents and dialect - www.bl.uk/british-accents-and-dialects.

Cooper Gallery, Barnsley. Online jigsaws offering an 'insight into wonderful works of art' in the gallery's collections - www.jigsawplanet.com/BarnsleyMuseums.

Council for British Archaeology. An enormous resource hub for adults and children, including links to useful websites, online talks, podcasts, videos etc. - <http://blog.archaeologyuk.org/2020/03/24/archaeology-resources-hub/>.

DigVentures. Online archaeology courses - <https://digventures.com/courses/>

FutureLearn. Over 40 history courses are currently available, including five archaeology courses. <https://www.futurelearn.com/subjects/history-courses>.

Open Domesday. Interactive map to find places mentioned in the Domesday Book, and images of the original folios - <https://opendomesday.org/>.

Online museums and virtual tours

BBC History Extra. Links to virtual reality tours including the Vatican, Petra, the Museo Nacional de Anthropologia in Mexico City, and the National Computing Museum in Milton Keynes - <https://www.historyextra.com/magazine/virtual-remote-museum-exhibition-tours-how-explore-history-from-home/>.

Google Arts and Culture. A huge archive of digital content from over 2000 leading museums and archives, including interactive virtual tours of five historical sites across the world. <https://artsandculture.google.com/>.

Quizzes

BBC History Extra. Historical quizzes ranging from Ancient Rome, Medieval, Great Fire of London, Women Who Changed the World, and World War I - <https://www.historyextra.com/quiz/>

NEW PUBLICATIONS

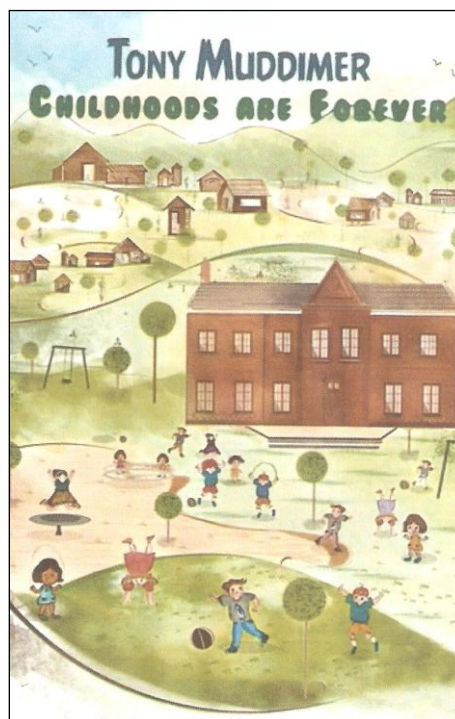
CHILDHOODS ARE FOREVER

Tony Muddimer

Austin Macauley, 2019, 135PP, illus, ISBN 9761528901758, £8.99

Tony Muddimer was born in 1933, the year that Hitler became Chancellor of Germany and Bonnie and Clyde were on the run in the USA. One of the earliest memories in this autobiography is as a three year old in Abbot's Road, Humberstone, when while 'playing with the local neighbourhood children, I could learn the ways of the world... I learned more about life from my pals than from my parents'. Other early memories are of adult reactions to events such as the abdication of Edward VIII, a 'momentous furore' when family and friends 'talked about nothing else for days on end', and children sang 'Hark the Herald Angels sing' Mrs Simpson pinched our King'. He later watched the parade for the Coronation of George VI on his father's shoulders in Charles Street.

The book is written in a year by year format, most of it relating 'what it was like for a young boy having to live through and experience a world war'. He has vivid memories of that time, including food shortages, German bombing raids, and the large class sizes at his school due to the number of teachers called up to serve in the armed force. He also writes of his father's service in 30 Assault Unit, a British Commando unit originally formed in 1943 to gather intelligence, in which the author Ian Fleming also served and which was said to be the inspiration for his most famous character James Bond. For details of how to purchase the book, see www.austinmacauley.com/book/childhoods-are-forever.



WILLIAM FLINT, LEICESTER'S CLASSICAL ARCHITECT

Mark Mitchley

Fuzzy Flamingo, 2019, 294pp, illus, ISBN 9781916114708, £12.99

Some of William Flint's contributions to the architectural heritage of Leicester include such familiar buildings as the lending library on Belvoir Street, Charles Street Baptist Church, the Corn Exchange (with Charles Wickes), West Bridge spinning mill, and townhouse in customary Classical style in Upper King Street in which the author himself once lived. While Flint was described as 'an amiable, unassuming and esteemed man', the same could not be said of some of his associates. They included his first partner, who led a life of crime as 'an utterer of forged cheques', and a pupil who had plans to canalise the streets of Leicester with wooden troughs. On a more positive note, another pupil became master to Ernest Gimson, father of the English Arts and Crafts movement. The book offers a rounded and absorbing account of a man who was, in the author's own words, 'rather splendid but rather overlooked.'

A HISTORICAL FOOTNOTE

The Newsletter editor is contributing an article on cigar manufacture in Leicester to the 2020 edition of the *Leicestershire Historian*. In the course of her research she found an account of a 'treat' given to the workforce of one of the largest companies, Evans and Stafford, who were also in business as cheese, provisions and wholesale grocery merchants. In 1866 they took around 400 employees by train to the Crystal Palace – a journey of five hours each way. Below is an extract from a report in the *Leicester Journal*, 31 August 1866.

At six o'clock nearly all the employees were assembled in the yard of the establishment at Campbell-street, and shortly after that hour, and after receiving their tickets for the journey and admission into the Palace, they proceeded to the station, headed by the band of the firm, under the conductorship of Mr. Nicholson, and entered the carriages specially provided for them. The party was accompanied by both members of the firm, and several of their friends. The engine was gaily decorated with flowers and evergreens, and the carriages were ornamented at each corner with bannerets [sic]. Precisely at half-past six o'clock the train started on its journey, and to give *eclat* to its departure, several fog signals were exploded in imitation of salvoes of artillery.

The train continued its journey with the necessary stoppages at Bedford and Hitchin, and a delay of a few minutes at Holloway whilst an express train passed, until its arrival at the York-road platform of Kings-cross station, where the decorated engine of the Midland Railway Company was changed for one of the low funnelled engines of the Metropolitan Railway Company. From the York-road station the excursionists were conveyed by the Underground Railway via Kings-cross and Farringdon-street stations to the new station of the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway at Ludgate-hill, from whence they proceeded direct to the Crystal Palace, where they arrived about a quarter to eleven o'clock.

On entering the Palace they dispersed themselves about the spacious building, directing their steps wherever their fancy led them. The surprise and amazement with which the junior members of the party were filled on beholding the Palace for the first time was very great, and must have been a source of immense gratification to Messrs. Evans and Stafford, who had given them the opportunity of enjoying such pleasurable excitement. The programme for the day at the Crystal Palace, although presenting few features of attraction to the constant visitor, afforded ample entertainment to the Leicester excursionists. In addition to the general attractions of the Palace, there was a capital instrumental concert, several beautiful solos on the magnificent organ, and on the terrace there was the inimitable performance of Ethardo [an Italian gymnast] on the spiral column. These were sufficient in themselves to engage their attention, and notwithstanding they had eight hours given them at the Palace, we do not think that any of them were wearied with their visit...

At seven o'clock they left the Palace for their return home, arriving at Leicester at twelve o'clock, extremely pleased with their treat... On Saturday afternoon Messrs. Evans and Stafford finished their treat by giving their workpeople a tea at their premises in Campbell-street, which was much enjoyed. After tea, dancing and other amusements were engaged in, and in the evening a pyrotechnic display took place.

* There is a photo of Ethardo ascending his spiral column at <http://www.19thcenturyphotos.com/Signor-Ethardo,-the-Spiral-Ascensionist-123564.htm>.

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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