

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



## NEWSLETTER 112 Autumn 2021

Welcome to the latest edition of the LAHS Newsletter. We have delayed this for a short time to give an update on some aspects of the Society's activities following the September 2021 meeting of the LAHS Committee. Contributions to future editions of the Newsletter are as always welcome at any time. These can be posted to or left at The Guildhall, Leicester, which has now reopened, addressed to LAHS; or you can email them to the Newsletter editor, Cynthia Brown, at [newsletter@lahs.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@lahs.org.uk).

### LAHS NEWS

#### LECTURE PROGRAMME

The first lecture of 2021 – 22 will be delivered online via Zoom (details below). We are intending to return to face-to-face meetings for the remaining lectures, but this remains conditional on government policy regarding public gatherings. If we are able to go ahead, social distancing will have an impact on the numbers of people able to attend, and we may have to use a booking system such as Eventbrite. Updates will be communicated by email, social media, and on the Society's website at [LAHS - Lecture Programme](#), where details can be checked in advance.

Unless otherwise stated, all lectures will be held in the Victorian Art Gallery at New Walk Museum, and start at 7.30 pm. 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 23 September 2021

**This lecture will be delivered remotely via Zoom**

##### ***Scarborough Lecture:***

***Before Wat Tyler: peasant rebellion in the East Midlands in the thirteenth century***

Professor Christopher Dyer, Emeritus Professor of History, University of Leicester

#### Thursday 4 November 2021

***Dabbling in the dark arts: how the Church embraced Arabic astrology and opened the door to modern science***

Dr Chris Mitchell, University of Wales, Trinity St. David

#### Wednesday 24 November 2021 at The Guildhall, Leicester

**166th Annual General Meeting at the Guildhall**

**Please note this is a WEDNESDAY due to Cathedral bell-ringing**

**Followed by *Luxury galore: the prisoners at Donington Park***

Robin Jenkins, Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland

**Thursday 2 December 2021**

***Diet and migration at Ketton Quarry: an isotopic perspective***

Dr Sam Leggett, University of Oxford/University of Edinburgh

**Thursday 13 January 2022**

***A recent Roman discovery in Rutland***

Jennifer Browning, University of Leicester Archaeological Services

**Thursday 20 January 2022 – venue to be confirmed**

**Joint lecture with the Prehistoric Society and the Leicestershire Fieldworkers**

***Kindred: Neanderthal life, love, death and art***

Rebecca Wragg Sykes, School of Archaeology, University of Liverpool

**Thursday 10 February 2022**

***Members' Evening***

If you would like to present the results of your research to fellow members, please contact the Hon. Lecture Secretary by email at [lectures@lahs.org.uk](mailto:lectures@lahs.org.uk) or by phone on 0116 2120271.

**Thursday 10 March 2022**

**The Alan and Joan North Memorial Lecture**

***Did the Romans have a typical East Midlands town? What makes a Roman town, with particular reference to Leicestershire and Northamptonshire***

Ian Meadows, Independent Consultant

## **OTHER LAHS NEWS**

### **NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY**

It was finally possible to reopen the Library on 4 July after the very long closure from April to October 2020 and February to June this year. It was good to welcome members on the first Sunday afternoon. The Library will close for the regular winter period on 17 October and, all being well, reopen as normal on 6 February 2022. Three small groups on guided walks of The Guildhall visited the Library as the Jury Room to see the view down into the Great Hall. It was pleasing to hear that their guide had told them of the Society's work in saving the building many years ago. Despite everything, material has been published and received for stock. The Society is grateful, as always, to those people who are kind enough to donate publications.

### **BOOKS**

HIRONS, T. & WOODFORD, J., comps. Lutterworth memories 1950 -1980: recollections by the people who were there at the time. Hiron/Woodford, £8, 2021. 9781526208712. Donated by Tony Hiron. All proceeds to Age Concern Lutterworth.

HONEYBONE, D. & M., eds. Stukeley and Stamford part 1. Cakes and curiosity: the sociable antiquarian 1710 1737. (Lincoln Record Society Vol. 109 ). 2021. Some Leicestershire and numerous Rutland references.

PATEL, B. & WAIND, A., eds. Tales from a plague village: life in lockdown. 2021. Queniborough during the pandemic.

RYDER, I. The governance of Rutland 1614 – 1664. ( Rutland Local History & Record Society Occasional Publication no. 13 ). 2021. 9780907464631. Donated by the publisher.

SEATON, P. & S. Letters from the Workhouse: the story of the Hinckley Union. [2021].

WESTON, A. The Westons 1880 – 2021. 2021. Donated by the author. A ‘middleclass story of a Catholic family in Leicester, it involves a substantial printing business and a successful firm of lawyers’.

### PERIODICALS

Archaeologia Cantiana 142. 2021.

British Archaeology 7-8/21 reports on Roman Road Research Association and its new journal Itinera; this year’s Festival of Archaeology...see <https://bit.ly/3feDgJ7> for self-guided walk in Whissendine.

9-10/21 reports on Roman iron fetters found in Great Casterton; Hinckley Head (of Nero), currently in store at Leicester City Museums.

Church Monuments 35. 2020. Further donation from Mrs. F. Cocks (see Newsletter 104. Autumn 2019).

Essex Archaeology & History 4 ser. 10. 2019

Hinckley Historian 87. Summer 2021. Includes William Thomas Hall (1877 – 1946): a little known local historian, by Caroline Wessel. Donated by Hinckley Museum.

Leicestershire Archaeological & Historical Transactions 94. 2020.

### NEWSLETTERS

Ancient Monuments Society

Essex Society for Archaeology & History which reports that the Society has taken on the Essex Journal. This echoes what this Society did with the Leicestershire Historian. The Essex Newsletter will be online from 2021.

Cottage Books catalogue 272 Aug. 2021. The usual extensive range of interesting books.

### LEICESTERSHIRE IN UNEXPECTED PLACES

The Library has extensive files of periodicals. Searching these has revealed numerous articles of local interest in titles where they might not be expected to be found. There may be something here of interest:

Ancient Monuments Society Transactions:

Vol. 4 1956 Staunton Harold and Foremark: two Laudian churches...

10 1962 Manor House Farm Donington-le-Heath

50 2006 Dovecotes of Rutland

59 2015 Two private chapels: two painted ceilings: Gwydir Uchaf and Staunton Harold

Antiquity

50 Sep/Dec 1976 Carved stone from Aylestone, by R. Rutland

Architectural History

8 1965 Ambrose Phillipps of Garendon

Birmingham & Warwickshire Archaeological Society Transactions

119 2001 James Pickering and the search for cropmarks...

Birmingham Archaeological Society Transactions

50 1924 Breedon church (incl. 5 illus.)

Historical Research

68.165 1995 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Rutland’s band of men-at-arms 1551-2

89.245 2016 Decline of the Liberal Party in the heart of England: the Liberals in Leicestershire

And have you heard of *The Reliquary*? Perhaps more next time.

Aubrey Stevenson, Hon. Librarian

## **PUBLIC HERITAGE FUND**

The Society's Public Heritage Fund made a grant to one project during its July 2021 round, awarding £500 to enable Desford and District Local History Society to build a website. As Angela Thomas said on behalf of the Society: 'This will enable us to engage a professional web developer to create an eye-catching and informative showcase for our archive material. We are aiming to be the focal point for sharing Desford's rich heritage, and a website will help us to engage a much wider audience'. LAHS welcomes applications to the Public Heritage Fund. See [LAHS PHFund Guidance 20190321.pdf \(le.ac.uk\)](#) for the application criteria, and [LAHS PHFund 20190321.pdf \(le.ac.uk\)](#) to download an application form.

## **VACANCY FOR LAHS TREASURER**

Our Treasurer, Reg Mawdsley, has recently resigned from this post, and we would like to thank him for the valuable contribution he has made to the Society. This is a key position at the heart of LAHS, and we would very much like to appoint an existing member to replace him. The job involves managing the Society's accounts, timely payment of invoices, and liaising with our accountants and financial advisors. The ideal person will have some accountancy or other financial experience, but this is not an absolute requirement. If you are interested in fulfilling this role, or would like further information, please contact our Secretary, Jim Butler, at [secretary@lahs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@lahs.org.uk).

## **REQUEST FOR LAHS REPRESENTATION ON HARBOROUGH ADVISORY PANEL**

Harborough District Council is looking for a volunteer from LAHS to join an advisory panel considering applications for local listings of historic sites and buildings from the Harborough area. The panel, which will meet perhaps twice yearly is chaired by an elected member (Cllr Bateman), and currently has local historian and author, Stephen Butt, and Peter Ellis of the Victorian Society as members. Meetings are currently held virtually and information on potential entries will be circulated beforehand. Although panel members add information and background on certain entries, there is no requirement for them to undertake any research. They just need to have a look at the proposed entries and form an opinion on whether they are worthy of inclusion. If you are interested, please contact Matt Beamish, Membership Secretary at [membership@lahs.org.uk](mailto:membership@lahs.org.uk) in the first instance.

## **HAVE YOU CONSIDERED JOINING THE LAHS COMMITTEE?**

If you enjoy being a member of LAHS and have some spare time, have you considered joining the Committee? There are many possible ways of contributing, along with the potential for identifying new ways of promoting the archaeology and history of Leicestershire and Rutland. The Committee meets five times a year, usually on a Wednesday in the late afternoon in the Jury Room at the Guildhall, where the LAHS library is housed. If you are interested, please do contact our secretary Jim Butler on [secretary@lahs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@lahs.org.uk).

## **OTHER NEWS**

### **CATHEDRAL DISCOVERY OF A MEDIEVAL NORTH PORCH**

Caroline Wessel of the Cathedral Internal Interpretation Advisory Group sends this update on a recent discovery: As part of the building project currently in progress at Leicester Cathedral, repair and renovation work has recently been carried out on the North Porch - and during preliminary investigations an exciting discovery was made. It was previously supposed that the Victorian restoration had altogether replaced any original medieval structure, but when the porch roof was opened up, there hidden away was a much older

structure, almost intact, within the void below. This was very unusual, because older architectural features on historic buildings were commonly destroyed or damaged by Victorian restoration.

In this case the oak timbers and panels that made up the early roof are in a good state of preservation, and have now been fully recorded and assessed by the Cathedral Archaeologist. His view is that they date from the early to mid 1400s, with some later repairs, perhaps in 1571. The entry for St Martin's in John Nichols' *Antiquities of Leicestershire* includes a long transcript of church wardens' records up to 1724, including the following item in 1571: 'Paid for mending the North church porch and the chamber over it, 2s 4d'. The North Porch repair work is now finished and it is no longer possible to discern that, hidden beneath, is an important and far older roof which has been successfully conserved, recorded and protected. In addition, new wider gutters, protective weatherings and ventilation gaps have been installed, carefully designed to divert rainwater, reduce the risk of water penetration and keep the roof dry and free from condensation. One can only speculate on what other wonders will be revealed during the coming months, as the Cathedral building programme progresses and hopefully we are able to learn more about life in Roman and medieval Leicester.

### **REDEVELOPMENT OF JEWRY WALL MUSEUM AND THE FORMER VAUGHAN COLLEGE**

This update appeared on the Leicester City Council website in July, and is reproduced with permission: 'The transformation of Jewry Wall Museum and the former Vaughan College continues with work on the fabric of the 1960s Grade II listed building. All the partitions have now been removed from the former museum space on the ground floor to recreate the original open gallery as designed by architect Trevor Dannatt. You can now see the original roof arches echoing the Roman Bathhouse arches. The foundations for the pillars are in place which will carry a new walkway to provide level access from the pavement on St Nicholas Circle pavement. On the first floor of the building the reception, café and shop spaces are being created'. There are images of the redevelopment work so far at [July 2021 - updates on the Jewry Wall Project – Leicester Museums](#).

### **ANGLO-SAXON BROOCH RETURNED TO RUTLAND COUNTY MUSEUM AFTER 26 YEARS**

A bronze-gilt square-headed brooch from the Anglo-Saxon period, originally discovered in Market Overton in Rutland, has been returned to Rutland County Museum 26 years after it was stolen along with eight other brooches and a Roman ring in 1995. The ring was recovered soon afterwards, but the brooches remained missing until this particular brooch, which had been on loan from Oakham School, was sent anonymously by post to the Metropolitan Police last year. The Police used the London-based Art Loss Register to identify its origins, and stored it safely until it could be returned to the museum once Covid-19 restrictions were relaxed. For more information, see [Ancient brooch returned to Museum almost 30 years after theft | Rutland County Council](#).

### **LEICESTERSHIRE INDUSTRIAL HISTORY SOCIETY (LIHS)**

LIHS has recently published a history of Equity Shoes, the workers' co-operative with a factory in Western Road, Leicester. *Bulletin Number 24: The Equity 1886 – 2009 – Leicester's last major shoe factory* is available through the Society's website at [www.lihs.uk](http://www.lihs.uk), price £15, 143pp A4, illustrated. The book includes a DVD, *The Final Days of Equity Shoes*, produced by LIHS in 2009. A short review of the book will appear in a future LAHS Newsletter, and a full review in the *Leicestershire Historian* in 2022.

## LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL MUSEUMS SERVICE

The exhibition 'Full Steam Ahead: the railway reaches Melton', which featured in the LAHS Spring 2021 Newsletter (110), continues until 18 December 2021 at Melton Carnegie Museum – more details at [www.meltonmuseum.org](http://www.meltonmuseum.org).

'Market 800', an exhibition at Charnwood Museum celebrating 800 years of the market in Loughborough, also continues until December. This shows how the market has developed from the medieval period to the present, and what it means to the community today. There is further information at [September 2021 | Charnwood Museum](#).



(Leicestershire County Council Museums)

A new exhibition opens at Harborough Museum on 16 October 2021 and continues until 5 February 2022. 'Creativity in HMP Gartree Library: the transformative power of reading and art' shares work responding to the BBC 100 Novels that Shaped our World, including reviews, creative responses and artworks. For further information visit [Harborough Museum – Embracing our past](#).

## EVENTS

### VICTORIAN SOCIETY LEICESTER BRANCH

It is intended to hold both lectures at Bishop Street Methodist Church, Town Hall Square, Leicester, LE1 6AF, but please check for confirmation nearer the dates. Meetings are open to all for a contribution of £2.50 per person towards the cost of accommodation.

**Tuesday 2 November 2021**

**Treatment of Leicester's sewage and the four Gimson engines**

Tony Kendall and Paul Sole

**Tuesday 7 December 2021**

**Knighton House: the sustainable refurbishment of a period property**

Nils Feldman RIBA

### VICTORIAN SOCIETY ONLINE LECTURES

The national Victorian Society will be continuing its online lecture series in the autumn. This will include a six-part lecture series on 'The Terraced House', and a Christmas lecture on 14 December. All lectures are delivered via Zoom and cost £5 each. For further details and access to previous lectures, see [www.victoriansociety.org.uk/events](http://www.victoriansociety.org.uk/events).

### BBC HISTORY MAGAZINE VIRTUAL LECTURE SERIES

A programme of online events by *BBC History Magazine* features historians exploring 'a diverse range of eras, themes and episodes from the past'. Lectures can be accessed from anywhere in the world. Each 45-minute lecture costs £10, and is followed by a Q&A session. For further information, visit [BBC History Magazine LIVE | Virtual History Events - HistoryExtra](#), where you can search for periods, people and topics.

## MARKET HARBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Market Harborough Historical Society now has a new venue for its meetings – the Methodist Hall on Northampton Road. There is limited parking at the back of the church, but ample space across the road in the car park beside the Market Hall. Chairs will be spaced in pairs to enable social distancing, and the wearing of face coverings will be optional. See [home \(marketharboroughhistoricalsociety.org\)](http://home(marketharboroughhistoricalsociety.org)) for updates.

**Wednesday 13 October 2021**

***William Knibb of Kettering***

Mike Stroud

**Wednesday 10 November 2021**

***1919: The Red, the White and the Green: Hallaton's Walter George Butteriss MC MM in a little-known conflict against the Bolsheviks***

Denis Kenyon

## DIGITAL TALKS ARCHIVE

Over the past year, many organisations across Leicestershire and Rutland have been recording their online talks and creating new digital content. These include lectures or talks by LAHS, Leicestershire Fieldworkers, ULAS, and Hidden Histories of Leicester. They can be accessed at [Digital talks archive – Leicestershire Fieldworkers \(leicsfieldworkers.org\)](http://Digital%20talks%20archive%20-%20Leicestershire%20Fieldworkers%20(leicsfieldworkers.org)).

## GREEN PLAQUE SCHEME – LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL



Leicestershire County Council's Green Plaque scheme aims to honour people and places of historical importance across the county. Candidates are nominated and voted for by members of the public. The most recent Green Plaque was unveiled at Market Harborough to honour the heavyweight boxer Jack Gardner, who was born there and represented Great Britain at the London Olympics in 1948. He turned

professional later that year, became British champion in 1950 and European champion 12 months later. When his boxing career ended in 1952 he retired to his farm in Market Harborough. He died in 1978 at the age of 52. The unveiling was attended by Jack's daughter Jackalyn, who also lives in Market Harborough.

Jack Gardner was nominated for the award by John Tillotson, the chairman of Market Harborough Civic Society, who felt that his achievements merited more recognition than the existing commemorative bench outside the old Grammar School and at the leisure centre. The plaque is located on the side wall of the Market Harborough Building Society, which overlooks the Memorial Gardens. See [The Green Plaque Awards | Leicestershire County Council](http://The%20Green%20Plaque%20Awards%20|%20Leicestershire%20County%20Council) for further information about the Green Plaque scheme itself.

(Image courtesy of Leicestershire County Council)

## ARCHAEOLOGY

### CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF ULAS

The University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) had its origins in 1995 with only three staff, but developed into an award-winning commercial archaeological unit that has completed over 3,000 projects over a 25 year period in the East Midlands and beyond. It has recently published a book, *Secrets from the Soil – a quarter of a century of discoveries from Palaeolithic to modern times*, to celebrate its achievements.

The book offers insights into the methodology as well as a chronological survey of discoveries, from that of the location of a 200m long stretch of the Bytham river at Brooksby Quarry through to Victorian engineering projects, World War II shelters and the former RAF Nuneaton (Lindley) airfield. An extensive section on Roman Leicester (AD 43 – 410) encompasses its public buildings and markets, townhouses, mosaics, and the defences of the town, along with the lifestyles of its people and the individuals named on the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century curse tablet found during excavations of a large townhouse at Vine Street. Thanks to large-scale excavations in the Highcross area in recent years, more is also known about life in Anglo-Saxon Leicester, illustrated with scenes drawn by Mike Codd. Excavations in Leicester from the medieval period also offer insights into domestic and industrial structures, industries such as tanning and brewing, the ‘lost churches’ of St Peter, St Michael and St Clement, and investigations into the site of Leicester Abbey.

Other sections focus on the one-day ‘Big Dig’ community archaeology project at Great Easton, and the community excavation project at Oakham Castle over two seasons – both striking examples of how productive such collaborations can be. Similarly, the student training and research excavations at Bradgate Park from 2015 – 2019, aimed to enhance community involvement in ‘the understanding and presentation of important regional monuments for the benefit of the wider public’. The book is edited by Gavin Speed and is available from the University of Leicester online bookshop at [Secrets from the Soil | shop@le](http://SecretsfromtheSoil.shop@le.ac.uk). Visit [Secrets from the Soil – new book launched! – ULAS News](http://SecretsfromtheSoil-newbooklaunched!-ULASNews) for a more detailed account of the book and the work of ULAS itself.



### THROWN TO THE LIONS? NEW EVIDENCE REVEALED FOR THE USE OF LIONS DURING EXECUTIONS IN ROMAN BRITAIN

An elaborately-decorated Roman bronze key handle was discovered by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) below the floor of a late Roman town house excavated in the city in 2016. This portrays the execution of captives in the arena by throwing them to lions. A ‘Barbarian’ can be seen grappling with a lion, together with four naked youths ‘cowering in terror’. Roman law sanctioned the execution of criminals and prisoners of war in the arena through the public spectacle of throwing them to the beasts; defined by the Latin term *damnatio ad bestias*.

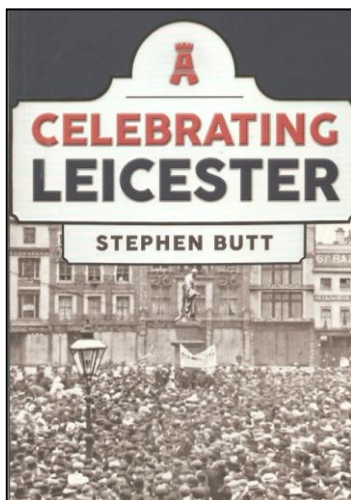


After conservation, the key handle was studied at King's College London, and the findings have recently been published in the journal *Britannia* (August 2021). Dr Gavin Speed, who led the excavations at the site off Great Central Street in Leicester and is a co-author on the study says: 'When first found, it appeared as an indistinguishable bronze object, but after we carefully cleaned off the soil remarkably we revealed several small faces looking back at us, it was absolutely astounding. Nothing quite like this has been discovered anywhere in the Roman Empire before'. For further information about the key handle and its wider context, visit [Thrown to the Lions? New evidence revealed for the use of lions during executions in Roman Britain – ULAS News](#).

## SOME RECENT PUBLICATIONS

### CELEBRATING LEICESTER

Stephen Butt  
Amberley, 2021, pp96, illus,  
ISBN 9781398106543, £15.99



Stephen Butt's latest book ranges far and wide as it celebrates the achievements of Leicester people and their contribution to the city's industries, built environment, heritage, culture and identity – and it has some surprises in store. How many of us knew, for example, that Nicola Pellow, while an undergraduate to the former Leicester Polytechnic, now De Montfort University, wrote the machine code for the first ever web browser to work on a computer while working under Tim Berners-Lee at the HQ of the European Council for Nuclear Research?

More familiar figures include Thomas Cook, Lord Attenborough and Sir David Attenborough, and the explorer Alfred Russel Wallace, co-discoverer with Charles Darwin of the theory of natural selection. Mary Ellen 'Nellie' Taylor had the distinction of being the subject of one of the first police surveillance photographs in England, later serving a three month sentence in Holloway Prison for her suffragette activities. A number of local inventions are also celebrated, among them Bostik glue and BluTac, an 'accidental by-product'. Local companies, charities and sports have a section to themselves; and there may also be some surprises among the buildings featured in the book – such as St Aidan's church in New Parks, which was designed by Sir Basil Spence, architect of the new Coventry Cathedral. It concludes with a focus on music, arts and the media, encompassing BBC Radio Leicester, the first local radio station to be established by the BBC; Sue Townsend's 'Adrian Mole' novels; and singers and groups including John Lord, Englebert Humperdinck, Showaddywaddy and Kasabian.

## 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.**

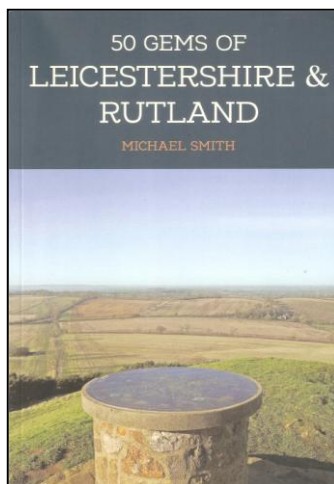
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## 50 GEMS OF LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND

Michael Smith, Amberley, 2021, 96pp, illus, ISBN 9781445697000, £15.99



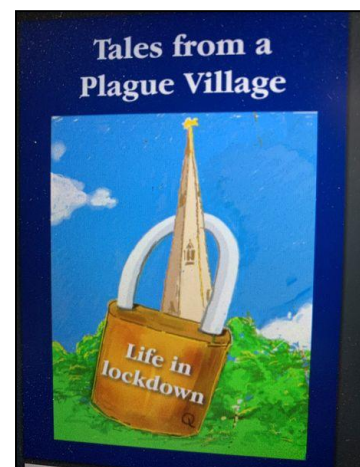
This book will hold much of interest for residents of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, however well they feel they know the area. Take, for example, Halliday's Folly in the Rutland village of Greetham, the former home of a stonemason, nicknamed as such in the 19<sup>th</sup> century from his habit of decorating his workshop with fragments of medieval masonry acquired during the repair or restoration of churches.

For visitors to the area it offers an excellent way of planning what to see. Each entry is around two pages long, but with sufficient information to give a good sense of the main points of interest, along with an address and postcode, and in many cases, a website link for further information. The Leicestershire 'gems' include Burrough Hill Iron Age Hill Fort, the Watermead country parks, the gargoyles and grotesques inside and outside the parish church at Tilton on the Hill, and the Triumph Visitor Experience in Hinckley - along with a number of lock-ups in North West Leicestershire. The Rutland section of the book takes in Rutland Water, Oakham and Uppingham, and 'steeple-chasing' around several interesting parish churches. As the author says, a tour of these would be 'a pleasant and interesting way of spending an afternoon' in itself!

## TALES FROM A PLAGUE VILLAGE: LIFE IN LOCKDOWN (QUENIBOROUGH)

Bharat Patel and Andrea Waind, Anchor Press, 2021, £10

These reflections on the experience of lockdown by villagers in Queniborough open with a quote from *The Plague* by Albert Camus on the value of recording 'a host of seemingly trivial details which yet have their importance' in a time of chaos – of the kind that the 'normal historian' passes over. Although specific to one Leicestershire village, they capture the full range of experiences with which so many other people will identify, including those of working on the front line of the NHS, or feeling anxious about essential treatment being delayed, and the great sadness of not being able to visit loved ones in care homes, or 'grieve properly with our loved ones' due to restricted attendance at funerals. Others recall the 'joy' of finally acquiring a bag of plain flour, or the ravages of do-it-yourself haircuts.



A large section of the book is devoted to the 'Plague Diary' written by Andrea Waind from April 2021 for her family - 'And posterity, of course'. Along with a daily commentary on the wider world of infection rates, shelves stripped bare of hand gel, and mixed messages from politicians, she records the pleasure of rediscovering table tennis, and hearing a woman on the radio saying that 'without Botox she can see her face ageing in the mirror, like the Evil Queen in Snow White'. The thoughts of children in Queniborough are also recorded in a section entitled 'Innocence Lost', many in the form of poems or mock front pages of newspapers. In the words of one poem: 'And when this is all over, we will all say I'm glad it's not like that today'. All profits from the book go to charitable causes.

## A HISTORICAL FOOTNOTE

Local agricultural shows, along with the annual Royal Agricultural Show, were very popular with the general public in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century - as well as providing 'an exertion to improving stock' to farmers and breeders. In July 1868 the Royal Agricultural Show was held in Leicester, on what was then the Racecourse and is now Victoria Park. This report is from the *Leicester Guardian*, 22 July 1868.

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'Monday was the first day of the special trains from the various large towns on the different lines of the [Midland] railway, and from about nine o'clock in the morning till afternoon the Railway Station was a scene of constant bustle, the trains being constantly arriving and discharging loads of passengers on the excursion platform. The preparations, however, proved thoroughly adequate to the traffic, and the numerous arrivals, as far as we can learn, were able to make their way from the trains without accident. 'Trains were run from Bradford, Leeds, and Sheffield; Manchester, Buxton and Matlock; Hitchen and Bedford; Camden Road and St. Alban's; Hull, Market Rasen etc.; Cambridge, St. Ives, Huntingdon etc.; Birmingham, Nuneaton etc.; Loughborough, Melton, Kettering; altogether about twenty trains...

'About half past nine, the visitors began to pour onto the ground, in numbers so great that for some time it was thought that additional entrances would have had to be opened, and by 11 o'clock the numbers who had passed the turnstiles were 20,886; by 12.30 this number had increased to 24,226, and by 1.30 to 42,327... by seven o'clock it was understood the numbers reached over 52,000... Yesterday witnessed the close of the Royal Agricultural Show, and we may say that the finish was worthy of the beginning... The ground was not so inconveniently crowded as on Monday. Still, at various points of attraction, it was with great difficulty that progress could be made... not a single accident has occurred in connection with the show from the time the foundations were laid on the 1<sup>st</sup> of April until now, which is most remarkable considering how closely the agriculturalists thronged around the machinery in motion'.

A report of the Northamptonshire Agricultural Society show in 1862, held at Burghley near Stamford, gives some idea of the scale of county shows, and the number of entries they could attract. According to the *Leicester Journal*, 25 July 1862, Burghley was chosen 'although almost out of the boundary of its operations, in consequence of the President, Lord Burghley, having some connection with the town... About eleven acres of the Park were staked out—a great portion of which was used for the exhibition of stock and agricultural implements, and the remainder for the floral and horticultural show. The arrangements were very perfect, covered sheds having been erected for the horses—232 in number. The show is said have exceeded in extent and value that of any previous show of the Society. In the 34 classes for beasts consisting of fat stock, grazing stock, breeding and store stock, there were no less than 165 entries, of which 29 were in the classes open to all England; in the 15 classes for sheep, the entries numbered 74... The Floral and Horticultural part of the exhibition also proved a great attraction—especially to the ladies...

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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](http://www.lahs.org.uk).

**THE LEICESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL &  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

THE GUILDHALL, GUILDHALL LANE, LEICESTER. LE1 5FQ.  
Registered Charity No 503240

President:  
*Robert Rutland*

**Membership Form**

**Categories**

- Individual Membership      £30      
Family Membership          £40      
Student Membership        FREE\*

Mr. Matthew Beamish,  
Hon. Membership Secretary LAHS,  
c/o ULAS,  
School of Archaeology and Ancient History,  
University of Leicester, University Road,  
Leicester LE1 7RH  
Tel 0116 2525234  
Email: membership@lahs.org.uk

Surname:..... Forename:..... Title:..... Initials:.....

Address: .....  
.....  
.....

Post Code:..... Telephone:.....

Email Address:.....

*(Only to be used for communicating information with members. \*Student membership is contingent upon you providing the email address given to you by your educational institution).*

I wish to become a member at the rate indicated above.

I enclose a cheque/ I have paid by Paypal/ I have made a Standing Order arrangement with my bank/Please send me a Standing Order form *(delete as applicable)*.

*If paying by Standing Order please either make your own arrangement with your bank/building society, or request a form from Hon. Mem. Sec. Please make any payments to Sort Code 60-60-06, Account Number 87270080.*

*Alternatively pay by Paypal: Payments@lahs.org.uk*



**Data Protection Act**

I/We agree to my/our names being stored on a computer database

Signature/s:..... Date:.....

**Gift Aid Declaration**

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all qualifying previous and/or future subscription payments and/or donations I have made to LAHS (delete as applicable). I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand that LAHS will reclaim 28p of tax on every £1 that I gave up to 5 April 2008 and will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after 6 April 2008.

Surname: ..... Title:..... Initials:.....

Address: .....  
.....  
.....

Post Code: .....

Signature/s:..... Date:.....