

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



## NEWSLETTER 132 Autumn 2026

Welcome to the latest edition of the LAHS Newsletter. Contributions to future editions of the Newsletter are as always welcome at any time. These can be emailed to the Newsletter editor, Cynthia Brown, at [newsletter@lahs.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@lahs.org.uk).

### LAHS LECTURE PROGRAMME FOR 2025 - 26

All lectures commence at 7.30 pm. Most of this season's lectures will be delivered online via Zoom, with the link to be emailed to members several days before the event. There will be access to the Zoom waiting room from 7.00pm. Further details of each lecture will be available at [Events - LAHS](#) in due course.

#### Thursday 10 September 2026

The Guildhall, Leicester, LE1 5FQ

***Scarborough Lecture - A Rebel Princess: Eleanor de Montfort, Countess of Leicester and Pembroke, and the Second Barons' War (1264-7)***

Louise Wilkinson, Professor of Medieval Studies, University of Lincoln

#### Thursday 8 October 2026

***The Archaeology of Leicester in 20 Digs***

**On-line access only**

Dr Gavin Speed, Project Manager, University of Leicester Archaeological Services

#### Thursday 12 November 2026

***Nanpantan: Leicestershire's forgotten holiday destination***

**On-line access only**

Dr Pam Fisher, Leicestershire Victoria County History Trust

#### Thursday 10 December 2026

***From Charnia to Charnwood: Community Archaeology in the Charnwood Forest Geopark***

**On-line access only**

Mathew Morris, Chair, Leicester Fieldworkers and Project Officer, University of Leicester Archaeological Services

#### Thursday 14 January 2027

***Sudden Death: 19<sup>th</sup> century coroners' inquests***

**On-line access only**

Dr Sophie Michell, Visiting Fellow at the Open University

**Thursday 11th February 2027**

***Members' Evening***

**Venue to be confirmed**

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).

**Thursday 11th March 2027, Jewry Wall Museum, Leicester, LE1 4LB**

***North Lecture - Troy Story: Influences on the Rutland mosaic***

**Jewry Wall Museum, Leicester, LE1 4LB**

Dr Jane Masségli, Associate Professor of Ancient History, University of Leicester

**Thursday 8 April 2027**

***The revolt against the Poor Law***

**On-line access only**

Ned Newitt, author and social historian

**Thursday 13 May 2027**

***Roads and religion: an excavation on the Fosse Way at Enderby***

**On-line access only**

David Ingham, Project Manager, Albion Archaeology

**Thursday 8 July 2027**

***LAHS AGM, followed by a lecture - Market Towns in Leicestershire***

**The Guildhall, Leicester, LE1 5FQ**

Dr Len Holden, Secretary, Market Harborough Historical Society

## **LAHS GRANTS**

LAHS currently offers three types of grants - Research, Acquisition and Public Heritage – and encourages applications for these.

### **RESEARCH GRANTS**

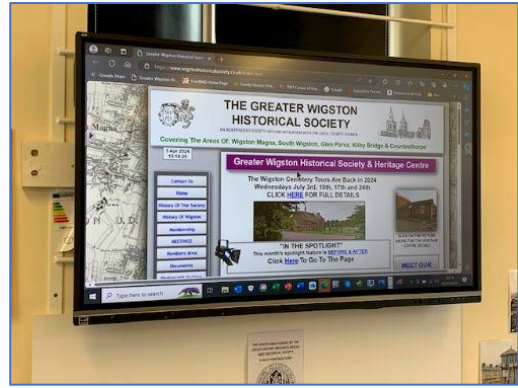
The Society has always encouraged research into the history and archaeology of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, and its publications often contain the results of such research. If you feel your project may be eligible for a Research Grant, please read the guidance notes at [Research Grants - LAHS](#). If you decide to proceed, complete the application form on the same web page, and email it to [grantapplications@lahs.org.uk](mailto:grantapplications@lahs.org.uk). The closing date for the next round of applications is 30 September 2026.

### **ACQUISITION GRANTS**

This emergency fund exists to support the purchase of historic items that have significant value to the heritage of Leicester and Leicestershire by accredited organisations. They can include historic and archaeological objects (including Treasure), paintings, archival material (including photographic), and other materials that are considered to be relevant. The projects that the Acquisition Fund has supported include [At Risk War Memorials Project](#) funding for the purchase of [Humberstone Road Congregational Church's Great War Roll of Honour](#). Please see [Acquisition Grants - LAHS](#) for more guidance and an application form. There are no annual deadlines for applications, but potential applicants should contact the chair of the Acquisitions Committee to discuss their case, in advance of submitting the required form.

## PUBLIC HERITAGE GRANTS

This fund exists to provide grants to history and heritage societies and projects within Leicestershire and Rutland that will enable engagement with, and the presentation of, research to the general public. See [Public Heritage Fund - LAHS](#) for guidance, an application form, and examples of recent grants, which include one towards the purchase of an interactive Smart Board for Greater Wigston Heritage Centre, to enable easier engagement with the collections by their visitors. If you would like to discuss a potential application, email [phfund@lahs.org.uk](mailto:phfund@lahs.org.uk). The closing date for the latest round of applications is 30 September 2026.



## LAHS HAS JOINED THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY – WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

LAHS has recently taken out a Society Membership of the [British Association for Local History](#) (BALH). This gives our members a 40% discount on BALH's online lectures (usually £5). To claim this discount, visit the [events section of their website](#), click on a BALH lecture, then 'book now'. Use the code F-37734E for the discount, and enter 'Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society' as the organisation. PDF copies of BALH quarterly publications are sent to the LAHS Hon Secretary, and will then be shared among our members. These are *The Local Historian*, *Local History News*, and the *BALH e-Newsletter*, which will be passed on via email when they are published. We will circulate the May 2026 editions of *Local History News* and *The Local Historian* in separate emails, and you can find the latest newsletter at [visit here for the latest](#). Discounts for future BALH events will also be available to you, and will be signposted in the LAHS circulars to members as and when they are announced.

## LAHS DISSERTATION PRIZES IN LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY 2027

LAHS awards four annual dissertation prizes for extended projects that focus on the Archaeology and/or History of Leicestershire and/or Rutland. There are two prizes for Archaeology, for the best Undergraduate (BA/BSc) and the best Post-Graduate (M-level) dissertations, and two prizes for History, one for Undergraduate and one for Postgraduate levels. The subject area includes comparative studies, where Leicestershire/Rutland is one of the main comparisons used and where examples drawn from the counties comprise the majority of those used. It also includes art and design histories, and museum and heritage studies where the focus is on Leicestershire and/or Rutland. The 2027 prize is for dissertations written during the 2025 - 26 academic year. Dissertations should not previously have been published or be in publication.

Each prize winner will be awarded £250 and the opportunity to publish some of their work in the *Leicestershire Historian* and present it at the annual members' evening. The winners will also be awarded LAHS membership for one year. Copies of the winning dissertations will be printed and lodged in the LAHS library, in The Guildhall, Leicester. The deadline for the awards is 31 December 2026. An application form should be submitted along with a copy of the dissertation. These are available on the LAHS website at [Dissertation Prizes 027 - LAHS](#), and electronic copies of each are required. Enquiries should be directed to the convenor of the prize committee at [competitions@lahs.org.uk](mailto:competitions@lahs.org.uk).

## NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

A reminder that Sunday 18 October will be the final day of opening this year before the regular winter closure during November, December, and January. All being well the Library will reopen on Sunday 7 February 2027.

**CAROLINE WESSEL** , 19 May 1942 – 9 June 2026, was a Vice President of LAHS and a prolific author. The Library has copies of the following which give an indication of her wide interests in Leicestershire.

Beaumanor armorial window: a Herrick pedigree. 2012.

Beaumanor WW11: secret listening station for Bletchley. 2022.

Beaumanor war and peace: the Curzon Herrick years. 2018.

Desford at the time of the Battle of Bosworth. 2015.

Desford personalities of the past. 2021.

Harry Simpson Gee 1842 – 1924: Leicester businessman, banker, philanthropist and family man. 2010.

Herricks & Beaumanor picture book. 2012.

Knights Hospitaller of St. John and their history in Leicestershire. 1999.

LOROS hospice care for Leicestershire and Rutland: celebrating 25 years helping others. 2011.

Lost mansions around Desford and Leicester Forest West. 1986.

Medieval heraldic stained glass (1450) in the church of St. Mary-in-the-Elms, Woodhouse... 2012.

Miss Lawton's almshouses [Leicester]. 2010.

Nichols' History of Leicestershire: a bi-centenary celebration. 2015.

125 years of charity organisation: LCOS to Leicester Charity Link. 2001.

The parish pump: a history of water in Desford. 1997.

Portrait of Beaumanor: an illustrated account of the ancestry and heraldry of the Herrick family, and of their home at Beaumanor. 1988.

Proud owners of Beaumanor 1086 – 1974. 2012.

Robert Herrick 1591 – 1674: poet and cousin of the Herricks of Beaumanor. 2012.

Tales of ten rectors: some Desford clergy 1209 – 2009. 2010.

Twentieth-century rectors of Desford. 2010.

The Library does not have copies of these:

Desford childhood: a publican's daughter remembers the Twenties. 1996. ( Kathleen Taylor and Caroline Wessel ).

Hinckley & Bosworth 1974 – 2024. [2024?].

History of the High Sheriffs in Leicestershire. 2000.

Remembering the Woodhouse airmen of 1942. 2021.

Caroline also wrote articles in the *Leicestershire Historian* and blogs for the LAHS website.

There are further articles on the Leicester University website ([www.ourhistory.le.ac.uk](http://www.ourhistory.le.ac.uk)).

A Memorial Service for Caroline was held in the Cathedral on 20 July. A copy of the Order of Service has been added to the Society's biography file.

Aubrey Stevenson, Hon. Librarian.

## OTHER NEWS

### LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL MUSEUMS

For information about current exhibitions at Leicestershire County Council Museums:

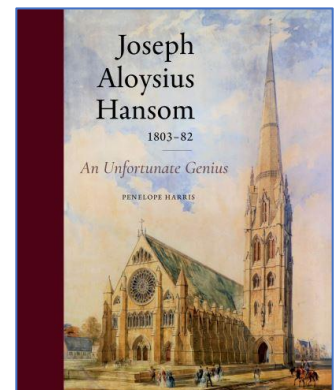
- Brush exhibition at Charnwood Museum until 27 September 2026 - <https://www.charnwoodmuseum.co.uk/temporary-exhibitions>
- Cut and Create at Melton, and the online Villiers Exhibition at <https://www.meltonmuseum.org/exhibitions>
- Walking Through Time continues across the county - <https://leicestershirecollections.org.uk/behind-the-scenes/walking-through-time-50-years-of-leicestershire-fieldworkers>

### NEW HERITAGE PANEL COMMEMORATING POLISH EX-SERVICEMEN'S CLUB

A new addition to Leicester City Council's Heritage Panels was recently unveiled on University Road, Leicester by the Lord Mayor, Cllr Kulwinder Singh Johal. It commemorates the club established for Polish ex-servicemen and women who served in the Second World War and made their home in Leicester after it ended – providing support and acting as a focus for Polish culture, traditions and community life. The panel has been placed opposite 11 University Road, where the club was located. For information about other Heritage Panels, or to download the *Leicester Heritage Trail*, see [Heritage Panel Project - Story of Leicester](#).

### JOSEPH ALOYSIUS HANSOM (1803 – 82): AN UNFORTUNATE GENIUS – ADVANCE NOTICE OF A NEW BIOGRAPHY

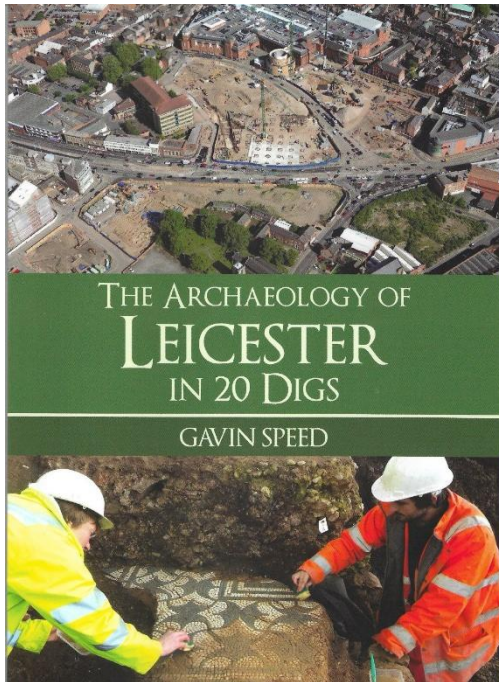
The author of this biography, Penelope Harris, gives an account of the architect of around 200 buildings across the British Isles and into France, mainly for Catholic and gentry patrons. Using original research material such as the diaries of his clerk of works, the author argues that far from being a self-seeking egoist, Hansom attempted to set up a college for budding architects and promoted building skills through his journal *The Builder*. This publication may be of particular interest to LAHS members because of Joseph Hansom's connections with Hinckley. It will be published by Unicorn Publishing on 1 October 2026: 464pp; hardback £50; ISBN 9781918271133. Further details at [Title Detail: Joseph Aloysius Hansom \(1803 82\) by Penelope Harris](#).



### ROBERT HALL MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH, LEICESTER – 125 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

The Grade II listed Robert Hall Memorial Baptist Church on Narborough Road, Leicester was designed by local architect Walter Brand of Leicester and completed 125 years ago. It was intended both as a memorial to the Rev Robert Hall, Pastor of Harvey Lane Baptist Chapel from 1807 to 1826, and to serve as a place of worship for the growing population of the West End area of Leicester as its population expanded. For more information about the church and its history, see [History - Robert Hall Baptist](#). This has links to a 1902 *Manual* and 1962 *Handbook*, in addition to a general overview.

## ARCHAEOLOGY



There is no question that Leicester is one of the most excavated cities in Britain, and *The Archaeology of Leicester in 20 Digs* by Dr Gavin Speed, Project Manager at the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS), offers an accessible guide to some of the most significant of the many 'digs' that have illuminated its history. The discovery of the lost grave of Richard III in 2012 is of course one of the most memorable, but it represents only a fraction of the heritage revealed across the centuries, from the Iron Age settlement onwards.

Taking a chronological approach to the digs themselves, it begins with the first large scale investigation of Roman Leicester, that of the Jewry Wall site, from 1936 – 39. This had been of interest to antiquarians since at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century when it was first recorded as a Roman construction by William Burton, and believed to be part of the Roman

baths following a small excavation in the 1770s by John Throsby. It was also novel in being led by a woman, Kathleen Kenyon, using a (then) modern box grid technique that revealed a baths complex of sufficient importance to be retained as a public monument.

This may be relatively well known, but many of the Roman artefacts subsequently displayed in the Jewry Wall Museum were discovered in the course of 'rescue' archaeology in the post-World War II period, in advance of mass clearance schemes for new housing and a ring-road. Among them were the Blue Boar townhouse (1958); the Roman forum in the area now known as Jubilee Square ((1965 – 73); and the Norfolk Street 'Cherry Orchard' villa (1975 and 1979 – 80). Alongside these went the excavation of the 13<sup>th</sup> century Augustinian friary by the River Soar, the first in Leicester to take environmental soil samples; the investigation of an Anglo-Saxon settlement in Bonners Lane (1993). The Shires shopping centre excavations (1988 – 89), by then an integral part of Leicester's planning process, was a rich source of Roman and medieval archaeology – as was the first fully developer-funded excavation at Causeway Lane in advance of a new HMRC tax office.

Richard III has his place, of course, but the 21<sup>st</sup> century has also been very productive so far in other ways: the former Merlin Works site on the western edge of the historic city (2007 and 2018), for example, shedding new light on Leicester's Iron Age origins; the exploration of a medieval merchant's undercroft below the BBC Radio Leicester studio; and most recently the excavation of Leicester Market Place, with 'remarkable' insights into the Roman and medieval towns. This is an innovative and very engaging approach to Leicester's history, one that not only offers accessible accounts of the excavations themselves, but also demonstrates how both archaeological techniques and the motivations and funding behind successive 'digs' have also evolved, along with the organisations conducting the work – not least the University of Leicester Archaeological Service (ULAS) where the author is a project manager.

Gavin Speed, *The Archaeology of Leicester in 20 Digs*, Amberley Publishing, 2026, 96pp, illus, ISBN 9781398127586, £15.99

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

All details are correct at the time of writing. Please check nearer the dates.

### CHARNWOOD MUSEUM

**Wednesday 23 September 2026, 7.30 pm; doors open 7 pm**

**Charnwood Museum, Queen's Park, Loughborough, LE11 3DU**

***WAAF Irene Elsie May Guy***

Mark Smith

WAAF Irene Elsie May Guy is the only female casualty buried in Loughborough Cemetery who has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission memorial. She was a local girl and only 28 when she died. Mark Smith attempts to shed some light on who Irene was and how she died. Members £3; non-members £5. Booking Essential - Please visit the museum and talk to a member of staff or call 01509 233754. Payment can be taken over the phone.

**Saturday 10 October, 10 am – 3 pm**

**Charnwood Museum, Queen's Park,  
Loughborough, LE11 3DU**

***Finds Day***

Whether you are a seasoned metal detectorist, or you have made a chance find in your garden, you are invited to bring your archaeological finds to the Charnwood Museum for identification and recording with the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Our local Finds Liaison Officer will be more than happy to take a look and give you more information, as well as explain how finds are recorded with the Scheme to help advance knowledge of the history and archaeology of England and Wales. Free event; no booking required.

### 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.

Established 1970. Extensive stock. Free catalogues, postal only.

**COTTAGE BOOKS,  
THE COTTAGE, REMPSTONE ROAD  
GELSMOOR, COLEORTON,  
LEICESTERSHIRE  
LE67 8HR**

e-mail [jenny@boyd-cropley.co.uk](mailto:jenny@boyd-cropley.co.uk)

### FRIENDS OF THE RECORD OFFICE

**Wednesday 16 September 2026, 2.30**

**Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, Long Street, Wigston, LE18 2AH**

***Industry and Ardour – a history of allotments in Leicester***

Cynthia Brown, social historian and author

Allotments are now more popular than ever – but there has always been more to them than producing food or flowers. This talk will look at their origins in Leicester to rescue working men from 'the deadly fountain of poverty', through to 'back to the land' movements in the later 19<sup>th</sup> century, and their crucial role in digging for victory in both World Wars. It will also consider the role of allotment societies, their social aspects, and some of the challenges they have faced – rabbits not least among them. Admission free; non-members welcome.

**FRIENDS OF RUTLAND COUNTY MUSEUM AND RUTLAND LOCAL HISTORY AND RECORD SOCIETY**

Rutland County Museum, Catmose Street, Oakham, LE15 6HW, 7.30 pm

**Thursday 8 October 2026**

***'Days of Shaking' - Rutland families in the Civil War***

Richard Hunt

**GREATER WIGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**Tuesday 15 September 2026**

***A Walk Along Hadrian's Wall – illustrated talk***

Adrian Walker

**Tuesday 20 October 2026**

***Queen Eleanor Cycle Rides***

Judith Rout

**Tuesday 17 November 2026**

***Rossa's Ice Cream Story***

Ralph Rossa

Meetings are held at the Little Hill Primary School, Launceston Road, Wigston, LE18 2GZ, at 7.15 pm (doors open 6.45 pm). Free admission to members; non-members £4. Any enquiries – [enquiries@wigstonhistoricalsociety.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@wigstonhistoricalsociety.co.uk).

**FRIENDS OF WELFORD ROAD CEMETERY**

**Sunday 18 October 2026, 10.30 am, Starting at the Visitor Centre, Welford Road entrance**

***Conflicts - guided walk***

This walk will cover the history of the Cemetery, and in particular the stories of those who died or served their country in numerous conflicts around the world. Cost £6, including refreshments in the Visitor Centre afterwards. Places are limited, so pre-booking is essential by emailing [fowrcem@gmail.com](mailto:fowrcem@gmail.com). The walk will last around 90 minutes.

**HIDDEN HISTORIES – GUIDED WALKS**

**Sunday 1 November 2026, 2 pm; £7**

***History of the Golden Mile – Diwali***

Guide – Jim Butler

Just before this year's Diwali celebrations, uncover the story behind how the sudden influx of Ugandan Asian refugees fleeing the tyranny of Idi Amin rejuvenated a dilapidated Victorian area of Leicester and led to the creation of The Golden Mile. Booking at [Event Details – Leicester Museums](#).

**Saturday 31st October 2026/Sunday 1st November 2026, 7 pm; £7**

***Haunting Histories of Leicester***

Explore the darker side of Leicester's past to uncover tales of witches, curses, murder and betrayal along the streets and through the churchyards of the heart of the ancient city.

Booking at [Event Details – Leicester Museums](#).

## **JEWRY WALL LIVING HISTORY (FORMERLY FRIENDS OF JEWRY WALL MUSEUM)**

**Sunday 27 September 2026, 11 am – 3.30 pm, St Nicholas Church, Leicester, LE1 4LB**

***Artefacts Through Time***

**Sunday 25 October 2026, 11 am – 3.30 pm, St Nicholas Church, Leicester, LE1 4LB**

***Blood, Gore and Folklore***

For further details, email [jewrywallfriends@outlook.com](mailto:jewrywallfriends@outlook.com).

## **LEICESTER CITY, COUNTY AND RUTLAND AT RISK WAR MEMORIALS PROJECT**

**Open Day, Saturday 14 November 2026, Chancel, Rear of All Saints church, Highcross Street, Leicester, LE1 4PH, 11 am – 3.30 pm**

An opportunity to view the memorials housed here, and to find out more about them. Free entry; all welcome. For further details, see [Leicester City, County & Rutland At Risk War Memorials Project - At Risk War Memorials Project](#).

## **LEICESTER CITY MUSEUMS – BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENT**

**17 – 21 October 2026, 11 am – 4.30 pm, Newarke Houses Museum, Leicester, LE2 7BY**

***Windrush: the Legacy***

*Windrush: the Legacy* celebrates the lives, achievements and lasting contributions of Leicester's Windrush Generation, through portraits by Denise Lensi, personal video testimonies, and a recreated Windrush front room. Visitors are invited to explore the stories of those who journeyed from the Caribbean to Britain after answering the call to help rebuild the nation following the Second World War. Free entry. For further details, see [Windrush: The Legacy – Serendipity Institute for Black Arts and Heritage](#).

## **LEICESTER VAUGHAN COLLEGE**

**Tuesday 29 September 2026, 1pm, Jewry Wall Museum Café, Leicester, LE1 4LB**

***Archaeology Discovery Circle***

Meet for a tour led by a member of the Circle. For more information about the Discovery Circle, its aims and how to join it, see [Archaeology Discovery Circle - Leicester Vaughan College](#).

## **LEICESTER CIVIC SOCIETY – GUIDED WALKS**

These walks are led by James Gunn. If you have any queries, please contact him at [events@leicestercivicsociety.org.uk](mailto:events@leicestercivicsociety.org.uk), tel 07799 035462.

**Wednesday 16 September 2027, 11 am - free Heritage Days event**

***Wharf Street***

A walking tour along Leicester's Wharf Street, led by James Gunn. Wharf Street is perhaps one of the less glamorous parts of Leicester, but includes plenty of social and building history along the way. Amongst other things, hear about a well regarded cricket pitch, the Elephant Man, a Grand Prix racing driver, a canal, and the poor housing conditions of working class families who lived in the area. The walk starts outside Curve Theatre, Rutland Street, and will finish around 1 pm near Leicester College on Belgrave Road. Pre-booking is essential at [Wharf Street, guided walk - Leicester Civic Society](#).

**Saturday 19 September 2027, 11 am - free Heritage Days event**

***High Street and The Leicester Lanes***

Learn about this iconic street and the 'Lanes' that lead off it. Hear about collecting the 'divi' at the Co-op, a Cameo appearance, a Leicester coffee and cocoa house, and much more. The walk is led by James Gunn, and starts and finishes at the Clock Tower. Pre-booking is essential at [High Street and The Leicester Lanes, guided walk - Leicester Civic Society](#).

**Saturday 10 October 2026, 10.30 am, £6 members; £8 non-members**

***Haymarket and Belgrave Gate – a roundabout walk***

Learn about these two roads that make up one of the major routes into Leicester, along with what is perhaps Leicester's most recognisable landmark, the hotels that used to stand nearby, some of the 'big stars' of the day that frequented Leicester's entertainment 'hot spots', and the people who lived in the poor housing that previously covered much of this area. The walk starts at the Clock Tower and finishes near to Charles Street bus station. Pre-booking is essential at [Haymarket & Belgrave Gate, guided walk - Leicester Civic Society](#).

**LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY – LEICESTER GROUP**

All meetings start at 7.30 pm. Doors open 7 pm. For events organised by other branches of LRFHS, see [Welcome to the Leicestershire and Rutland Family History Society - Leicestershire & Rutland Family History Society](#) 'What's On'.

**Wednesday 9 September 2026, Leicester Friends' Meeting House, 16 Queen's Road, Leicester, LE2 1WP**

***Leicester's Infidels***

Ned Newitt

**Wednesday 14 October 2026, Oadby Granville Tennis Club, Leicester Road, Oadby, LE2 4AB**

***The Life and times of Mary Attenborough***

Richard Graves

**LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND BRANCH WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION**

**Council Chamber, Braunstone Civic Centre, Kingsway, Braunstone Town, Leicester, LE3 2PP**

**Monday 21 September 2026, 7.30 pm**

***Le Cateau - a reappraisal***

Major (retired) Phil Watson

General Horace Smith-Dorrien's decision to 'Stand and Fight' around the French town of Le Cateau against a greatly superior German force committed the British II Corps to a close-range artillery battle, with devastating effects on infantry advancing over open ground. However, this heroic stand did relieve the pressure on the remainder of the BEF, buying them vital time to continue to withdraw towards Paris.

**Monday 19 October 2026, 7.30 pm**

***The Duty of a Briton***

Mark Gamble

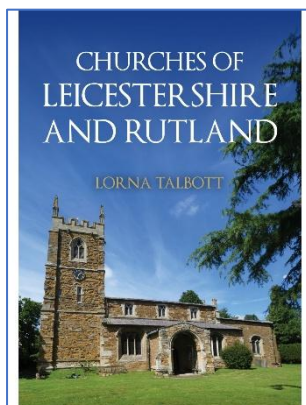
At the outbreak of the Great War, the British community in Argentina remained loyal to their mother country despite Argentina's official neutrality. Some 4,800 British-Argentine volunteers returned to Europe to enlist in the armed forces and this is their story.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

### CHURCHES OF LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND

Lorna Talbott

Amberley, 2026, 234 pp, illus, ISBN 9781398125278, £15.99



The churches of Leicestershire and Rutland are an integral part of the history of the two counties from the medieval period onwards, offering insights into the wealth or otherwise of localities, rural life, industrialisation and urban expansion. Many also reflect changes in the religious context of different periods, in architectural styles, and the restoration and repair that was a prominent, if not always popular, feature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some like St Nicholas in Leicester, include Roman or Saxon fragments, while at the other end of the spectrum the 21<sup>st</sup> century has seen the interior of Leicester Cathedral transformed, firstly to accommodate the tomb of Richard III - and later as part of the recent 'Leicester Cathedral

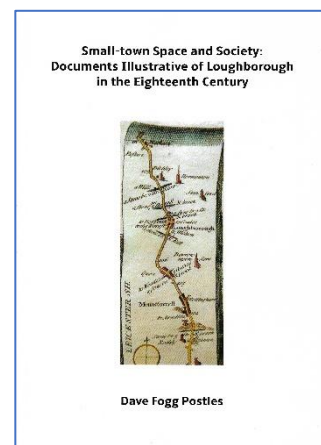
Revealed' project of repair, renewal and archaeological exploration. Some of the churches may be familiar in name at least, but others perhaps less well known certainly deserve their place, like the tiny church of St Mary at Wigston Parva. The oldest parts date from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and the nave and chancel share a single space – but the church is also unusual in being located within private land with no churchyard – burials taking place in the graveyard of the nearby village. The book covers 50 churches in total, all placed firmly in their historical context and accompanied by high quality images.

### SMALL-TOWN SPACE AND SOCIETY: DOCUMENTS ILLUSTRATIVE OF LOUGHBOROUGH IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Dave Fogg Postles

The author, 2026, 101 pp, available free online at [manorbask.pdf](https://manorbask.pdf)

The spatial and social development of Loughborough in the 18<sup>th</sup> century is demonstrated here in a wide range of documents, from the legacy of a house in 1702-03 to the dissolution of a partnership between two drapers in 1807 – a date that allows a perspective on the impact of the improved Soar navigation from 1777. The Introduction to the book explains its chronological approach as it relates to landownership in the town, and gives a useful overview of the governance of Loughborough, including bye-laws to regulate husbandry and prosecute environmental 'nuisances', and the value of Land Tax assessments in analysing the use and control of urban space. To give just one example of other entries, many of those from parish registers in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century indicate the occupations of fathers, entered 'haphazardly' at first and then more consistently – providing a very accessible source for family historians as well as an invaluable overview of the local economy at that time. There are many other insights into the local economy, and can only imagine the labour involved in searching out these documents, collating them, and making them available free of charge to the reader. We should be duly grateful for it – and also for the fact that Dave Postles did not feel the need to impose his own analysis on them, leaving the reader to make of them, and use them, as they will.



## A HISTORICAL FOOTNOTE

As the new school year begins, you may be interested in this extract from the Board of Education *Handbook of Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers and Others Concerned in the Work of Public Elementary Schools*, published by HMSO in 1937. I have focused on its guidance on arts and crafts because it includes this advertisement (below) for the Dryad Handicrafts company of Leicester. The language is of course of its time. The *Handbook's* views on the teaching of history are for another day...

### THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF ART AND CRAFT

It is clear that training in draughtsmanship, although it may still be of value as a means to an end. Is not a sufficient end in itself. The love of drawing, painting, and making things, seems to be instinctive in every normal child. By such means he expresses ideas about the things which surround him, long before he can use the written word, and this outlet for his lively imagination must be fostered and developed to the full. The spontaneity, the freshness and vigour which are characteristic of the free expression of young children's drawing and painting should be recognised as of greater importance than an imitative accuracy, but it should equally be recognised that for the normal child it is as natural to make progress towards adult standards in the language of drawing as in the written word...

The teacher should find time for discussion, for consideration of examples of the art and craftsmanship, hand or machine, not only of the past but of the present. For this purpose pictures and illustrations may be used when original works are not available, as they seldom will be. His method of teaching will not be confined to the study of museum pieces, but will deal with contemporary building and articles of everyday use. As a background to these more positive influences which are brought to bear on the child's development, there will be those which may be considered as more incidental but none the less very important: the influence of the environment provided by the class room, the school, and its surroundings, and the active part which the children are called upon to take in creating that environment.

To sum it up, it may be said that the purpose of including instruction in Art and Craft in the education of the child is, twofold:

- (1) To encourage the child's natural impulse to give visible form to his ideas and to develop in him the power to do this with courage, sincerity and vividness;
- (2) To make him actively aware of what is beautiful in nature and art and what is fine and honest in craftsmanship...

(Original price 2 shillings; bought in a charity shop at the inflated price of 50p).

### DRYAD HANDICRAFTS

Good results cannot be obtained with poor materials, therefore insist on using DRYAD handwork materials, tools and apparatus, all of which are carefully designed or selected by experienced craftworkers, who are acquainted with the teacher's requirements and the means at his disposal.

The Dryad range also includes needlework materials, artists' materials and nursery school toys, games and equipment.

Dryad Press books on Handicrafts give helpful suggestions, practical instructions and sound design.

If you require any help or suggestions or would like to examine samples of any materials, apply to the address below.

*Illustrated catalogues post free on request to bona fide teachers*

**DEPT. 72, ST. NICHOLAS STREET, LEICESTER**  
LONDON SHOWROOM: 22, BLOOMSBURY STREET, W.C.1

---

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).