

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



NEWSLETTER 131 Summer 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.

LAHS LECTURE PROGRAMME FOR 2025 - 26

Thursday 9 July 2026, The Guildhall, Leicester, LE1 5FQ, 7.30 pm
LAHS Annual General Meeting (LAHS members only) to be followed by a lecture
Recreating a Roman Cavalry Helmet from Hallaton
Helen Sharp, Curator (Archaeology) Leicestershire County Council Museums

The Roman cavalry helmet from the Hallaton Treasure – a collection of stunning finds buried at a Late Iron Age ritual site in Leicestershire – has recently been recreated in the form of two contrasting replicas. This talk will discuss the recent project to re-evaluate the helmet's iconography, and investigate what the helmet may tell us about wider themes of religion, propaganda, status, and the relationships between invaders and native populations. More information about the AGM itself will be circulated in advance.

LAHS NEWS

SUCCESSFUL LAHS CROWD-FUNDING CAMPAIGN FOR THE LEICESTERSHIRE TORC

The LAHS-organised Crowd-funding appeal for £10,000 to help Leicestershire Museums to acquire a middle Bronze Age gold torc, was very successful. Along with Leicestershire Museums and the Leicestershire Fieldworkers, our members contributed substantially towards the return of this unique piece to the county. LAHS also made a grant of £5,000 from the Society's Acquisitions Fund. In due course the torc will be displayed at Market Harborough Museum. We will keep you informed!

NEW CO- EDITORS FOR LEICESTERSHIRE HISTORIAN

We are very pleased to announce that we have new co-editors for the *Leicestershire Historian*. In the recent membership survey, this was our members' favourite publication (just!), so we are keen to ensure its continuity after the long and excellent tenure of Joyce Lee. Dr Pamela Fisher and Dr Susan Kilby, who are expert local historians, will take on the editorship jointly from autumn 2026. Cynthia Brown will continue as book reviews' editor. The co-editors invite submissions of articles to the *Leicestershire Historian*. If you would like to discuss a submission in advance, please contact them at editorhistorian@lahs.org.uk.

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY

Books and pamphlets

As always we are grateful to authors, at least six of whom are Society members, and publishers for donating copies for review (see *Leicestershire Historian*) and subsequently the Library.

DYER, L. Loughborough at work. 2025.

HARTLEY, R. 'The Master of these Marvels': George Stephenson and his circle of genius. 2024. This includes his house Alton Grange, Snibston, Leicester & Swannington and Syston & Peterborough Railways.

KNAPP, S. High flying around: memories of the 1960s Leicester music and arts scene. Vol. 2. 2025.

KNAPP, S. Mods two city connection: memories of the 1960s Leicester and Nottingham Mod scene. 2019.

KNIGHT, J. A wealth of extraordinary luminaries from Coalville and district. 2025.

MARQUIS, S. Old inns of Wigston Magna, also the history of beer making. 2026.

POSTLES, D. Worlds of framework knitters in Leicestershire c1600 – c1850. 2026.

SPAB Kibworth Harcourt post mill. 2025.

TRUBSHAW, B. Survey of Swithland slate gravestone literature. Rev. March 2026. See: www.hoap.co.uk/slate_gravestone_literature.pdf

ZIENTEK, J.

Along Great Central lines. 20 vols. Rev. ed. 2025.

The Church of England churches in the City of Leicester Deanery past and present... 2026.

The Hardman Stained Glass Company of Birmingham. 2 ed. 2026.

Humberstone village in pictures and documents: the 2000 Humberstone history exhibition. 2 vols. 2026.

ALSO: the 2003 exhibition. 3 vols. 2026. AND: the 2008 exhibition. 2 vols. 2026.

Launde Abbey Retreat House. 3 vols. 2026.

Letters from Poland : letters from members of the Zientek family from 1949 – 2025. 2 vols. 2025.

Mediaeval stained glass of Leicestershire. 2025.

New beginnings: the licensing of the Revd, Riffat Zamurad as Vicar of St. Mary... Humberstone... 2 ed. 2026.

Vicars of St. Mary's church Humberstone from 1794... 2026.

It should be mentioned that all these pamphlets are extensively illustrated.

Periodicals

Antiquaries Journal. 105. 2005.

British Archaeology. 208. May – June 2026. Includes a review of 'Finding Troy' by J. Irvine. See: LAHS Newsletter 130 p.2

Journal of Historic Buildings and Places. 04. 2025. Previously Ancient Monuments Society.

Newsletters

Current copies only, on the Library table :

Heritage Now, Lincoln Record Society News Review, Worcestershire Recorder. Also the latest Cottage Books catalogue.

British Association for Local History (BALH)

The Committee decided recently that we should join BALH for the benefit of members. We have just received the latest editions of its journal and magazine for February this year. The

Local Historian is published four times a year in February, May, August, and November. It has a variety of local articles and book reviews. This issue covers London, Yorkshire, Hampshire, and the East Coast. Local History News reports on the activities of local societies, archives and museums, so is an excellent medium for publicity. BALH was created in 1982 to encourage and assist the study of local history throughout Great Britain as an academic discipline and as a rewarding leisure pursuit for both individuals and groups'. It has a website at www.balh.org.uk. One of the members of its Publishing Advisory Committee is Kate Thompson, who was at one time Leicestershire County Archivist.

Aubrey Stevenson, Hon. Librarian.

THE GUILDHALL - CENTENARY CELEBRATION OF ITS OPENING AS A MUSEUM

Aubrey also writes that on 4 May, Bank Holiday Monday, the City Council had a celebration at The Guildhall to mark the centenary of the reopening of the building, following its restoration after this Society had been instrumental in preventing its demolition. The work was carried out under the direction of member T.H. Fosbrooke, an architect (see 'The Old Town Hall, Leicester' by T.H. Fosbrooke and S.H. Skillington in *Transactions* Vol.13 1923). This was published separately in 1925 following Fosbrooke's death on 12 June that year.

There were numerous family activities, and the Library was open to visitors with a display of relevant and interesting material: books, pamphlets, maps and photographs. LAHS publications were also on sale. The Librarian was assisted by the Chair, the Membership Secretary, and the Editor of *Leicestershire History*. Committee member Steve Marquis gave a talk in the Town Library on 'Old Inns of Wigston Magna', which was also available as a pamphlet and can be found as a blog (20/3/26) on the LAHS website. BBC TV reported on the event on *East Midlands Today* in the middle of the day and in the early evening. The Chair spoke about the importance of the building and Burton's *History of Leicestershire* (1666), was mentioned. Nearly 700 people visited the building, and very many took the opportunity to visit a part not usually accessible.

We were asked for an 'encore' on Tuesday 19 May, which was the actual day of the reopening in 1926 - so another display of a similar nature was arranged, and the Librarian was assisted by the Lecture and Membership Secretaries. Three guided tours visited with over 50 people, including the Lord Mayor and the City Mayor. Ben Jackson of Radio Leicester was there too. There was a centenary cake which was cut by the Lord Mayor in the Mayor's Parlour below the Library. All three of us did receive a piece!

LAHS Committee members at The Guildhall anniversary event (lt. to rt.), Librarian Aubrey Stevenson, *Newsletter* editor Cynthia Brown, Membership Secretary Charlotte Wilson, and Lectures Secretary Rebecca Hale.



(Courtesy of Leicester City Museums)

OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER WITH LAHS

In the recent membership survey, there was strong support for volunteer opportunities with the Society. There was also great interest in field trips. Putting the two together, we have a number of opportunities to become involved with the Society. We would also welcome some assistance in other areas. We are looking for the following people:

FIELD VISIT COORDINATOR, AND ASSISTANT LOCAL VISIT COORDINATORS

We would welcome someone to help organise field trips for the Society, which we would like to run two or three times a year. This would involve identifying interesting venues, helping to advertise trips, and organising the event. We are also looking for people who might be able to offer a specific visit to a site with which they are familiar, or have worked on – or at. They would organise the visit in association with the overall field visit coordinator.

ZOOM/ONLINE LECTURE ASSISTANT

Due to popular demand, we are moving to a mix of in-person and online lectures from autumn 2026. We are looking for someone who can help with ZOOM, setting up, running and sometimes recording talks. Experience of IT would be useful but is not essential, as full training will be given.

MEMBERS OF GRANT-AWARDING COMMITTEES

We are looking for members to sit on two of our grant awarding sub-committees, one person for the Public Heritage Fund and two people for the Acquisitions Fund. This involves reading applications and discussing them with other panel members under the guidance of a chairperson. There are two meetings of each sub-committee a year, usually online. For more information about the grants see [About our grants and prizes - LAHS](#).

If you are interested in any of the above and would like to discuss the possibilities, please contact the chair, Elizabeth Tingle, at chair@lahs.org.uk

LAHS CONCERN ABOUT REDUCED OPENING HOURS OF LEICESTER CITY MUSEUMS

The LAHS committee recently sent a letter to Sir Peter Soulsby, as head of Leicester City Council, stating the concern of the Society about the reduced opening hours of Leicester museums. At the time of writing we are awaiting a response.

PUBLIC HERITAGE FUND

We have been pleased to fund a new permanent display at Hallaton Museum, on the fascinating history of Hallaton Castle. The display adds significantly to the existing displays in the museum, and was researched by Mathew Morris, University of Leicester Archaeological Services(ULAS). Mathew describes it as ‘the finest motte and bailey castle in Leicestershire’. The display was designed by Paul Johnson of PJD Graphic Communication. The Castle stands just outside the village, and can be clearly seen from the Gaulby Road. Hallaton Museum is open every Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays from Easter Monday until 4th October between the hours of 2 to 4.30pm. To find out more about the Society's [grants and prizes click here](#).



ARCHAEOLOGY

Here is a more detailed account of the recent excavations at Leicester Market, as highlighted in the previous edition of this *Newsletter*. The Chamber of the post-medieval building, the Gainsborough - a former civic building first recorded in the 1500s, was infamous as a its 'most vile prison'. By the mid-18th century, the Gainsborough was no longer in use, and its thick walls were later robbed for building material. Clay pipes, glass bottles, animal bones, and ceramics were dumped into the centre of the dilapidated structure, along with hundreds of slate roof tiles of various shapes, sizes, colours and conditions.



A small selection of slate roofs tiles from the Gainsborough Chamber (Image – ULAS)

Archaeologist Jonny Graham has investigated further: 'Though a dump of slate roof tiles in an abandoned building might not appear on the surface to be as exciting a find as a burial or a coin hoard, it provides a unique lens onto life in post-medieval Leicester and raises some fascinating questions. Given the careful laying out of these slates, it appears that they were not the original collapsed roof of the Gainsborough but rather a carefully placed deposit of tiles that had come from various buildings in the vicinity. As well as being the only tangible remains we have of these long-gone structures, their accumulation here suggests that parts of Leicester may have undergone reconstruction at the time of this deposit, with older buildings being pulled down to make way for newer ones.

'Furthermore, why was such a large quantity of complete and perfectly reusable slate dumped here when they could be reused as tiles on buildings elsewhere, and why were they laid out so carefully rather than thrown in haphazardly? Some slates had evidence of a broken hole for fixing them to a roof, beneath which another hole was bored, showing some degree of recycling. We also have a thick build-up of mortar on several slates that are the remnants of a process called torching which fixed slates to the roof. Such a large and varied assemblage as this therefore gives us a window into different stages in the life of a post-medieval slate roof tile, from manufacture to torching to reuse to eventual abandonment'.

Jonny also writes about trialling a recording system that helped him and some colleagues break the slates down into various categories based on their size, shape, completeness, method of hole manufacture, and whether mortar was preserved. Using this system, they were able determine where much of this slate was quarried from - predominantly from local quarries in Groby and Swithland, as well as ensuring that tiles from all parts of the roof were represented, and note any particularities each of the slates had...

Extracted with permission from extracted with permission from the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) blog that you can view in full at [Better slate than never! – ULAS News](#).

OTHER NEWS

FESTIVAL OF LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND ARCHAEOLOGY

Saturday 4 July 2026 – Sunday 2 August 2026

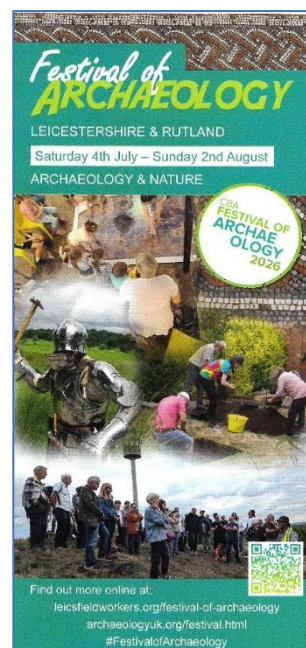
The programme for the Festival is now available at [Festival of Leicestershire and Rutland Archaeology – Leicestershire Fieldworkers](#). It includes family friendly activities, guided and self-guided walks, exhibitions, and hands-on events. Keep checking the website for possible additions!

FESTIVAL OF ORAL HISTORY

**Saturday 4 July 2026, 9 am – 6 pm, Newton Building,
Nottingham Trent University**

**Presented by the Oral History Society in conjunction with
Nottingham Trent University and the East Midlands Oral History
Society**

The Festival offers a full day of interactive workshops exploring the many ways of doing and using oral history. The programme also highlights oral history's role in documenting environmental change and everyday climate experience, as well as community-led heritage initiatives. OHS members £65; non-members £85; concessions (pensioners, unwaged and self-funded students) £75, including refreshments and lunch. Further details and booking at [Oral History Festival 2026 - Oral History Society](#).



LEICESTER CITY MUSEUMS

A reminder that the 'You Are Here' exhibition, telling the story of the evolution of Leicester Museum & Art Gallery over the past 176 years, runs until 31 December 2026. It explores the story of the New Walk Area, the Museum itself, and its collections from its origins to the



David Attenborough receiving the
Perfect World Foundation Award in 2018
(Creative Commons CC BY-SA 4.0)

present day and beyond. It has been co-produced with Museum Service volunteers, including those working with the Museum's archive, and brings together objects, photographs and research to reveal this ongoing story.

The Museum website also celebrated its connection with Sir David Attenborough on his 100th birthday in May 2026. He moved to Leicester with his family in 1932, when his father Frederick was Principal of University College. Along with his brothers Richard and John, he attended Wyggeston Grammar School for Boys (now Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth I

College). As a regular visitor to the Museum & Art Gallery, and a volunteer there, he was inspired by its natural science and geological collections, and described it as having 'a profound effect on my career'. You can view a short video of his visit to the Dinosaur Gallery in 2011 at [Sir David Attenborough at the Dinosaur Gallery, New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, Leicester](#).

LEICESTERSHIRE FIELDWORKERS – 50 YEARS OF FIELDWORKING IN LEICESTERSHIRE WALKING THROUGH TIME EXHIBITION

Over the last 50 years, exploration of the fields of Leicestershire and Rutland has transformed what we know about the area's archaeology. A special exhibition at Harborough Museum and satellite displays around the county from 12 June – 31 October 2026 will delve into the discoveries and people that helped put the region at the forefront of community archaeology in Britain. Further details will be available in due course at <https://leicsfieldworkers.org/50th-anniversary/> and

<https://leicestershirecollections.org.uk/behind-the-scenes/walking-through-time-50-years-of-leicestershire-fieldworkers>.

?? THINK YOU KNOW LEICESTER'S GUILDHALL ??

LAHS Hon Secretary Jim Butler has produced two YouTube videos about the history of The Guildhall, to mark its centenary as a museum. These are available at [?? Think You Know Leicester's Guildhall ?? Pt1 14th-17th Centuries - YouTube](#) and [?? Think You Know Leicester's Guildhall ?? Pt 2: From the Medieval period to the Regency era.](#)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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

BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY – ONLINE LECTURE

Wednesday 17 June 2026, 7 – 8 pm

Thomas More and Suburban London: a view from the outside

Dr Joanne Paul

What does it change about our understanding of one of England's most controversial historical figures, Thomas More, if he was born not in fashionable wealthy Milk Street, but outside the stinking ditches of the London Wall, in Cripplegate Without? BALH members free; non-members £5. For more details and booking, see [Thomas More and Suburban London: A View from the Outside | Joe Saunders | Forthcoming BALH Events | British Association For Local History](#).

FRIENDS OF THE RECORD OFFICE

Wednesday 10 June 2026, 2.30pm, Record Office, Long Street, Wigston, LE18 2AH

Cornets, Kiosks and Cafes: 130 years of Rossa ice creams, doughnuts, coffee and cakes

Gary and Angela Rossa

Admission free; non-members welcome.

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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CHARNWOOD MUSEUM

Booking essential - please visit the museum and talk to a member of staff, or call 01509 233754. Payment can be taken over the phone.

Thursday 25 June 2026, 7.30 – 9.30 pm; members £3, non-members £5

The Base Hospital

Robin Jenkins

Hear the story of the 5th Northern Hospital and its satellites, one of the UK's largest military hospitals which operated a network of smaller hospitals and nursing homes throughout the East Midlands, as well as the experience of its staff and patients from before mobilization in 1914 to closure in November 1919.

Thursday 16 July 2026, 7.30 – 9.30 pm; members £3, non-members £5

Murder and Mayhem in Medieval Leicester

Mathew Morris

Join archaeologist Mathew Morris for some gruesome tales from medieval Leicester, including the bell ringer murdered by the vicar on Christmas Eve, the Franciscan friars hung drawn and quartered for treason, and the criminal deeds of the Bushby brothers. Find out how archaeology and historic sources, like the town's medieval coroner's rolls, provide complimentary evidence which enriches the story of Leicester. This talk is organised by the Friends of Charnwood Museum.

GREATER WIGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Tuesday 16 June 2026

The History of the Lord Lieutenancy of Leicestershire

Mike Kapur

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 – secretary@wigstonhistoricalsociety.co.uk.

SERENDIPITY INSTITUTE FOR BLACK ARTS AND HERITAGE

**Monday 22 June 2026, 7 pm, Serendipity Institute for Black Arts and Heritage,
8 Bowling Green Street, Leicester, LE1 6AT**

Annual Windrush Day Lecture,

Dr Christienna Fryar, writer and independent historian of Britain and the Caribbean

Windrush Day, officially recognised by the UK government since 2018, is commemorated annually on 22 June to mark the arrival of the *SS Empire Windrush* in 1948. This date has become a powerful symbol of the Caribbean community's establishment in the UK. Serendipity's Annual Windrush Lecture was established in 2020, and provides a platform for esteemed thinkers, writers and educators to focus on 'the narrative of Black presence, persistence and resistance in the UK while unpacking the complex realities of British-Caribbean connections'. Tickets: £15 standard, £12 concessions. Further information at [Annual Windrush Day Lecture 2026 – Serendipity Institute for Black Arts and Heritage](#).

LEICESTER CIVIC SOCIETY – GUIDED WALKS

Saturday 13 June 2026, 10.30 am – 12.30 pm; £6 members; £8 non-members; prior booking for both walks essential at [Guided Walks - Leicester Civic Society](#).

In the Footsteps of the Loyal and the True: discovering the families and homes of those lost in WWI in the parish of Holy Trinity

Join Dr Jenny Wilkinson as she traces the lives of those remembered on the Holy Trinity War Memorial tablet. Starting at Holy Trinity Church, Regent Road Leicester, the walk will explore the local vicinity, discovering the stories of families who lost their sons and daughters during the First World War. Taking in parts of the middle-class Edwardian new town, as well as the less salubrious Victorian terraces, it will consider the various social and economic echelons of Leicester society and how they intermingled within this parish in the early years of the 20th century. The walk will finish at the Cenotaph, Victoria Park.

Saturday 25 July 2026, 10.30 am – 12 midday; £6 members; £8 non-members

Victorian Leicester: a townscape to cherish – with Leicester Branch of the Victorian Society

1994, the Leicester Group of the Victorian Society published Richard Gill's *Walks Through Victorian Leicester*. Some 30 years later, how is the Victorian townscape that Richard described so well faring? The Leicester Group's Colin Hyde and Peter Ellis will lead a walk through the city centre, following Richard Gill's trail, when we will discover what survives and what this can tell us about Victorian Leicester. We will hear about Leicester's first Arts & Crafts-influenced office, and about a building overlooking Town Hall Square that became a cause celebre in the 1970s when developers wanted to replace it with a modern honeycomb building - and much more. The walk will start at the South African War Memorial in Town Hall Square and follow a circular route.

LEICESTERSHIRE FIELDWORKERS

Tuesday 14 July 2025, Leicester Guildhall, LE1 5FQ, 2 pm

50 Years of Fieldwalking in Leicestershire

Peter Liddle

Join archaeologist Peter Liddle to mark 50 years of archaeological survey by the Leicestershire Fieldworkers, and how this has helped to transform our understanding of local archaeology. Tickets £6.; purchase online at [50-Years of Fieldwalking in Leicestershire by Peter Liddle at The Guildhall, Leicester](#).

LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY – LEICESTER GROUP

Wednesday 10 June 2026, Leicester Friends' Meeting House, 16 Queen's Road, Leicester, LE2 1WP

Racism, violence, sex: an alternative history of Americans in Leicester

Dr Liam McCarthy

Dr McCarthy is a Honorary Fellow of the University of Leicester School of History Politics and International Relations.



Wednesday 8 July 2026, Leicester Friends' Meeting House, 16 Queen's Road, Leicester, LE2 1WP

External features of Victorian houses

Colin Hyde

As you walk along a street of Victorian houses, it can be striking how much variation there can be in design, layout and decoration. Colin will take us through examples of this variation and tell a story that may make you look differently at these streets of 'all the same' buildings.

Doors open 7 pm for 7.30 pm start. For further details of these and meetings of LRFHS branches in Hinckley, Loughborough, Market Harborough and Oakham, see [LRFHS - Meetings](#).

LEICESTER CITY, COUNTY AND RUTLAND AT RISK WAR MEMORIALS PROJECT

Open Day, Saturday 25 July 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](#).



Aylestone & District Working Men's Club and Institute memorial

LEICESTERSHIRE

INDUSTRIAL HISTORY SOCIETY –

GLENFIELD TUNNEL TOURS AND RAIL RIDES

Glenfield Tunnel was officially the longest railway tunnel in the world when it opened in 1832, and one of the world's first underground rail routes, used by steam trains to carry coal from North West Leicestershire pits to Leicester. It closed in the 1960s, but will be open to the public for tours and rail rides on Saturdays 4, 11 18 and 25 July 2026. Please see [Glenfield Tunnel - Leicestershire Industrial History Society](#) for further information about booking, which will be available in the near future.

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND BRANCH WESTERN FRONT ASSOCIATION

Monday 15 June 2026, Council Chamber, Braunstone Civic Centre, Kingsway, Braunstone Town, Leicester, LE3 2PP

German tanks at Villiers-Bretonneux

Chris Johns

At the Second Battle of Villers-Bretonneux in April 1918, a key event in the German Spring Offensive, German and British tanks met in combat for the first time. The German tanks, like the famous 'Mephisto', initially achieved surprising results. This is an account of the development of German armoured vehicles and their only serious use on the battlefields of the Western Front. Further details at [German Tanks at Villers-Bretonneux | The Western Front Association](#).

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

WORLDS OF FRAMEWORK KNITTERS IN LEICESTERSHIRE, c.1600 – c.1850

Dave Fogg Postles

The author, 2026, 170pp, illus, available as a free download from

davelinux.info/BOOKS/bookindex.html

As Dave Postles notes in his introduction to this study, the framework-knitting industry in Leicestershire has not been well covered by comparison with other areas of industrial development in England - possibly due to the persistence of domestic production well into the 19th century. He begins by revisiting the concept of protoindustrialization, as applied to small-scale domestic or workshop manufacture in rural areas prior to the adoption of factory production – demonstrating that this has been, and remains, open to differing interpretations. His research focuses on handloom weaving and framework knitting in the county, and is based largely on detailed analyses of probate records. ‘Although the evidence is slender’ he argues that ‘it can perhaps be deduced that, although there were some highly successful weavers, the rural weavers in these regions later associated with framework knitting, were predominantly poor. Records from Leicester, Hinckley, Loughborough and Shepshed are examined to assess the relative fortunes of weavers, and the often perilous financial situation of the knitters.

He also considers the importance of ‘human capital’ in industrialisation, analysing the role of education in equipping individuals and hence society with the requisite knowledge, skills and experience. A chapter on ‘Mothers of circumstance and illegitimacy in the early nineteenth century’, based on an examination of sources such as parish registers, identifies framework knitters and servants as the two most ‘at risk’ groups; but whereas the former ‘could often rely on their kinship for support and so remain somewhat integrated into local society’, servants often had no local kinship networks, and were very vulnerable to dismissal. The final chapter revisits and expands on a study of Shepshed by David Levine in 1977. It focuses on 1891, 40 years on from the conclusion of Levine’s analysis, charting demographic changes between the two dates and their implications, along with the impact of new factories on small masters in the local hosiery industry. Once again Dave Postles is to be thanked both for the insights that his meticulous research and analysis offer into this industry of paramount local importance, and for making them available free of charge online.

KIBWORTH HARCOURT POST MILL

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAG)

The authors, 2025, 22pp, illus, £5

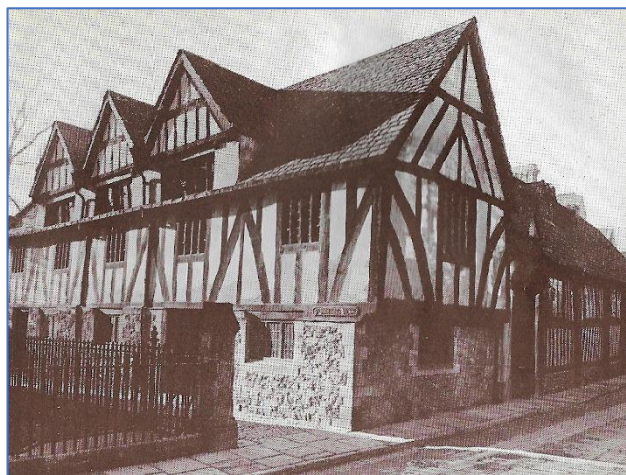
This Grade II* listed post mill is the only one of its kind in Leicestershire, and still retains most of its working mechanism. Major repairs were carried out by SPAG in 2020 – 22, and it is now cared for by a team of local volunteers, with specialist input when required. As well as descriptions of its sails, tail pole (newly fitted), brake wheels and governors, fitted below the stones to maintain an even distance, this booklet includes sections on dating the mill, some of the 200 examples of graffiti found within it – the earliest from 1711 – and a timeline from the first reference to a post mill in the village in 1270 through to the 2020s. It is designed primarily for visitors to the mill, but gives an overview of its history that can be enjoyed by a wider audience – and as it also emphasises, it will need regular maintenance to ensure its survival well into the future.

A HISTORICAL FOOTNOTE

You will be aware from other items in this *Newsletter* that the Leicestershire Archaeological Society - as LAHS then was - played a crucial part in saving The Guildhall from demolition after it fell into disrepair. A major programme of restoration began in 1922, and it opened to the public in May 1926. Perhaps less well known is the 'animated debate' that took place that year about what it should be called. This is an extract from a report of the debate from the *Leicester Evening Mail*, 27 October 1926.

LEICESTER GUILDHALL. CITY COUNCIL DECIDE THE VEXED QUESTION. ANIMATED DEBATE...

On the question of the name of the ancient building in Town Hall Lane, known by the present generation as the Old Town Hall, the City Council were divided last night. For an hour the subject was considered. In the end it was decided to call it the Guildhall. The Museums and Libraries Committee recommended the adoption of the title or name of the "Old Town Hall", formerly the Hall of the Corpus Christi Guild", and this was championed by Alderman C. Squire, chairman of the Committee. Councillor J. T. Biggs, who had advocated a reversion to the original name "The Guildhall" was strenuous in his advocacy, and finally got his way, a considerable majority of the members voting for his amendment.



Alderman Squire, in submitting the report of his committee, said that the actual number of attendances at the old Town Hall since it was re-opened on May 19th was 14,719. and the daily average 109... Included in these attendances were 40 classes of school children, who had been given information as to the contents and history. There was no disputing that the building was originally the hall of the Corpus Christi Guild. That was founded in 1343. In 1584 the Guild was dissolved and the property passed to the Crown, and in 1563 it was sold to the Leicester Corporation, and it had remained their property ever since.

Since then it was called the Old Town Hall and Guildhall in all the papers and records. Archaeologists might differ, but the name was entirely a matter of opinion. The building had been used for municipal purposes for 400 years, and was therefore identified with the town council. It seemed a matter largely of sentiment and what it had been used for mainly. On practical modern lines he was strongly of the opinion that the name Old Town Hall should be retained. [Councillor Biggs] went on to expound his views on the subject, and said that the building was known as the Guildhall long before it became the Town Hall, and they should retain the old title still... Eventually the matter was put to the vote. and the amendment in favour of "The Guildhall" was carried by a large majority.

Image from the 1950s publication, *No Mean City*, which refers to the room above the Mayor's Parlour 'used by the Leicestershire Archaeological Society' – the LAHS Library. The Society was renamed Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society in 1955.

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.