

THE THOROTON SOCIETY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

THE COUNTY'S HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1897

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS for the year ended 31st December 2014



**THE THOROTON SOCIETY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
OFFICERS JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2014**

PRESIDENT

Dr Rosalys Coope PhD FSA (until April) Adrian Henstock BA DAA FRHistS (from April)

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Dr Rosalys Coope PhD FSA (from April), Sir Neil Cossons OBE FSA FMA, Keith Goodman BA FCA, Adrian Henstock BA DAA FRHistS (until April), Robin Minnitt

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Richard Gaunt BA PGCE PhD FRHistS (2)	Philip Jones BSc MSc MA (3)
David Knight BA DPhil FSA MifA (2)	Ceril Little BA (2)
Penny Messenger BSc MEd (1)	Pauline Miller (until April) (1)
Andrew Nicholson BA MSc (1)	Hannah Nicholson MA (from April) (2)
Peter Reddish (1)	Peter Smith (2)
Margaret Trueman BSc (2)	

HONORARY SECRETARY

Barbara Cast BA Hons (3)*

Little Dower House, Station Road, Bleasby, Notts NG14 7FX

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John Wilson BPharm MPhil FRSPH (3)*

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History - Martyn Bennett BA PhD FRHistS (0)*

Archaeology - Keith Challis BA MPhil MSc MifA FRGS (0)*

CONSULTANT EDITOR AND RECORDS SERIES EDITOR

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HONORARY NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Howard Fisher MA (1)*

HONORARY CIRCULATION SECRETARY

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HONORARY LECTURE SECRETARY

David Hoskins IEng AMICE* (3)

HONORARY EXCURSION SECRETARY

Alan Langton BA (2) *

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Judith Mills BA MA PhD (2)*

**Ex-officio members of Council*

Number in brackets indicates attendance at Council meetings (maximum 3)

TRUSTEES FOR THE CHARITY

John Beckett, Barbara Cast and John Wilson

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE (TRANSACTIONS AND RECORD SECTION)

Jenny Alexander BA PhD
Professor John Beckett BA PhD FRHistS FSA (Chairman)
Professor Martyn Bennett BA PhD FRHistS
Keith Challis BA MPhil MSc MIfA FRGS
David Crook MA PhD FRHistS FSA OBE
Lee Elliott BA, PgDip (Archaeol.Sci)
Howard Fisher MA
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Richard Gaunt BA Ph D FRHistS FHEA
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John Wilson BPharm MPhil FRSPH
(Honorary Treasurer, Record Section)

THE THOROTON SOCIETY OF NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

TRUSTEES REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2014

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The full name of the society is the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire and it is governed by a constitution known as the 'Rules of the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire'. These rules are registered with the Charity Commissioners under number 237755.

OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY

Under the rules of the Society, its objects shall be to promote and foster the study of the history, archaeology and antiquities of Nottinghamshire for the public benefit and to promote and foster public knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Nottinghamshire's history generally.

ADDRESS FOR ENQUIRIES

Barbara Cast, Honorary Secretary, Little Dower House, Station Road, Bleasby, Nottinghamshire NG14 7FX

TRUSTEES

The members of Council are considered to be the Trustees of the Society. Details of membership of Council are shown on page 2.

MAIN ADVISORS

Bankers – HSBC Bank plc, 26 Clumber Street, Nottingham NG1 3GA

FUNDS

The General Fund can be used for the general furtherance of the aims of the charity. In order to achieve the aims of the Record Section, the Society has the power to print original historical materials, records and manuscripts. The income from the Maurice Barley, Nora Witham, Myles Thoroton Hildyard and Neville Hoskins Funds is used for lectures. The Coddington Fund is to be used for the William Senior Record Series volume, the Centenary Fund for the Heritage Gateway and the Davis Bequest to digitise the Nottinghamshire Bibliography.

REPORT OF COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2014

INTRODUCTION AND CHAIR'S REPORT

This year's annual report reveals once again the remarkable range of activities with which the Society is involved in terms both of its programme of lectures and excursions and also of the behind the scenes work keeping abreast of developments in the local history and archaeology of the county. In many respects the highlight for me of 2014 was the December lecture and associated launch of the Record Series volume on Newstead Abbey. Not only is this a fine volume in itself, but it is an extraordinary achievement by our former President Rosalys Coope given both her age and her frequent claims (to me anyway) that she is about to fall off her twig! The book is a tour de force for Newstead, and Pete Smith, in editing it and supplying many of the pictures, has brought to completion a really valuable piece of work.

Mentioning Rosalys reminds me that at the AGM in April she stepped down as our President and was replaced in the post by Adrian Henstock. We are grateful to Rosalys for being such a charming president, always attending events and having a word to say

to everyone. She has been an inspiration to us all. We welcome Adrian who has been a member of the Society for more than four decades and responsible for its published output (in one form or another) since the 1970s.

A 'first' for us this year was the October conference, jointly sponsored with the Nottinghamshire Local History Association at Ravenshead, on the subject of the First World War. It is a great pleasure to work with John Parker, the NLHA Chairman, and his team, to the greater benefit of the history of our county.

As usual I should like on this occasion to thank the officers and Council members for their work in ensuring that the Society runs as successfully and smoothly as it does. At the AGM we shall be saying goodbye to two long standing officers, Howard Fisher (Newsletter Editor) and Keith Challis (Archaeology Editor), both of whom are standing down after many years of service on behalf of the Society. We are grateful to them both for all their hard work. Andy Nicholson and Peter Reddish have indicated that they wish to stand down from Council, and we thank them also for their work. And, unusually for the Thoroton Society, just a few days after the AGM we shall be celebrating a wedding! Congratulations to our Treasurer John Wilson on his forthcoming nuptials with Janet Moore, and our best wishes to them for the future.

Finally, my usual plea to members to keep the officers informed of how you feel about such things as the subject matter of lectures and the venues for excursions, and also to let us know of any planning or similar issue in your area so that we can if necessary make appropriate representations. We keep our eyes and ears open, but we do need help!

John Beckett, Chair of Council

PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL

The Council met for its scheduled three meetings at Lenton Grove, courtesy of the University of Nottingham. Council's responsibility is to oversee the Society's business, finance and development. Officers and representatives of the Society on various organisations and responsibilities report to Council at each meeting. Members of Council and its officers are elected at the AGM for a period as set down in the Constitution. The Standing Committee, appointed by Council and consisting of the officers, meets on a regular basis, taking responsibility for day to day work, detailed consideration of developments and the planning of the programme. It reports to Council each meeting.

Barbara Cast, Honorary Secretary

HONORARY TREASURER'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR TO 31ST DECEMBER 2014

I am pleased to report that the Society's finances are sound and I have no concerns. Subscription receipts have increased very slightly. An increase in receipts from book

sales is largely due to the bequest of books from the late Bryan Churm which have sold well and, so far, have raised £326. I would particularly like to thank the staff of the Bookstall - Margaret Trueman, Penny Messenger and Philip Jones - for their sterling work in selling many of these books. Excursions made a very small loss, as did the AGM and Luncheon, but together the losses amounted to £352 which is quite acceptable in the grand scheme of things.

We have received an additional £203 in Gift Aid compared with 2013. This is due to the number of new members who have joined and signed the Gift Aid form. Interest from our reserves in National Savings and Investments remained about the same as in 2013, the interest rate being unchanged at 0.75%.

On expenditure, the cost of printing of *Transactions* was slightly down and printing of the Newsletter increased. However, the greatest cost (£6,699) was the printing of *Newstead Abbey 1540-1931* by Rosalys Coope and Pete Smith. This has been issued as volume 48 of the Record Series. We anticipate that this volume will sell well - I have at the time of writing received advance orders for nearly thirty copies.

The General Fund of the Society at 31st December totalled £31,255. The total assets of the Society at the start of the 2015 financial year amount to £65,601.

Treasurer

John Wilson, Honorary

MEMBERSHIP

During 2014 the Society recruited twenty five new members including new subscribers to the Record Series. This success, however, was balanced by an almost equal number of resignations or non-renewal of subscriptions. Consequently, membership is roughly the same as in 2013, and remains strong.

The major change is seen in Institutional Membership which has suffered significant losses. Many Institutional Members are universities in Europe and the USA and it is assumed that the economic situation has led many to review their acquisitions policies.

Judith Mills, Honorary Membership Secretary

Comparative membership numbers	2013	2014
Individual members	218	221
Individual members with record series	78	80
Associate members	61	58

Life members	7	7
Student members	6	5
Honorary members	4	4
Record series only	4	4
Total individual members	378	379
Institutional members	12	12
Institutional members - with record series	62	49
Institutional members - record series only	2	4
Total institutional members	76	65
Final total	454	444

Total record series	146	140
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PUBLICATIONS

Transactions

Volume 117 (2013) was published and presented at the Annual General Meeting in April 2014. Once again 4word of Bristol provided excellent support to the editors during the publication process. The illustrations continued to be of a high standard and adorned the archaeology articles beautifully: there were far fewer illustrations accompanying the history articles this year, which was a pity as there was a series of very good submissions which all made it into the journal in this edition.

Volume 117 included two archaeology articles, covering the “designed landscape of mediaeval Clipstone” and “the interpretation of field walking finds from Bingham” as well as the archaeology editor’s full round-up of county archaeology. There were six history essays stretching from coverage of the “soke of Dunham in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries”, “fee trees and rogue verderers” in Sherwood Forest in the eighteenth century, the Newark Navigation between 1740 and 1850, an exploration of the people who visited Lord Byron’s tomb and left their names in the visitors’ book of St Mary’s Church, Hucknall, and an examination of newspaper articles on capital punishment in Nottingham during the nineteenth century. The report following the annual history lecture on Sir Thomas Parkyns of Bunny completed the tally.

In late November 2014 the Publications Committee had seen the proposed articles for both the history and the archaeology contributions for volume 118. In contrast to the previous year these articles were farther down the line as far as readiness went. It was also noted that there was a dearth of history articles again in comparison with the accepted submissions for Volume 117. There were three history articles and two archaeology articles accompanied by a substantial report on archaeological activity in the county. It was announced at the meeting that Howard Fisher had stepped down as the editor of the newsletter and that Keith Challis would also be stepping down as the archaeology editor for *Transactions* after eleven years in the role.

Martyn Bennett, Honorary History Editor

Record Series

The latest publication – Volume 48 - *Newstead Abbey: a Nottinghamshire Country House : its Owners and Architectural History 1540-1931* - was launched in December 2014. This volume is unusual for a *Record Series* publication in that it is devoted to a specific topic – in this case the architectural history of Newstead Abbey over 800 years (the previous precedent for such a publication was a similar history of Nottingham Castle issued in 1989). However the new study does include full transcripts of the extensive household inventories of fittings and furnishings of 1740 and 1778.

The volume gathers together in a single chronological narrative a series of articles on different phases of the Abbey's architectural history written over a period of thirty five years by architectural historian and former Society President Dr Rosalys Coope and published in the Society's *Transactions*. The opportunity has also been taken by Dr Coope - assisted by retired English Heritage officer Pete Smith - to revise and extend some of the original conclusions in the light of new research, particularly the evidence offered by newly identified drawings, paintings, and engravings. The result is a masterly piece of detective work incorporating evidence from written records, visual images and the fabric of the building itself to unravel the complex architectural history of this remarkable country house. It is lavishly illustrated with 112 plates and diagrams, most in full colour (ISBN 978-0-902719-26-2).

As this volume was inserted into the programme at short notice it has appeared before Volume 47 which will now be published during 2015. This is the interactive Compact Disk edition of estate maps created for the Earl of Newcastle during 1600-1640 by the surveyor William Senior and now preserved in the 'Welbeck Atlas'. The disk will comprise full colour reproductions of some seventy maps of estates mainly in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Northumberland. It will be accompanied by a printed volume containing both a detailed introduction and a catalogue of the maps listing the place names and other topographical features recorded on each one.

Adrian Henstock, Honorary Record Series Editor

Newsletter

There have been four issues during the year with a variety of articles and news items. I hope that members have found the issues of interest. The spring 2015 issue will be my last as editor as I am standing down from the post, and Council, at the 2015 Annual General Meeting. I should like to thank Council members for their encouragement and support during my period as Newsletter Editor and, especially, in supporting all the contributors whose work has meant that the Newsletter has been able to develop and expand in the way it has done. Members have also been supportive and appreciative for which I have been very grateful. I wish my successor well and hope that I have been able to create a platform on which further developments can be made with the

PLANNING AND CONSERVATION IN THE CITY OF NOTTINGHAM

2014 was the year of improvements to Nottingham's traffic infrastructure even if at the year's end schemes were left unfinished. The £60m improvements to the Midland Station and its approaches were completed, steady progress was made on the widening of the A453 from Clifton to the M1, while work on the City's tram routes 2 and 3 was delayed resulting in a revision of the optimistic timetable. More locally a £1.2m traffic flow improvement programme was carried out on part of the City's ring road.

Nottingham Midland Station was officially re-opened on 26th November by William McAlpine, Chairman of the Railway Heritage Trust: the "stunning restoration" improved its listing status from Grade II to II*. Unfortunately the opening of the extensions of the City's tram network, radiating from the station, was bedevilled by various setbacks, which has meant proposing next June as a completion and opening date.

During the year Nottingham was successful in receiving several awards from the Heritage Lottery and other funds. Besides the £24m from HLF previously announced for the refurbishment and development of the Castle and its grounds, funding of £10.4m from the Government's Local Growth Fund has been received for the transformation of the City's Southern Gateway, which includes upgrading Carrington Street and the pedestrianisation of Collin Street. More recently a grant of £3.2m has been given by HLF towards the re-installation of original features at Highfields Park.

Smaller grants from the HLF were given to the Malt Cross on St. James' Street (£1.38m) and, together with help from English Heritage, to the Church of St. Martin of Tours, Bilborough. Restoration Work at the Malt Cross included opening up two basement levels and a cave to form a new music and arts and craft hub. At St. Martin's the repair and restoration work uncovered 'lost' murals by Evelyn Gibbs.

The Council, after years of frustration awaiting action from developers, finally purchased the Sneinton Market site with partial funding coming from the European Regional Development Fund (£2.44m). Initially three of the five avenues will be refurbished, which will provide a focal point for the City's evolving Creative Quarter.

While Nottingham waits for a start on the £150m reconstruction of the Broadmarsh Centre, the Victoria Centre is being redeveloped around the existing shops with some being re-located within the Centre. As preparation for the enlargement of the Centre, York House on Mansfield Road is currently being demolished, a task likely to take a year.

UAST, the Nottingham University sponsored Academy of Science and Technology, has opened on the site of the former Dunkirk Fire Station. A £60m "Skills Hub" has been planned for derelict land on Canal Street, just below the current tram terminus. There is

a worry that if the proposed college has excessive height it will obscure the fine views of the High Pavement scarp and the edge of the Lace Market and Anglo-Saxon Nottingham. The Local Growth Fund will contribute half of the cost. Basford Hall, part of New College Nottingham, is in the advanced stages of rebuilding its training facilities for the construction industries. These combined efforts should eventually solve some of the local skills shortages.

The draft of the Nottingham Local Flood Risk Strategy was put out for consultation, the closing date being the end of January 2015.

Once again it must be reported there are several buildings "at risk", most notable are the art deco Talbot House on Wollaton Street; and 41 Pilcher Gate, erected for the Sherwin family between 1689 and 1699 which, although much altered (remodelled) retains a fine C17th staircase, a rare survival.

During the year an appreciable number of planning applications were made for the conversion of the upper floors of city centre buildings for accommodation mainly intended for students; the purpose built block of student apartments that overpowers the Grade II* Georgian Bromley House on Angel Row opened for business.

Ken Brand, City Planning Representative

THOROTON RESPONSE GROUP

The Thoroton Response Group continues to make representations on behalf of the Society on matters, national and local, relating to the historic environment and buildings of the County, any representations made being usually noted in the Newsletter. In 2014 representations were made on the proposals to split English Heritage into two arms, one, Historic England, would be the official body with the statutory role of giving expert advice to owners, local authorities and the public, and championing the wider historic environment. Its role would include the designation of heritage assets and advising government on any important proposed changes to them. The other arm would still be known as English Heritage, but with a very different remit, it would be responsible for the properties in the National Heritage Collection, but it is intended, after a period of substantial investment by the government to bring properties up to standard, that it become a charity responsible for raising its own finances. The Society expressed concerns at this separation between the two arms and the requirement that English Heritage should become self-financing: it was felt that this would weaken the protection of our valuable historic buildings and sites and also that English Heritage, as a charity, would be vying for finite funds along with other organisations such as the National Trust. However, the new structures are to be in place by 1st April 2015 and Simon Thurley will be leaving English Heritage.

Representations were also made regarding the appeal by Nottingham Trent University's proposal to place wind turbines at Brackenhurst College, a historic building which overlooks Southwell and its Minster. The inspector, having prepared a long and detailed report, recommended that the Secretary of State dismiss the appeal

due to the impact such an installation would have on the setting and special character of Southwell, its very important buildings, Brackenhurst itself and the village of Halloughton. The appeal was subsequently dismissed by the Secretary of State. Comments were also made on Nottingham Heritage Strategy, an exercise of which nothing has recently been heard.

Members of the Society are encouraged to draw the group's attention to matters concerning them. There are instances where our input has made a real difference to the outcome for our county's heritage.

Barbara Cast, Coordinator, Response Group

THOROTON RESEARCH GROUP

The Research Group met only once in 2014. The meeting, in May, allowed members to 'showcase' their talks to be given at the Nottinghamshire Local History Association Day Conference on the Home Front in the Great War. This joint conference was held in October and a full report appeared in the Winter 2014 issue of the Thoroton Newsletter.

John Wilson, Coordinator, Research Group

THE THOROTON SOCIETY WEBSITE AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BIBLIOGRAPHY ONLINE

Website statistics for 2014 show that each month an average of 1,620 unique visitors viewed a total of 8,300 pages. These figures show an increase in use when compared with 2013. The most popular times for viewing the website over the year were early afternoon and 10pm to midnight.

The electronic version of Michael Brook's 'A Nottinghamshire Bibliography' continues to be the most popular document on the website and was downloaded or accessed around 250 times a month over the course of the year. The most viewed sections of the website were 'Events' and 'About us' and the most popular individual page was the article on The General Lunatic Asylum, Nottingham, 1812-1902 (Sneinton Asylum) by Terry Fry.

Most people found the website by using an Internet search engine such as Google. One of the most intriguing searches made was 'Fit lad in Bakewell' which confounded me until I ran it myself and found that Google has located the terms 'lad', 'Bakewell' and 'fit' on a page of book reviews from Spring 2010 which includes Howard Fisher's review of Jack **Bakewell's** autobiography called *Jack the 'Nottingham' Lad!*

The Nottinghamshire Bibliography Online continues to grow and now holds around 11,500 entries (Michael Brook's original bibliography published in 2002 has around 8,700). In addition to adding recent publications to the database, work has focussed on identifying and adding shorter reports within longer articles (usually of an archaeological nature) in the Transactions and also cataloguing the longer reports in the annual roundup of archaeological work in the county.

Andy Nicholson, Thoroton Society Webmaster

THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE HERITAGE GATEWAY

This year we have had five entries go live; Plumtree, the Sherwood Foresters, DH Lawrence, Nottinghamshire and the Miners' Strike and an updated article on Retailing. We have had a lot of interest shown in this part of the website and it is regularly used and quoted by academics, locals and schools alike.

Next year an entry on James Arthur Woodford is planned and an extensive one on the hospitals of Nottinghamshire. If you have information about any of the hospitals I would love to hear from you.

Once again I make a plea for more people to take on a topic – I am most willing to assist new authors in this.

Dr Denise Amos, Heritage Gateway

SOCIETY EVENTS IN 2013

Excursions

Another good year of excursions has been enjoyed by members of the Society, usually a hard core of regulars joined occasionally by other members. It is apparent that some places we visit appeal to people more than others; and with nearly everyone having a car members often get around to places of interest more than used to be the case years ago.

Our first excursion in 2014 on 22nd May was to Tutbury Castle and Hoar Cross Church. We were guided around Tutbury Church by Mr Nicholas, who gave us a wealth of information about this one-time Benedictine Priory. The very solid Norman pillars in the nave, the more recent barrel roof and the tastefully built modern construction enclosing the north aisle for social purposes were well worth seeing. We had an excellent lunch at the Castle, and were then entertained by Lesley Smith, the Castle curator and historian, who, dressed in full sixteenth century costume, presented an imaginary Mary Queen of Scots protesting in vehement terms to Queen Elizabeth about her unfair treatment and imprisonment. The visit to Hoar Cross Church gave us a splendid example of the way wealthy Victorians often commemorated their loved ones by building elaborate churches. In this case Emily Ingram, the daughter of Viscount Halifax, wished to celebrate the memory of her husband Hugo. The church was built by Bodley in Anglo-Catholic design and has elaborate decorations and fittings. The amazing thing is how such a large church which stands in the middle of open countryside can possibly afford the upkeep with only a small congregation, especially as since its construction it has had added two side chapels, a black and white marble floor, a narthex, and an organ which came from Bangor Cathedral.

The visit to Burgage Manor with afternoon tea on 8th June was an additional outing, thanks to the generosity of Mr Geoffrey Bond and his wife Dianora. Geoffrey is an avid

collector of Lord Byron memorabilia as well as being a knowledgeable authority on the life and work of the poet. Byron once lived at Burgage Manor, and members were amazed by the range of pictures, prints and documents and books in Geoffrey's collection, which he demonstrated to members as we walked around the rooms of the Manor. The gardener, Jonathon Wild, also gave members a fascinating tour of the beautiful garden which he has worked on for several years to restore it to its former splendour.

On 26th June members enjoyed a visit to Egmonton and Edwinstowe churches. The Norman church at Egmonton was restored by Ninian Comper in the 1890s and the screen, organ case and door are currently being repainted and gilded to their former glory. Walking between the scaffolding we were able to see the 14th century glass, the ancient font and the tombs of early benefactors of the church dating back to Nicholas Powtrel who occupied Egmonton Hall during the reign of Elizabeth I. The stone building of Edwinstowe Church dates from 1175, and we were given a very entertaining history and description of the church by Margaret Woodhead, a Reader at the church. Main items of interest include the chantry chapel, the broach spire, and the obvious development of the building over the centuries as styles have changed. We moved to the Savile restaurant at Rufford Abbey for lunch, and then had a talk by Sarah Law who is researching the original lay-out of the Abbey grounds first created by the Savile family in the eighteenth century. We then had a tour of part of the park to view the various sites which Sarah had spoken about.

On 7th August members went to Newby Hall near Ripon which has been occupied by the Compton family since 1748. This beautiful house is clearly a lived-in home but at the same time exudes fine grandeur with Robert Adam's neo-classical work and Chippendale furniture and beautiful china. Major restoration was done to the ceilings in the 1980s and they are now outstanding. The walls of the Tapestry Room are covered by Gobelins tapestries. Our tour of the stunning wealth and beauty of the place ended in an area added to the dining room which appears to have been constructed as an ancient temple containing what is said to be the finest collection of Roman statuary in private hands in Britain. We had lunch in the orangery, and then enjoyed walking around the grounds in lovely sunshine until our return journey. This really was a memorable excursion for the society.

On September 11th Penelope Messenger and Margaret Trueman led members on an outing to Stow in Lindsey and to Doddington Hall. The church at Stow is like a small medieval cathedral and its size is stunning. David Justham gave us an excellent talk about the history of the building from its foundation in 975, a fire and subsequent rebuilding by Bishop Eadnoth about 1050, and then to more recent developments. After lunch at Whisby garden centre, we travelled to Doddington Hall, designed by Robert Smythson in 1595. It is a fine Tudor building with a walled garden and gate house. Again, it has the air of a lived-in home, even though its contents reflect the taste of four hundred years of family collectors. We had tea in the modern garden wing, and were then able to visit the church and gardens before the journey home.

An additional visit to the Welbeck Abbey State Rooms was kindly offered to the society

on 18th September to allow members previously disappointed in 2013 to enjoy the excellence of the restoration of the house to its former glory after its occupation by the Army as a college in the 1940s. The Cavendish-Bentinck family now reside there again. The rooms are beautifully furnished, and we saw the fine collection of portraits and miniatures, Gobelins tapestries dating from 1783 and the Titchfield Library and Chapel. It is interesting to note that a new gallery is under construction to house more of the famous Portland Collection.

Alan Langton, Honorary Excursion Secretary

Lectures and Presentations

Our year opened with Jenny Alexander giving the *Nora Witham Lecture* and sharing with us her thoughts on the construction of the great cathedral of Santiago de Compostela. These thoughts came from her immense knowledge of masons' marks and her interpretation of these marks has led to a much greater understanding of the history of the building.

In February, local architect Darren Turner used the *Maurice Barley Lecture* to give us an insight into his recent research into the early works of Watson Fothergill. Darren looked at Fothergill's early buildings, principally in Nottingham and Mansfield, many of which were built while he was still developing his distinctive style of architecture.

We ended the winter season with the *Myles Thoroton Hildyard Lecture* and Derek Wileman giving us the benefit of his studies of personalities associated with the Southwell Workhouse. Derek concentrated on the role of the Guardians and their links with the many and varied personalities associated with the work of the Workhouse.

The *Spring Meeting* was held in the spacious surroundings of the Cranmer Centre at Aslockton with tea served in the original church, under the restored memorial to Rev John Standish, one of the joint Honorary Secretaries appointed at the formation of the Thoroton Society.

The new winter season began with the *Archaeology Lecture*, given by Peter Liddle, formerly of Leicestershire County Council, showing us the glories of the Hallaton Treasure. This huge hoard of mainly Iron Age coins and a few spectacular Roman artefacts have given archaeologists and historians a great insight into activities in this corner of Leicestershire.

The Annual Luncheon was held in the restored barn of the Forest Lodge Hotel at Edwinstowe, where a splendid meal was followed by Charles Watkins giving us a short history of the nearby Sherwood Forest and its conservation into its current form.

A week later, the *Nottinghamshire History Lecture* was given by PhD student Teresa Phipps from the University of Nottingham, who had studied local court records from the 14th century to establish the ability of women to obtain justice within the patriarchal society of the time.

The year ended with the *Neville Hoskins Lecture* being used to launch the newest book in the Record Series, which is a compilation of all the published papers of Dr Rosalys Coope, our recently retired President. Pete Smith assisted Rosalys in the preparation of the book and showed us how their understanding of the history of Newstead Abbey had developed over the years.

David Hoskins, Honorary Lecture Secretary

VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Work continues with a small group of volunteers, mainly drawn from Thoroton Society members. As always, more would be welcome. Draft text is gradually accumulating on the VCH website for several parishes around Nottingham and Mansfield. About half the text for the planned volume on Rushcliffe Wapentake Southern Division, a group of thirteen rural, and mostly small, parishes in the south of the county including East Leake and Sutton Bonington, is in an advanced draft, with a target for submission to the VCH General Editor in London in September 2015. This will be the first Nottinghamshire VCH volume to be published since 1910. Thoroton Society has applied to the Victoria History Trust, the central funding body for VCH, for a small grant to enable research at the National Archives for the volume to be completed.

Philip Riden, County Editor, VCH

ARCHAEOLOGY

2014 has seen a wide variety of archaeological investigations by archaeological contractors, the Nottinghamshire County Council Community Archaeology Team and community groups across the County. Brief details of some of the main projects are provided in this report, with thanks to Ursilla Spence of Nottinghamshire County Council for her help in compiling this list of current projects.

Attenborough

Over the last year, Trent & Peak Archaeology staff have worked in partnership with the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust at Attenborough Nature Reserve. This HLF funded project has created a group of heritage volunteers (the Attenborough Heritage Explorers) who have been tracking down artefacts that were extracted during historic quarrying and that are now dispersed in different museums and collections. The volunteers created a full catalogue (<http://www.attenborough-heritage.org.uk/>), which enabled a heritage trail leaflet and a final technical report to be devised.

Colston Bassett

A geophysical survey by Archaeological Project Services Ltd at Langar Lane revealed the plan of an extensive nucleated settlement of probable Late Iron Age and Roman date. A possible Early Medieval open-air assembly site ('moot'), signalled by a 'Thinghowe' field name, was identified on low promontory that was utilised by a later gallows - adding usefully to the growing number of such sites that have now been identified in Nottinghamshire.

Farndon: Ice Age Journeys

The programme of fieldwalking and test-pitting by FARI members and other volunteers has continued on this nationally important Late Upper Palaeolithic site and has enhanced further our understanding of the spatial extent and character of hunter-gatherer activity across the sand and gravel terraces and floodplain of the Trent to the south-west of Newark. The results of recent fieldwork and their contribution to wider understanding of the Late Upper Palaeolithic period were discussed in a well-attended and highly successful day conference organised by FARI members in Newark in November.

Kelham

Investigations by Wessex Archaeology on behalf of Severn Trent Water and Laing O'Rourke in advance of pipeline construction uncovered the limestone foundations of a gate structure possibly associated with a demolished high status building. This may coincide with a building shown in the 17th Century Clampe plan, and it has been suggested could correlate with one of the properties demolished by Royalist or Parliamentary forces during the Civil War.

Kings Clipstone: King John's Palace

Mercian Archaeological Services have continued archaeological investigations at King John's Palace. This has included test-pitting, topographic survey, geophysical survey and excavation in the vicinity of the surviving building, with the aim of elucidating further the extent and character of the site and its relationship to the neighbouring landscape.

Newark: Bantymock

Further excavations of this extensive Middle to Late IA settlement and ditched field system were carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology staff in advance of quarrying by British Gypsum. Structural remains included pits, wells, waterholes, roundhouses and other features yielding pottery, querns and other occupation debris. This represents a continuation of an extensive dispersed Iron Age settlement, including several ditched enclosures, that has been revealed during several phases of quarrying, and provides further evidence of extensive Iron Age activity at this location. Earlier prehistoric activity is indicated by scattered Neolithic and Bronze Age flintwork, including a fine barbed and tanged arrowhead, together with Beaker pottery.

Nottingham

Tram Extension

Archaeological investigations by Trent & Peak Archaeology on behalf of NET2 and Vinci Construction UK during extension of the Nottingham Tram network have now concluded. Staff are working on post-excavation tasks and will be adding reports to the TPA website once completed (<http://www.tparchaeology.co.uk>).

Lenton Priory

Between October and December 2014, community excavations led by Trent & Peak Archaeology for the Dunkirk and Lenton Partnership Forum were undertaken on the site of Lenton Priory. Seven evaluation trenches were excavated in the green areas around St. Anthony's Church, re-identifying a number of parts of the main priory

church, the inner precinct wall and part of the market situated in the outer precinct. The project was funded mainly by the HLF and Nottingham City Council.

The Origins of Nottingham:

Work was completed on the first stage of an assessment of the archives compiled during excavations by the Nottingham City Museums Field Archaeology Section from 1969 to 1980 in the Pre-Conquest Borough (specifically at Drury Hill, Woolpack Lane, Goose Gate, Fisher Gate, Boots Garage and Halifax Place). This English Heritage funded project is being conducted by Trent & Peak Archaeology in collaboration with Nottingham City Council Museums and is aimed at securing, consolidating and enhancing the archives compiled during excavations on the sites prior to further synthesis. A digital version of the archive examined during this first stage of this work will soon be available for all to view on the website of the Archaeology Data Service (address to be advised in Thoroton Newsletter). A second stage of work, aimed at enhancing further the digital archive, was begun in November 2014 and will continue to February 2016. Updates to the ADS website will be provided as tasks are completed.

The Nottingham Caves Survey

Phase 2 of the Nottingham Caves Survey continued through 2014 and is scheduled to finish in March 2015. Work included the development of a smartphone app which will allow location-based virtual access to many of the city's caves via an Android or Apple smartphone or tablet and further assessment of hitherto unexplored caves.

St Ann's Well

Evaluation was undertaken for the Historic Environment Consultancy at the site of St Ann's Well, Nottingham. This is a source of much local interest and speculation, providing the origin of the name of the St Ann's district of the town and associated by many with Robin Hood (it was known as Robin Hood's Well as early as 1500). Despite this history, the well was demolished in 1855 and the site disappeared beneath the Nottingham Suburban Railway in the 1880s. Subsequent redevelopment has taken little account of its long heritage. Evaluation results were largely negative, but did confirm the extent of 19th century disturbance and the great depth of embankment material still present across the north of the site. The remains of the well may yet survive, but if so probably lie beneath at least 4m of overburden.

Nottinghamshire Coalfields Heritage: physical landscape legacy

This English Heritage funded project aims to assess the condition and vulnerability of the physical remains relating to the Nottinghamshire coal industry. Documentary and archive sources have been reviewed by ArcHeritage staff with the aim of identifying the character and extent of the physical remains of the coal industry and identifying threats to heritage assets. A second stage of work will include further documentary research, walkover surveys and community engagement. This will enhance the Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record, assess the vulnerability of the coalfield landscape and heritage assets and recommend strategies for the management and promotion of heritage resources.

Palaeochannels of the Trent Catchment

The valleys of the River Trent and its major tributaries preserve a rich resource of abandoned river channels, many preserving organic deposits with potential for elucidating changes in land-use, vegetation and climate – and hence for studying the landscape impact of human activity. This new project, conducted by Trent & Peak Archaeology with funding from English Heritage, is combining study of air photographic data with the analysis of new remotely sensed imagery, including lidar and multi-spectral and hyper-spectral imaging. This is enhancing significantly our understanding of river development in the Trent Valley, and will expedite management of this precious and fragile resource and the development of targeted research.

Rufford Park

Two phases of excavation were carried out by the Nottinghamshire Community Archaeology Team. Investigations were conducted on Abbey Lawn with the aim of locating the west end of the Abbey Church. Three walls associated with an early phase of the 17th century country house were located, but no traces of the church were found. A second phase of excavation was conducted on Abbey Meadow near the site of a medieval well. This revealed late medieval to early post-medieval structures interpreted as workshops, plus a clay floor sealing an earlier wall. Much re-used masonry from the former abbey was recovered, together with pottery, window glass and glass vessels.

Southwell Buildings

Trent & Peak Archaeology, in partnership with the University of Nottingham, Nottinghamshire County Council and the Southwell Community Archaeology Group undertook reconnaissance and subsequent analysis of the town's pre-1750 houses. Significantly, the project successfully dated the earliest house in Southwell, Home Farm Cottage, which was built of timbers felled between 1332 and 1337.

Toton Manor Farm

Following field survey (including geophysical prospection), community excavations led by Trent & Peak Archaeology for the Friends of Toton Fields were undertaken at Toton Manor Farm recreation ground as part of the HLF funded project Toton Unearthed (<http://totonunearthed.org.uk/>) between May and September 2014. Two evaluation trenches re-identified the site of Manor Farm itself and revealed traces of extensive medieval and post-medieval activity. The site of a watermill dating mainly to the first half of the eighteenth century was also excavated. The results will be summarised on new interpretation boards that will be installed in the park on behalf of Broxtowe Borough Council.

David Knight, Archaeology Rapporteur

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

The Association has had a very busy and productive year, providing grants to aid with the publication of research work, grants to youth groups, and work with member societies setting up and hosting web sites.

The two day schools held at Ravenshead village hall were 'A River Runs Through It –

The Trent and Its Communities' on 22nd March 2014 (disseminating the results of an AHRC-funded Connected Communities Project [PI Richard Gaunt] at the University of Nottingham), and a joint Conference on the Great War focusing on The Home Front, in association with the Thoroton Society (25 October 2014).

The NLHA also held 'Make History Happen!' Youth Conference on 15 July at Wollaton Hall, in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council (Nottinghamshire Archives).

The association exhibited and presented at the first 'Nottinghamshire Local History and Archaeology Day', organised by the University of Nottingham Museum in conjunction with the Thoroton Society on 21st June 2014.

Another series of Angel Row History Forums, convened by the NLHA, were held at Nottinghamshire Local Studies Library. Topics included the 1984-5 miners' strike, Andy Nicholson's Nottinghamshire history website and a visit to Hurt & Son, Chilwell.

Richard Gaunt, NLHA Representative

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUST

Over the past twelve months some twenty three buildings have been, briefly or exhaustively, discussed at NBPT Meetings. The most frequently mentioned is the former Robin Hood Hotel at Newark which, after many years of discussion with potential buyers, English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the local authority, etc., still awaits an outcome for the future. This illustrates how painfully slow can be the process of safeguarding our built heritage. Information about the Trust, with illustrations of past activities, can be seen at www.nbpt.co.uk

Ceril Little, NBPT Representative