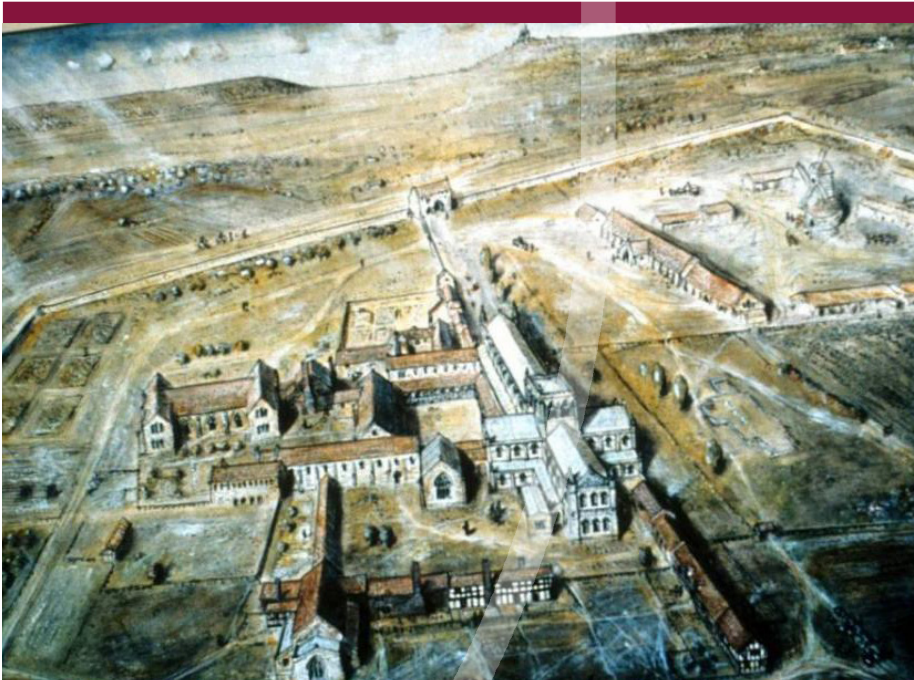




SOCIETY FOR  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
HISTORY &  
ARCHAEOLOGY

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Charity Number 1182569

[www.slha.org.uk](http://www.slha.org.uk)

Patron : Ursula Lidbetter  
President : Naomi Field  
Chair : Andrew Walker  
Vice Chairs : Mike Daly &  
Heather Hughes

Treasurer : Chris Hewis  
Secretary : Kathy Holland  
Charity Number : 1182569  
Total Membership : 609

## Chair's Report

As you will see from the reports of the various separate sections of the Society, it has been another busy year. For much of 2024 (since March) we have been celebrating our golden jubilee anniversary – and we will continue to do so into the early months of 2025. Thanks to all who attended and contributed to our special conference marking our first 50 years as SLHA in April at Bishop Grosseteste University. It was a really stimulating event in which I think many participants learnt much about all aspects of the Society, reflecting upon what has already been achieved and giving some consideration as well to the future.

The Society seeks to cover all parts of the historic county and, with that in mind, our Golden Jubilee Exhibition, which has been assembled by representatives of the various groups within the Society, has been touring Lincolnshire. After a period at Lincoln Museum, where it was officially launched, the exhibition has moved on to Caistor Arts and Heritage Centre, where several associated activities were also organised. The exhibition is now based at Boston Guildhall, where, again, a range of related events have been organised. If you haven't already seen this, please do visit the exhibition if you can. Thanks are due to the Lincoln Record Society for a generous grant to help with the financing of this important element of the golden jubilee activities.

Another aspect of the celebrations was the publication in the summer of a bumper edition of Lincolnshire Past & Present, with several articles focussing upon the past work of the Society. Thanks to Ros Beevers for her editing work on this. One noteworthy part of the 50th anniversary celebrations is the number of still-active members of the Society who have vivid memories of their involvement with the SLHA at its launch, or soon afterwards. Having joined the Society at the time of its silver jubilee, I still feel like a newcomer.

Work on the Bardney Abbey site continues. During the year, attention has been paid to some aspects of signage, vegetation management and the wooden monk, who greets visitors to the site, has been given a much-deserved smart new coat of wood preservative. Still much work remains to be done here.

The major project for the Society in the months ahead, though, concerns our headquarters, Jews' Court, where major structural work is required at the front of the building, and the shed, which has given such sterling service as the store for the second-hand books, has finally come to the end of its life. Over the year ahead, we need to be developing a new strategic plan, involving as many members as possible. We'll be saying more about this in the months ahead. This is indeed an appropriate task to undertake as we end our first fifty years and look forward to the beginning of the Society's next half century.

I'd like to finish by thanking all of the Society's volunteers who contribute so much to the successful operation of the Society. My thanks as well to Kathy Holland for her tremendous work on the Society's behalf. If you would like to become more involved with any of the Society's work, please don't hesitate to contact Kathy in the first instance, using the address at the end of this Annual Report.

**Andrew Walker, Chair of the Society**

## Property

Cyclical maintenance continues to be carried out at Jews' Court including, boiler maintenance, annual asbestos check, PAT Testing, intruder and fire alarm servicing. The Five Yearly Fixed Wiring Test was carried out in Jews' Court in July and remedial repairs carried out. Weekly/ monthly checks and monitoring are carried out at approved intervals to the fire alarm, emergency lighting, the Intruder Alarm System, smoke and heat detection and fire extinguishers. Training of new volunteers in Fire Safety Awareness has been completed and will continue to be carried out in-house as required.

Following structural investigation at Jews' Court by Alan Wright Consulting it has become clear that some remedial work needs to be carried out. The front wall of the building now needs to be stabilised by 'tying' it into the structure on the first floor. The ceilings to the bookshop require replacement and these works will require parts of the building to be closed for several weeks. Listed Building Consent will have to be obtained for these works. It is anticipated that the work will be carried out in 2025. Members of the Property Team have participated in meetings and site visits regarding the future of the Bardney Abbey site which is in the care of the Society. Following the fall of a section of the ceiling in the Asbestos clad external bookstore in the garden, the future of this building is now in question. A firm decision on this structure has yet to be made, however the City Council has given approval for the structure to be demolished without the need for Planning Permission or Listed Building Consent. Maintenance of the gardens at Jews' Court has continued with grateful thanks to Dave Mellows.

**Colin Holland for the Property Team**

## Industrial Archaeology

The annual Industrial Archaeology Conference, Lincoln's Engineering Heritage was held at Lincoln College. The six presentations covered notable elements of this heritage with the final speaker emphasising the importance and pressing need to establish an archive for Lincolnshire's Industrial Heritage. The talk From Elsham with Love, held in person on 15th February 2023 described the construction and commissioning processes of Anglian Water's new strategic new pipeline, currently threading its way from Elsham to Colchester.

Team members contributed to the SLHA Golden Jubilee Conference.

An in-person talk on Chemical Production at Flixborough covered the history of the site and the important chemicals produced there and particularly for Nylon production. It is 50 years since the devastating explosion at the site. The talk included poignant moments as our speaker recalled working on the site immediately before this disaster.

Fieldwork again included visits to the surviving buildings and other structures associated with the East Lincolnshire Line and "New Line" together with other nearby locations of industrial archaeological interest. Other field work included a visit to the Austen Fen Warehouse on the Louth Canal. This is a fine Georgian style building, probably dating from early in Queen Victoria's reign.

The project to celebrate Lincolnshire's Bricks and Brickmakers in conjunction with Alford Manor House continues to make

progress. Team members have visited sites throughout the county recording the variety of local bricks they encounter. Last year's report recorded the team's sadness at the death of Eric Newton. The first of Eric's booklets, *A History of Water Supply in Lincolnshire* has recently been published. This fitting tribute to Eric covers Grantham's water supply.

**Stephen Betteridge, Chair of the Industrial Archaeology Team**

### Local History

The Local History Team sacrificed its 2024 conference to make room for the SLHA Golden Jubilee celebration at Bishop Grosseteste where three members of the team spoke. We are presently planning our 2025 conference which is likely to be on the theme of Lincolnshire explorers and innovators.

We hosted the January Sunday Special at which the 2023 Flora Murray Award was presented to the RAF Wings to the Past Project and a Certificate of Excellence went to Louth Museum for their exhibition of Louth-made clocks. As well as our scheduled Zoom and in person talks, Jean Howard and Chris Hewis arranged events for Heritage Open Days.

Our churches group had a busy year with a well-attended and received conference in Tattershall village hall followed by a visit to the parish church of Holy Trinity. Church visits open to all members took place in Great Limber and Brocklesby in July and Scampton and Cammeringham in August. Further trips of this sort are being planned. Ken Redmore followed his Zoom talk on Burringham church with an open day there in September.

As ever my thanks go to Caroline Crane for her efficiency as Minutes Secretary and to Jean Howard for leading the Churches Group. New recruits to the team are welcome!

**Mark Acton, Chairman of the Local History Team**

### Building Recording Group (RUBL)

This has been a busy year for RUBL with two new projects. We surveyed The Round House at Langton-by-Spilsby. This is a Cottage Orné built in the early nineteenth century. This stimulated the idea of looking at all of the Cottages Ornés in the county. We visited the King's School Grantham to look at its medieval roof which we plan to survey. Work continues at South Willingham for the RUBL element of The Lincolnshire Hearth Tax volume which will be published by the Lincoln Record Society and the British Records Society. The Kirkstead and Stixwold projects are coming to a conclusion. These are part of our contribution to the Sacred Landscapes of the Witham Valley project based at the University of Wales Lampeter. Members of RUBL actively contribute to the Bardney Abbey working party. RUBL members continue to play a leading role in the Lincoln Local List project. The Lincoln Local List of some 400 heritage assets is scheduled for adoption by the City Council later in 2024. Discussions are taking place with Lincolnshire County Council on a project to better understand mud and stud buildings. There have been regular Zoom meetings throughout the year.

**Ken Hollamby, Secretary for David Stocker, Chairman**

### SLHA Study Tour to Anglesey & North Wales

On this year's the Study Tour in July we visited Anglesey and North Wales. There were thirty-one on the trip. On the journey to Bangor University, where we stayed, we visited the RAF Museum at Cosford. Our first day was a tour of prehistoric sites on Anglesey led by Francis Lynch who had spoken to the group the evening before.

We started day two at Penmon Priory and spent the rest of the morning at Beaumaris. In the afternoon we visited Plas Newydd which overlooks the Menai Straits. There was time when we got back for a wet walk round Bangor. On day three we took a morning trip on the narrow gauge Welsh Highland Railway from Porthmadog. This was followed by an afternoon in Caernarfon. On the journey back to Lincoln we visited Chirk Castle. Plans are well advanced for a Study Tour to the Isle of Wight in 2025.

**Ken Hollamby**

### Lincolnshire Heritage Ltd (Booksales)

The Directors of Lincolnshire Heritage remain the same. The bookshop continues to make regular sales and Lincolnshire Heritage transferred £20500 to the Society. High quality donations of books, both fact and fiction are still urgently needed to increase sales. Our December sales were far lower than usual due to the cancellation of Christmas Market, but our sales at the Heckington Show were our highest so far. We are open from Wednesday to Saturday. We have excellent volunteers, but we are very stretched and still need more so that we can open on more days and organise a bookstall at events.

The shop has been renamed 'Steep Hill Bookshop' and we have a new colourful hanging sign which is making people aware of us and bringing more customers in.

The North Room was also revamped with new shelving and the removal of the central unit, which allows the shelves to be seen more easily. The new shelving has meant that we are able to have far more books in the shop.

We have just published another book via KDP *A History of Water Supply in Lincolnshire – Grantham*, the first in a series. This method seems very successful as it means we do not have any significant upfront costs and just order as many as we require.

**Nick & Eva Moore, Bookshop Managers**

### Trustees

The Trustees are having a busy 2024.

Our agenda has covered several important developments. A good example was the decision to begin work on a new website, which will allow us to build a highly effective and informative online presence. I'd like to thank all of those people involved in this important work.

Working closely with the Bookshop Managers on the rebranding of the bookshop, with a new name and sign, is already proving a great success, along with a refresh of the shelving. Our Bookshop volunteers are a very important part of the SLHA team; I always enjoy spending time catching up on new developments with them.

We are beginning work, alongside the Executive team, on a comprehensive Business Plan and strategy document, to provide us with a road map for the years ahead.

A notable challenge we are facing is that the buildings we occupy are continuing to age and deteriorate, requiring investment for the future. The Property Committee is working hard to ensure the development of a programme for this, with the support of the Trustees.

We regularly review Trustee skillsets and consider our training needs; this is essential if we are to provide the level of support to all in the Society that we strive to give.

We would welcome the opportunity to strengthen our scope of expertise with the addition of Trustees experienced in Law and Accountancy: please do get in touch if you can help in either field, and would like to join us, at [stevestefaniuk@gmail.com](mailto:stevestefaniuk@gmail.com)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow

Trustees for their continuing enthusiasm and support. Our meetings are stimulating and enjoyable across the wide spectrum of challenges and opportunities that come before us.

**Steve Stefaniuk, Chair of the Trustees**

### Archaeology Team

The team again organised a range of events. Among the Wednesday talks were those concerned with the project at Crowland, which identified ritual use beginning as early as the late Neolithic period; preliminary findings along the Anglian Water pipeline crossing the county; and Viking coins of the East Midlands. Our 2023 conference, held at Navenby, was a joint meeting with the Council for British Archaeology branch, and had a special emphasis on the Portable Antiquities project across the East Midlands region. A further event, held at Scunthorpe Museum, focused on recent research in North Lincolnshire. Members of the team also made contributions to the Jubilee Conference in April.

It is notable how much archaeological work is taking place across the county, much of it linked to huge infrastructure developments. Regular items discussed by the Team included the Lincoln Greyfriars project, to which Team members have offered their expertise, and the ongoing research at Norton Disney. It was gratifying to hear Alice Roberts, interviewed on BBC Breakfast about the latest Digging for Britain series, select two Romano-British discoveries from Lincolnshire as the highlights of the year: the unsuspected settlement near to Waddington and the remarkable dodecahedron from Norton Disney, currently on display in Lincoln.

**Michael. J. Jones, For the Archaeology Team**

### History of Lincolnshire Committee

The Committee continues to meet on a quarterly basis. In July 2024, the fourth book in the Studies of the History of Lincolnshire series was published – Professor Andrew Jackson's, *Rural England Through War and Peace: The Literary Work of Lincolnshire's Bernard Samuel Gilbert, 1882-1927*. The book is now available from Steep Hill Bookshop in both paperback and hardback editions. The Committee is overseeing the ongoing production of a number of other works ranging chronologically from prehistoric Lincolnshire to some aspects of the county's twentieth-century history. Proposals for monographs relating to aspects of the county's history continue to be welcomed by the Committee. SLHA's annual journal, *Lincolnshire History & Archaeology* is also within the purview of the Committee. It is pleasing to report that two issues have been published since the last annual report as attempts are made to 'catch up'. Thanks are due particularly to Dave Start for his work as journal editor. As part of the ongoing 'catch-up' strategy, over the next few years, alternate thematic volumes are being produced, co-ordinated by guest editors.

It is pleasing to note that, during the year, Martin Watkinson's article, 'Reflections on "Closed Parishes"', published in volume 53, was winner in the 'long article' category of the British Association for Local History Publication Awards 2024. Congratulations to Martin.

Should you have any ideas regarding potential articles for inclusion in the journal, please contact Dave Start, the editor.

**Andrew Walker**

**Chair of the History of Lincolnshire Committee**

### Treasurer's Report

The Society showed a loss for the year of £4,510.

The 10% increase in subscriptions on the previous year was offset by reduced income and increased expenditure within the area of Membership Services.

Due to time constraints, I was unable to complete a gift aid claim in this financial year. I hope to finalise a claim this year covering two years, which is estimated to result in a total refund of £3,500.

There was also additional expenditure in this area of £4,500 for the Annual Journal.

Expenditure was increased on building repairs on the previous year, together with an increase in spend on Information Technology.

The IT expenditure increase was due to an ongoing update to the society's computer systems, which had fallen some way out-of-date, and becoming increasingly unreliable.

A reduction of the contribution from the Steep Hill Bookshop on the previous year was offset by an increased contribution from Events.

The increased activity within the events programme has not only increased our profile amongst members, but also been managed to show a surplus from the majority of events.

As the sole owner of Jews' Court, it was agreed to include this asset within the Balance Sheet. The property was independently valued at £250,000.

**Chris Hewis ACMA, Society Treasurer**

### Events & Activities

As requested by members, the Society continues to develop a programme of diverse events and activities in addition to the Conferences and talks organised by the teams. These have included visits to the Usher Gallery and Art-store, a guided walk around historic Caistor, a 'behind the scenes' visit to Lincoln Museum, a visit to the North Lincolnshire Museum in Scunthorpe, and Heritage activities for families.

The Society has introduced a series of Craft sessions inspired by historic and archaeological themes, which are proving popular, for example, 'Celtic Crafts' and 'Victorian Christmas'.

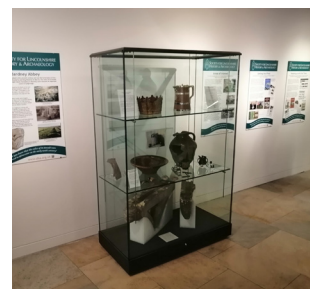
The programme of talks by Zoom has included a variety of topics for example, 'Bateman's Brewery' and 'Halls Barton Ropery at Barton on Humber'.

Additional events have been organised to support the Golden Jubilee exhibition including a number of talks, for example 'Historic Myth-busting', 'Lincolnshire Tokens' and 'Roman Lincoln' in addition to two well attended events exploring the history and folklore of Lincolnshire through Music, Stories and Song.

The Society has supported the Lincoln History Festival and Heritage Open Days by arranging and hosting a number of events and activities.

Thank you to all those to all those who helped with and supported the events and activities throughout the year.

**Kathy Holland**



*The Golden Jubilee Exhibition at Lincoln Museum.*