

society for lincolnshire history & archaeology

Annual Report June 2007

2006/7 has been a year of some special achievements. We have published two more books, shared in the 90th birthday celebrations of Rex Russell, and had some most successful days and weekends in our programme.

Rex has been an active member over many, many years and contributed to our lecture programme and publications times out of number. We enjoyed joining him and his wife, Joan, for his 90th and noting he is not retiring from his active support of the Society.

More recently we have been able to celebrate the 80th birthday of our Chairman, Pearl Wheatley; this turned into a double celebration because she was also honoured with the MBE in the New Year's Honours List. Pearl's contribution to the work of the Society cannot be over-emphasised, and this was a justly deserved acknowledgement of her outstanding contribution to the heritage sector.

Patron

**The Lord Lieutenant
of Lincolnshire
Mrs B Cracroft-Eley**

President

Mrs C Wilson

Chairman

Miss P Wheatley

Vice Chairman

Mr D Start

Treasurer

Mr P Hutchings

Administrator

Mr R Callow

publications

We have experienced regular requests for the out-of-print volumes one, two and three of *Lincolnshire's Lost Country Houses* by T R Leach and R Pacey. Mrs Joyce Leach, Terence's widow, and Robert Pacey gave the Publications Sub-Committee permission to reprint, and volume one was printed during the year with the plan to re-print volumes two and three in future years.

The other book to roll off the press in 2006 was J Norman Clarke's book *The Shadow of the Workhouse*, on Horncastle and the workings of the Poor Law in that area. The launch took place in December by Cllr Mrs Christine Talbot, Executive Committee for Adult Services and Secondary Education, at Jews' Court in the presence of the author's two daughters, Carol and Phyllida. Sadly Mr Clarke, who had written a number of books on Lincolnshire and numerous articles for SLHA publications, died before the book was published.

The Publications Sub-Committee has now drafted a programme for its publications over the next three years. There is no shortage of new books in the pipeline and we expect at least two volumes each year for the next three or four years.

The History of Lincolnshire Committee is progressing its new series and *Monasteries of Lincolnshire* by Dr Glyn Coppack is in preparation. Ian Straw, who has been treasurer of the Committee for many years, resigned at the end of the year. He has been most punctilious in keeping the stock records and the books balanced. We are most grateful to him for his dedication and support. The reins have been taken up by Eric Hair, who is a long time member of the Society as well as being our Auditor in his capacity as a Director of Streets Accountancy.

Our quarterly publications have regularly reached members thanks to Ros Beevers and Hilary Healey, editors of *Past and*

Present, and Mrs Sue Smith for the *Bulletin and Diary Dates*. Mark Bennet has worked steadily on editing the journal *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology* and hopes to clear our slight backlog in the near future.

A problem arose when both *Past and Present* and the journal were at the printers and the printing company went into liquidation. We were fortunate in that Ruddocks of Lincoln quickly took on *Past and Present* and Belton's of Gainsborough the journal, but there was, inevitably, a delay.

Although we cannot lay claim to publishing *Summoning Saint Michael* by David Stocker and Paul Everson (published by Oxbow Books) the SLHA played a big part in enabling its publication and were able to make a special offer to our membership.



SLHA President, Catherine Wilson, presenting a copy of 'Summoning St Michael' to Dr Richard Morris who launched the book on 20 September 2006

meetings



Our guide explains the finer points of the Clifton Suspension Bridge to participants on the Bristol trip in July

During the year we held two new day schools – one on Roman Horncastle jointly with Horncastle Civic Society, and the other to sample Early Romanesque towers with David Stocker and Paul Everson, the authors of the new book *Summoning Saint Michael*.

The Annual Leach Lecture took us to the extreme south of the county to join the Stamford Survey Group for a talk by a long-standing SLHA

Member, Professor Alan Rogers, on William Browne of Stamford.

The Local History Day in July on 'Markets and Fairs', and the Archaeology Day in October on a Roman theme were both exceedingly well supported. Our thanks go to Dr Andrew Walker, Head of the History Department at Lincoln University, and our Administrator, Rodney Callow, for masterminding the days. Our



Display of masonic regalia on show at the masonic temple, Horncastle. Part of our Horncastle weekend

thanks also to Dr Mick Jones for gathering such an excellent team of speakers for the Archaeology Day.

Ken Hollamby and Rodney Callow organised a most enjoyable weekend trip to Bristol and district in July. The programme was very mixed ensuring everyone had something special to experience. As on previous tours, we were fortunate in having the service of top quality guides at all important venues.



Members and guests on the roof of Belton House, following the Annual General Meeting on 10 June 2006

Our 2006 AGM at Belton House was a most enjoyable occasion. The management and staff made us most welcome and we were allowed access to the roof to view the garden and the park which was a real bonus.

During the year the Sunday afternoon meetings at Jews' Court have seen better attendances than weekday evenings, so we have abandoned Friday evening lectures and programmed fewer weekday talks. Spalding and Sleaford have no such problems and both groups attract good audiences to their mid-week evening lectures.



Romano-British pot, found near the Town Hall in Horncastle in 1966, on display at the 'Celebrating Horncastle' conference 1 June 2006

library

At last we were able to open the library to researchers for one day a week. With the help of Joan Smith, Marjorie Whaler and Peter Laughton we have brought the card index up to date and computerised the stock. We also have a fine collection of large-scale maps.

Turning to the future, at the instigation of the President, the Executive have launched a review of our management procedures. The consultation stages of this will be extended to the general membership and to all those interested in the future well-being and success of the Society.

staff

We are fortunate in having had few staff changes over the year. Ian Straw has relinquished his post as Membership Secretary, held over the past twelve years. He has ensured new members have been welcomed, the records kept up to date and queries received prompt response. We wish him well in concentrating more on his artistic pursuits. His tasks have been taken over by Mark Acton, who has recently been elected to the Executive Committee.

Another important change is the appointment of Professor Graeme Wilkinson to a new post across the Pennines, which means he can no longer assist with our web site. We thank him for sorting out our many and varied computer problems over the last four years. Graeme and Mollie have been very good neighbours on Steep Hill and have watched over Jews' Court.

Our Sleaford and Spalding branches, under the leadership of Sandra Sardeson and Dr Simon Pawley, and Rose Clark, respectively, are most efficiently managed

and provide members with interesting and varied programmes. Rose is still managing without a secretary and David Bramford wishes to relinquish the secretaryship at Sleaford. He has served the group for a long time and has regularly represented them at Executive meetings.

We pay tribute to the sterling efforts of our gardener, Mrs Jane Wheatley, who, with a little help from our neighbour, Stephen Bailey, keeps our delightful garden in fine shape. It is a great pity so few people can see and appreciate this hidden haven.

Lincolnshire heritage

Jews' Court Bookshop is forever running out of space. The space gained by discontinuing the sale of gifts and souvenirs was soon filled. On average, two new books on Lincolnshire are added to the stock each week. Additions of new books always bring in extra trade, especially if there is media coverage. Ken Redmore and Henry Wheatley have again made changes to both sections of the shop, creating more shelf space at low cost.

Donations of used books are most welcome and keep flowing in. We are most grateful to members and friends - this aspect of our business is crucial to our success. It has been a good trading year, even though some spells have witnessed low receipts. Profit from the second-hand books now equals that of new books. Our success is due to wise purchasing of new books by Pamela D'Arcy and the management of the second-hand section by Ken Redmore. A third

area of substantial income is from our book stalls at conferences. Bernard Sullivan, after many years of loading and unloading boxes of books and setting up stalls, has resigned due to ill-health. He has raised hundreds of pounds and, with the help of Pamela, has done much to publicise the Society. All these would wish to thank Mrs Fen Major, Paul Hunter and Mark Acton for their help, as well as the army of volunteers who keep the till ringing.

A member of staff we miss is Sheila MacPhail, who moved from Lincoln in the autumn. Sheila was a volunteer for many years and the buyer for gifts and souvenirs. With our thanks we send good wishes to her in her new home. Sheila set up a used post card section, which has been enlarged and extended by Mark Acton to target specialist collectors - a development which is proving most successful.