

society for lincolnshire history & archaeology

Annual Report May 2011



chairman's report

Once again, 2010/11 has been a busy year for the Society with day and week-end conferences, outings, publications, and comments on actions by the County Council to reduce its expenditure. We have expressed great concern at the Council's decision to close the Stamford, Grantham and Church Farm Museums, and elsewhere to cut opening hours and staffing. We welcome the proposals to set up trusts to run the Grantham and Church Farm Museums, which will at least keep them open, but note that no new arrangement has yet been made for Stamford. The County Council has also ended meetings of the Lincoln



*The impressive
Gawthorpe Hall,
Lancashire, a brief stop
on the weekend study
tour, July 2010*

Cultural Panel, that allowed the Council to get feedback from users of its cultural services in Lincoln, and we regret its ending. The City of Lincoln Council is reviewing its Heritage Services, and we stand ready to offer what help and advice we can.

In recent years the publication of our annual journal has got behind-hand, and the Executive has decided that efforts must be made to catch up. We will publish two volumes a year for the next three years, and this year volumes 42 (2007) and 43 (2008) both appeared. In 2011/12 we should publish the volumes for 2009 and 2010, then in 2012/13 the volumes for 2011 and 2012, and in 2013/14 the volumes for 2013 and 2014. This has meant

a tremendous effort by Mark Bennet, the editor, and we thank Mark for the hard work he is putting in to achieve this target.

The Society's website has been updated and is a necessity in this modern age. Some time ago Dennis Mills put together some notes on writing local history and these have now been added to the SLHA website.

The British Association for Local History (BALH) decided to make an award to Rex Russell for his lifelong contribution to local history, and the award was given to Rex in Nettleton Manor. The Vernacular Architecture Group (formed in 1952) hope to have a four-day conference in Lincoln in spring 2015, or 2016, and have asked SLHA to help organise it. We have set up a team to work with VAG on this.

The Society has for long had a library in Jews' Court, but the Executive noted that not much use is being made of this facility. We set up a Working Group to look at the future of the Library and they recommended some improvements. However before we incur significant expenditure on those improvements we need to be sure there is sufficient demand. So we are encouraging members to make use of the library, and to record that usage. If members do not use the Library, we could certainly find another use for that room.

The Churches in Lincolnshire are interested in working with the Society to give more attention to the history of the many churches in the county. Professor David Stocker, a member of the Executive, is leading a new team to carry this forward.

George Boole (1815-64) of Lincoln is now recognised for his contribution to logic and mathematics, which prepared the way for the development of modern computers. The University of Lincoln is planning to mark his bicentenary in 2015 and the Society will do what it can to support them.

The Executive decided during 2010/11 to initiate a series of awards to recognise the achievements and endeavours of local groups, societies and individuals in the fields of Lincolnshire history and archaeology. There will be an annual award named in honour of the late Flora Murray, and Awards of Excellence that can be given at any time. The first Awards will be presented to winners at the AGM on 18 June, 2011 at Burgh le Marsh. The nominations received are set out on the last page of this report.

Dr Andrew Walker served for many years on the Executive and other Groups of the Society, and provided a very good link with Lincoln University. Andrew has now left Lincolnshire, though he still keeps in touch with the county and its history. Dr Cairo Hickman from the University has joined the Executive to continue that close and valuable link. Dr Erin Bell of the University has also joined the Local History Group.

Philip Hutchings has announced his resignation as Treasurer after several years. We thank him for his work over the years, and wish him well for the future. A new treasurer should be elected at the AGM in June 2011.

This has been my second year as your Chairman and as originally indicated I will stand down at this year's AGM. This will be a further step towards returning to our arrangement where members of the Society are elected as Vice-Chairman for four years and then serve two years as Chairman. We have two Chairmen in place to carry this forward, and expect a new Vice-Chairman to be elected this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the Society who serve on the Executive and our various Groups, and those who help carry out all the other tasks for the Society, as well as those who help at Jews' Court in the bookshop and with other tasks. The Society could not carry out all its activities without the work of so many volunteers who do it for the love of our county and its history.

Neil Wright, Chairman of the Society

Patron

**The Lord
Lieutenant
of Lincolnshire,
Tony Worth**

President

Dr M J Jones

Chairman

Mr N R Wright

Vice-Chairmen

Mr C J Lester

Mr S E Squires

Treasurer

Mr P Hutchings

Administrator

Mr R Callow

Membership and

Marketing Officer

Mr M Acton

Secretary

Mrs S Smith

industrial archaeology team

We have been particularly active with our fieldwork and recording in the last year. Our survey work has included Canwick Hall sewage works; two C19 water pumps at Langton by Spilsby; the former E2v factory in Lincoln; a rare wheelwright's oven in



Members of the Industrial Archaeology team investigating the Canwick Hall Sewage treatment plant (July 2010)

Horncastle; Wiggshall St Germans pumping station near Wisbech where the Lincoln-made pumps were removed with the demolition of the building; an intriguing mound at South Willingham which turned out to be natural; Branston Gas Works and Branston Water Mill. The results will be published in the journal. We have carried out a preliminary survey for work to record a water wheel and pump remains at Belton House and walked the routes of the Stamford canal and the Bytham to Edenham railway to identify potential future recording projects.

In October 2010 our Conference at Holbeach on "Food and Farming in the Fens" was a great success and we are very grateful to QV Foods for their sponsorship.

We had bookstalls at the Holbeach conference as well as the Carrington Steam Rally. We also led a guided walk as part of the Wolds Walking Festival. This was entitled "Railways and Radar" and included visits to the former Donington on Bain station, ex RAF Stenigot

as well as Stenigot Church.

We have maintained our involvement in the ongoing proposals for the future of the semi-derelict ice factory on Grimsby Docks and in the Louth Navigation Trust. The future of Sleaford Maltings appears to have been resolved with the grant of permission in April 2011 for a mix of residential and business uses. The assessment of the multitude of plans produced for this has been very time consuming for us but we welcome the positive outcome.

Joint events with other groups continue. We now have joint events, both talks and visits, with the Lincoln Engineering Society and we are liaising with the Lincolnshire Mills Group to find further opportunities. A small group from the Sleaford U3A record buildings for us and are currently undertaking work at Amber Hill and at Wragby.

On top of this we have maintained our regular flow of speakers and articles for the Society and its publications.

Stewart Squires

south holland group

After many years as Chairman of this large and popular Group, Rose Clark has stood down. Dennis Wolfe has taken over as Chairman, and Anna O'Sullivan has become Secretary of the Group. On behalf of the Society as a whole we have presented Rose with a copy of Bartholomew Howlett's *Views in the County of Lincoln* in recognition of her long service as leader of the South Holland Group. Talks have included: Historic Landscapes of the Wash; Hatched, Matched and Despatched: Aspects of Registration; The Saxby to Bourne Railway; The History of Strawberries; Balloons, Blériots, and Barnstormers; Lincolnshire and the Great War Belgian Refugees; The Tolpuddle Martyrs and The Development of Willow Tree Fen.



The navy house at Wymondham, Leics, an important and rare survival visited by SLHA group in September 2010

local history team

We have had another active year of conferences, lectures and other events. The 'Horncastle' weekend conference was held on 18 to 20 February at Bishop Grosseteste University College in Lincoln, as Horncastle College no longer offers residential accommodation. The Leach Lecture was given by Richard Thornton on 8 September, 2010 at Coningsby, and his subject was the ancestry of Bishop King.

A Local History Fair was held at Grimsby Minster on 9 April 2011 and many local societies, churches, and other bodies from around the county set up their stalls. For this a lot of thanks go to David Robinson of Grimsby, and to the staff of St James', for their very active and positive work to help set this up.

Over past decades there have been many schemes to record oral history in Lincolnshire, and the Society is seeking funding for a project to bring together these scattered collections that have been created over the years. There is a need for transcription, and ownership is also a problem.

The Lincolnshire Heritage Consortium was formed under the encouragement of Bishop Grosseteste University College and the Society is hoping to establish closer links with the Consortium. Two of their Committee members, Mike Booth and Teresa Mayberry, have already joined the Society's Local History Group.

Brenda Webster

archaeology team

The monthly meetings at St Hugh's Hall have continued to be well supported. Lectures by leading archaeologists have covered sites far and wide but most have concentrated on recent work in this country. Dr Kevin Leahy's talk on the Staffordshire hoard was attended by an



Whalley Abbey, Lancashire, visited on the SLHA tour, July 2010

audience of over 100. Our annual Archaeology Day was held in March at Lincoln University's Riseholme Campus, and the theme was 'The End of Roman Lincolnshire' to mark the anniversary of the traditional date for the departure of the Roman legions in 410. Once more there was a galaxy of speakers and a capacity audience.

Our main practical project to involve volunteers, working on Lincoln's huge quantity of medieval and post-medieval ceramic building materials and tile, started with a series of training sessions and assessments. It was soon clear that the unavoidable costs would be more than the Society could bear, and an application for heritage lottery funding is now being submitted. If successful, it is hoped the project will get under way later this year.

Our *Children's Guide to Roman Lincoln* has been revised and reprinted, and is for sale in the Jews' Court bookshop. The only real disappointment this year was the cancellation of the Christmas party, which fell on the day that saw the heaviest snowfall in 2010. There were dire warnings not to travel unless absolutely necessary, many apologies were received all day, and cancellation became certain when our caterers and entertainers were unable to even reach Lincoln. Refunds were made to all concerned.

John Wilford

publications committee

The SLHA has recognised the contribution of Dennis Mills to history in Lincolnshire and further afield by publishing a festschrift entitled *Lincoln Connections*. It was launched at a large gathering in Branston Village Hall on Dennis' 80th birthday on 26 March, 2011.

history of lincolnshire committee

Unfortunately, and despite their best efforts, this Committee was unable to publish a volume during the past year. Several are nearing completion, and one is being copy edited and prepared for publication later in 2011. As with so many books, authors often find starting out is much easier than finishing. We now have a schedule, with a year on year publications programme in which books are ear-marked for publication down to 2016, but as is always the case we cannot publish until we have an acceptable text together with the appropriate illustrations. We have been monitoring the publishing world carefully. Modern methods of publication make it easier to pinpoint just how many copies to publish in terms of sales potential, so we should in future carry little back stock. We have also agreed liaison procedures to ensure that we are fully aware of the programme of the SLHA Publications Committee. Finally, we have taken the opportunity fully to revise our contracts to take into account changes in publishing practices including digital opportunities.

John Beckett



A guided tour of the Weavers' Triangle on the Leeds-Liverpool Canal, Burnley (SLHA tour, July 2010)



The East Midlands Archaeology Conference, organised by the IA team, was held at the Food Technology Centre, University of Lincoln, Holbeach (October 2010)



The grassy ramparts of Bytham Castle (SLHA day tour, September 2010)

society for lincolnshire history and archaeology awards

In 2011 the Society instituted a series of awards to recognise the endeavours and achievements of local groups, societies and individuals in the fields of Lincolnshire history and archaeology.

There will be one annual award, to be called the 'Flora Murray Award' and, in addition, occasional awards at the Society's discretion to be called 'SLHA Awards for Excellence'. The Flora Murray Award will take the form of a cheque for £200 and a framed certificate, and recipients of an SLHA Award for Excellence will receive a framed certificate. The Flora Murray Award will be presented at the Annual General Meeting, and SLHA Awards for Excellence can be made at any time.

The first awards will be made at the 2011 Annual General Meeting and the following nominations have been received

The judges have decided on this occasion to make two SLHA Awards for Excellence as well as the Flora Murray Award.

- *Adam Eve and Louth Carpets; and the Story of Eve and Ranshaw Ltd.*, by David Robinson; published by Louth Naturalists, Antiquarian and Literary Society.
- *An excursion into Waddington History*, a series of booklets by Jean Towers; published by Waddington Local History Group.
- *Bardney Heritage Trails leaflet*; published by Bardney Development Trust.
- *Glimpses and Gleanings from Minting and Gautby*; published by Minting and Gautby Heritage Society.
- *Rose Brothers (Gainsborough) Ltd*, by Sue Edlington and Dr D. Rose; published by Gainsborough and District Heritage Association.
- *Stickney History Collection*, including web site; published by Stickney History Collection.
- *The Parliamentary Career of Charles De Laet Waldo Sibthorp 1826-1855* by Stephen Roberts and Mark Acton; published by the Edwin Mellen Press
- *Wrawby at War 1914-1918*, edited by Anne Astling; published by Wrawby Local History Group.
- *Yellowbelly Youth. A Fiskerton Boyhood*, by Fred Thompson, photographs by Ernest Steele; published by Fiskerton History and Archaeology Group.

Building a Railway: Bourne to Saxby, the SLHA/LRS book by Stewart Squires and Ken Hollamby, was awarded the AIA prize for Best Occasional Publication, 2010



sleaford group

This large Group continues with an active programme of lectures in Sleaford during the year. The annual W. H. Hosford Memorial Lecture was given by Rod Fanthorpe on 'Smuggling on the Lincolnshire Coast', and at the December meeting members of the Group gave a variety of contributions and displayed items and artefacts. Other talks included: The Billingas and the Early History of the Sleaford Area; The Luttrell Psalter; Malta: A Journey into the Past; Edward King, Bishop of Lincoln; Heckington Windmill and The Plague at Howell, 1587.

lincolnshire heritage ltd

Lincolnshire Heritage is the commercial arm of the Society, handling the income and expenditure of the bookshop and paying our rent to the Jews' Court Trust. Income has been very little affected by the recession and continues to exceed expenditure.

finance

The Society's finances continue in a sound condition, with income from subscriptions, book sales, donations and interest on our reserves more than covering the relevant expenditure. All conferences and other events are self-financing, and the price of publications is set to cover the cost of publication over a period of time. Copies of the audited accounts are available on request if any member wishes to see them.

In recent years several members have left bequests to the Society, and the Society is very grateful for these. Recently Dennis Mills has donated the Royalties of his books to SLHA and this is also greatly appreciated.

Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology
Jews' Court
2-3, Steep Hill
Lincoln LN2 1LS

Tel/Fax: 01522 521337

Email: slha@lincolnshirepast.org.uk

Web: www.lincolnshirepast.org.uk

