

society for lincolnshire history & archaeology

Annual Report June 2012



Chairman's Report

Yet again, 2011-12 has turned out to be a busy and productive year for the Society. The bare statistics show that we have organised 28 talks, most in Lincoln, Spalding and Sleaford with one each in Spilsby and Caistor; three Sunday Specials making another nine talks, all in Lincoln; three one day outings; two guided walks; the four day Study Tour to Edinburgh; nine Heritage Open Day events; three one day and one weekend conferences; and at least seven bookstalls at events other than those in our programme. We have also published one book, one Journal and four copies of Past and Present. This is a very varied programme, including events and subjects both inside and outside the County of which we are very proud. These activities can only take place because of the commitment and interest of so many dedicated volunteers. Indeed, the backbone of the Society is the great number of you who work so hard and we are all very grateful to you.

That what we do is of wider regard and interest became clear when the work of the Society featured in *You and Yours*, on Radio 4, on Friday 20 January. This included a feature on the regeneration of Sleaford Maltings. Solving the problem of large, unused former industrial buildings is an initiative of English Heritage at the present time and the Maltings was used as an example of how this may be successfully achieved. Those taking part were the developer, the Prince's Trust, English Heritage and the SLHA. Chris Lester was interviewed as our representative.

The thrust of the item was how important it is for all sorts of organisations to work together to achieve new economic uses. There is a role for developers, local authorities, English Heritage and, where particularly important buildings on difficult sites are involved, the Prince's Trust. Sleaford was promoted as an excellent example of this and in the conclusions our involvement as a 'committed community group' was emphasised as an important part of the process.

We received further publicity in April in the pages of the *Lincolnshire Echo*. Part of the revamped now weekly paper is a regular history section. The Society took the opportunity to introduce readers to what we do. We hope to build on this and have occasional articles related to specific areas of our work.

The Society again made a contribution to Heritage Open Days 2011. Altogether we organised nine events at seven sites in Boston, Castle Bytham, Lincoln, Sleaford and Toft near Bourne. We also organised an event for the Wolds Walking Festival again this year. Another of our strengths is the quality of our website. This is now being revamped to make it even better and we shall see the results shortly.

Concern over the possible protection of historic buildings, historic areas and landscapes, and archaeology, in the new national planning framework led the Society to make representations to the government as part of the consultation process. The Act has now become law and the future seems to be secure but we shall continue to monitor the situation.

Life memberships have been given to three members who have served the Society well for many years. Rose Clark has been a

member and Chairman of the Spalding Group for over 20 years and has recently moved away to be closer to her family. Dennis and Joan Mills, through their research and publication as well as their ready willingness to share their experience, have inspired others to follow in their footsteps.

Recently the Society has been offered a gift from Philip Vickers in the form of an oil painting he has done of the view of Lincoln Cathedral from the Brayford. This is very generous of Philip as he has also suggested that we can auction it to raise funds. Our intention is to put it on display at Jews' Court for a period. This will give members the opportunity to consider purchase in advance of it going to auction. We are very grateful to Philip for his very kind gesture.

Two of the major Society events this year were the visit to the Manchester Ship Canal in September and the annual long weekend in July, this time to Edinburgh. Twenty nine members and friends joined the Mersey Ferry 'Snowdrop' at Birkenhead for a six hour cruise to Salford Quays.

On the way to Edinburgh there was a stop at Alnwick. On Saturday morning there was a visit to the National Map Collection of Scotland, followed by free time to visit attractions of personal choice. A cruise on the Falkirk Wheel on Sunday was followed by the Museum of Rural Life at East Kilbride. Thank you to Ken Redmore and Ken Hollamby for these visits.

Our new Treasurer is Chris Hewis and following his appointment a year ago he is giving us excellent advice regarding our accounts. John Wilford will be standing down as a Vice Chairman at the AGM and we thank him for what he has done while in the post.

Finally, I would take this opportunity to finish as I began and thank all the members of the Society who serve on our various Committees, Teams and Area Groups; those who volunteer to help carry out the multitude of tasks and those who work in the bookshop and in the offices at Jews' Court. In reality such people are the Society and nothing would get done without you.

Patron

**The Lord
Lieutenant of
Lincolnshire,
Tony Worth
Dr M J Jones
Stewart Squires
Chris Lester
John Wilford
Chris Hewis
Rod Callow
Mark Acton
Sue Smith**

President
Chairman
Vice-Chairmen

Treasurer
Administrator
Membership and
Marketing Officer
Secretary



SLHA group at Corbridge Roman site, SLHA Study Tour, July 2011



IA Team members surveying a lock on the Horncastle Canal, August 2011

Industrial Archaeology Team

We are very proud of the fact that our involvement with the future of the Sleaford Maltings has received national recognition as referred to in the Chairman's notes above.

Our IA Conference in November had a theme of Lincolnshire Country House Technology and More. The technology included the supply of what we take for granted today, water, gas and sewerage, as well as tramways to link kitchen and dining room. The 'More' included short talks on the Caistor Canal,

Holdingham Watermill, Horncastle Wheelwright's Oven, the Grimsby Ice Factory and the use of Pulhamite, an artificial stone, in Lincoln. We have submitted a case to English Heritage for the Horncastle Wheelwright's Oven to be listed as it has turned out to be a very rare survival nationally. As usual, the results of our survey work will be published.

The Team are very pleased that the future of historic records relating to the County's engineering history has now been secured. Details of this will be announced soon but it is something we have been working towards with the County Council and the University for over ten years now. A new initiative followed a tour of the School of Engineering at Lincoln University by members of the Team. Together with the School we are now looking at ways in which the rich engineering history of the City may be expressed within the building for the benefit of the students.

The recording of the following structures has been carried out. A C19 Greenhouse at 66 St Mary's Lane, Louth; locks on the Horncastle Canal; structures at the former Sutton Bridge Dock; and a pre demolition photographic survey of parts of the Bardney Sugar Beet factory. Our work at Belton House on

the wheelhouse and pump which provided the power for the fountain in the Italian Garden as well as the Chapel organ has been completed. The results will feed into the information panels the National Trust intend to erect at the wheelhouse with its restored water wheel.

Queries we have been or are dealing with relate to railway gas works in the County; the First World War Tritton Trench Crosser; the former Great Central Goods and Grain Warehouse, now University Library, in Lincoln; and the Stoke Rochford waterfall.

Ken Redmore organised the Horncastle Canal lock survey in November and led a walk to look at the north end of the Canal as part of the Wolds Walking Festival in May. Chris Lester continues to represent our interest in the initiative to find a new use for the Grimsby Ice Factory and Steve Betteridge as the SLHA representative on the Louth Navigation Trust.

Steve Betteridge is also the Secretary to the Industrial Archaeology Team and in 2011 reached the milestone of twenty years in that post. At the last AGM the Society recognised this and thanked him for his work with a presentation in celebration.

Stewart Squires

Spalding Group

Our annual programme of eleven talks again proved to be well attended. Subjects this year have included Moulton Mill; Late Roman settlement in the Fens; Ayscoughfee Hall; Wildlife in the Wash; Wisbech Castle and Fen Drainage. A talk by Michael Elsdon on Old Spalding proved to be our most successful yet with 87 people coming along to St John's Church Lounge on Hawthorn Bank where all our meetings take place. At all meetings we offer SLHA books and sales have continued to go well.

We have also been involved with the preparation of the SLHA Heritage Fair to be held in Spalding two weeks after the SLHA AGM. There is a great interest in local history in the Spalding area and we regularly attract significant numbers of non members to our meetings.

Denis Wolfe



One of our Heritage Open Day events was to Lound Viaduct and Toft Tunnel near Bourne. Here the group is looking at the Lound Viaduct, September 2011

History of Lincolnshire Committee

Although I am not able to report the publication of a new volume in the History of Lincolnshire series, I can alert members to the fact that our next book will be appearing during the early autumn 2012. This is Tom Green's study of the British Kingdom of Lindsey, and SLHA President Mick Jones, who has been instrumental in obtaining the book for our series, is convinced that it is going to throw much new light on the 'Dark Ages' in Lincolnshire. The foreword has been written by Dr Kevin Leahy, and the book is the first to be produced by Dr Wendy Atkin, our production editor. It will be the third volume in the 'Studies in the History of Lincolnshire' series. We are also positive about the future, with several volumes in an advanced state of authorship, so that we hope to have at least one new volume in 2013.

John Beckett

Archaeology Team

Monthly archaeology lectures in St Hugh's Church Hall on Monks Road in Lincoln during the past year have been consistently well supported. Once more Mick Jones, our President, has been able to attract a wide range of professional and specialist colleagues to describe current local and national projects. We have been kept informed about recent excavations in Lincoln's Castle and Cathedral, about new thoughts on Lincolnshire's monastic houses and how to interpret them, and about new research into the place of Lindsey and Lincolnshire in Anglo-Saxon settlement in England. We have heard about Roman settlement in the Wolds, and about the achievements of those involved in the 'Portable Antiquities Scheme' in Lincolnshire with reference to some 28,000 finds declared in our county. We have scrutinised the 'Hallaton Treasure': hoards, hounds and helmets, and have been kept up-to-date with current archaeology in the City of Lincoln. The archaeology programme for the coming year promises to be equally stimulating and informative. Special gratitude is due to St Hugh's Church for décor and comfort, improved large-screen facilities, and secure and ample parking.

Our 2011 Lincolnshire Archaeology Day was held in October on Lincoln University's Riseholme Campus. Under the title 'Science and Archaeology', recent developments in research and survey

techniques were explained. These included LIDAR survey, radio-carbon and tree-ring dating, brick and building material analysis, genetics and population diversity, the study of animal bones and increasing use of forensic sciences. A wide range of applications were demonstrated and sites and materials described.

Once more our proposed practical archaeology project involving SLHA volunteers to work on stored multi-period ceramic material and tile has been delayed. Unavoidable costs mean that the Society will have to rely on Heritage Lottery funding. Stringent conditions and how to comply with them to achieve what we intended to do has meant modifying our application. It is hoped the revised project will soon receive approval and funding.

John Wilford



Group visit to Ellys Manor House at Great Ponton, April 2012

Publications Committee

In October 2011 we published our book, *Growing Better; Lincolnshire and the Potato*. Edited by Stewart Squires and Catherine Wilson, with contributions from a number of people, the book describes the history of potato farming in the County over the last 150 years and the people, past and present, who have helped to make Lincolnshire the premier potato county.



Launch of Growing Better: Lincolnshire and the Potato at Holbeach, October 2011. Tony Worth (SLHA Patron) with the joint editors, Catherine Wilson and Stewart Squires

The book was launched at the National Food Technology Centre at Holbeach by our Patron, Tony Worth, the Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire and a well known potato grower. A series of short presentations were followed by a buffet lunch of potato dishes taken from the recipes in the book. These included cakes, savouries and drink as well as some more obvious products which showed just how versatile the potato can be; truly a Taste of Lincolnshire.

Following lunch we were able to tour the facilities at Holbeach and were impressed not only by the variety of food industry training courses on offer here but also by the state-of-the-art food processing equipment in use.

This very enjoyable day was sponsored jointly by Lincoln University and by QV Foods, our Patron's family food production company. We are very grateful to them for their support.

David Start

Local History Team

The first of our two conferences was the Local History Weekend in February at Bishop Grosseteste College in Lincoln, on the theme of Non Conformists in Lincolnshire. Talks were given relating to the Baptists, Roman Catholics, Methodists, Huguenots and Quakers. On the second day there were visits to the Unitarian Chapel and the Central Methodist Church, both on Lincoln High Street.

A Local History Day conference took place in May. Over 80 people attended to hear about a rich variety of estate types, including Lincoln City Council housing estates; Harmston village and the Thorold tenants; the Earls of Yarborough and the Lincolnshire landscape; the Monastic Estate of Barlings Abbey; Belton Park; and finally, a Twentieth Century farming estate in the form of Worth Farms of Holbeach Hurn.

In September the Leach Lecture in memory of Terence Leach was given by John Wilford on the subject of Popery and Papists in North Lincolnshire. This was at Caistor Town Hall, hosted by the Caistor Community Archives and Heritage Group.

Finally, we are working through the Leach and Lacey papers donated to the Society. These are in the form of a large number of files. The intention is to move material into the parish files which form a major part of the Society archive. This already includes material not collected in any other archive and will considerably enhance the value to researchers of the material we hold at Jews' Court.

Brenda Webster



SLHA members at Salford Quays by the Mersey Ferry Snowdrop following the cruise along the Manchester Ship Canal, September 2011

Sleaford Group

Sleaford History Group has continued to hold successful and well attended lectures. In December, we held another of our 'Variety Evenings', at which members who would not normally consider giving a full talk are invited to speak for a few minutes on a subject of interest, or to bring along objects for other members to look at. We have also had talks on the field names of Dembleby, a miscellany of Sleaford topics by Douglas Hoare and a Victorian bigamist.

We will shortly be making plans for celebrating the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Sleaford Group.

Simon Pawley

Lincolnshire Heritage Ltd

Lincolnshire Heritage is the trading arm of the Society and, supported by a team of dedicated volunteers, its principal task is to run the Jews' Court Bookshop. We claim to stock the widest selection of Lincolnshire books anywhere, and are always grateful for the many donations of second-hand books which continue to arrive on our doorstep. Trade is always difficult to predict, but we do work closely with the Bottom of the Hill Group, an informal groups of local traders and the Lincoln Business Improvement Group, to maximise trade.

Rodney Callow

Finance

Control of the Society's finances remains sound. All conferences and special events are self-financing, and sale of publications by post and through the bookshop shows a reasonable profit.

The Society has benefited from donations by several members, in particular

Dennis Mills, who has donated his book royalties.

In recent years, expenditure on day-to-day activities has exceeded income by an average of 30%, or £10 per member. Some costs have risen sharply, in particular gas and electricity charges. Subscriptions have not increased since 2007, and inflation has risen 17% since that time.

Whilst the Society has a reasonable level of reserves, losses are not sustainable in the medium term, and the Executive Committee will be asking for the approval of members to increase subscriptions by the rate of inflation.

Chris Hewis

**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**



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 is one annual award, the 'Flora Murray Award' and, in addition, occasional awards at the Society's discretion, known as 'SLHA Awards for Excellence'.

The Flora Murray Award is in the form of a cheque for £200 and a framed certificate. Recipients of an Award for Excellence receive a framed certificate.

In 2011 the Award winner was the book *Rose Brothers (Gainsborough) Limited*, written by Sue Edlington and David Rose. SLHA Awards for Excellence were given for two books; *Adam Eve and Louth Carpets; the story of Eve and Ranshaw Ltd*, by David Robinson of Louth and *Yellowbelly Youth; a Fiskerton Boyhood* by Fred Thompson, a project by the Fiskerton History and Archaeology Group.

The 2012 awards will be presented at the Annual General Meeting. For this the judges have decided to make two SLHA Awards for Excellence as well as a Flora Murray Award. The following nominations were received.

Helpringham, a history of the village in the 19th and 20th Centuries, a book self published by the Helpringham History Society

The Pickworth Project: Researches into the History of a Small Lincolnshire Village. Two books and a website, www.pickworthvillage.co.uk

Living the Lincolnshire Life, a book by George A Bell. This tells the story of his life and boyhood days in the Boston area.

Great Grimsby Ice Factory Trust, a promotional video made as part of a TV4 Change volunteer project. Visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k93xJmNOOfE>

Saxilby History Trail, a village trail produced by the Saxilby and District Heritage Group in the form of a leaflet. The story is told also with some 20 plaques placed on buildings along the trail.

Bardney Abbey Revealed, a community project undertaken by the Bardney Heritage Group to excavate and record the refectory of the Benedictine Abbey

Inventing Sempringham, a book by Dr Katherine Sykes. The first full-scale examination of the early years of the Order, this book explores the origins of the role of Master of the Order.



SLHA President (centre) and Award winners, at 2011 AGM