

SOCIETY FOR LINCOLNSHIRE HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY



Chairman's Report

Pausing to reflect on the year's activities has brought home to me just how much has been achieved in the last twelve months. This is borne out by the statistics and in the reports which follow.

The bid for HLF support for the "Past and Present" exhibition celebrating 170 years since foundation, 50 years of Industrial Archaeology and 40 years of SLHA was ultimately successful. The exhibition was launched in April at the Museum of Lincolnshire Life where it was seen by 29,185 visitors and it has subsequently toured Grantham, Caistor and Kirton Lindsey. Events were held at each location, some organised by the local hosts and others by SLHA. The Society now possesses a set of high-quality panels depicting its history and its current activities which can be used elsewhere in future.



'Presidents Past and Present' at the launch of 'Past and Present'

**Left to Right:
Mick Jones,
Catherine Wilson,
David Robinson**

In February our Patron, Tony Worth, stood down as Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire. He has been an enthusiastic and effective ambassador for the Society and I am delighted that he will continue in his role of Patron.

A highlight of the year was "Hilary Healey's Lincolnshire", staged at Spalding jointly with the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire to celebrate the life of our much-loved member. 125 people came which in itself is a tribute to her.

Nigel Burn organised a "New Members" event to welcome recent members and to acquaint them with the benefits of Society membership, the work of the Interest Teams and to sample the bookshop. Hopefully this will become an annual event. In September Bishop Grosseteste University Library hosted an event to mark the formal accession of SLHA's Lincolnshire book collection. These books are now much more accessible by students, our members and the general public and it is gratifying to know that they will help to inspire future generations of historians.

The Society has registered its concerns for the future of heritage services in Lincolnshire recognising the need to make significant cost savings.

At the time of writing the Society faces a severe crisis of leadership.

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

900+ individual members • 57 events in 10 towns
10 joint meetings/events • 3 new books • 5 cyclical publications
30000 (approx.) pages in mailings
2000 (approx.) volunteer-hours in bookshop
29,185 visitors to "Past and Present" exhibition, Lincoln

There is no Chairman Elect and two of the Interest Teams have no chairmen, although fortunately they have very able secretaries. This problem of succession is common to many voluntary organisations of our type and it appears to be the result of an ageing membership, in turn due to the lack of younger people joining. The Society's Business Plan sets out to address this problem in a number of ways including improving publicity, increased use of electronic media such as Facebook, joint meetings with other societies and other outreach activities. Despite an active year these actions have only yielded modest results. The present crisis is not terminal but the membership at large must seriously consider how it can contribute to the future well-being of the Society.



Gunby Hall, venue for the 2014 picnic

Finally, I enjoyed my time as Chairman, putting something back into the organisation from which I have derived so much pleasure. Thank you to all staff, officers and volunteers, too many to mention here, who have helped to make that possible.

Chris Lester

Archaeology

The Archaeology Team continued its successful events programme with well-attended talks on the important Palaeolithic site at Farndon, near Newark, on Celtic Art, on the gardens of Petwood Hotel, Woodhall Spa, and on the internationally significant research

Patron - Tony Worth CVO
President - Dr Mick Jones
Chairman - Chris Lester
Vice Chairman - Nigel Burn

Treasurer - Chris Hewis
Society Secretary - Kathy Holland
Clerk - Sue Smith
Chairman of the Trustees - Stewart Squires

project at Torksey, where the Viking Camp and Saxo-Norman town are being investigated. Our annual conference in October, on the Norman impact on Lincolnshire, attracted almost 100 delegates. The three Sunday Special topics were similarly well appreciated.

Project planning has begun in earnest for the long-envisioned scheme to develop a medieval tile series for the Lincoln area, to be followed by the excavation of a local kiln. Other opportunities are being explored for members to engage in field activity.

Members of the team are regularly called upon to respond to enquiries – some quite demanding! – from members of the public. Thankfully, the team's membership has been augmented by several new recruits who are providing new energy and new ideas.

Mick Jones

Spalding Group

We have had an eventful year. Our Chairman Dennis Wolfe passed away. The Committee is determined to carry on. Gordon Nottingham is Acting Chairman and Keith Seaton is assisting by sharing duties.

Last year we chose not to hold lectures in January and February. Whilst numbers at talks have fallen off due mainly to illness, we have enjoyed some good evenings. The most successful was "The History of Levertons" when attendance was bolstered by some thirty ex-employees of H Leverton & Co.

Gordon Nottingham

Sleaford Group

During the year, the group arranged a varied programme of some nine lectures – topics included "Empress Matilda and the Anarchy", "Matthew Flinders (the father)", "Excavations at Navenby" and "Stained Glass in some Lincolnshire Churches". In addition there was the annual Members' Variety Meeting, which gives members a chance to speak on subjects they are working on, or are of interest to others.

The annual Les Gostick Memorial Walk took place in June and was led by Dr Simon Pawley in 'Old Sleaford'. The AGM produced changes in the officers. Dr Simon Pawley stepped down as Chairman and Treasurer. Reverend David Boutle was elected Chairman, Mr David Bramford Vice-Chairman and Mr David Ellis Treasurer. Production of the newsletter 'The Sleaford Historian' has continued for the months when meetings have been held.

Thank you to all who have contributed to the group.

David Boutle

Local History

After many years in the chair Brenda Webster decided to let someone else take the seat. Unfortunately no one wanted it but committee members were willing to chair meetings in turn. The good news is that Brenda remains on the committee continuing to share her expertise and several new members have come on board. The new members are from Scunthorpe, Grantham and the Saxilby area and we have a new Minute Secretary.

The commemoration of WW1 has been the theme of the day conferences. The first was in May in Market Rasen with a wide-ranging programme from a Field Marshal to Zeppelin raids. The

second was in Gainsborough when the programme included looking at the home front, churchyard memorials, serving before the war and a visit to Gainsborough Heritage Centre.

The Committee managed to field a speaker for all three of the Sunday talks. Prof Beckett gave the Brackenbury Lecture on Rev Edward Trollope. Sadly, Raithby Chapel, the usual venue, was not available but the Spilsby Methodist Church was. The Annual Leach Memorial Lecture was back in Lincoln for the first time since the initial one 21 years ago. It was shared with the Lincoln Civic Trust with Marianne Wilson talking on her research about Medieval Lincoln citizens.

For the first time we had a stand in the Broadway at Woodhall Spa for their "Forties Weekend". Our helpers were impressed with the way locals and visitors entered into the spirit of the occasion. The Heckington Show was yet another successful event and Jean Howard led a walk around her village during the Wolds Walking Festival. The Committee is grateful for the help from other branches of the Society.

Pearl Wheatley

Industrial Archaeology

The Team has had another busy year. Stewart Squires stood down as Chairman of the Team after fourteen years and Neil Wright is the new Chairman. We recorded two early radiators in St Denys church, Sleaford, prior to the removal of one of them and Chris Page, on behalf of the Team, is working with other organisations to arrange a survey of drainage scoop wheels in Holland Fen. We are currently prioritising our next survey work. Members of the Team gave a number of talks and walks in support of the touring exhibition, "Past and Present". Stewart Squires led a successful walk at Nettleton mines in 2014. On 15 November we ran a successful conference at Bishop Grosseteste University to celebrate 50 years of recording industrial archaeology in Lincolnshire.

During the year the Team worked on sorting the collection of photographs created by the late Peter Grey of Lincoln. The collection is of good quality and contains much of historical importance. Most prints and negatives of Lincolnshire railways and other locations have been transferred to Lincolnshire Archives and non-Lincolnshire railway items have gone to the Lincoln Railway Society. We are talking to the University of Lincoln about displaying the industrial heritage of the county within the School of Engineering. We are also working with the University Technical College (UTC).

The Team is watching developments at the Museum of Lincolnshire Life, which has one of the best agricultural collections in the country, as the County Council needs to make reductions in its expenditure. Good news is that Lincolnshire County Council has received a grant of £98,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to digitise, catalogue and make available on line photographs, film and other material from the Ruston and Hornsby archive and that, we understand, the Navy house at Wymondham is to be dismantled and re-erected at Ribbleshead station.

And finally, as you may recall, the IA Team organised the Society's Christmas Party at St Hugh's on 10 December 2014 when the entertainment was a presentation of the Branston Plough Play.

Neil Wright

History of Lincolnshire Committee

During 2014 we continued to sell our books, both in hard copy and also via new agreements to sell e-Books and Kindle editions. We are grateful to Caitlin Green and Wendy Atkin for their help in this area. The movement into e-production means we have been able to sell some of our backstock, and thereby reduce the number of volumes we keep in store.

The manuscript for Glyn Coppack's long awaited book on Lincolnshire monastic houses has now arrived, and will be edited for production during 2015.

We have several other books in active preparation, but we are still trying to persuade some of our would-be authors to move from active preparation to completion and submission!

HLC's finances are in good shape and we are ready to publish our next book(s) as soon as we have the completed MSS.

John Beckett

Publications Committee

Three new books were published in 2014, beginning in May with the launch of Michael Credland's book on the First World War Memorials of Lincolnshire. This is a comprehensive illustrated gazetteer of all the county's external memorials, setting out details of design, funding and unveiling. With all the thousands of inscribed names extracted and indexed, it is a truly monumental volume.

The late Hilary Healey's significant contribution to publications in the Society has been marked in three ways: the book by Joyce Curtis on the Windmills of Pinchbeck, introduced and edited by Hilary, was published in June; a collection of her delightful pen and ink drawings were reproduced for sale as notecards; and much of the Spring 2014 edition of Lincolnshire Past & Present (of which she was co-editor for many years) was devoted to Hilary's artwork and writing.



Gate and Sign. One of the late Hilary Healey's drawings

Artur Immanuel Loewental, an eminent twentieth century sculptor and medallist, spent the last 20 years of his life in the Lincoln area. A biography and detailed catalogue of his work has been painstakingly assembled by John Turner and was published by SLHA in the autumn. This attractively presented book is another example of the excellent design and typesetting by Ros Beevers which regularly enhances many of the Society's publications.

The pocket-sized booklet Grantham: An Industrial Heritage Trail, by Peter Stevenson, was reprinted in August to coincide with the Society's special programme of events in the town.

We are greatly indebted to Mark Bennet, editor of the Society's journal, who is stepping down after almost twenty years in the role. The skill and dedication he has applied to this key SLHA publication has been outstanding and he will be very difficult to replace.

Ken Redmore

Finance

I am pleased to report that, for the first time since I became treasurer of the Society, the annual reported loss been considerably reduced to less than £1,000. Through the on-going efforts of the Trustees, Executive and Committees, and our volunteers, income has been increased and expenditure reduced.

Income from subscriptions is lower than the previous year; this is entirely due to timing differences (income in the 2013/14 accounts included sums from the 2012/13), and membership is in fact steadily increasing. The bookshop has almost doubled its contribution to the Society, and income from postal sales has tripled from £2,100 to £6,400.

Energy costs have been reduced by nearly 50% due to the installation and improvements to the Jews' Court heating and lighting systems. Other significant reductions have been achieved through reduced printing costs for 'Lincolnshire Past & Present' and the Annual Journal.

(Please note that this report excludes the History of Lincolnshire Committee income and expenditure, and is subject to audit)

Chris Hewis

Lincolnshire Heritage Ltd

The bookshop at Jews' Court continues to work for the benefit of the SLHA by passing its balance over to the Society each year. Last year the balance transferred was £9,672. Sales saw an increase on the previous year of 7%. We offer the best selection of books about the history of Lincolnshire, and of individual communities, in the county and members should always pay it a visit whenever they are in Lincoln. We have been in this building many years, but every year we get people coming into the shop who say they never knew we were there. Following the retirement of long serving volunteers, we now have Nigel Burn dealing with book purchases and Chris Page dealing with postal sales. More volunteers to help Nigel and Chris, and to serve in the bookshop, are always welcome.

Neil Wright



Society bookstall at "Echoes of the Past"

Trustees

The Society's solicitor, in February 2013, advised us that our Constitution should be amended to bring it up to date and ensure it complied with present day charity law. For this reason the Trustees have been meeting separately since May 2013. In the last year their focus has been on looking at ways the Society can reduce its annual expenditure and increase income. This follows a series of annual financial losses. The evidence of the Annual Report for 2014/5 does show that the financial situation has greatly improved. This does not mean that we can rest, however. We now have to ensure that satisfactory figures are achieved into the future.

Stewart Squires

Building Recoding Group (RUBL)

Although 2014-15 was the first complete year of SLHA's new building recording group, it actually originated in March 2011, when Ken Hollamby called together a group of SLHA members interested in hosting the Summer Conference of the Vernacular Architecture Group at Lincoln in 2016. A demand for a county building recording group was immediately apparent, though there was less agreement on which buildings to survey first. RUBL has developed a 'steering group' (which all SLHA members are very welcome to attend) and also a programme of building-related events, each focussed on one of the various projects so far identified.



RUBL members at work surveying Church Cottage Aubourn.
Photo Richard Croft

Top of our current list of priorities is ensuring that SLHA 'puts on a good show' for VAG next year, and during 2014-15 we have designed a programme of lectures and visits and begun the process of survey work that will inform the conference programme (traditionally a significant statement on the vernacular architecture of the region visited). Our Trent Valley project has been another priority this year and a formal lecture on its progress was delivered to VAG at its winter conference in Leicester in January. So far two buildings have been recorded for this project (Manor Farm House, Thorpe on the Hill, and Church Cottage, Aubourn), and a number more have been visited. RUBL has also generated a 'Lincolnshire Farm Buildings project' which began with a weekend's study in spring 2014, led by Alan Wadsworth of the Wiltshire Buildings Record. Further projects in

Grantham, Boston, and in the Wolds around Hainton are also under development.

Particular thanks are due to Ken Hollamby, who provides the group with such direction and energy, and to Jenne Pape, who has adopted the vital role of its 'research director'. Colin East worked hard learning drawing skills for the Trent Valley project, and Naomi Field, Richard Croft and Arthur Ward have lent invaluable expertise, both administrative and technical. For RUBL, 2016 will be the year of the VAG conference, and the new group has plenty still to do, but we will not abandon our other projects, whilst still learning the while about new building types and new places alongside VAG colleagues from all over Britain.

David Stocker

Awards

The 2014 Flora Murray Award was shared between Nettleham Parish Council and Rase Heritage Society.

The Nettleham Bishop's Palace Heritage Amenity Project involved village groups in the clearing and interpretation of a Scheduled Ancient Monument in the centre of the village. This important site is now publicly accessible with information boards and an attractive leaflet.

The 'All our Stories' heritage trail by Rase Heritage Society highlights notable buildings, people and events in Market Rasen using information boards, smartphone multimedia information and the Web.

An Award for Excellence was made to the Puritan Path Project. A series of 13 stones in the vicinity of St Botolph's Church, Boston, commemorate twelve congregation members who left in the 1630s and made a significant contribution to the founding of the City of Boston, USA.

The 2015 awards will be presented at the Annual General Meeting. The following entries have been received:

Artur Immanuel Loewental. Book on an internationally-known sculptor of medallions.

Fallen Sons of Gainsborough. Community project to restore WW1 gravestones.

Grantham Hall Book. Transcription of the earliest surviving Minute book of Grantham Corporation.

Highfields Orchard Project. Community archaeological excavation project at Navenby.

Sir Joseph Banks of Revesby. Book published by the Banks Society.

Spirit of Sutterby Project. Community local history project, part of the "Down your Wold" project.



Joint Flora Murray Award winners at the 2014 AGM. Caroline Foster (Rase Heritage Society) and John Evans (Nettleham Parish Council) with the SLHA Chairman and President.