

**NEWSLETTER** April 2024



Image used courtesy of Deene Park

See page 8

## CHAIR'S AGM REPORT

Northamptonshire Heritage Forum has enjoyed another successful year. The celebrations of the Forum's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2022 have been built upon. The Forum's profile amongst the heritage community in the county continues to grow, attracting new members and through working collaboratively with key stakeholders.

The Heritage Forum is a valuable point of contact for its membership, who have given their time and commitment to support a stronger, more resilient and sustainable heritage sector. They have continued to share best practice and provide practical assistance to other members.

West and North Northamptonshire Councils have been active in promoting heritage activity and during the past year have co-ordinated the development of the county's tourism strategy, which was launched on Tuesday 19 March 2024 at Northampton Museum and Art Gallery. The Heritage Forum has been active in the consultation process and welcomes the new initiatives which will flow from the strategy.

Forum members have demonstrated that they want heritage venues to play a major role in attracting visitors and have shown themselves willing to participate in the new visitor economy strategy. A new Local Visitor Economy Partnership will be established this year, which will provide opportunities for co-ordination in promoting heritage in the county. The Heritage Forum will benefit through engagement as the partnership develops.

Members have been active in supporting the Discover Northamptonshire Hub at Rushden Lakes through display and participation. More than 10,000 residents and visitors have already explored the opportunities it provides. The hub promotes tourism, encourages employment, volunteering and skills development. It also supports local businesses and community engagement.

The Heritage Forum engaged with North Northamptonshire Council in the development of their culture, tourism and heritage business plan for 2024/2025, which provides clarity on delivery and supports partnership working.

The members' booklets have been a very successful tool for forum members. At this AGM the latest edition is launched. 25,000 copies of the previous edition were distributed throughout the county and were very well received. We are confident that the current edition will play a useful role in attracting visitors from within the county and beyond.

Today also sees the latest publication of the Heritage Forum's journal, Hindsight. This excellent edition will be the last one edited by Enid Jarvis. The Forum is hugely grateful to Enid and her editorial team and thanks her for her outstanding contribution to the Forum's success. Popular demand has seen an increased number of the journal being printed, made possible through the Hindsight Fund.

The Heritage Forum is active in promoting members' venues and activities through our website, newsletter and Facebook page. The website has increased its visitor numbers and the content continues to grow. Our website manager, Lynne Dickens, oversees the development of the website and ensures it is up to date. Thank you Lynne for ensuring this valuable asset is relevant to the needs of members.

The newsletter is a core means of communication for members and is also read by our website visitors. The newsletter demonstrates the wide range of heritage activities being undertaken by our members. This is much appreciated and your contributions are highly valued. The newsletter is distributed electronically throughout the Midlands and the East of England.

Janet Lawrence passed the co-ordination of the newsletter to Shanna Wells and then to Colin Ashworth during the past year. Members recognise the importance of the newsletter and the considerable work involved in bringing the newsletter together. Many thanks to Janet, Shanna and Colin.

The Heritage Forum is active in promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and has continued to work with faith communities throughout the county, helping them to share their community heritage through the newsletter.

Delapré Abbey hosted the Heritage Forum's evening dinner and lecture on 14 June 2023. It was a splendid summer evening in a beautiful setting and was well attended. The lecture given by Graham Evans, the Chairman of the Northamptonshire Battlefields Society, outlined battles in the county throughout the ages.

Graham also explained how the Battlefields Society had built a mutually beneficial partnership with Delapré Abbey Preservation Trust. Through collaboration new information boards had been placed on the site of the Battle of Northampton, 1460. I was pleased to represent the Heritage Forum at the unveiling of the information boards.

Joint marketing is enabling more visitors to access the Abbey to attend events and exhibitions. The Battlefields Society have their meetings in the Abbey.

On Friday 12 July I attended the official opening of the glass extension to 82 Derngate. The ribbon was cut by Darren Henley, Chief Executive of Arts Council England. It was an excellent occasion. I want to congratulate the trustees, staff, volunteers and Friends of 78 Derngate on the completion of this significant project. The extension provides vital additional space for visitors and its adjoining galleries.

I had the opportunity to discuss with Darren Henley the Northamptonshire National Portfolio Organisations and update him on Heritage Forum developments.

The 2023 Northamptonshire Heritage Forum's Awards ceremony was held on Wednesday 12 July. The evening was hosted by Chester House Estate in the beautifully restored threshing barn. It was a glittering evening enjoyed by all present.

It was good that our supporters and partners played an important part in celebrating the wonderful work of Forum members. Cllr Helen Howell, Deputy Leader of North Northamptonshire Council and Executive

Lead for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism welcomed Forum members and our distinguished guests. These included our Patron, Lord Spencer; Charlotte Brudenell DL, deputising for the Lord Lieutenant; Rachel Mallows MBE DL, Chair of Northamptonshire Surprise and the Chairs and Leaders of the unitary authorities. Our guests presented our awards.

John Griff DL guided our speakers through the ceremony without any hitches and on time. He made our evening so special.

Wicksteed Park won the heritage organisation of the year award, presented by Lord Spencer. All the winners and the entries impressed the judges for their high standard of delivery.

Charlotte Brudenell and Lord Spencer emphasised the importance of promoting the heritage of the county and the value of the Heritage Forum.

A huge vote of thanks is due to Laura Malpas who organised the awards and all those who worked so hard to make it such a splendid occasion. Many thanks are due to Jack Pishhorn, whose team presented the venue so well.

Members of the Forum participated in partners' events, the Heritage Fair at Abington Park Museum and the Nene Valley Festival in September. In addition members welcomed visitors for Heritage Open Days. These events provide opportunities to attract new visitors and are extremely important for the visitor economy of the county.

A survey of heritage organisations has led to the planning of a further Heritage Fair at Wicksteed Park in April 2024.

The September Forum meeting at Delapré Abbey gave an opportunity for members to highlight their successes in 2023. Reports were provided by Delapré Abbey, Rockingham Forest Trust at Stanwick Lakes and Daventry Museum. They demonstrate examples of excellent practice in welcoming visitors and ongoing projects to excite and entertain.

Partnership between members and working together for mutual benefit was demonstrated vividly at the Heritage Forum's Annual History Day at Oundle on 28 October. It was a collaboration between Oundle School Archives, Oundle Historical Society and Oundle Museum, who provided excellent talks and tours. The event was sold out as 90 members enjoyed the facilities of Oundle School. The event was a great success. Many thanks are due to John-Paul Carr who organised the day on behalf of the Forum.

On Tuesday 30 January 2024 Heritage Forum members were entertained and enjoyed lunch at Sulgrave Manor. Following the Forum meeting members enjoyed a talk on the history of Sulgrave Manor and the Washington family, followed by a tour of the house and garden. Members were able to wander round the building exploring each room with questions answered by the staff. Many thanks to the Sulgrave Manor team and Laura Malpas who organised the day.

Jack Pishhorn, Head of Culture, Tourism and Heritage for North Northamptonshire Council brought members up to date with the Council's Business Plan in his areas of responsibility. This was helpful in

informing the Forum of how they can participate in the Council's work and help the community to maximise the outcomes.

From April 2024 Museums Development Midlands will be working as one team across the Midlands region. This partnership will be managed by Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust and Leicestershire County Council. Their support for the Midlands' Museums responds to the Art Council England's strategy 'Let's Create'.

At the September Forum meeting I indicated that I would be standing down as Chair in April 2024. The committee established a recruitment committee and has undertaken a selection process to find a new Chair. The committee was led by Laura Malpas and I am grateful to all those who have taken part. This activity was discussed again at the January 2024 Forum meeting.

It has been a huge privilege to be Chair of the Northamptonshire Heritage Forum between 2020 and 2024. I have been excellently supported throughout by the hard work and friendship of Laura Malpas (Vice-Chair), Angela Scheidegger (Hon. Secretary), Jon-Paul Carr (Hon. Treasurer and Membership Secretary), Jane Baile, Katie Boyce, Kate Chadwick, Richard Clinton, Debra Cox, Lynne Dickens, Sylvia Hughes, Belinda Humfrey, Charles Lister, Andrea Pettingale and Jack Pishhorn. The committee has outstanding skills and experience, which are of great value to the Heritage Forum.

I would like to thank all those members who have attended Forum events or written in the newsletter or Hindsight and advertised their events on the Forum Facebook page.

I want to thank all the members of the Heritage Forum who have made my time as Chair such a rewarding and enjoyable experience. At a time with rapidly changing challenges and agendas, Forum members have shown themselves to be successful in promoting and explaining the unique heritage of the county. Their ingenuity, innovation and willingness to work together in new ways will ensure an exciting future for the heritage community and visitor economy in Northamptonshire.

I wish the members of the Northamptonshire Heritage Forum every success in the coming years.

**Martin Lawrence MBE**

Chair Northamptonshire Heritage Forum

## MARTIN GASKELL

On taking the Chair at the AGM on 16 April, Martin Gaskell said he was very honoured to be elected as Chair of the Forum. This was not something he had ever sought and he had been greatly surprised when approached. So he was particularly conscious of the responsibility in taking on this role.

He first of all paid tribute to Martin Lawrence for all that he had done for the Forum. Over the past four years he had led the Forum with great tenacity, attention to detail, involvement and vision. As a result, the Forum is now much better known across the county and beyond. It has a secure and established place in the decision-making structures around the new Authorities. For all this, and much more, the Forum was greatly indebted to Martin Lawrence, who would certainly be a hard act to follow.

Martin Gaskell then went on to reflect, briefly, on the good fortune he had in taking the chair of an organisation that was strong in terms of its reputation, its activities and its finances. However, he recognised that, as with all organisations, it was always timely to review its strengths and weaknesses and reflect on what could be done differently and what might be done better. And so, as the Forum moved seamlessly on into its third decade, he was pleased that the Committee had established a strategic review, and he was looking forward to learning from that and hopefully contributing to it.

In doing so, it was his hope that the Forum would continue to stress its inclusivity; recognising that all our members are important in their different ways, and encouraging everyone to excel on their own terms. In particular, he hoped, as Chair, that he could facilitate the breaking down of barriers and continue to contribute to that balance of informality and professionalism which has guaranteed the success of the Forum to date.

More details about Dr Gaskell can be found [HERE](#)



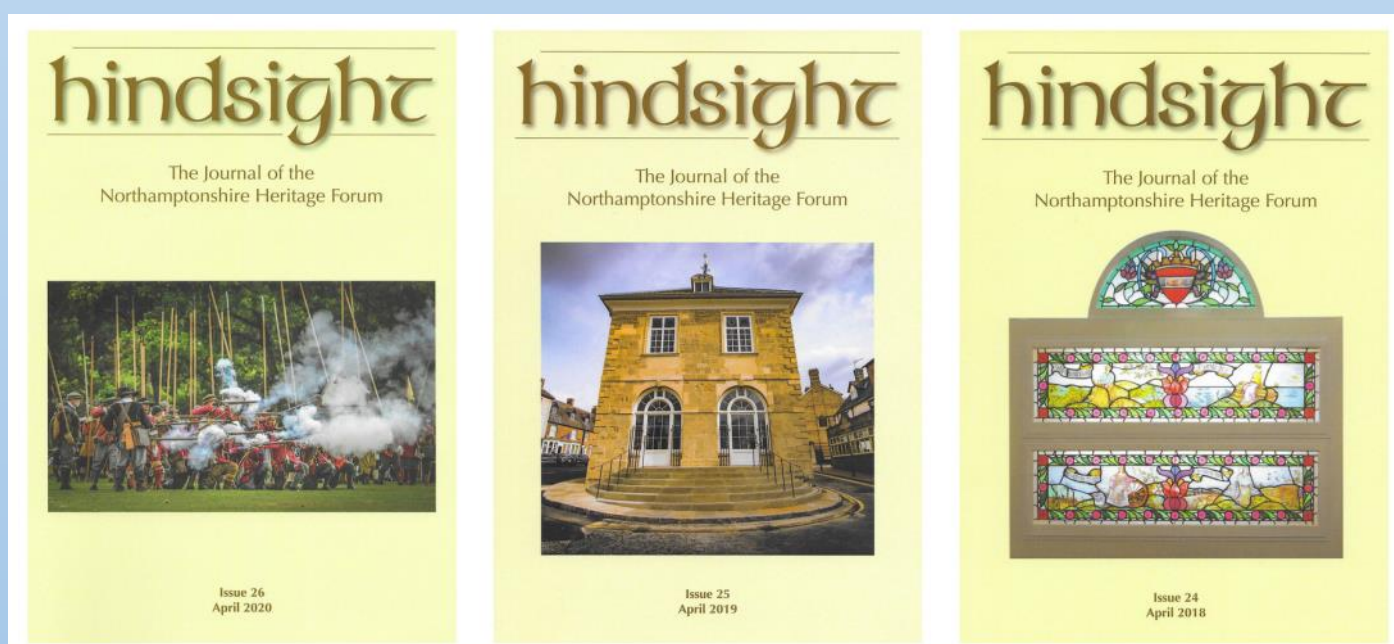
Dr Martin Gaskell, Chair

## EDITOR SOUGHT FOR HINDSIGHT

Due to the recent retirement of Enid Jarvis, the Editor of the Forum Journal, Hindsight, the Forum is actively seeking a volunteer to take over this important key role.

- Do you have a love of Northamptonshire heritage and the many different stories that can unfold about its history?
- Would you love the chance to engage with Forum members and encourage others to share their knowledge of the county, or the research they have undertaken, to contribute articles for the journal?
- Do you have a critical eye for editorial detail?
- Are you able to prepare articles with images and then liaise with the Forum designer and printers?
- Would you be happy to correspond with potential writers by letter, phone or email?
- Could you work with a small, enthusiastic editorial team to produce the Journal for the Forum AGM in the Spring of each year?

If you are interested in this rewarding and enjoyable role or want to find out more, please email the committee on [northamptonshireheritageforum@gmail.com](mailto:northamptonshireheritageforum@gmail.com)



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT DEENE PARK

Have you ever considered volunteering in a stately home?

Do you have a passion for history, enjoy sharing your knowledge with others, and wish to meet new people? If you do, we'd love to hear from you!

We are looking for volunteers to help with room stewarding and tour guiding for the 2024 season, beginning in May. We are a small, friendly, and dedicated team with a variety of different interests and passions.

Each year our volunteers enjoy a pre-season lunch in the Regency Dining Room, a group outing to a local place of interest, and a Christmas get-together.

Full training will be provided.

If you're interested in discussing volunteering at Deene Park, please contact Kelly on 01780 450278 or email [admin@deenepark.com](mailto:admin@deenepark.com) for an informal chat.

Deene Park, Deene, Nr. Corby, NN17 3EW

## FRIENDS OF THE ALFRED EAST GALLERY AND MANOR HOUSE MUSEUM

The gallery remains closed, but there is light at the end of the tunnel! North Northants Council has approved the financing of the scheme to refurbish the roof over the library and gallery. Work has already begun with the clearing of the colourful Virginia creeper from the outside walls. It has brought about groans from some quarters, but the growth was at least in part, responsible for the damage and water ingress. The path is now clear for the roof to be tackled.

In the meantime, there has been some activity by the Kettering gallery staff taking place in our town centre contemporary art space ARTworks. It bodes well for future cooperation between the two galleries. ARTworks remains as popular as ever with established artists hanging their work, workshops for adults and children, and displays of craft work. It has also become a popular spot for artists to hang out.

The Friends have continued to be active, with regular meetings and outings, town and cemetery walks. A set of three monographs on the cemetery: Notable Graves, Exotic Trees and Monumental Masonry are now available, as well as three illustrated guides to the town's more interesting buildings.

The future of the Museum is still uncertain, although we have repeated assurances that a solution to the problem will be found in the near future.

Please refer to the Events Diary this Newsletter for details of our program of town and cemetery walks in 2024. These walks begin at 11pm and take place on Sundays, except for June 29 which is a Saturday. Rendezvous at the cemetery gates for cemetery walks, or outside the Royal Hotel for town walks.



## ROADE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

**RAF to Formula One:** Wednesday, 21 February 2024

A great talk by Gerald Lovell about the history of Silverstone. In 1136 there was an order of Benedictine monks called Luffield Priory which continued until Henry VIII disbanded them. There was also a royal hunting lodge used right through from Henry I to Edward II – the land was sold to a commoner called Sir Richard Lovell. Silverstone was surrounded by forests and, back in the day, it had 24 woodyards. The sole remaining woodyard today is Linnells. During WW2 an aerodrome was built on the land, and a Wellington Bomber training station with three runways, 200 staff and 130 German POWs. Pilots had a 10-week course and, from 1943 to 1946 there were 126 courses for pilots, navigators and gunners. Sadly, in the first 12 months, there were 36 crashes and 124 deaths – 8 in one crash. The layout of the airfield became the basis of the Silverstone race circuit. The inaugural RAC Grand Prix was held in 1948. The first Formula One Grand Prix was held on 13 May 1950, the winner was Giuseppe “Nino” Farina in an Alpha Romeo, and since then Britain has had 10 World Champions. The benefits for the village have been tremendous, and now the Silverstone Museum has opened holding a vast number of historic mementos.



Gerald Lovell

**Richard Dunkley (Builder & Railway Contractor):** Wednesday, 27 March 2024

We had a very interesting talk by Dick Hennessey and Hilary Spurrier (pictured), from Blisworth Heritage Society, who brought to life local man Richard Dunkley whose ancestors were noted in 1678 as carpenters and builders.

Richard started from nothing to become a builder of railways, bridges, stately homes - such as East Carlton Hall and Collingtree Grange - and substantial houses such as his own, The Loundes. It is thought that his career started with work at Blisworth Church, where there is a carved shoe with the initials RD dated 1826.

As Richard's reputation grew, Blisworth developed from a rural village to a hive of industry with a canal, stone quarries and the coming of the railways. All this gave Richard great opportunities and scope. It was also a period of change nationally – public health, education, and prison reform. Working with architect E. M. Law, Richard became the builder of choice for country houses, schools, a prison and many other buildings, often commuting to London by train. He also became a railway contractor and built Blisworth railway arch, locally known as “Dunkley Bridge” on the Northampton Road between Blisworth and Milton Malsor. He built Castle Station in Northampton, Roade Station, Blisworth Station and Blisworth Hotel (now the Walnut Tree) where people from London came for a day out to visit the pleasure gardens.



## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHIVES

Hello, my name is Graeme MacLeod. I joined the Northamptonshire Archives Service as a Collections Officer in December 2023. I am covering for Victoria Oakman who, as many of you will know, is on maternity leave. I have moved to Northampton from sunny Inverness, Scotland, where I was born and bred. Indeed, I graduated from the University of the Highlands and Islands with a degree in history and politics in 2017.

One of the first steps in my archival career was becoming an Archives Assistant at The Highland Archive Centre in Inverness. Although I had used archives for my undergraduate dissertation, I found working in an archive very different, but also very enjoyable. While we were in lockdown, my wife encouraged me to apply to the Archives and Records Management course at the University of Dundee and so in 2021, while things were still not quite normal, I embarked on the distance learning course. The course was extremely interesting and it was brilliant to meet (albeit digitally) others who were also studying from as far afield as America, Italy, Jersey and Glasgow! Undertaking the course while also working as an Archives Assistant could be challenging, but fortunately I had a lot of support. I received my PG Dip in Archives and Records Management in August 2023 and decided to apply for the Collections Officer post in Northamptonshire as it was something and somewhere completely different.

After Sarah, the Heritage Services Manager, kindly interviewed me via Microsoft Teams (as it is roughly 500 miles from Inverness to Northampton, so a bit far, insert your own Proclaimers joke), and following an in-person visit in October to ensure I was who I said I was, and my wife and I moved in December.

I am thoroughly enjoying my time here at Northamptonshire Archives Service, as everyone has been very welcoming and happy to answer any queries I might have about archives or the local area. So far, I have been liaising with members of the public with a variety of archival accessions, getting to grips with diocesan records, and helping in the search room and on reception.

The main project on which I am working is to catalogue all of the Rate Books which we hold in the archives. This has been generously part-funded by Northamptonshire Family History Society with the aim of making them more accessible to the public.

Name of Occupier.	Name of Owner.	Nature of the Property.	Situation.	Gross Estimated Rental.		Rateable annual value.	
				£.	s. d.	£.	s. d.
Robert Lancum	J. Phipps	House	Bridgesher	36		30	
John Gavitt	J. Gavitt	House	"	62		36	
John Errington	E. Letchmore	House	"	52		42	
James Watts	J. Daniels	House	"	30		24	
William Hoopry	H. B. Whitworth	House	"	30		25	
Thomas Swan	"	House	"	20		16	
Charles Woolston	"	House	"	30		24	

A section of a page from a Rate Book

The first task was to locate every rate book that the service holds and this meant checking literally each shelf in the three repositories to note the presence of any rate books and which parish/district they were from. It was something of a mammoth task as there are hundreds of them and they are not all in one place. Having located them all (I think), I have set to work on cataloguing them, beginning with those for Brackley as they were the smallest grouping.

I have managed to collate all 96 volumes for Brackley and gather them all in one place, which was not easy given that they are of various shapes and sizes. A catalogue is being created, noting the type of rate, the year and which body levied the rate (the urban district council, borough and rural district council are involved). We are also deciding where in the repositories the rate books will be located in the future. The system I am using is working well for my 'pilot set', so I shall be using the same approach for all the rate books held at Northamptonshire Archives.

I was also keeping a record of any that could not be handled because of their condition. These books cover a large timespan, from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1970s, and cover various rates including poor, general, special and water rates. Some were found which required conservation but the majority of those have already been treated and there are only a few shelves yet to be investigated.

The project, although challenging, is very interesting, and understanding the different legislation influencing the content of the archives, as well as the differences between Scottish and English records, has been something which I feel I have just about got my head around.

**Graeme MacLeod (Collections Officer)**

## STAMFORD VISITOR CENTRE

Stamford Visitor Centre has been in touch and very much welcome any printed material that they can offer to visitors to the area. Please send brochures or other suitable material to the address below and spread the word about your society to Lincolnshire which is, after all, not too far away and is very popular with visitors.

You can either contact **Christine Bradshaw** on 07952 304847 or send material directly to:

Attn. Christine Bradshaw  
Corn Exchange Theatre  
Broad Street  
Stamford  
PE9 1PX

## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE RECORD SOCIETY

The Northamptonshire Record Society, based at the Northamptonshire Records Office, Wootton Park, have appointed Dr Graham Lampard as their General Secretary.

Graham hails originally from Oxford. He came to Northampton in 1983 to study leather technology at what was then the National Leathersellers Centre, at Nene College's Park Campus. He ended up being at Nene College until 2001, doing various courses including a higher national diploma in Chemistry and a degree in Chemical Science, via day release while working for the British Leather Confederation at Moulton Park and he subsequently worked for Leather International magazine. He also completed a doctorate in leather science from the University of Leicester. Subsequently, he worked as a journalist in the pharmaceutical industry before buying Craftsman Binders, a small bookbinding business that was in Ashburnham Road. The previous owner worked at Birdsall & Sons, which some will remember as the eminent bookbinders in the centre of Northampton until the early 1960s. This led to an interest in the history of bookbinding and Birdsall's in particular.

For several years Graham has served as a Clerk to Governors at several schools in the county and further afield, and in recent years has been an assistant curator at the now defunct Museum of Leathercraft in Northampton's Grosvenor Centre.

Graham can be reached at NRS via: [enquiries@northamptonshirerecordsociety.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@northamptonshirerecordsociety.org.uk)

On 8th June, 2 pm, Dr. Susan Kilby will give a lecture entitled '*Fantastic Beasts and where to find them: the Romanesque Capitals of St. Kyneburga, Castor and the Local Landscape*'.

This will be preceded by the Society's (brief) AGM and will be held at St. Andrew's Hospital, Billing Road: all are welcome. Dr Kilby's work focuses on the complexity of medieval peasants' relationships with local landscape, ranging from their economic interests through to wider cultural ideas.

The beautiful set of Romanesque capitals in Castor church depicts an array of creatures, both natural and supernatural. Dr Kilby will look at the inspiration behind this scheme and the links with Castor's rural twelfth-century landscape.

Website <http://www.northamptonshirerecordsociety.org.uk/index.php>

## BOUGHTON HOUSE

Boughton House and gardens will next be open on:

Saturday 4 May – Monday 6 May

Saturday 25 May – Monday 27 May

For more information please see our website at [www.boughtonhouse.co.uk](http://www.boughtonhouse.co.uk)

## OUNDLÉ HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The Oundle Historical Society (OHS) has a varied programme scheduled for 2024/2025 covering a wide range of topics and periods of historical significance in the Oundle area.

The first fixture on Friday, 12 April, will be an entertaining talk by Stuart Orme (Curator of the Cromwell Museum in Huntingdon) on 'Henry VIII's Grandma'. This intriguing title refers to Margaret Beaufort's leading role in the foundation of the Tudor dynasty in the late fifteenth century and her philanthropic contribution to education. Even though this Newsletter will be published after the talk has taken place, we are including it in order to demonstrate the depth and breadth of our programme.

Janice Morris will deliver a talk on 10 May with another evocative title 'Saints & Sinners' to depict the wall paintings that can be found in churches around Oundle.

The September lecture will be given by Crispin Powell, who will draw on his access as archivist of the Buccleuch family collections to highlight the careers of black servants at Boughton during the 18th Century.

Sheila Harris will give a talk on 11 October about 'Oundle's Charities' and, on 8 November, Max Schurer will talk about his involvement in the discovery of Richard III's remains at Leicester.

At the beginning of 2025, OHS Members will await with interest the third instalment of Colin Pendrill's 'Mastering Laxton Free Grammar School' on 10 January, which will cover the history of Oundle School from 1922 to 2015.

On 14 February, Charlotte Young, from the Department for Continuing Education at Oxford, will provide scholarly insight into 'Royalist Estates in Northamptonshire during the English Civil Wars', when the Oundle area was characterised by families divided by the conflict.

In addition to the enlarged programme of lectures, visits will be made to Brigstock on 12 June (2024) in order to appreciate its rich history, and to Longthorpe Tower on 10 July in order to assess its important historical and artistic legacy.

Finally, Peterborough Morris will provide entertainment at the OHS AGM on 14 March 2025.

All tremendous good value for an annual subscription of £10!

Please visit our website [www.oundlehistoricalsociety.org.uk](http://www.oundlehistoricalsociety.org.uk) to find out how to become a member.

## Fire Marks

Our current exhibition “Look What We Found!” opened on 2 March and we were delighted to receive a visit from Phil and Janice Morris of the Fire Mark Circle. They had found a mention of one in our report to the last Forum meeting and came along to check it out. Apparently, some fire marks on display in museums much larger than ours are fakes, so we were relieved to have ours confirmed as authentic.

We have three fire marks in our collection, all of which are on display until 29 June. Thanks to Phil and Janice, we have been able to date them with more accuracy and see what they would have looked like when painted.

What are fire marks? The early 18th century saw the emergence of insurance companies so people could take out insurance against fire. As these companies grew, some started their own fire brigades to help fight fires at properties insured with them. It is believed that the Sun Fire Insurance Company (est. 1710) was one of the companies that operated in this area, and that they may possibly have had a fire brigade of some description which would fight fires at the properties of people insured with them. We have two Sun Insurance fire marks. The Sun Fire Insurance Mark 7JJ784 (shown below) belonging to Joseph Sudborough, farmer, would once have been gilded.



Any properties insured with an insurance company would have had a plaque fitted to the building to show which insurance company they were with. In the event of a fire the insurance fire brigades would turn out, but they would only put out the fire if the property was insured by their company. It was not uncommon for more than one insurance brigade to attend and, on arrival, whichever brigade was not required were more likely to hinder the other crew rather than attempt to help to put out the fire! In later years this was stopped, and the insurance brigades worked together when fighting fires.

There are believed to be at least two properties in Burton Latimer, which still have these plaques on their walls: one in Kettering Road and one in Church Street.

The Fire Mark from the Royal Exchange Insurance Company (on the next page) would have been brightly painted. This came from the wall of a building on the High Causeway, most likely the building that was once The Bell public house, which was demolished in the late 1960s to make way for the Library and Civic Centre. The one we have on display is one of the last to be produced in lead and dates from 1810-1838, so is possibly unlikely to have been purchased by The Bell, as the pub closed in 1810.

Continued...

Dates for your diary:

- ◆ Spring Exhibition Thursdays and Saturdays 10am-1pm. Free entry. Opening at other times by arrangement.
- ◆ Thursday 25 April 2pm - 3.30pm An afternoon to remember in the Council Chamber of the Harold Mason Centre. Look through our old photos while enjoying a cuppa and home-made cakes. Free entry. Donations for refreshments.
- ◆ 25 April (until 6.30pm). Late afternoon/evening opening.
- ◆ Wednesday 8 May Heritage Walk. Meet at 10.30am outside the Museum. Finish at Osborne House for refreshments. Tickets £5, £4 BLHS members.
- ◆ Sat 18 May 7.30pm. John Yeomans Hall. Updated talk by Mike Luke of Albion Archaeology about the Higham Road Roman excavation. Tickets £5, £4 BLHS members.
- ◆ Sat 1 June Museum Extended Opening until 3pm.
- ◆ Wednesday 5 June (am). Heritage Walk (Burton Latimer Hall). Provisional date – further announcement in May.
- ◆ Sat 29 June 10.30-12.00 Coffee Morning and Tombola. Spring Exhibition Closes 1pm.



Fire Mark from the Royal Exchange Insurance Company

### Linda Gregory

Please contact Linda on [linda.gregory152@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:linda.gregory152@yahoo.co.uk) or 07944 083170 to book tickets or for more information.

**The deadline for the next edition of the Newsletter is**

**Sunday, 7 July, 2024 for publication before the end of July.**

**Please send articles to [nforumnewsletter@outlook.com](mailto:nforumnewsletter@outlook.com) (not to the old address!)**

**Listings for the Events Page should include the following information (in this order)**

**Organisation, Date, Event, Speaker/Details, Point of contact, Email/telephone.**

## NORTHAMPTON MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

### Stories from the collection - Robert Ball

One of the joys of working in a museum is finding the stories behind the objects given to the museum. One donation given to Northampton Museum and Art Gallery in the last few years was a group of photographs which reveal the far from ordinary life of Northampton resident, Robert Ball.

Robert was born on 21 August 1901, not far from the Racecourse in Northampton, to William and Lucy Ball. Robert's father was 37 and working as a machine operator in the Boot trade. Robert was christened on 3 November at St Lawrence's Church. It appears Robert displayed an aptitude for the piano at an early age, judging by this photograph of him standing proudly by a piano. This photograph was sent as a postcard to a relative in Northampton. The next photo might have been taken for display at one of the cinemas in Northampton where Robert is said to have accompanied silent movies. In 1928 Robert married Annie Priscilla Hardwick, also from Northampton. Photographs in the collection show the happy couple in their wedding clothes.



According to the information given to the museum with the photographs, Robert was a self-taught engineer and worked at the new Northampton Technical College (also known as St George's). The college had been established on Abington Street in 1924 before a site in St Georges Avenue was purchased and

formally opened by the Duke and Duchess of York in 1932.

Robert was also a keen photographer and took many local views including the floods of 1929 and the local carnival processions. He was also employed as a photographer for Mulliner's coachbuilding work at Bridge St, Northampton. Mulliner's was founded in 1760





making mail coaches. Business boomed during the 1920s with orders for bodies on Armstrong, Siddeley and Vauxhall cars being exhibited at the 1920 London Motor Show, together with coachwork for Rolls-Royce and Bentley. Robert took images of some of the vehicles produced by Mulliner's including this ambulance (right) for the St John's Ambulance in Northampton.



Arthur Mulliner had married the eldest daughter of the founder of Northampton's Albion Steam Brewery in 1887, which may account for Robert's photographs recording the delivery of new brewing tanks arriving by train.



By the outbreak of World War II Robert and his wife were living in Ruskin Road, Northampton. During the war Robert's work at the Northampton Technical College included training fitters for the armed services. His prominent position in this photograph taken outside the college and dated 1941 shows Robert with some of his trainees.



Sadly, in the 1950s Robert lost both his parents and wife but Robert lived in Kingsthorpe until 1993. The technical college where he worked for so long eventually became part of the University of Northampton. It is hoped that in the future the University Archives may uncover more about Robert's work and the role of the Technical College during the WWII.

Written by **Sharn Matthews**, social cataloguing volunteer for Northampton Museum and Art Gallery.

*Text and images copyright of Northampton Museum and Art Gallery.*

## MADE WITH MANY

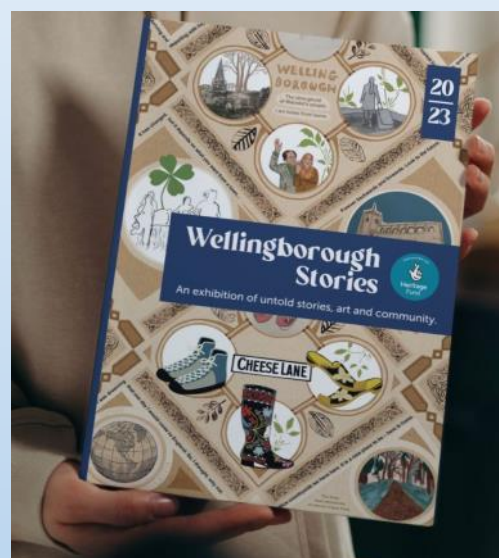
### Wellingborough Stories book published

What is a story? A published definition says, “It is a narrative, either true or fictitious, in prose or verse, designed to interest, amuse, or instruct the hearer or reader”.

With this in mind, Made With Many decided to tell real stories from communities in Wellingborough. Our aim was to collect and share stories from people who have lived or settled in Wellingborough since the mid-20th Century, reflecting the diverse heritage that is Wellingborough’s community today.

With generous support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, we created a programme of oral history interviews and artist commissions led by Wellingborough’s communities. A series of community call-outs followed for individuals and organisations to register their interest in collecting stories from the people and groups who they felt had stories to share.

Stories were collected from people across Wellingborough’s wide ranging communities, varying from vivid childhood memories of World War II to first impressions of arriving in the town. Next came call-outs for artistic commissions that would form the core of Wellingborough Stories Festival. Our community panel chose Kremena Dimitrova, Makers of Imaginary Worlds and Ruth Pigott as the commissioned artists for the festival.



The work that the artists co-created with the Wellingborough community groups culminated in the three week long Wellingborough Stories Festival. The Festival Hub was situated in the Swansgate Shopping Centre with fringe events in the Library, Victoria Centre, Castle Theatre and Kingsway Centre. Previous projects, the South Asian Heritage Project, *You Must Stay At Home* publication, the Windrush Generation quilt and *Wellingborough* podcasts (ghost stories) were also included.

Over 20,000 people engaged with the Festival participating in different heritage and creative activities, enjoying new public art, seeing films of Wellingborough’s past and watching theatre performances about its future. You can still find some of Ruth’s fantastic films on the Made With Many website and Kremena’s beautiful murals continue to be displayed in the Swansgate Centre.

This publication captures the essence of the 18-month-long celebration of Wellingborough’s varied and exciting untold stories, as well as the creativity and commitment of our town today.

To read the book online please visit <https://madewithmany.hflip.co/wellingboroughstories.html>

#### Myrle Roach

Community Engagement Co-ordinator (Wellingborough)

Website: <https://madewithmany.org/>

## 78 DERNGATE - 'FEEL THE FLOW'

We are delighted to welcome Lisa Timmerman, who returns to 78 Derngate - after 10 years - when she displays her evocative work in our newly refurbished galleries for her 5th solo exhibition: 'Flow'.

For Lisa, the journey to this exhibition began in Burma Myanmar in 2016 and flowed through to a quote by Kabul Gibron: 'Beauty is not in the face, beauty is a light in the heart.'



Since 2019 she has been working with oil, cold wax and other painting techniques, experimenting with ways to give the viewer their own lift and 'light in the heart' moment.

Enjoy the moving tranquillity of these paintings and reflect on the thoughts behind them at Lisa Timmerman's exhibition entitled 'Flow'. It runs from Saturday 6 April to 29 June 29 in our Barwell Room and Mezzanine Galleries, open 10am - 4.30pm (closed Mondays). Free entry to exhibitions, all work for sale. Why not take the perfect opportunity and combine a visit to the exhibition together with a trip round the adjacent Charles Rennie Mackintosh House (for which there is an entry fee) gardens, restaurant and shop.

Website: <https://www.78derngate.org.uk/>

Instagram: @78derngate or <https://www.instagram.com/78derngate/>

### **Lisa's Details**

Website: <https://www.lisatimmerman.co.uk/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/lisatimmermanpaints/>

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/@lisatimmermanpaints>

## THE ROYAL ORDNANCE DEPOT VISITOR CENTRE

Planning for our D-Day 80 exhibition is nearing [H-Hour](#). (Click the link for an explanation - Editor).

Weedon Depot's role in supporting the Normandy Invasion was significant. Long before June 1944, with some other depots, it assembled 'Beach Maintenance Packs' to sustain the British and Canadian Armies from the beaches until the Mulberry Floating Harbours could be built, or a regular port captured.

The packs contained everything from rations, weapons and spares, tools, vehicle parts, tyres and even replacement uniforms and webbing. Thousands of tonnes of items, arriving by train and lorry, were sorted and packed and sent to the embarkation ports and temporary sites in the south of England.

Thousands of women also made up smaller boxes of rations in their own homes or in village halls across this part of Northamptonshire. Putting together the exhibition should inform visitors about another part of this amazing site's history and the people who served, worked inside or lived around its walls. It has also opened a new area of research and knowledge for us while encouraging leadership and team skills that 'Ike' himself would recognise. The D-Day 80 exhibition runs from May to October.

**STOP PRESS** could any NHF member please lend us any items of British Army Pattern 37 uniform or equipment, for the duration of our exhibition? If so, please contact me (details below).

Our treasurer Doreen Addicott recently gave a talk on the Depot's Army Equitation School and Depot Locations BEYOND Its Walls to more than 20 people at Weedon Community Centre. And talking about rations, we have an improved retail/souvenir display with a new line in knitted woolly covers for a Terry's Chocolate Orange! They are selling well and nimble-fingered volunteers are busy Knitting For Victory!

Please contact **Steve Larnier**, Volunteer, Phone: 07790 244542 Email: [y.larner@btinternet.com](mailto:y.larner@btinternet.com) for more information or to arrange a visit to the Depot. Website <https://the-depot.uk/>



Mountains of weapons in crates, ammunition and spares are checked before D-Day

## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The Northamptonshire Natural History Society was founded in 1876 and we are based in our own premises, in Northampton Town centre, at The Humfrey Rooms (right), 10 Castilian Terrace, Northampton NN1 1LD where all our meetings take place.



We cover a number of disciplines, including the following:

- Archaeology & History (meets the fourth Thursday of the month at 2.30pm);
- Astronomy (meets the second and last Mondays of the month at 7.30pm);
- Botany (meets the first Thursday of the month at 2.30pm);
- General (meets the second Thursday of the month at 2.30pm);
- Geology (meets the third Thursday of the month at 2.30pm);
- Microscopy (meets the first and third Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm);
- Photography (meets every Wednesday September to June);
- Weather and Climate (meets the first Sunday of the month at 2.30pm);
- Exploring the Society's Collections (meets every other Monday between 11am – 3pm).



A sheet from one of our older herbarium collections

Interested? Just turn up at any meeting to see what we offer. All we ask is that you become a member if you attend more than any three meetings (currently £50 a year, reviewed in May). Membership is for the whole society and covers all advertised meetings. It is taken between 1 April and 30 June 2024 is valid till 30 June 2025.

The "Exploring the Society's Collections" meetings are very interesting, giving an opportunity to study, draw, paint and possibly help curate the society's extensive collections. These include, sand (largest private sand collection), rocks, fossils, birds eggs, butterflies, moths, shells, herbarium, microscope slides etc. Some of the collections date back nearly two hundred years. All collections are housed in the Humfrey Rooms, which were generously given to us in 1957 by the Humfrey family.

Our website is [www.nnhs.info](http://www.nnhs.info), where an overview of the



Part of our historic Butterfly collection

society (and each section) can be found, as well as a calendar of our meetings.

If you wish to contact us please email [info@nnhs.info](mailto:info@nnhs.info) or ring us on 07396 819876.

**Paul Hayes** (Membership Secretary)

## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

We continue with our programme of online meetings and details of our programme can be found on our website. Upcoming online talks for the next few months include: Members' Evening – sharing research tips or research problems, a talk on Folk Traditions, Dialect and Peculiarities of town and village life and on Apprenticeship Records - so something for everyone. Branch meetings are held at Kettering and Weston Favell and are open to all. See: [www.northants-fhs.org/](http://www.northants-fhs.org/)

We have recently sent a questionnaire around to our members asking for their thoughts on what we already offer, what they might like to see in the future, what they hope to gain from their membership, what resources they would like made available that can help them with their research and how we can, hopefully, meet those expectations. It will help us plan our activities and events for the future.

By the time you read this, we will have attended the FHF Really Useful Family History Show Live at St Ives, on 20 April. This is the first large live event we have attended since before Covid so it is great to be planning to get out and about and meeting people in person!

### **Heritage Fair Northants North, Sunday 28 April 11am – 4pm**

An exciting event showcasing Northamptonshire's history and heritage, organised by Discover Northamptonshire in partnership with Northamptonshire Family History Society and supported by Wicksteed Park. Entrance to the event is free, although normal car parking charges for Wicksteed apply. Refreshments are available on site. Come and find out what Northamptonshire has to offer!

See the following poster for more details!

**Angela Malin**



# HERITAGE FAIR

## NORTHANTS NORTH 2024

**Sunday 28 April 2024 from 11am to 4pm:  
The Pavilion, Wicksteed Park, Kettering NN15 6NJ**

**With a large variety of stalls  
and displays showcasing  
Northamptonshire's history and heritage**



*384th Bombardment Group Museum  
78 Derngate - The Charles Rennie Mackintosh House  
All Saints Church Brixworth Friends  
ARC*

*Bonkers Playhouse Theatre  
Chester House  
COFEPOW  
Corby Heritage Centre  
Cornerstone  
Deene Park  
Derek F Blunt*

*Discover Northamptonshire/Nene Valley  
Friends of Brixworth Church  
Glennis Hooper  
Holdenby House  
Jeyes of Earls Barton  
Kettering Civic Society  
Kettering Cultural Consortium  
Kettering u3a Family History Group  
Masque Theatre  
Naseby battlefield Project*

*Nene Lacemakers  
Nene Valley Bat Group  
Northampton Heritage Hunters  
Northamptonshire Archaeological Society  
Northamptonshire Archives & Heritage Service  
Northamptonshire Beekeepers Association  
Northamptonshire Family History Society  
Northamptonshire Film Archive Trust  
Northamptonshire Record Society  
Northants & Rutland Open Studios  
Northants Guild of Spinners, Weavers & Dyers  
Roade Local History Society  
Rockingham Forest Trust (Stanwick Lakes)  
Sleipnir Creations CIC and Vikings of Mercia  
St Mary's Primary School, Kettering  
Terry's Tours  
UK Film School  
Wicksteed Charitable Trust  
Wildlife Trust for Beds,  
Cams and Northants*



**Entrance is free to the event  
but normal parking fees will apply  
for Wicksteed Park**

**More information will be found at: [www.northants-fhs.org/fairs-events](http://www.northants-fhs.org/fairs-events)**



As part of its latest project to raise money towards the installation of a new sound system at All Saints' Church, Pytchley Church Heritage Trust has a busy programme of talks, art and music planned for 2024 and we'd encourage everyone to come along.

On 23 February the Trust hosted a fascinating talk by Ruth Rignall on the Heritage of Wicksteed Park and on 12 April Joe Whitehead, head gardener at Burghley House, will be speaking to us about 'Burghley Gardens, Past, Present and Future' which promises to be very interesting.

We have a Summer Arts & Crafts Festival in All Saints' Church over the weekend of 22-23 June, organized in conjunction with local artist Sophie Kilpatrick celebrating a number of local artists and makers – entry is free, all are welcome, and refreshments will be available.

Following the arts theme, PCHT is again hosting a Northants & Rutland Open Studios event over the weekend of 14-15 September where we hope for a range of exhibitors to display their artistic talent and, in addition to this, the Trust will be registering for the Heritage Open Days programme and offering guided tours of our historic Grade I listed church.

Finally, PCHT is pleased to present a concert by Frumenty on Friday 22 November in Pytchley Village Hall. Frumenty have played for us several times before and never fail to entertain.

For more information about any of our events, please contact Mike Walsh – [mikeawalsh@me.com](mailto:mikeawalsh@me.com). Please also look in the Events Diary at the end of this Newsletter.



## JEYES of EARLS BARTON

Just when you think January will be a month for spring-cleaning one phone call can change everything.

### THOSE KINKY BOOTS AGAIN!



ITV X contacted us with their new venture – local stories but with ‘legs’ to be of interest nationally: they literally did choose the right ‘legs’ – those adorned with Earls Barton’s wonderful red “Kinky Boots”. Interviewed in our ‘KINKY BOOTS SHOWCASE’, telling the story of shoe-makers W. J. Brookes, how local Steve Pateman saved his factory (albeit for just a few years) from closure, it was exciting and great fun to share the story with such a wide audience. Steve himself and other villagers involved in the filming, were featured and we will continue to welcome

fans and visitors to try to walk the walk! “How sturdy stilettos thrust the shoe-making community into the spotlight”, Earls Barton’s story of shoe-making, is our “Life and Sole Exhibition” too.

### RUSHDEN LAKES “DISCOVER” HUB

Preparing to get the duster out once again, we instead find ourselves with the task of setting up a display (right) of Philadelphus and John Jeyes’ family pharmaceutical memorabilia in the Discover Tourist Hub at Rushden Lakes – telling another local Northamptonshire story borrowed from our Heritage Centre – with a video showing the 140 years of Jeyes Fluid – it will soon be 150 years so another project awaits!

### JEYES’ “HEAT OF THE DAY” PROJECT

Next year sees the anniversary of The Great Fire of Northampton of 1675 and we have been pleased to help provide information to the town project as the Apothecary at 6 The Drapery, Northampton which - in 1810 - became Philadelphus Jeyes’ “Chymist and Druggist”; one of the few buildings to survive. As Oak Apple Day draws closer we hope to have an exciting new product to join Jeyes’ Northamptonshire Sauces!



## EARLS BARTON FESTIVAL and VE DAY in JUNE

We are looking forward to celebrating Earls Barton Festival in June working in collaboration with The Festival Team - we will be holding a very special exhibition and event for the anniversary of VE Day on the 6 June.

### A PIGMENT OF IMAGINATION!

The old adage “dust and cobwebs can wait till tomorrow” is true as there significant news of the illness of King Charles III. His photograph of choice for national publication of over 8000 “get-well” cards was a joy – the card, designed by Pigment, “At least you don’t have to wear a cone!”, is now on display in The Royal Room. We wish him and the Princess of Wales a good recovery.

Whilst in The Royal Room (pictured below), we must thank Martin for everything he has done to support us; not only in his role as Chairman of The Forum but entrusting us to keep safe his royal treasure which he has guarded since he was 15 years old. None of us knew the educational value of the copy of the Proclamation of Edward III (but not crowned due to his abdication) would have when Queen Elizabeth II died. Prince Charles was proclaimed King. There had not been a Proclamation made since 1953 so for many it was a new experience.

Both Martin and Janet have been a great support to us as a small family-owned and family-run Heritage Centre – we wish them both good health and look forward to being at Wicksteed Park for The Heritage Fair with Janet soon. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

**Georgina, Philippa and Anna**



## BRIXWORTH HISTORY SOCIETY

In February we had an interesting talk from Mike Stroud on Kelmarsh Hall which was built in the 18th century and is surrounded by extensive gardens; a visit is likely to be on the cards for the summer! In March we heard about Royal Fotheringhay and its history from Douglas Goddard; he was most informative and told us of its design and eventual downfall: being the birth place of Richard III and the place of execution of Mary, Queen of Scots. Of especial interest was the detail given concerning the church and the village.

Looking forward, we are hosting Leonard Holden in April, who is talking about the Enclosure Riots and in May we are going to hear about the Life and Times of John Betjeman from Mark Temple.

Further into the future we are planning a visit in June to Harvington Hall and the Jewellery Quarter in Birmingham. We are also planning our summer exhibition in the Heritage Centre which will be based on our collection of old Brixworth post cards.



*This is a copy of an old post card showing the Market or Butter Cross in Brixworth. It is on the site of an older cross, erected in the 13th century to celebrate the granting of a charter by Henry III for the village to hold a weekly market and an annual fair. Behind the cross is the Heritage Centre which was originally called the Thomas Roe building, having been built in 1811 by his charity trustees and was the first school in the village.*

Our meetings are held in the Village Hall in Holcot Road on the third Thursday of the month and begin at 7.30pm.

Further details from our Facebook page or website: [www.brixworthhistory.org/](http://www.brixworthhistory.org/). To contact us, our email address is [helloBHS1990@gmail.com](mailto:helloBHS1990@gmail.com).

## DAVENTRY MUSEUM

We are putting on an exhibition to mark the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings and the Battle of Normandy, the largest scale Allied invasion of Nazi-occupied France that led to the liberation of north-west Europe.

When: Saturday 13 January to Friday 14 June 2024

Contact: Sophie Good, Museum Officer [museum@daventrytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:museum@daventrytowncouncil.gov.uk)

Website: <https://daventrymuseum.org.uk/whats-on/world-war-two-80-years-since-d-day/>

# World War Two: D-Day 80 Years On



Exhibition marking the 80th Anniversary of D-Day

**Sat 13th Jan to Fri 14th June 2024**      **FREE Entry**

2024 Opening Times: Tues-Fri 9.30am-1.30pm  
First Saturdays of month 10am-4pm  
3 New Street, Daventry, Northants, NN11 4BT

## ST PETER'S CHURCH, MAREFAIR, NORTHAMPTON



The Friends of St Peter's winter has been noteworthy with another set of excellent local history talks online.

There was particular interest in Ruth Thomas's Talk on the Great Fire of Northampton 1675. We plan to join the towns' commemoration of the anniversary next year with more Talks, Walks and a display at St Peter's.

Spring brings good news on the Old Black Lion restoration project. Phipps Brewery Albion team is announced as proprietor to take the pub on when it reopens.

We are looking forward to this so much as we will once again have access to facilities for group events and all our visitors.

The Churches Conservation Trust national headquarters will then move into the upper part of the building. It will be a key part of Northampton's Heritage Gateway.

The church garden has a spring-like feel. It makes a cheerful welcome to visitors.

We are very happy to be fixing visits for groups and individual visitors. People travel from far and wide to see this prime example of 12th century carved capitals in such a fine state of preservation. As the burial place of William Smith "father of English Geology" this is a special place for Earth Scientists and social historians.

For group visits, we can offer an Introductory Talk, a tour of the impressive Grade 1 building, and teas and coffees.

Do contact us if you would like to make a booking.

Bookings are now open too for our summer show. The popular touring company ***This My Theatre*** brings us their "fringe" performance of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream". It's going to have appeal for an all-age audience and is bound to bring us a magical evening. The date to put in your diary is **Sunday 11 August at 7.30pm.**

Please see the Friends webpage for future Events both at the church and online.

We are very happy to have an influx of new members this year. If you would like to join us you will be helping to look after one of the County's most precious and interesting buildings. Volunteers are always



# ST PETER'S



*Sunday 11th August*  
*7.30 pm*  
*St Peters Church Marefair*  
*Northampton NN1 1SW*

**A**  
**M**idsummer  
**N**ight's  
**D**ream  
 W. Shakespeare

**THIS MY THEATRE**      *now booking on:*  
<https://www.thisismytheatre.com/a-midsummer-nights-dream>

most welcome. There's a variety of things to do. The garden volunteers are on site on Tuesday mornings. The church is open from 10am to noon. Come along and meet them if you would like to help.

For all enquiries contact us:  
[stpetermarefair@gmail.com](mailto:stpetermarefair@gmail.com)

Find us on Facebook at: [Friends of St Peters Church Marefair Supporters](#)

[This My Theatre Booking](#)

Wishing all heritage enthusiasts a happy season ahead.

**Jean Hawkins**  
 Chairman  
 Friends of St Peter's Marefair

*St Peter's Church*  
**MAREFAIR NORTHAMPTON NN1 1SW**  
*'The most interesting Norman Church in the County'* PEVSNER

## WICKSTEED PARK

On March 24 Wicksteed Park celebrated the unveiling of a new piece of playground equipment that was designed by an 11-year-old Northampton local named Mia and built by Wicksteed Leisure. Inspired by her favourite fairy tale, *The Beanstalk* is a yellow-and-green-themed climbing frame with a tube slide. Mia's design won out over 50 entries in a competition that encouraged children to design a piece of play equipment they would like to see in the playground. The opening of this play equipment that was attended by the Kettering Mayor Emily Fedorowycz and Philip Hollobone MP, marked the closing of a £2m National Lottery Heritage Fund project called @Play.



National Lottery funding has also helped to fund the restoration of the Garden Room tearoom, which offers stunning views across the park from the top of its famous Edwardian-style Pavilion. Seven traditional telescopes have also been installed, pointing at key areas of the 147-acre park. When visitors look through the viewer, they see an image of what that area looked like in years past and hear commentaries by actors playing the voice of Charles and Hilda Wicksteed explaining the history of the features.

### Future Events

On April 28 we will be hosting the Heritage Fair, sponsored by Discover Northamptonshire in partnership with Northamptonshire Family History Society (see larger flyer elsewhere in this newsletter). It will be open to public from 11am to 4pm with a large variety of stalls showcasing Northamptonshire's history and heritage. Entry to the Heritage Fair is free but normal parking charges will apply.

Starting Wednesday April 10 Wicksteed Park will be included in as one of the 20 Wellbeing Walks across Northamptonshire as part of a North Northamptonshire Council initiative. The Wicksteed Park walk will meet every Wednesday at 10am outside Carlo's Courtyard restaurant and offers a 60-minute walk around the park, led by staff or volunteers. For further information on Wellbeing Walks in Northamptonshire you can visit [www.northnorthants.gov.uk/walking-and-cycling/wellbeing-walks](http://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/walking-and-cycling/wellbeing-walks).

Throughout April and into May Carbon Theatre will be holding textile workshops called Creating Patches of Home, on Saturdays from 10am-12pm in the Learning Space. These 6 weekly textile sessions are about 'Creating Pockets of Home', exploring your family heritage or local stories through different sewing,

printing and other textile techniques. All materials are provided, and there will be instructors on hand to guide you. To book onto the workshop please visit <https://www.carbontheatre.org.uk/seedling>.

**Creating Patches of Home**  
FREE Textile Making Sessions in Kettering

Explore your local stories and family history through a variety of sewing, printing & textile techniques.

Everyone is welcome & no experience necessary!

Join us for 6 weekly sessions from  
Saturday 13 April 2024  
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
at Wicksteed Park  
(Learning Space), NN15 6NJ

Book your free spot here: [www.carbontheatre.org.uk/seedling](http://www.carbontheatre.org.uk/seedling)

COMMUNITY FUND  
Northamptonshire Community Foundation  
Giving back to our county  
CARBON

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer at Wicksteed Park, please contact Ruth Rignall at [getinvolved@wicksteedpark.org](mailto:getinvolved@wicksteedpark.org).

Keep an eye on our social media for updates on upcoming events.

[Facebook/wicksteedpark](https://www.facebook.com/wicksteedpark)

[Instagram/wicksteedpark](https://www.instagram.com/wicksteedpark)

**Connor McIntyre**

Community and Heritage Coordinator [community@wicksteedpark.org](mailto:community@wicksteedpark.org)



### Ancient 'Oak Apple Day' ceremony to take place in Northampton



An ancient ceremony of thanksgiving will take place at All Saints' Church on Monday, 27 May to commemorate Northampton's Oak Apple Day.

This annual ceremony, organised by Northampton Town Council and the Lord Lieutenancy is unique to Northampton and remembers the generosity of King Charles II, who donated over 1,000 tons of timber to reconstruct All Saints' Church and halved the town's taxes for seven years following the 1675 Great Fire of Northampton.

The public ceremony will begin at 11:30am, when a Civic Procession enters All Saints' Church for a thanks giving service led by Father Oliver Coss. Then at midday, the A Company LNR Corps of Drums will parade to All Saints' Church via George Row.

The highlight of this traditional ceremony comes just after midday, when the Mayor places a wreath of oak leaves on the statue of Charles II, standing high on the church's portico. A salute to the Lord Lieutenant and the High Sheriff is given from this lofty position, followed by a prayer of thanksgiving, the playing of the National Anthem, a toast to the Mayor and a final blessing.

The unusual name of the ceremony is derived from the restoration of the monarchy, when Charles II came to the throne on 29 May 1660. The future King famously hid in an Oak tree, when he sought refuge from his roundhead enemies, following the 1651 battle of Worcester.

James Compton the then Earl of Northampton, spoke to Charles II and the bill to rebuild Northampton was passed, with Crown Commissioners sent to oversee the works and ensure that the benefactor of a new Northampton was never forgotten.



Once the new century had begun, the portico at All Saints' was completed, and the Mayor John Agutter sought public subscription for the statue of King Charles II, which was wreathed on Oak Apple Day.

## KETTERING CIVIC SOCIETY

After 23 years as Chairman, architect Paul Ansell has retired. Paul was highly respected by all and his expertise in all things to do with the town and planning was invaluable. He will be greatly missed; however, I am forever grateful to have had such a great mentor whose skills I greatly admire. Paul's approach to problems is thoughtful, considerate, and respectful, and it has been both fun and a great privilege to have worked with him. Although retired we will no doubt be calling on his advice in the future.

We are delighted to have Eleanor Patrick as the new Chairman and Andrea Pettingale as Vice-Chairman.



Monica Ozdemir, Secretary. Paul Ansell, Eleanor Patrick, Chairman, Andrea Pettingale, Vice-Chairman



Art teacher, Stephanie Johnson

Continuing the art project funded by Historic England we were able to offer 12 free watercolour classes held at St Andrew's Arts Centre. Several people, including me, had not used a paintbrush since school whilst others had a little experience. Our very competent teacher Stephanie, took us through a variety of techniques from colour to 3D and more. Over the weeks our knowledge and skills have greatly improved and we are producing some wonderful pieces. Our latest subjects include spring flowers and scenes. The afternoons pass quickly and are enjoyed by all who work silently on their pieces in deep concentration also making good friendships. The sessions are therapeutic and industrious and most of us will continue with this interest looking forward to further lessons with Stephanie Johnson on Monday afternoons.

### **Kettering- a town of artists!**

The Society successfully obtained a Kettering Town Council grant to spruce up the town by painting three OpenReach boxes. Working with Cll. Emily Fedowrowycz and local artists Sally Leach, Mark James and Daisy Farrah Hayton we suggested topics based on the history of the area. They consulted local residents about their designs and it was the wish of residents at Oaktree Court, to remember the former bus station and flowers that they love. Painting began on three OpenReach boxes around Wood Street and Oaktree Court, in George Street on the weekend of 6 April.



We continue to make sure that Kettering station looks welcoming by changing the planting schemes.

#### Events

- ◆ 18 April Pensioners' Parliament
- ◆ 28 April Heritage Fair, Wicksteed Park
- ◆ 30 June Guided Tour of Rushton Hall Park and Tea  
1.15pm for 1.30pm
- ◆ 19 September, Wellingborough Civic Society
- ◆ 28 September Roger & Penny Payne's Amazing QUIZ  
at Barton Seagrave Village Hall. Details to follow

**Monica Ozdemir** [kettcivic@gmail.com](mailto:kettcivic@gmail.com)

Secretary

## FRIENDS OF BRIXWORTH CHURCH

The Friends of Brixworth Church have been actively fundraising and promoting our beloved church in Brixworth. Additionally, we're gearing up for the Heritage Open Days event in September, and we are bubbling with ideas to showcase not only the church but also the wider village.

We have a request!

We are a small group of Trustees who meet five times a year to oversee the preservation efforts of this remarkable church. We discuss fundraising activities and funding priorities to ensure the longevity of our beloved landmark. Currently, we have a vacancy within our team and are eager to welcome individuals who share our passion for preserving heritage buildings. If you have an interest in joining our small but dedicated group, we would love to hear from you.

**Sandy Cummings**

Secretary - Friends of Brixworth Church

<https://www.friendsofbrixworthchurch.org.uk/>

## HIGHAM FERRERS TOURISM

### Visitors potty about pottery as Higham Ferrers wraps up display

Inspired by a clay centrepiece on display at the Northamptonshire Tourism Visitor Hub at Rushden Lakes, Higham Ferrers organisers decided to hold a weekend craft workshop. Visitors – young and old – were thrilled at the amulets, friendship bracelets and various ornaments that they turned out. Three-year-old Rhys Bremner, who was visiting with his grandmother Gill Bremner, rolled out the wet clay then took his dinosaur-shaped souvenir home to paint.



*Rhys Bremner with grandmother Gill Bremner*

Higham Ferrers Tourism and HiFARS (Higham Ferrers Archaeological and Research Society) volunteers were on hand at the Heritage Crafts Family Workshop to show visitors how to work with clay and wool and fashion jewellery and ornaments – and even little dinosaurs – which they were able to take home to paint once the clay had dried.

The workshop marked the end of the four-month display by Higham Ferrers Tourism, HiFars and the Higham Ferrers Town Council.

The clay centrepiece on display at the Northamptonshire Tourism Visitor Hub was a commissioned replica Samian-ware bowl, based on original pottery sherds uncovered at the Roman excavation site in Kings Meadow, Higham Ferrers.

Rachel Smyth, deputy chair of HiFARS was on duty with volunteers on the first day of the workshop and Olwen Mayers, the HiFARS chair, on the second.

Carol Fitzgerald (pictured right), who is on the Higham Ferrers Tourism Committee, tried her hand at making pottery jewellery and said she was looking forward to seeing what it turned out like once it was painted.



Some 350 Higham Ferrers schoolchildren will also be able to do similar craftwork during the Higham Ferrers Tourism-run *Great Big Green Week* held at the town's Chichele College, starting June 8. There is another chance for people to get creative at the HiFARS' annual Archaeology Allsorts on July 27 and 28.

*(Left) Rachel Smyth of HiFARS, explains to Kaiden Lander, 6, centre, and Riley Lander, 9, how to use their rolled-out clay to fashion souvenirs.*



## LOCAL FOCUS TALKS & TOURS

SPRINGTIME: Lotions, Notions & Dubious Cures. Learn more about the heritage, traditions and remedies connected to this time of the year.

ADVANCE BOOKING ESSENTIAL. Book a talk for your local group in your usual venue.

Group talks from £25, Exploration Maps & Booklets £5 - £10.

Another option is to buy and try unique WEATHERPROOF Exploration Maps and Booklets to go outside yourself, or with us as guides as well. We often use public transport, and our feet, but you can also use them for car trips.

Full details and agenda from [localfocuswalks.talks@gmail.com](mailto:localfocuswalks.talks@gmail.com)

**Susan Copperwheat**

## A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

### Forum History Day 2024

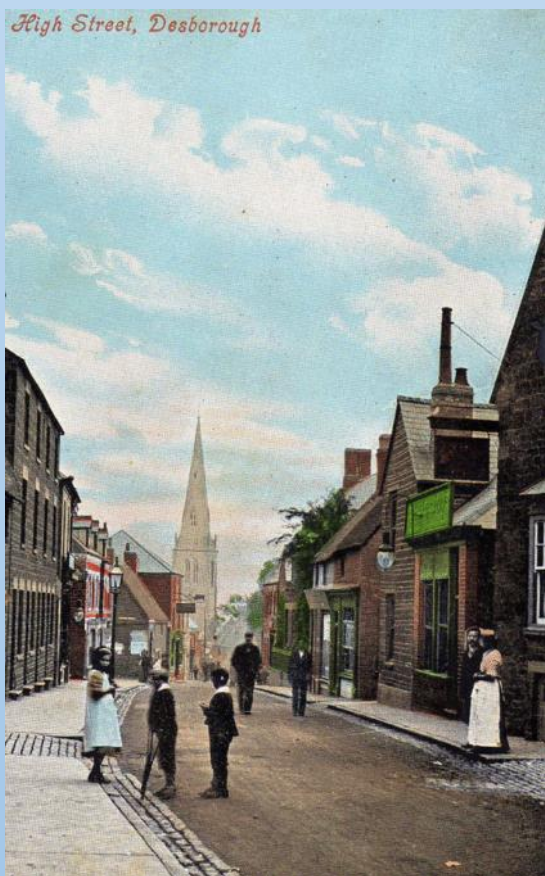
Saturday, 19 October at Desborough

Kindly hosted by Desborough Civic Society with Desborough Heritage Centre

A full day of talks and tours, and a chance to visit the historic Parish Church and the Desborough Heritage Centre. Refreshments served throughout the day.

Cost: £27.50

Details and booking forms will be circulated to Forum Members in June.



Station Street, Desborough

## EVENTS DIARY - by Organisation

Also refer to articles within Newsletter for other organisations

Organisation	Full Organisation name	Point of contact	Email/ telephone
AEAGMHM	Alfred East Art Gallery & Manor House Museum	David Brown	<a href="mailto:info@friendskagam.org">info@friendskagam.org</a>
BHS	Brigstock Historical Society	Robin Phillips	01536 370144
FSPM	Friends of St Peters Marefair	Jean Hawkins	<a href="mailto:stpetermarefair@gmail.com">stpetermarefair@gmail.com</a>
NFHS	Northamptonshire Family History Society	Angela Malin	<a href="mailto:info@northants-fhs.org">info@northants-fhs.org</a>
NNHS	Northamptonshire Natural History Society	Paul Hayes	<a href="http://www.nnhs.info/Whats-On/">www.nnhs.info/Whats-On/</a> or phone 07396 819876
NRS	Northamptonshire Record Society	Dr Graham Lampard	<a href="mailto:enquiries@northamptonshirerecordsociety.org.uk">enquiries@northamptonshirerecordsociety.org.uk</a>
PCHT	Pytchley Church Heritage Trust	Mike Walsh	<a href="mailto:mikeawalsh@me.com">mikeawalsh@me.com</a>
RLHS	Roade Local History Society	Maggie Smith	<a href="mailto:events@roadehistorysociety.org.uk">events@roadehistorysociety.org.uk</a>
UoN	University of Northampton	Siobhan Hyland	<a href="mailto:Siobhan.hyland@northampton.ac.uk">Siobhan.hyland@northampton.ac.uk</a>

Organisation	Date	Event (Shortened Title)	Speaker/Details
AEAGMHM	28-Apr	Standard	Town Walk
AEAGMHM	26-May	Market Street And Beyond	Town Walk
AEAGMHM	29-Jun	Military Graves (Armistice Special)	Town Walk
AEAGMHM	28-Jul	High Street And Gold Street	Town Walk
AEAGMHM	25-Aug	Top End And Trees	Town Walk
AEAGMHM	29-Sep	High Street And Gold Street	Town Walk
BHS	24-Apr	When Olive Oil was for Earache	Sharn Matthews
BHS	22-May	That's Unusual	Derek Blunt
BHS	26-Jun	The Life of Denys Watkins-Pitchford	David Osborne
FSPM	15-May	Old Black Lion Project (Zoom)	Nick Patrick
FSPM	11-Aug	A Midsummer Night's Dream	This My Theatre
NFHS	22-Apr	The Victorians and Entertainment (Zoom)	Dr Judy Hill
NFHS	28-Apr	Heritage Fair Northants North, Wicksteed Park	Free Event
NFHS	13-May	Newspapers as Historical Sources (Kettering)	Denise Bates
NFHS	20-May	The Times They are a'changing (Weston Favell)	Ian Waller
NFHS	27-May	Members' Evening & Help Desk (Zoom)	Members
NFHS	10-Jun	Northamptonshire songs and stories (Kettering)	Frumenty
NFHS	17-Jun	Sex, Drugs and Tapeworms (Weston Favell)	Kevin Varty
NFHS	24-Jun	There's none as queer as folk (Zoom)	Ian Waller
NFHS	08-Jul	Henry Smith: A most notorious, naughty, false, lying fellow (Kettering)	Sue Paul
NFHS	15-Jul	Mary Burbidge - An Innkeeper's widow (Weston Favell)	Dr Wendy Raybould
NFHS	22-Jul	Apprenticeship Records (Zoom)	Richard Holt
NNHS	8-Jul	Exploring the Society's Collections	Informal meeting

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Event (Shortened Title)</b>	<b>Speaker/Details</b>
NNHS	22-Jul	Exploring the Society's Collections	Informal meeting
NNHS	25-Apr	Natural History Seen Through My Smart Phone	John Smith
NNHS	29-Apr	Exploring the Society's Collections.	Informal meeting
NNHS	29-Apr	Arrokoth	Kelsi Singer
NNHS	02-May	Common Flowers, More Common Flowers; and Less Common Flowers	Seán Karley
NNHS	05-May	The Last Month's Weather	Mike Longman
NNHS	7-May	Trichomes	Mike Asquith
NNHS	8-May	Bexley AV Group	Roger Stevens
NNHS	9-May	George Claridge Druce	
NNHS	13-May	Exploring the Society's Collections	Informal meeting
NNHS	16-May	The Story of Amber	Sue Barker
NNHS	21-May	Diatoms	Mike Gibson
NNHS	22-May	Photographic Practical Night	Informal meeting
NNHS	23-May	The Taylor Memorial Hall Castilian Street Northampton	
NNHS	27-May	Exploring the Society's Collections	Informal meeting
NNHS	27-May	Telescopic Topics	Various
NNHS	29-May	Northamptonshire Night	Various
NNHS	02-Jun	The Last Month's Weather	Mike Longman
NNHS	04-Jun	Making Videos Through the Microscope	John Smith
NNHS	06-Jun	Aberrant Botanist in Catalunya	Seán Karley
NNHS	10-Jun	Exploring the Society's Collections	Informal meeting
NNHS	10-Jun	The Gaia Space Telescope	Dr Floor van Leeuwen
NNHS	12-Jun	A Triptych on the Subject of Spring	Various
NNHS	13-Jun	A Virtual Journey Along the Greenwich Meridian from Peacehaven to Tunstall	
NNHS	18-Jun	My Favourite Microscopy / Wildlife Books	Tim Newton.
NNHS	20-Jun	The Springs and Wells of Northampton	Bob Purser
NNHS	24-Jun	Telescopic Topics	Various
NNHS	27-Jun	Northampton Town Hall and its Sculptures	
NRS	08-Jun	Fantastic Beasts and where to find them	Dr. Susan Kilby
PCHT	22-Jun	Summer Arts & Crafts Festival	Continues 23 June
PCHT	08-Sep	Open Days & Guided tours	Until 15th September
PCHT	14-Sep	Northants & Rutland Open Studios	and 15th September
RLHS	24-Apr	Virginia Bradley, Actress	Andy Tennet
RLHS	28-Apr	NHF Heritage Fair	Committee
RLHS	22-May	AGM & Music and Music and Memories of 1960s Adolescence	Polly Feeley
RLHS	08-Jun	D-Day Exhibition at Cripps House, Roade	In-House
RLHS	26-Jun	The Bells Go Down	In-House
UoN	27-Jun	Humour, Satire and Play in History	Continues 28-Jun