

Newark Civic Trust

MAGAZINE

Caring about the town's environment

Issue 73 | August 2016



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A few words from the Chairman

The Newark Civic Trust has had a very interesting 6 months since we published our last edition of the magazine. We've refurbished the Town Pump and provided an information board for people who want to know a little bit more about this small, but not insignificant part of our town (more about this later in the magazine.)

We've also made some changes to the website including adding a News and Events page that we hope will enable us to keep in touch with our members and the wider public. On this page we will advertise our events as well as those of other groups and we will also publish interesting news stories and announcements. If you're not a

regular user of the website I would encourage you to become one. It's a great tool and something we should be proud of.

There have also been two large planning applications submitted and commented on; the Sainsbury's development (on the old highways depot on the corner of the Great North Road/Kelham Road) and the latest application for the Robin Hood Hotel site. In this issue we have included a piece on the decision made by Newark and Sherwood District Council on the Sainsbury's development. We have also included our response to the latest application submitted by MF Strawson to demolish the former Robin Hood

Hotel and build a Travelodge in its place. We strongly oppose this latest application and I know several members of the Trust have also submitted comments individually opposing the development.

I hope to see as many of you as possible at our AGM on the 29th September at Newark Library. More information can be found on page 20 of the magazine.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Knapton', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Chairman of Newark Civic Trust
Michael Knapton

Albert Grocock

It is with much sadness that we report the passing of Albert Grocock, who passed away, aged 93, on April 16th, 2016. He was a staunch member of the Trust for a number of years,

always with a friendly greeting at meetings and a deliverer of our magazine.

He loved to meet people to regale them with amusing reminiscences

of his years as a postie with the Post Office. Some members have memories of Albert going back further than we care to admit. He will be sorely missed.

Save our signal box

Images and story courtesy of the Newark Advertiser

A campaign has started to save a historic signal box at Newark Castle Station. The signal box currently controls the station's level crossing, but that will be automated in future and controlled from Derby under plans by Network Rail. The box, built in 1912, would be boarded up and at risk of being demolished.

Mr Kevin Thompson, of Newark, says the signal box should be preserved and cared for by the community. He, along with Newark in Bloom volunteers, have offered to paint and maintain it and hope Network Rail will agree. "This is the first building people coming into Newark see and they don't want to see it boarded up – it is a historical building," Mr Thompson said. "It will have an effect on investment coming into the town. I just can't understand their way of thinking. The signals being automatic is a great idea, but we want to preserve the building."



Campaigners hoping to save the signal box at Newark Castle station, left to right, Mr George Wilkinson, Mr Kevin Thompson, Mr Chris Lester and Mrs Sue Tapply

Mrs Sue Tapply, a member of the Newark in Bloom committee, said: "We don't want this building boarded up, because it is one of the first people see and Newark Castle is in the background. When we cleaned up the station some time ago many people liked what we did and now this building needs to be spruced up."

Network Rail is planning to remove signal boxes at Lowdham, Fiskerton Junction, Staythorpe and Newark Castle and the gate boxes at Fiskerton Station and Rolleston Station. The signal boxes and gate boxes between Lowdham and Newark Castle date back to the early 1900s. The signals will be operated from Derby using CCTV cameras and monitoring equipment.

A spokesman for Network Rail said: "This relates to the investment we are making to upgrade the signalling in this area. This means that control of the train service will move to our state-of-the-art Railway Operating Centre in Derby and that the signal box will no longer be required to control train operations. In such circumstances our first choice, if the structure is not listed, is to demolish it in order to prevent any trespass and anti-social behaviour risk, as well as allowing our funds to be spent on improving services, rather than maintaining the now redundant building. This signal box



A view of the signal box in 1968

is in a conservation area and so we are unable to demolish it without permission. That being the case we will board it up in order to prevent people gaining access to it and to keep it weather-tight. We are already working with groups who are able to provide alternative uses for other signal boxes away from the operational railway. The box at Newark Castle is immediately next to the operational railway line and so would be very difficult and costly for a third party to maintain as they would need protection from the train operation. There is also no safe access route to the signal box in its current location, which would be required to enable the signal box to be used for another purpose."

The former ticket office at Newark Castle station has reopened after being empty for many years. It includes a toilet and waiting area. The project has cost £1½m with money coming from the Railway Heritage Trust and the Department for Transport's national station improvement project.

ETL: Share your knowledge of England's buildings 'enrich the list'

(<http://ihbconline.co.uk/newsarchive/?p=12980>)

Historic England launched a revised version of the web pages 'Enrich the List' on 7 June 2016, and now invites input to this critical tool from members of the public.

Historic England urges users of the list (the National Heritage List) across professions and communities to add to the considerable resource which is the list and ensure that the

information does not remain static as our knowledge changes. With more than 400,000 entries from milestones to tower blocks, sculpture to street furniture, Historic England have found that 99% of England's residents live within a mile of a listed building. The list also serves as an invaluable record of the historic environment.

Historic England explains:

'Following the HER (Historic Environment Records) Forum in the Spring, the site has been development and Beta Tested to take on board feedback received, so that the new site launched today is easier to use and still more valuable'.

Visit <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/enrich-the-list/> to see how you can get involved.

Treasure Your Treasures

(<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/news-desk/news/treasure-your-treasures-1>)

Patron Loyd Grossman has launched, what he calls, 'the world's greatest heritage festival', rousing visitors to get out and about and 'treasure your treasures' during Heritage Open Days between Thursday 8 and Sunday 11 September. He was speaking to an audience of event organizers and stakeholder representatives from the cultural sector at the Heritage Open Days 2016 launch event at RIBA in London on Tuesday 12 July.

'Treasure Your Treasures' is the theme for this year's annual four-day festival, which calls on communities to champion their local heritage and show their support for cultural and historic assets on their doorsteps. Visitors are encouraged to capture themselves on camera with the objects, people or places that they treasure and to share their stories online via social media using the hashtag #TreasureYourTreasures. Specially made Heritage Open Days frames will be positioned in each region at some of the free events for people to put themselves in the picture together with or in front of their treasures.

The 'treasures' theme comes following the results of a straw poll by Heritage Open Days, which showed that 95% of Heritage Open Days organisers had fears about the future of places like museums, galleries, archives, theatres, parks and historic sites in their own communities, which may be

facing financial uncertainty. 225 local organisers responded to the survey about their treasures and their level of concern about the effects of funding cuts. They felt overwhelmingly that Heritage Open Days had an important role to play in supporting the future of their local treasures.

Loyd Grossman said the 5,000 free events held during the festival provided the ideal platform to stand up and shout about local treasures, engaging people in heritage as visitors and volunteers, and getting behind campaigns to retain access to places like museums, archives, libraries, galleries, theatres, parks and historic sites.

In the last 22 years, Heritage Open Days has grown from 701 events to over 4800 in 2015 with some 3.4 million visitors enjoying free-to-access events and activities over four days in September. Over 40,000 volunteers help to run the festival making it the biggest grassroots celebration of culture and heritage in the UK. It is coordinated centrally by the National Trust with funding from Players of People's

Postcode Lottery. The festival provides an opportunity to showcase buildings and hidden histories in communities.

The database for this year's festival is now live at www.heritageopendays.org.uk Heritage Lincolnshire also publish a booklet containing all Lincolnshire Heritage Open Days (available to download at <https://www.heritagelincs.org.uk/news/lincolnshire-set-biggest-heritage-open-days-festival>) if you fancy crossing the border!



Planning

Sainsbury's Development (former Highway's Depot)

One and a half years of critique and consultation came to a head in April when a special planning committee of Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC) was convened, to finally decide the planning application for a new Sainsbury's supermarket on the former highways depot on Great North Road. The officer's report gave the Members an easy decision - to refuse planning permission.

The County Council had deemed the site surplus to requirements and had partnered with a property development company (Mulberry) to redevelop the site and to raise much needed funds in a time of cutbacks. Mulberry then partnered with Sainsbury's to propose a new supermarket and a blaze of publicity followed, before an application was lodged.

To begin with the plans were met with serious objections from statutory bodies particularly on highways and flooding grounds and the developers went to lengths in providing new reports and revised plans; one by one such issues were resolved and statutory objections lifted, but only after considerable additional work, time and no doubt cost. NSDC themselves commissioned their own independent specialist retail analysis, which when published hinted towards the ultimate recommendation - for it advised that a new supermarket would have a 'significant adverse

impact' on the town centre. The vacant site on North Gate was considered more preferable and more likely to promote 'linked trips' to the town centre and was also at a lesser risk of flooding.

Objections were also made by Newark Town Council, several surrounding parishes and 45 residents/interested persons. 14 letters were made in favour. Much concern was made about traffic and congestion; impacts to those living on Muskham Road, such as noise from a rear delivery yard; the loss of many frontage trees and whether the town needs, or can sustain, a further large supermarket.

Ultimately it was on this principle planning matter - that of retail need and impact to the 'vitality and viability' on this 'market town' which decided the matter. A package of mitigation measures tabled by Sainsbury's to help promote the market and town centre were not enough to offset the impact.

Councillor Saddington commented that people travelling from Farndon, Kelham and the Muskham direction already struggled to get into town on a regular basis; this development would further increase travel times from those areas. Councillor Dobson explained that several Co-Op stores had recently opened in Newark. She therefore felt that the town was already well served by supermarkets or large stores. Several Councillors also opposed the development

because the site partially sits on flood plain. It was however pointed out by Councillor Handley that NSDC had approved 2000 new homes on flood plain that had been under 4 feet of water twice in 6 years (see 'Rising Damp' in issue 68 of the Newark Civic Trust Magazine) therefore opposing on this principal would be hypocritical.

The developers have a right of appeal, which given the time and expense already occurred to satisfy many of the technical issues, would seem a strong possibility. On the other hand, Sainsbury's (and Tesco's et al) are abandoning many large schemes (Nottingham included) as shopping habits change, with people shopping little and often at local Co-Ops or at discounters like Aldi and Lidl - coming soon to Balderton Lakeside - and also online. So for the applicants that time and expense may be a sound investment - if an appeal is successful but on the other hand it could all be consigned to the planning history of Newark, and a publicly-owned piece of real estate on a gateway location will be left to go to weed.

Visit: <http://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/media/newarkandsherwood/imagesandfiles/democraticservices/pdfs/planning/Planning%20Committee%2020%20April%202016.pdf> to view the Planning Committee minutes for this application.

Robin Hood Hotel

The following are the comments submitted by Newark Civic Trust in opposition to the application to demolish the former Robin Hood Hotel and to build new retail units and a hotel.

Newark Civic Trust wish to register the following comments regarding the application to demolish the former Robin Hood Hotel and build new retail units and a 64 bedroom Travelodge Hotel:

1. The Beaumont Cross area is a mix of architectural styles but opposite the Robin Hood, on Lombard Street, are two listed buildings, one from the late 18th and one from the early 19th centuries. Removing the Robin Hood



View of proposal from Carter Gate (MF Strawson Ltd)

would further reduce the historic context of those listed properties as well as adjacent non-listed properties that have a positive impact on the area. Although there are several properties in the area that have a negative visual impact, it doesn't mean the Planning Committee should be taking action that further damages the area.

The Conservation Area is judged by Historic England, the Government's statutory advisor on the historic environment, as being at risk and they rated its condition as 'very poor'. Ultimately NSDC is responsible for the management of the Conservation Area and therefore it needs to take action to prevent any further deterioration, by preventing the demolition of the Robin Hood and by taking enforcement action against M. F Strawson to prevent the buildings and the site deteriorating any further. The condition of the Conservation Area can also be improved by promoting high quality architecture and design. If demolition of the Robin Hood was ever permitted, then what replaces it has to be of sufficient quality to have a positive impact on the area; the design put forward is of poor quality and would therefore further contribute to the Conservation Areas decline.

2. Section 133 of the National Planning Policy Framework states:

"Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent,

unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use."

We would argue that the Nottinghamshire Building Preservation Trust have demonstrated, through the feasibility report that they have commissioned, that a viable use can be found for the buildings through obtaining grant funding. Unsurprisingly this was dismissed by M F Strawson. Independent advice should be sought as to whether this option is possible and indeed all other options including sale, and compulsory purchase need to be exhausted before the exceptional loss of a Listed Building is accepted. We would also argue that the demolition of the buildings, or their replacement, with the proposed hotel would not lead to "substantial public benefits". The hotel could be located elsewhere, or incorporated into a scheme of retention, without resulting in the permanent and irreplaceable loss of a 280-year-old listed building.

3. The Town Council demonstrated, at the Sainsbury's Planning Committee meeting, that further retail units in or around town could lead to less shoppers using retail outlets in the historic core of the town. Several independent town centre stores are struggling, so additional retail outlets

might only have a minor impact on shopping habits, but these changes could be significant for retailers who are struggling. Further, two committee members said that the ASDA development was a mistake and additional retail outlets out of the historic centre would be of no benefit to the town.

Newark Civic Trust believes that the proposed development is in direct contravention of the agreement between Newark & Sherwood District Council and the Potterdyke developers, M. F. Strawson. The proposal does not respect local context or the scale and proportions of the surrounding buildings. In scale and massing it is one large block utilising some inappropriate materials, notably the single-ply membrane roof. It would be entirely out of character for the area and to the detriment of the local environment. The hotel, an 'off-the-shelf' Travelodge design with no architectural merit, is inappropriate and fails to take any opportunity to improve the character and quality of the area and fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

4. It is notable that there is no car parking provided to serve the hotel. Whilst customers of the retail units can park within the ASDA carpark, hotel customers would not, due to the 3-hour maximum stay. Instead, the applicant has tabled a possible arrangement with NCP, to open the multi-story car park 24/7, with discounted rates. It is a 180m walk from the pedestrian access to the car park to the proposed hotel, involving crossing the road, and no doubt these patrons would be trailing or carrying luggage/suitcases. Without a legally binding agreement there is no guarantee that any such parking would continue to be available for the lifetime of the hotel. The safety and security of NCP at night should also be considered and advice could be sought from the Police on this matter.

5. There is no area for cars or taxis to



View of proposal from London Road (MF Strawson Ltd)

drop off hotel patrons and this matter has not been properly considered. The layby at the front of the hotel is

currently restricted to goods vehicles and will be needed to serve the retail units. Without proper provision people will pull up mid-junction to drop off, or they will pull into 'Robin Hood Walk', where the barrier is inadequate. This behaviour will affect the traffic flow at the junction and be unsafe for vehicles and pedestrians alike.

In conclusion, there is no question that the current situation is disgraceful and needs resolving, but replacing one eyesore with another will not solve the problem.

It would also send out a totally wrong message that owners of historic properties can get away with deliberately running down such properties, without financial or legal repercussions.

Newark Civic Trust appeal to Newark & Sherwood District Council to reject the proposal and take immediate steps to enforce the conditions of the original contract, or initiate an alternative plan that will enhance the character of the site.

Town Pump

In 2015/16 the Newark Civic Trust embarked on a project to refurbish the Newark town pump, while also installing an information board to allow passers-by to learn more about this small, but important part of Newark's heritage. The project was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Feel free to contact us if you have any information or memories of the pump or any other pumps in or around Newark.

The Project

In 2012 the proposal to refurbish the town pump was first put forward as a possible project for the Newark Civic Trust by Life Member, John Oldham. It was suggested that this project could be completed in 2014 to mark the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Trust; an idea that was fully supported by the Committee and by Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC), who were at that

time in ownership of the pump. Quotes were obtained for the work and we were quick to realise that any work to the pump would require additional external funding. Our only option therefore would be to apply for grants from local and/or national grant giving organisations. We knew that if we went down this route there would be a possibility that we wouldn't be able to complete the work in time for the anniversary, so the project was put on hold.

In 2014 our 50th anniversary was celebrated at the Newark Town Hall, as we hosted Professor Martyn Bennett, who delivered a lecture on Newark and its role in the Civil War. Once this event was over our discussions once again turned to how the Trust could refurbish the town pump. We met with NSDC and Malcolm Lane & Sons in November 2014 to discuss the project. The discussion included how the pump should best be refurbished and how it should be protected in the future.



The damaged stone trough

We decided that it would be a good idea to install several bollards in front of the pump, and the trough that sits in front of it, as the trough had been struck several times by vehicles using the market place. The bollards that we installed matched the existing bollards in the market place as closely as possible to maintain its uniform



The pump, bear baiting post and fingerpost (with plastic bin) before the project



Day 1 of the restoration, note the soakaway located beneath the trough and the absence of any pump machinery

appearance. It was also decided that the trough needed repairing, as it had been heavily damaged in recent years. The decision was made to remove all of the concrete mortar, possibly added during the 1960s, and to clean the existing stone. Another object associated with the pump was the large metal plate located to its

right. This plate was quite badly worn and we initially considered removing and disposing of it. But, we were unsure how old the plate was or why it was even there. We first thought that it may have been a drain or well-cover, but we realised the surface underneath was solid ground. It was then suggested that the plate was actually a standing plate for people using the pump, as the two areas of wear matched the standing position of someone operating the pump with their right-hand. Due to the patterns of wear and the material used we ascertained that the plate may well have been at least a 100 years old. As part of the project it was agreed to lift and clean the plate of chewing gum and clear the area of weeds before it was securely rebedded.

All of the work was completed in May 2016. On day 1 the existing ironwork was cleaned down to provide a stable base for the new layers of paint. The housing behind the trough was removed and swapped for the rearmost section, as three of the base plates contained a 'laurel' decoration; the front plate was hidden by the trough. The removal of the plates



The pump once painting was complete (and trough back in position)

allowed us to look inside the housing. Unfortunately, none of the original pump mechanism remained, as this had been removed to make way for a lead water pipe, which fed a tap which has since been replaced by the current spout. A base layer of paint was also applied to all of the existing metalwork.

Day 2 involved applying a coat primer in the morning, followed by the first coat of coach paint later in the day. Once the painting had been completed the bollards were installed.

Days 3, 4 and 5 involved the final layer of coach paint, as well as the first layers of coloured paints on the coat of arms and gold detailing. Each layer of decorative paintwork needed 24 hours to dry, before the second coat could be applied. The refurbished stone trough was also fixed back into position. On day 5 a clear acrylic varnish was added to help protect the coloured paintwork.

The pump

The earliest hand pumps were made from timber, a practice which continued in England into the 20th century. The obvious downside to wooden pumps was that they decayed relatively rapidly and required high levels of skill to produce



The primer was applied once the panels had been fixed back into position



The pump and standing plate after the coach paint had been applied



Newark Market Place (1774) by Edward Eyre, the town pump is circled (image courtesy of Newark Town Council)

them. Lead was another material often used in English pumps, as it was easily formed and was much less susceptible to decay compared to wood. The downside of using lead was that it was an expensive material compared to wood, and as a result theft of lead pumps was not an uncommon crime. The vast majority of existing historic hand-operated pumps are made of cast iron and date from the mid to late nineteenth century. Cast iron is more malleable and versatile than wrought iron and was therefore an ideal material for hand-pumps; it was also relatively cheap to produce. Newark's pump dates from this period but we do not know exactly when the current pump was installed. We do know, however, that a pump has been located here since at least 1774, as can be seen in the sketch drawing by Edward Eyre.

Many pumps are also 'housed' in cast iron or timber; the housing is the rigid structure that helps to protect the pumping mechanism. We now know that Newark's pump mechanism has been removed and only the housing and handle remain. Many cast iron pumps were of a rigid construction, which thereby negated the need for housing to protect it, although housing was also added for decorative reasons. There are a number of examples of timber housed pumps in Nottinghamshire such as Upper Broughton, Barnstone and at the Framework Knitters' Museum at Ruddington.

Philanthropists, local land owners or dignitaries may have provided pumps and as a result they may bear

their name or coat of arms. Those in towns may also have been provided by the local corporation. Although most cities, towns and villages would have had a hand-pump (as well as hospitals, schools and other municipal buildings) it was not until 1878 that all parishes were required to have one - "It shall be the duty of every rural sanitary authority... to see that every occupied dwelling-house within their district has within a reasonable distance an available supply of wholesome water sufficient for the consumption and use for domestic purposes of the inmates of the house" (Public Health (Water) Act, 1878.) This law stemmed from the work of John Snow in 1854, when he identified that cholera outbreaks were the result of polluted water being pumped and drunk by the local population. The Act, however, also led to the introduction of mains supplies; so by the end of the century the village and town pump was gradually falling out of use. By the early 20th century most households had access to mains water, through either a direct supply to their house or a communal tap. On photographs from 1965 you can clearly see a tap located on the housing of the pump, so it can be presumed that the original pump mechanism was removed before this date.

Up to now you may have noticed that we have failed to mention the local curiosity that is the 'bear baiting' post.



The pump during resurfacing of the market place c. 1965 (image courtesy of Newark & Sherwood Museum Service)

When we started to discuss the town pump project we were unsure whether to also refurbish/repair the post. George Wilkinson was of the opinion that the post was a fairly modern addition to the Market Place. If you visit the post today, you can see that the corners are very straight, which would indicate that it was machine cut. We obtained an image from the Museum Service which clearly shows the post in its current location in 1965. We later obtained an image from Oliver Scott (Conservation Officer at NSDC) which shows the pump, but no bear-baiting post; this image is dated 1963. We can therefore presume that the bear-baiting post (which is currently a Grade II listed structure) dates to between 1963 and 1965.

Although we have learnt lots during the course of this work we only had limited resources to research the pump. If you have any knowledge of the pump, or even personal memories (and maybe photos) then we would love you to share them with us, so they can be added to the website.

Finally, we would like to thank the Heritage Lottery Fund for awarding us the grant to complete the town pump project. Not only did the grant cover the refurbishment work, but it also helped us with updates to the website, the trip to Papplewick Pumping Station and a new publicity leaflet (which should be out very soon.)



A 1963 photograph showing the town pump but no bear-baiting post (image courtesy of Nottinghamshire County Council and www.picturethepast.org.uk)

A History of Wellington Road

An article by Newark Civic Trust Member Suzanne McCarthy

Our family have lived in Wellington Road for many years, and I have always been interested in its history and that of the people who previously lived there. Unlike the medieval streets that make up the centre of Newark-on-Trent Wellington Road is a more recent 19th century development. However, every street is built on land that was once used for something else. Every street too, has a history and people of interest who once lived there.

I began to look into the possible early origins of the land in Wellington Road when, one day, I noticed there were wild violets growing in between the York stone paving slabs at No 9 Wellington Road. I have seen these little flowers before in domestic gardens, but know that they also grow in woodland and beneath the boughs in apple orchards. I wondered what the land had been used for prior to development, and thought that I might find the answer on some old maps of Newark that I had copies of.

The earliest map I had was a copy of one from the period 1870, and at that time, the majority of the land in the area was in the ownership of the Duke of Newcastle, Lord of the Manor of Newark. Lord Middleton owned some other parcels of land, and these two prominent landowning families controlled much of the land in and around Newark from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth century. The 1870 map showed regimented lines of small trees to the north of Sleaford Road, and some trees on Wellington Road, which at that time was known as New Sleaford Road.

The possibility that the land around Wellington Road might originally have been used for orchards, led to speculation on whether any of those original trees still remained. From

visiting my neighbours for summer BBQ's, I could recall some old knarled trees in the gardens of their Victorian and Edwardian houses and wondered if these were the remains of the original trees that had been planted in the area in the mid-late 19th century. Two of my friends living in Wellington Road have a particularly prolific old tree, which they thought was a Bramley apple tree, and we wondered whether it might be from the original Southwell stock. In order to try and ascertain if this were the case, two fine apple specimens, together with some leaves and twigs were sent to Brogdale Collections. This is a social enterprise company, and home to the National Fruit Collections. For a modest fee Brogdale will research and identify fruit tree samples sent in to them. After a few weeks they returned the results of their investigations; the apple tree was in fact one called Lane's Prince Albert, a popular amateur garden variety, which used to be grown for market. It was raised before 1841 by a Thomas Squire of Berkhamstead, Hertfordshire and believed to be a cross between Russet Nonpareil and Dumelow's Seedling. It was introduced by nurseryman John Lane of Berkhamstead in about 1850. The tree has been very carefully pruned and continues to give a wonderful bounty of fruit to be enjoyed each year. The information from Brogdale will remain with the house deeds, so that future owners will know of this interesting horticultural 'survivor' in their garden.

Next to be sent to Brogdale were some specimen apples from another of my neighbours, living at No 20 Wellington Road on the opposite side to the first discovery. The tree was identified as from a 'Bramley

Seedling - raised between 1809 -1813 by Miss Mary Anne Brailsford and introduced in 1865 by nurseryman H. Merryweather. It is probably the only cooker grown commercially and available all year round due to its good keeping qualities. It is a vigorous variety with a characteristic deep pink blossom'.

Sometime later, in 2012, one of the oldest houses in Wellington Road, "The Ferns", was sold, having been in the ownership of the previous family for over half a century, and by the original owners, the Farrars for 70 years before that. Perhaps this is why the house has fortunately retained so many of its original features. Before the new owners moved in I was allowed to visit the old walled garden at the back of the house, where I could see there were some ancient looking fruit trees. In due course, I met the new owners, who had fallen in love with the old house and were intrigued by the developing story of the old fruit trees. They too sent specimens of their fruit trees to Brogdale, and when the results came back they showed that one of their trees was also an original Bramley specimen.

Another old apple tree was identified as an early Blenheim Orange. Some records suggest the original name of this specimen was Dempster's Pippin, having been first discovered by a tailor living in Oxfordshire around 1700. However, by the time it was being grown commercially, in the early 18th century, it was titled the 'Blenheim Orange', after the nearby Blenheim Palace. It remains a popular variety today, due to its uses as both a culinary and a dessert specimen.

From this small sample, it has been possible to establish that there were

old fruit trees growing on both sides of Wellington Road, and that they were of varieties which were raised before most of the houses were built. From this it can only be speculation that the whole area of Wellington Road was originally given over to orchards. With so many trees having been cut down or having died, it is difficult to prove such a theory beyond doubt, but at a time when there is a national drive to protect and increase our apple heritage, it does demonstrate that many of us may have unknown fruit treasures in our gardens, just waiting to be rediscovered. So much for identifying the old fruit trees, but what of the built history of the street and its early and subsequent inhabitants?

Street Name

My starting point was again my copy of a street map of Newark, annotated 1870. This confirms that the original name was recorded as New Sleaford Road, and whilst the land either side of the road on this map is marked out into strips, there had been little development at that time. Wright's Directory of 1874 recorded that the Rev. W S Chapman, Vicar of St Leonards and a Chas. Judge, Merchant's Clerk, both had an interest in land identified as "a New Street, Unnamed near Sleaford Road".

The Wellington Road we now see began to be developed to its present state when the then Urban District Council gave consent for a new street of housing in July 1871. As indicated earlier, they gave it the name at that time of New Sleaford Road.

By 1885 another old map of that date noted the change of name to Wellington Road, and by that time considerable development was taking place. Perhaps the name change was because more houses were being built along Sleaford Road at the bottom, or just because the two names were too similar in such proximity. Whilst it seems likely the name was meant to commemorate

the first Duke of Wellington - the so-called 'Iron Duke' (1769-1852). It was by this time some 70 years after the decisive battle of Waterloo in 1815. One might have thought there would have been other more recent events to commemorate with a new road name, but events of national importance were perhaps much fewer than they are now. An article for the Newark Advertiser, by local historian and librarian Tim Warner, unearthed the most promising reason for the naming of Wellington Road. Mr Warner's researches uncovered the fact that in September 1829, the 'Iron Duke', whilst on his way to Doncaster races, spent a night in Newark at the Clinton Arms Hotel in the market place. That for me seems to settle matters, particularly as 2015 was the bicentenary of the famous Battle of Waterloo.

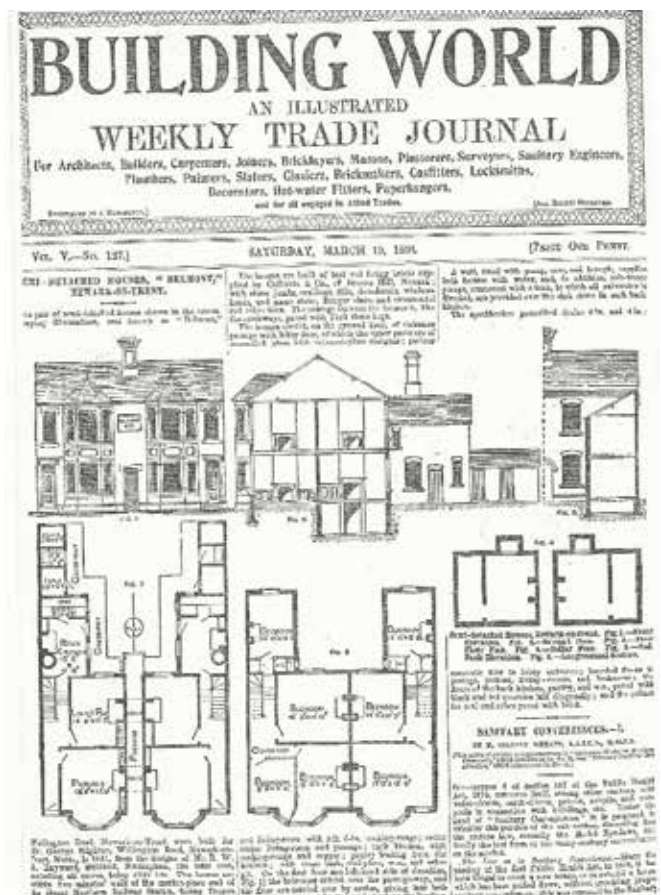
Curious History

A relative of mine, the late Samuel Dobbs, a local builder, recalled having been told there had been wooden gates at either end of Wellington Road. He did not know why they had been erected, but did remember the street had been known as "Clappergates". No one I spoke to seemed to know why the gates had been put there, but it reminded me that along the River Trent there are a series of cattle gates, designed to prevent cattle from straying, and unique to the Newark area, that are also called 'Clappergates'. It is also interesting when looking further up Beacon Hill Road, that in Coddington, there is a road called

Drove Lane; so perhaps the gates were put up to stop sheep or cattle straying down the new road from Sleaford Road and Beacon Hill Road when they came into market from Drove Lane. Perhaps too, like the Trent Clappergates they made quite a noise when they clanged shut.

The Architecture

Apart from the larger dwellings, most of the houses would have been built by speculative builders to house a new class of people, working class artisans and those in the emerging professional occupations. The architecture of the smaller houses followed a similar design on the inside, but had distinguishing features on the exterior, such as decorative buff stocks of polychromatic brickwork and name plaques on the front upper storey. The houses were mostly built of the local Cafferata brick, with the brickworks of that company conveniently situated just along Beacon Hill Road.



'Building World', March 1898
The Inhabitants

Some time ago I was given articles from an illustrated weekly trade journal, called Building World. It is dated March 19, 1898. One of the articles refers to a pair of semi-detached houses, known as "Belmont", Wellington Road, Newark. It goes on to say they were built in 1881 for a Mr George Blighton, from the designs of Mr R W G Hayward, Architect, of Nottingham, and the total cost was £582.10s. Mr Blighton was a Herbalist and Mr Hayward was likely to have been a contemporary of Watson Fothergill, the renowned Nottingham architect, who also designed the Italianate style building on Kirkgate that is the current home of the Violin School. The 'Belmont' houses can still be seen in Wellington Road today and the owners were pleasantly surprised to see the original layout in this old trade journal. Another bit of history to add to the house deeds.

Whilst there are no 'blue plaques' in evidence to indicate famous residents having lived in Wellington Road, there have, over the years, been some interesting people living in the street.

Once development began Wellington Road quickly became popular and a mixture of people of varying occupations, as now, moved in. There were tailors, auctioneers, drapers, solicitors, merchants' clerks and quite a few Ministers from various local churches. Two dwellings, No. 20 and No 10, were the Manse for the Congregational and Methodist denominations in the town. Two particular favourites of mine were a Rev. Archibald Lightfoot, living at No 10 and the Rev W E Perfect (Congregational) living at No 20 Wellington Road. For some reason, there is no 22 Wellington Road - no one seems to know why - it is a bit of a mystery. Wellington Road also seemed to be an address favoured by quite a number of artists. Perhaps the most notable of these was Fanny Easterfield who lived at No. 35 with her parents. A number of her works

can be seen at the very special "Spotlight Gallery", atmospherically situated at the top of the Town Hall.

The early trade directories give names that probably have local business relevance. For example, there is a John L Maltby, Ironmonger living at No. 4 (Newark Directory 1900), a George Asbury, Engineer living at No. 16 (Newark Directory 1900) and a William Cherrington living at No. 24 (1938 Kelly's Directory), Joseph Land Carpenter (Artist) resided at No 20 and Charles Ridge, Auctioneer was living at No. 7 (Newark & District Directory 1897). Could this Ridge be related to the firm of S & J Ridge of Newark, who first published Lord Byron's poems 'Fugitive Pieces' in 1806 and 'Hours of Idleness' in 1807. It would certainly have been close to the printers' business in Newark Market Place.

Our own home, 'Ilder House', does not have any previous owners of note, but the name plaque on the front the house gives a date of 1893, and the house deeds indicate that only four different families had owned it prior to ourselves. One of the earliest of these was called Ebenezer Holland, and he was a clerk at one of the local breweries. This seems

very appropriate, given the town's history of brewing, particularly at that time. No doubt he would have been aware that the original land deeds stipulated "no nuisance, obnoxious or offensive trade, manufacture or business shall at any time be carried on or conducted or used upon the said land. No buildings to be used for Public Houses, Wine or Spirits Victuallers or the sale of beer or other intoxicating liquor". So, despite what Ebenezer did for a living, no chance of establishing an ale house in Wellington Road, and quite right too!

Whilst researching this information, we also discovered something of a mystery in our house deeds. These suggested that the house, a semi-detached 'villa', had originally had a plaque with the name 'Dunstable Villas' and the date 1895. There seemed to have been a request to remove this plaque in favour of one for 'Maxwelton Villas 1893'. There is no reason given for this, or why the dates do not tie up – perhaps the builders changed before the house was finally built, or maybe it was just a genuine mistake. It remains an intriguing part of our house history. One of the interesting things about living in a house that has remained for the most part structurally



Sections of tile found in the garden of 'Ilder House'

untouched since it was built, is that even after many years of living here, we can still find things we had not previously noticed. For example, a brick in the cellar fell through and we discovered a small square 'room' that we had not previously known was there. It is, we think, a kind of sump, where the original builders would have deposited all kinds of unwanted building materials. However, as we are not able to get inside this area, we do not know for certain what is there - perhaps Ebenezer deposited what we would call a 'time capsule' there, but I doubt if we will ever know. Most curious of all are the objects that have occasionally risen to the surface during gardening projects. One of these is a small fossil called an Echinoid. It is preserved in flint and thought to be from Cretaceous beds laid down 65-80 million years ago. We have to presume we are too far from the Trent for this little object to have washed up from there, so perhaps it came in with building materials for the house. An oyster shell came to light this year and every year more pieces of what must once have been a splendid tile surround or floor - very much in the style of the Victorian children's book illustrator Kate Greenaway, who grew up in Rolleston.

One of the most substantial houses in Wellington Road, The Ferns, was previously owned by the Marsh family until 2014. They had also owned and established the old '51 Café', at The Wharf. This is now a renovated, Grade II listed building and the home of Pizza Express. The new owners of The Ferns have been fascinated by some of the history they have uncovered whilst carrying out renovation work. It appears from their house deeds that an engineer, called Alfred Farrar, was the first owner, having bought the land from a George Blight, Herbalist. The Newark Directory of 1900, published two years after the house was built, recorded Alfred Farrar as living there. I think there

can be little doubt that this is the same Farrar, of Farrar's Boilermakers and Engineers, that was established by him in Newark in 1887 with his two sons. After a long and productive business career, the business was taken over in 1961 by Hoval Ltd, who have continued the original business in an expanded worldwide market. By 1938 Kellys Directory only records that the 'Misses Farrar' lived at The Ferns. At that time our house Deeds indicate that a Miss GM Holland was the only resident, presumably one of Ebenezer's relatives. I speculated that these women, living diagonally opposite one another would undoubtedly have been known to one another. They appear in various directories as 'spinsters', so did they have the time to socialise with one another? Or were there class distinctions between Miss Holland, living in the smaller house, and the Misses Farrar, residing in the more imposing dwelling, which had its own carriage entrance. I couldn't help wondering why they were all single, at a time when it was still difficult for woman to live alone successfully. Perhaps they had lost sweethearts and fiancés in the First World War, or maybe had sufficient financial independence to stay single by preference. I can only speculate, but feel there may be answers still, in various historical records, and much more to discover.

Moving on to more modern times, in the 1980s John Gorman of the pop group, The Scaffold, moved into No. 9 Wellington Road and, for a time we heard the strains of 'Lily the Pink' echoing down the street. Our Civic Trust Chairman, Michael Knapton, also lived in Wellington Road for a while, at No. 7, and he tells me his family name is recorded in the house as a fond memory of living there. Not sure where Michael! Not so long ago, Matt Haig, journalist and novelist, grew up in Wellington Road and drew inspiration from it for some of his books for children. The area also

featured in a courageous book about mental illness, 'Reasons to Stay Alive'.

Perhaps our most well-known modern resident was Jenny Saville, the artist (b7.5.70), who lived at No 10 Wellington Road as a young girl. She is an English artist, who primarily produces large oil paintings depicting the female form. Whilst in Newark Saville attended, what was then, the Lilley & Stone School for her secondary education, but went on to gain her degree at the Glasgow School of Art. Whilst there she was discovered and subsequently promoted by Charles Saatchi, the art collector. Since her debut in 1992 Ms. Saville has continued to focus much of her artwork on the female form. Her large oil paintings have been exhibited all around the world, with her work often being compared to that of Rubens and Lucian Freud.

I feel sure that there are many more histories of previous Wellington Road inhabitants to be discovered and hope there may be a sequel to these brief details. As 2015 was also the bicentenary of the battle of Waterloo, and there are many more streets named to honour the Iron Duke, it could be an interesting project for others to undertake.

Acknowledgements and thanks to:

- Brogdale Collections, Faversham, Kent
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- Newark Library Local Studies Centre
- Newark & Sherwood Resource Centre and Archivist Kevin Winter
- Grateful thanks to the residents of Wellington Road who have allowed access to their gardens and other historical information.

Norwell – ancient and modern

Our host for the evening was Michael Jones of the Norwell Parish Heritage Group, accompanied by Sue Capewell. To say that Michael is an expert on the village would be a gross understatement. He has been largely responsible for the research and writing of seven booklets on every aspect of the village and the deserted village of Willoughby by Norwell.

We met Michael at the medieval church of St Laurence, a magnificent Grade I listed building, sufficiently large for a congregation of 350 – equivalent to the present population of the village. The churchyard contains some old gravestones, one dated 1686 and there are others of the 17th century as well as a 17th century sundial on a pedestal in the south west corner.



St Laurence Church

The Norman south doorway is the oldest part of the church and probably dates from the mid 12th century. Inside, the piers on the south side are circular and probably date from the late 12th century; those on the north are octagonal and date from the early-mid 13th century. The church grew from a small 12th century building to meet the needs of a growing population. The tower, originally separate from the church, was begun in the early 13th century and completed in three stages, before being integrated into the church by extending the nave. The church contains fine examples of stained glass, including two windows by the famous Victorian glass maker Charles Kempe and his workshop. Kempe liked to work in late medieval/early Renaissance style and his work is distinguished by its detailed face-drawing.



Example of Charles Kempe's stained glass windows

An example of Charles Kempe's work, dated 1903, depicts the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist.

When the land around the village was owned by the Church, Norwell supported three prebendaries, two of whom were among the richest in the Southwell diocese – Overhall and Palishall. The site of Overhall, a moated manor house dating from 13th century, can be seen from the churchyard, and the third prebend, Tertia Pars, also a moated site, is visible from the road. We will come to Palishall later! Michael explained that when Overhall manor was demolished in the 18th century, the villagers took the opportunity of recycling the masonry for use in the footings of their houses and farm buildings and pointed out examples during our walk.

Norwell was a typical self-sufficient farming community with blacksmiths, wheelwrights, stonemasons and builders grouped together in yards leading off the main street. There were two windmills, two steam mills and a watermill and, for a time, Norwell had its own brickworks that provided the distinctive red bricks used to enclose



Ivy Cottage

and strengthen the original timber-framed village houses. Michael pointed out examples of this, notably Greasleys and Pitchforks Cottages, Old House, Scott's Cottage and Ivy Cottage.

There were once three public houses - The Black Horse, The Crown (later The Elephant and Castle, demolished in 1960) and The Plough, which still serves the needs of residents and visitors. Personal needs were met by General stores, bakers and butchers, shoemakers and a tailor. Today the village has a small shop with a Post Office.

Norwell is a village of 'threes', Michael told us. Three prebends, three pubs, three vicarages and three schools. On our way down Main Street we saw the Tower Mill, a windmill that was fully operational until the 1920s, when milling became uneconomical. Milling had been a profitable business for centuries and there were a number of windmills and a water mill in the village. A bakery was established adjacent to the Tower Mill.

Major changes followed Parliamentary enclosure of 1832, when the land was divided into small fields. Many small farms were established, some in the village centre and others in outlying fields. Norwell parish still had more than 40 farmers and smallholders in 1945. Traces can still be seen of the medieval open fields with their ridge and furrow. Some old farmyards in the village, such as Church, Willoughby and Hill farms have been developed for new homes.



Auld Cottage

Norwell is unusual and fortunate in still having three adjacent standing buildings in School Lane that have served as schools - the 'Old' charity school, endowed by Thomas Sturtevant in 1727, the Victorian or National Endowed School, built in 1871, and the current Church of England School, opened in 1966. The Charity School built, in 1727, is now a private house, but its original endowment with farm land still produces an income, now administered by Norwell Educational Foundation for the benefit of the young of Norwell. The Victorian school is currently used by the Scouts. The modern school continues to change with the times and extra rooms have been added in response to evolving requirements for the education of young children.

Avoiding the temptation to take refreshment at The Plough (until later!) we turned off Main Street to view the early 19th century Pinfold.

The Pinfold

The Pinfold, a grade two listed building, rebuilt in brick around 1832, is situated at the southwest end of the village, opposite the Plough. With a diameter of



The Pinfold

33ft Norwell boasts the largest circular pinfold in the county. The brick walls are 1ft thick and approximately 5ft 6ins in height, with half round stone coping. By the 16th century most villages had a pound or pinfold for stray cattle, pigs, geese, etc. to be kept until the owner payed a fine and a fee to the pound keeper.

Palishall

Michael had kindly obtained agreement for us to visit Palishall and admire the gardens and L-shaped house, the two wings now constituting separate residences. Originally one of the



Members, with our host Michael Jones, pose by the sun dial in front of Palishall

three medieval Norwell prebendal manor houses, from the 16th to the 19th centuries it was leased to the Sturtevents, a local gentry family, before slowly slipping down the social scale, so that by the 1850s there were five poor families occupying parts of it. Restored in the 1970s, it once again forms a most delightful dwelling, mainly displaying 16th and 17th century features, but with traces of its medieval origins. The Sturtevents were generous patrons, not only of the school but also of the church, where one surviving memorial commemorates "Thomas

Sturtevant, the last of the family of that name at Palace Hall" who died in 1772.

And finally to The Plough to enjoy liquid refreshment and a seat in the pleasant surroundings! The pub has been serving beer since around 1800. Once 3 cottages, it has been converted and tastefully modernised, retaining the features typical of 18th century cottages.

Auld Cottage

Auld Cottage, a small two-bay timber-frame building, dates from around 1512. At first probably used as a farm building, it was converted for occupation in the 17th century and was lived in until 1968, serving as the winter residence of a lady who lived at Palishall with her horses in the summer. It is very dilapidated and an application has been made to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a start-up grant, to explore the possibilities of restoring the building for public use.

Ivy Cottage

Ivy Cottage is a classic case of the preservation of a timber-framed building by later use of brick. Originally consisting of at least three timber-framed bays and dating from around 1474, it was encased during the 18th century in brick, and Yorkshire sash windows inserted. It was reduced to two bays in the 19th century.

For more information on Norwell visit: <http://www.norwell-online.org.uk/norwell-organisations/heritage-group>

Papplewick Pumping Station

In April, at our final meeting of the season, we had a memorable talk by Ashley Smart entitled 'The History of Papplewick Pumping Station and Nottingham's Water Supply'. The opportunity to visit the pumping station at the end of June was too good to miss, and members travelled by coach to the site, where we were met by

Ashley and Gerry, who was to be our guide for the evening.

The link between water supply and water-borne diseases, such as cholera and typhoid, was established in the 1850s, and the need to supply clean filtered water became an urgent requirement. Built in the 1880s to

pump millions of gallons of clean fresh water every day to the rapidly increasing population of industrial Nottingham, Papplewick is the finest working Victorian water pumping station in Britain. It can be appreciated today thanks to the Papplewick Pumping Station Trust, set up in 1974, and the enthusiasm of the volunteer



The tour moves on to the entrance to the pumping station

members of the Papplewick Association. Restoration began in 1975 and it was opened formally for visitors on 8 June 2005, following a grant of £1.6 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Regular steaming events, wedding ceremonies and education visits enable the Trust to continue the essential preservation of this important site for future generations.

We began our tour at the large ornate cooling pond, with its scalloped edges and central fountain. It has a capacity of 1.25 million gallons of water - essential for cooling the boilers we were to see later. When restoration work began the pond had to be cleared of leaves and pine needles, before refilling could begin.

Gerry explained that the location of the pumping station was due to a supply of fresh water held in a vast natural reservoir of Bunter sandstone, a soft, porous and fine grained sandstone laid down during the Triassic period 250 million years ago. Nottingham Castle is built of Bunter sandstone. From 1884 water was pumped from two 200ft deep wells to a reservoir, from where it could be gravity fed to the city.

We then moved to admire the grand entrance to the engine house. Gerry



The coal store



The Lancashire Boilers



The boilers viewed from their rear



One of the two flywheels

told us that the giant hinges were merely decorative and designed to enhance the Gothic Revival style of the building. During restoration work ten years ago the phoenix above the door sadly disappeared. Fortunately there were sufficient photographs for a replica (although slightly smaller than the original) to be commissioned with the financial aid from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Coal for the boilers was delivered by horse drawn carts and stored under cover close to the Boiler House. Each boiler required 2 tons of coal per 24-hour day. The store is a replacement for the original which was demolished.

Entering the Boiler House we saw the six Lancashire boilers, which powered the beam engines in the next room. Gerry explained that under normal operation three of the boilers would be



Decorated column with water theme

producing steam, while three would be shut down for maintenance. Each boiler is 29ft long and 7ft in diameter and is encased in a brick lining to conserve heat. They required 3½ thousand gallons of water to raise sufficient steam for the two beam engines, built by James Watt & Co of Birmingham. Two of the boilers are in working order today.



Looking down to the ground floor

In the Engine House we saw the two enormous flywheels, each 20ft in diameter weighing 24 tons.

Gerry drew our attention to the many outstanding cast iron fittings, including two elaborately decorated columns and polished mahogany and brass work. The stained glass windows were paid for with money left over after the construction of the building was completed under budget. The total cost of construction was £55,000, equivalent to £6million today.

Finally, we climbed to the beam floor to look at the two 25ft long beams, each weighing 13 tons. They drove a main pump, which raised water from the 200ft deep wells and a supplementary pump, which pumped the water up to the reservoir. Each pump could raise 1.5million gallons of water per day.



The pump beams

How was all this massive machinery installed? Simple, really! As each piece of machinery was completed the building was completed stage by stage, until everything was ready for the roof to be put on.

We all realise that there is a lot more to water than turning on a tap! But the effort and ingenuity required to supply fresh water to the city of Nottingham 130 years ago makes an indelible impression and admiration for the people who made it happen.

The coach for the visit was paid for from the Heritage Lottery Fund grant for the Town Pump, as the pump is a water related project, but on a much smaller scale! Our grateful thanks to Ashley Smart and Gerry for making it such a pleasant and interesting event. If you haven't visited the site we are sure you will find your visit as



Trust members at the end of the tour

fascinating, informative and pleasant as we did. And if you want to see the steam engines in action visit the web site for dates and times - <http://papplewickpumpingstation.co.uk/>

Traditional Mud Buildings in Nottinghamshire

An article by Jason Mordan, Senior Practitioner Historic Buildings at Nottinghamshire County Council

This article is meant as a short introduction to one of the traditions of earth building that is found in Nottinghamshire, in an area to the north of Bingham. This particular form of earth construction is quite dissimilar to the 'mud and stud' tradition which is well known in Lincolnshire, and is much more like the 'cob' building tradition of the south-west, the 'Wychert' of the Chilterns and the 'Clay dabbins' of Cumbria. In fact, most areas of the UK have some form or other of 'monolithic mud' construction at some time or other, and it is largely luck as to whether any examples of these traditions have

survived into the 21st Century.

All these earth building traditions have a few things in common, they are constructed from local material immediately available in the locality and the local sub-soils will have a reasonable clay content. The known Nottinghamshire examples are found clustered north-east of Bingham, covering six parishes.

It would seem likely that the tradition continued south of Bingham as part of the same tradition seen in Leicestershire, where there are a large number of mud buildings, particularly around the Market Harborough area, which continues southwards into west Northamptonshire.

Some of the Nottinghamshire examples are no longer extant, and are known from historic records only. The most interesting of these is the little settlement of poor housing that was located due south of Scarrington. It was known as Little Lunnon and can be identified on the Ordnance Survey maps. Poor houses were most often erected on waste or common land at the edge of a village, and this explains why those at Little Lunnon stood a little apart from Scarrington itself. It is not known exactly

when the cottages at Little Lunnon were erected, although at the time of their final destruction in 1945 they were considered to be 200 years old.

The Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire tradition tended to be referred to as 'mud' building, rather than 'cob' or 'clay dabbins', which are terms used in other parts of the country. Of the few examples left in this county, three are dovecotes, two are cottages, there are two farm buildings and three examples of boundary walls. During 2014 one of the boundary wall examples, at the site of the old Manor Farm in Thoroton village, was determined to be 'at risk' and this was reported during the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) mud repair event in Leicestershire. In 2015, Anthony Goode (expert mud builder) offered to assist with the repair of this wall and ownership was investigated. It became clear that the wall was no-longer part of anyone's land, having been ignored during the redevelopment of the farm site for residential use. With the adjoining land owners' agreement, a working party of interested members of Thoroton village were brought together at the beginning of 2015 to clear ivy before the bird-nesting season. What



Monolithic mud in Nottinghamshire (image courtesy of Nottinghamshire County Council)



Mud cottages of Little Lunnon (image courtesy of Nottinghamshire County Council)



Mud cottages of Little Lunnon (image courtesy of Nottinghamshire County Council)

followed was a remarkable phase of community activity, led by Anthony Goode (of Slawston in Leicestershire) and Alex Gibbons (Earth Building UK education officer), and also assisted for one week by the SPAB scholars, that repaired and saved the wall over the space of the summer months.

This mud wall had been recorded as 'Smite Farm' by the archaeologist John Samuels and reported in the Transactions of the Thoroton Society in 1980. Although the record was not particularly extensive (and there are no photos in his report) it is clear that the thirty-five years had not been kind to the wall! Samuels' drawings of 1980 imply that the wall was over two meters tall along its full 20 meter plus length and that it had a pantile capping along its entire length. By 2014 this capping had disappeared for the most part and in its place there was a thick growth of ivy along the whole length.

Mud walls do not function well if they are allowed to get damp, and although the ivy was providing a rain cap of sorts it was also growing through the wall in places, destabilising it to the point that collapse was likely and imminent. Following the removal of the ivy it

was imperative that a proper capping of pantiles was reinstated as soon as practical. At this point Anthony Goode once more came to the rescue, offering to supply the pantiles he had stored at a farm in Leicestershire, which he needed to clear out. The removal of the ivy allowed the wall to be fully recorded on both sides and revealed some interesting information about its likely origins. Although the wall is neither 'listed' nor in a conservation area the drawings were supplied to Rushcliffe Council conservation officer for his agreement prior to the repairs commencing.

One section of the wall may have been part of a complete building; the western end was demonstrably of earlier age than the rest of the wall. It appears to form the southern part of an agricultural building that is shown on the early 20th century OS maps. At some point a door opening had been put through the wall and, further to the east, a heavily eroded section marked the location of a cut-through that some villagers recalled using as a short-cut to church before the 1990s housing development cut off this access route.

The repairs involved consolidating the wall down to a level that was stable enough to carry the roof of mini-trusses and pantiles. Several drops in height were used to ensure that as much of the original mud material was retained as possible. The sections that were taken down were put to one side and incorporated back into the wall as part of the new earth mix. Subsoil was tested from various locations offered by a village farmer, Richard Ogdon, and the chosen soil was delivered to site by him along with straw and hay. The wall is conveniently located next to an access track, leading from Main Street to fields to the east and this provided the space needed to do the mixing. Mixing earth is hard work, but straightforward enough if you have enough volunteers of any age (see picture) with wellies and strong legs! Plenty of water and straw is added to the mud mix to reduce shrinkage and increase its strength.



A section of wall prior to repairs (image courtesy of Nottinghamshire County Council)



Section of wall during repairs (image courtesy of Nottinghamshire County Council)

The mud mix was lifted onto the low Blue Liass stone wall that acted as a plinth, or on top of original mud wall and knocked hard with a garden fork to secure in place. The wall face was then trimmed with a sharp billhook or spade and the whole wall was treated to a good coat of a fine mud plaster (mixed with hay rather than straw).

Thoroton mud wall project was a great example of community coming together to recognise and protect its local heritage. Over the course of the summer lots of people gained an insight and appreciation for one of their vernacular building traditions and were even able to identify new, hither to unknown examples in the village as the knowledge spread!



The Thoroton volunteers (image courtesy of Nottinghamshire County Council)

Newark Civic Trust

MAGAZINE

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Dates for the Diary

- * 29th September 2016: AGM followed by talk by Oliver Scott
- * 27th October 2016: Les Reid – 'The Leicester Trader – Newark's Heritage Barge'
- * 24th November 2016: Richard Gaunt – 'Emma Wilmot – the forgotten artist of the Victorian Dukeries'
- * 26th January 2017: George Wilkinson – 'Malting and Brewing in Newark – the story continues'
- * 23rd February 2017: Jason Mordan – 'Monolithic Mud Buildings in Nottinghamshire'
- * 30th March 2017: Gareth Davies – 'Archaeology of Nottingham Trams' with an update on archaeological projects undertaken by Trent & Peak around Newark
- * 27th April 2017: Ros Nicholson – '1-3 Northgate, Newark'

Full details of any changes to the programme can be found on the website (<http://www.newarkcivictrust.org.uk/events>) and will be announced at meetings as necessary.

Talks take place in Newark Library and commence at 7.30pm.

Newark Civic Trust Annual General Meeting

To be held at Newark Library on Thursday 29th September 2016 at 7.30pm.

AGENDA

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. Chairman's welcome | 6. Chairman's Report |
| 2. Apologies for absence | 7. Treasurer's Report |
| 3. Minutes of last year's AGM of 24th September 2015 | 8. Election of Officers |
| 4. Matters arising | 9. Election of Executive Committee |
| 5. Civic Trust Awards | 10. Any other business |

To be followed by a presentation by Oliver Scott, Conservation Officer at Newark & Sherwood District Council, on his role and how members can be involved in reporting their concerns over conservation or planning issues.

The following officers offer themselves for re-election at the meeting:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| • Chairman – Michael Knapton | • Membership Secretary – Vacant |
| • Vice-Chairman – Kevin Winter | • Recruitment Secretary – Debbie Smith |
| • Secretary – Kevin Winter | • Conservation Watch Co-ordinator – Mick Gill |
| • Treasurer – Louise Knapton Carter | • Awards Co-ordinator – Michael Knapton |
| • Planning Chairman – Michael Hawes | • Events Co-ordinator – Vacant |
| • Planning Vice-Chairman – Vacant | |