Notes From The Editor

‘Now is our winter of discontent made glorious summer by this son of...Leicester’

It has been a glorious summer, weather-wise, and also by the great discovery that has made Leicestershire suddenly a very nice place to visit.

Presumably most Forum members have managed to attend one of the many presentations given by the successful team and hear the amazing story of the discovery of King Richard III. How many of us no longer see him as the wicked uncle who murdered the Princes but an intelligent King who believed in his country but was vilified by William Shakespeare to please the Tudor dynasty.

Whatever your thoughts, it has been a good summer for many museums with much support offered from Museum Service East Midlands and the HLF grants for All Our Stories.

Little did we realise, when we attended a Christmas meeting and hear Douglas Cawthorne talk about Digital Building Heritage that it would become a reality in our own areas. It is to be hoped that Leicestershire County Council when discussing the latest cuts do not hit the County Museums as it is through those that many people come to visit our smaller domestic museums.

Nikki Hening

Bulk Buying Conservation Materials

We all know that the costs of purchasing conservation materials can be very costly, especially the postage.

The Forum Committee are researching ways of reducing these costs. One suggestion is that the Forum bulk buys on behalf of members. That way postage costs could be reduced. Just think how much we are all spending on postage from companies such as Preservation Equipment.

If you are interested in being involved in this project please contact Emma Buckler at emma.buckler@leics.gov.uk

Inside this issue:

- Summer Exhibition
- News Updates
- Diseworth Church Trail
- EMMS Awards
- Heritage Awards 2014
- Forum In The Community
- New Green Plaques Scheme
- Diary Dates

We had 104 people to the Meet The Forum event on Sunday 28th July.
Treasure Your Past
The Forum’s Summer Exhibition 2013

This year the annual Summer exhibition at Snibston Discovery Museum was a little different! We had a title, Treasure Your Past and themed interpretation panels designed by students at the Sir John Moore Foundation. Museum Development East Midlands kindly funded two information boards and a fantastic new banner.

The Forum’s intern Nicola Seika was amazing and organised all the interpretation materials. Nicola was assisted by Tom, who completed some of his NVQ tasks. Special thanks to Biz and Phillip Lindley for installing the very large information panels which was no easy task. Thank you to all the Forum members and friends who provided information and objects for the exhibition. It was a bumper year for objects and we had a super display in the Community Gallery.

On Sunday 28th July we held a Meet the Forum event in the exhibition. We had 104 visitors in just two and half hours. They were entertained by traditional games (provided by the Old Rectory Museum), talks on bells by Bob Bracegirdle, traditional crafts by the Friends of Donnington-le-Heath and an archaeological interactive led by Ann Petty from the Friends of Thringstone.

Rosita Page, Chair of Leicestershire County Council was our special guest. Rosita was accompanied by Janet and Nigel Thomas (Head of Service: Delivery, Leicestershire County Council). Rosita was particularly enthralled with Bob’s highly entertaining and interactive talk on bells. She acknowledged the role the Forum plays in supporting the museums and history groups across Leicestershire and Rutland.

Nicola Seika has facilitated groups in using the exhibition. An adult group with learning disabilities developed a quiz and young adults group have used the exhibition to learn about preventative conservation techniques and caring for objects.

Next years’ exhibition will be on display in the Community Gallery, Snibston, from Friday 23rd May to Sunday 29th June 2014. So save the date!
Carillon Banners

We have a number of new banners advertising the Carillon Tower and museum as places to visit.

They are part of a project, 'The Heritage Trail' to tempt some of the thousands of visitors to the Great Central Railway to explore and visit other heritage attractions in the town and surrounding villages.

A new brochure has also been produced giving details of all the places of interest plus places to eat. The Arts Council are funding the project.

Now we need to place the banners where they will be seen! Do you know of anywhere? Public buildings? Empty shop windows? Anywhere? Please get in touch by emailing carillonmuseum@gmail.com

The new Carillon Tower banners.

Museum Development East Midlands Launches New Website

Museum Development East Midlands has launched a new website bringing together resources for museums in the East Midlands region. The website includes information on funding, developing your museum as a business, digital strategies, developing new audiences, collections, Accreditation, training and professional development. See www.mdem.org.uk and sign up for the e newsletter at www.mdem.org.uk/news-events/e-news/

Photography Stand Available For Loan

The Forum has a photography stand available to loan to any Forum members or heritage groups. The stand also includes lights.

The stand will be particularly useful for taking photographs of objects or archives to include on a website or collections database.

If you want to borrow the stand please email Janet Slatter at chairman@lrhf.org.uk
Diseworth Heritage Centre Launches Church Heritage Trail

Thanks to an award from Heritage Lottery Fund All Our Stories we have spent many months researching the history of the church from its early days as a little Saxon church, through the affluent times of its extensions and improvements, then the problems of the Middle Ages, to the lovely church it is today. Pat Guy gave a presentation of slides showing the different stages of the church’s growth which can be identified in the Heritage Trail. Dr Douglas Cawthorne from De Montfort University gave a short presentation on the Digital Building Heritage Project and spoke of his visit to Diseworth to create a laser scan of the Church and what he aims to produce in the New Year.

Also on display were four banners; one depicting the story of Langley Priory which held the advowson of the church for three hundred years and one showing the early Church Wardens and portrayed their important roles in the church and the village. The other two banners are time lines, one listing important events in Diseworth and St Michael’s Church and the other listing national events throughout the same years.

Bishop Christopher Boyle congratulated all who were involved in the making of the Church Trail and banners and Professor David Stocker representing Heritage Lottery Fund also expressed his appreciation of the achievements of the Trust. Thanks were expressed to Dr Pamela Fisher from Leicester University for the great support she has offered to the project in the form of training and visits.

A wine and buffet reception followed as the visitors viewed the displays, one of which is a model of a Saxon Church created by Jamie Sims. Diseworth Heritage Trust is very grateful for the help given by members of the PCC and the Trust in preparing the Church, helping, serving and clearing up. The Church Heritage Trail is available at the Church or the Heritage Centre at a cost of £1.50. Nikki Hening, Diseworth HC Trust.

Image Leicestershire: The County Image Library

Leicestershire County Council have recently launched a new website called Image Leicestershire. On the website you can search for images from the collections of the County’s museum, library and archive collections. There are some real gems on the website. So why not explore the website for yourself at www.imageleicestershire.gov.uk
Co-ordinating World War One Related Activities

Arts Council England (ACE) is supporting coordination of WW1-related museum activity via a post at the Imperial War Museum (IWM) - Josie Gale, Centenary Programme Museum Liaison Officer for English Regions, email jgale@iwm.org.uk.

Josie’s role is to ensure that the multitude of World War 1 commemorative activity is as joined-up as possible. The IWM is offering resources including branding and exhibition templates. Museums can sign up to be a partner and access these free of charge via www.1914.org. Details of how ACE is supporting WW1 activity can be found at www.arts council.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-museums/first-world-war-commemorations/

Welcome to New Members

We’ve recently had a number of new members join the Forum. It is reassuring to see the Forum’s membership increasing, particularly from the community heritage groups in our region.

New members:
Mountsorrel Heritage Group
Hallaton in the Great War Research Group
Leicester City, County & Rutland At Risk War Memorials Project
Friends of Donnington-Le-Heath Manor House
Desford & District Local History Society
Burbage Heritage Group

A very warm welcome to all our new members.

New Guides from AIM

AIM, the Association of Independent Museums have recently re-launched their really useful and practical guides.

Forum members may find the Successful Fundraising in Museums the most helpful.

The guide is written by Helen Shone and Judy Niner of Development Partners, and aims to help museums large and small understand the current fundraising environment and provide practice advice on how to kick-start or improve your fundraising activity.

See the AIM website for lots more useful guides.
East Midlands Heritage Awards 2013

This year EMMS and East Midlands Museum Development organised the inaugural East Midlands Heritage Awards. The awards were open to any museum or heritage organisation which operates a public site in the region. The awards were presented after the East Midlands Heritage Conference in the very lovely surroundings of Nottingham Trent University's city centre campus.

Forum members really excelled in the awards. Ashby Museum won the Heart of the Community Award for their project on the closing of the Standard Soap Works. The award was accepted by ex-soap workers who gave a moving and memorable speech about their time at the factory.

Ashby Museum was highly praised by judges for their sensitive handling of the project and generating positive relationships with Standard Soap employees.

The Sir John Moore Foundation received a commendation in the Engaging and Involving Young People category and were also shortlisted for the Heart of the Community Award. Loughborough Carillon Tower & War Memorial Museum represented Leicestershire in the Best Museum category.

Leicestershire County Council received a special judge's award for their ground breaking work with hard to reach audiences. Melton Carnegie Museum were category winners in Engaging and Involving Young People for their teenage after school club.

It was a fantastic night for Leicestershire, and showcased the inspirational and excellent work our heritage organisations are producing.

Ashby Museum's Michael Hardy (centre) with former Standard Soap workers.

The Sir John Moore Foundation team.

Staff from Leicestershire County Council receiving a special judges award.
After a short break, the heritage awards are returning in 2014. During the summer the awards have been reviewed. Museums and heritage groups have been asked to complete a questionnaire on what they would like to see in the awards. The awards are now open to all independent museums and heritage groups in the two Counties, whether or not they are members of the Leicestershire & Rutland Heritage Forum.

There will be no site visits, the awards will be assessed on the application form only. Prize money will be awarded to category winners. There will be certificates for good applications which haven't quite made category winners or received a commendation. Projects submitted for the awards must have taken place anytime between August 2012 and October 2013.

The categories you can enter are:

- Bringing heritage alive
- Best exhibition/event on a “shoestring” (costing less than £1,000)
- Best exhibition/event “the whole shoe” (costing more than £1,000)
- Best collection project on a “shoestring” (costing less than £1,000)
- Best collection project “the whole shoe” (costing more than £1,000)
- Best use of digital resources
- Opening your doors to new audiences

The Volunteer Museum of the Year and Heritage Group of the Year will be selected by a specialist panel of judges from the entries received in the above categories.


The closing date for applications is Friday 31st January 2014. You can enter as many award categories as you wish but your organisation can only enter each category once.

The awards ceremony will be at Snibston Discovery Museum on Thursday 10th April 2014 and will be hosted by Dave Andrews from BBC Radio Leicester. Emma Buckler will be running a short workshop on developing an award application on Thursday 5th December from 2 pm at Greenacres, Birstall. Please email Emma at heritage.awards@leics.gov.uk if you would like to book a place. You can also contact Emma at anytime to discuss a potential application or request an application form.
Forum In The Community

The Community Gallery at Snibston Discovery Museum showcased the wide variety of different independent museums within Leicestershire and the unique and inspirational collections and exhibitions they have to offer our local communities.

To energise the Museums Forum exhibition and make it more interactive we invited Mel Gould from the award winning Loughborough Carillon Tower and War museum to run a workshop with a group of adults with learning difficulties who are themselves volunteers at Snibston.

The group participated in a 'cooking in field with a ration pack' session. They learnt what soldiers ate during wartime, how they prepared their food and even got a taste of actual army grub. The session was hugely successful, especially once the beef ravioli and hot chocolate started to get passed around. It was a great way to engage the group in wartime history and demonstrated to them that history can be fun! After participating in the workshop, many of the group have voiced their desire to visit more of the local independent museums.

"Who would have thought they get milk with their coffee even in Afghanistan. It was really quick and easy to prepare with the right equipment and the man from the army really came well prepared.”
William Swailes, 64, Coalville. Nicola Seika, Project Manager, Leicestershire County Council.

Accreditation Success

Congratulations to Loughborough Carillon Tower & Memorial Museum on attaining the museum accreditation standard.

The accreditation standard is the national benchmark for museums. There is a rigorous assessment procedure before the accreditation standard is awarded.

Congratulations to Mel and all the volunteers at the Carillon, well done from everyone in the Forum. All the hard work has paid off!
Emma’s Diary

On the 1st July, I paid my first visit to Railway Vehicle Preservations (RVP) based at the Great Central Railway’s (GCR) Rothley station. RVP are a volunteer group, formed for over 40 years, who restore historic railway carriages and rolling stock which run mainly on the GCR.

Nev Goodman, RVP’s Chair showed me around Rothley and Loughborough stations. The group’s carriage shed at Rothley was a hive of activity when I arrived early on Monday morning. Nev explained the importance of basic materials, such as canvas tarpaulins, and how crucial their recent Shire Grant award been in funding this vital equipment.

RVP own and care for a number of unique and historically significant carriages. I was particularly fascinated by a post office carriage. The carriage was used by Royal Mail until 1971 to collect and sort mail. A really interesting feature of the carriage is the use of nets to collect mail bags from the track side. On special event days visitors can see this exciting exchange of mail bags taking place at break neck speeds.

RVP have a museum carriage which is jam packed full of wonderful Post Office related objects and displays. The re-created Post Office counter is a real gem and I loved the collection of letter boxes. The exhibitions are a real testament to the golden age of postal services, and there is a lovely photo of Nev himself, when he was a telegram delivery boy!

This article is in memory of Nev who sadly passed away on Sunday 3rd November 2013.

Do You Know Of A War Memorial That Is At Risk?

Leicester City, County & Rutland At Risk War Memorials Project are working on re-homing orphaned war memorials. Working from All Saints Church in the centre of Leicester, the group are have a display of memorials which when the project is finished will be re-homed in suitable locations. If you know of a war memorial that is at risk the group would love to hear from you. Contact Dennis Kenyon at denis.kenyon@virgin.net
**Click, Connect, Curate**

Leicestershire County Council are looking for members of the public, museum professionals and people interested in/working with digital technologies to work together to help us generate ideas for new digital content based on our museums and our collections.

We are initially looking for people to attend our Ideas Generation Day on Saturday 18 January at Snibston Discovery Museum. To find out more visit www.connect-curate.com or contact Lucia Masundire, Project Manager on 0116 305 4119.

**Loughborough Carillon 90th Anniversary**

The Carillon Tower has celebrated its 90th anniversary this year. There was a special programme of events during the summer to celebrate this momentous event. Here are some photographs showing construction of the tower.
Green Plaque Scheme For Leicestershire

Leicestershire has a fascinating history and Leicestershire County Council is keen to celebrate some of the important people and places linked to the county.

That’s why we will soon be introducing our new Green Plaque Award scheme. It’s modelled on English Heritage’s Blue Plaque scheme, except our plaques are green to reflect the county council’s identity and the rural heritage of our county.

Leader of Leicestershire County Council, Councillor Nick Rushton, said: “The Green Plaque scheme will help us promote the lives and historical importance of famous local people, build pride in our communities and help support tourism.

“It is the perfect opportunity to celebrate our county’s rich cultural and historical heritage.”

As custodians of the county’s heritage, we want you to tell us which people, buildings and sites you think really deserve recognition. Once the scheme is launched, you’ll be able to make nominations in writing or online. We will then publish a shortlist and you’ll be able to vote for the winning schemes which will then be awarded a prestigious Leicestershire County Council Green Plaque.

Nominations can cover such themes as: war heroes and memorials, local heroes and famous people, cultural and heritage connections, philanthropists and entrepreneurs and buildings of historic or architectural importance. People commemorated in Green Plaques must have been deceased for at least 20 years. Only six Green Plaques will be awarded each year.

For further information, please contact Heritage Development Officer, Karen Wilde on 0116 305 4112 or by email: karen.wilde@leics.gov.uk

Scheming To Honour The Great And The Good

Karen Wilde joined Leicestershire County Council in October to develop their Green Plaque scheme. She previously ran a similar scheme in Derbyshire.

Karen said: “There are so many worthy recipients of Green Plaques and I am really looking forward to working with individuals and groups across the county to honour Leicestershire’s rich seam of notable people and places.”
The Leicestershire and Rutland Heritage Forum is an umbrella body for all museums and heritage organisations in the counties of Leicestershire, Rutland and the city of Leicester.

It seeks to provide information, support, and networking opportunities for its members as well as building links with partner organisations and offering representation for its members at a strategic level.

Next Forum Open Meeting

Monday 2nd December 2013, from 7 pm at Wigston Framework Knitters Museum, 42-44 Bushloe End Wigston, Leicestershire, LE18 2BA.

This is our Christmas meeting. So come along and share a mince pie and listen to great speakers.

Heritage Awards Workshop

Thursday 5th December 2013, from 2 pm at Great Central Railway, Greenacres, The Sidings, Birstall, LE4 3BR.

For more information and to book a place please contact emma.buckler@leics.gov.uk