

When the Civic Trust's Heritage Trail was launched last year, the trail plaques were set up to incorporate QR codes which can be read by smartphones using one of many freely available apps by visitors to buildings on the trail. The plaques also incorporate NFC (near field communication) chips allowing 'tap and view' access to the videos for users of NFC enabled smartphones.

Another feature of the trail is the use of 'What3Words' on the Sleaford Heritage Trail website, allowing visitors to pinpoint the precise locations of the plaques. It seems that the trust was ahead of the game with this as 'what3words' is now to be incorporated into vehicle satellite navigation systems and is increasingly used for postal and other deliveries. What3Words has just been used by the Avon and Somerset police to locate a mother and daughter involved in a car accident and is now their preferred location identifier (Daily Telegraph report 26/3/19).

What3words is freely available online and as an app. It allows the user to pinpoint any location on the planet to within 3 meters. It's the way ahead for locating not only historic sites, but also of locating individual features within the sites. As an example, 'lost.leads.hood' is the location of the Heritage plaque at Town Hall in Navigation yard where you get the chance to meet the Reverend Edward Waterson in 1793. To find out more about the trail visit: [www.sleafordheritage.co.uk](http://www.sleafordheritage.co.uk) . To find out about what3words visit: [www.what3words.com](http://www.what3words.com).



*Rev. E Waterson can be found at lost.leads.hood*

Richard Hodgson

### Dates for your Diary

Once again this year we will be at the Heckington Show - Saturday 27th & Sunday 28th July 2019.

The Civic Trust have arranged the following three events as part of Lincolnshire Heritage Open Days.

On Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2019:  
SLEAFORD TOWN HALL, NAVIGATION YARD  
10.00-11.00 am – Inside Sleaford Castle: a discussion and seminar. Michael Turland and Simon Pawley discuss the early days. Was the castle totally new? Influence of Roger of Salisbury, leading castle builder? Comparable projects? Why fen site? Plausible detail of castle design. The castle estate.

MEET AT SLEAFORD CASTLE  
2.00 – 3.30 pm – sturdy shoes (can be wet / muddy in places) – dogs OK. Simon Pawley and Michael Turland discuss why a castle, who was Bishop Alexander, why this location, 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century appearance and functions, role of the Saxon Town and mills, death of the castle c.1550s.

On Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2019:  
CHAPEL OPENING  
13.00 to 15.00 - This rarely opened Almshouse Chapel is almost untouched by time since 1844. A short presentation on the two earlier chapels and the layout and features of this chapel will be given at 14.00.

### Trust News



Since our last Newsletter we have to report, with deep regret, the passing of a number of long standing, founding and life members. It was a cruel winter and the list includes: Dr SE Hodgson; Miss Margaret Outram (founder member); Mrs M Refrew (founder member with her late husband); Mr GW Renfrew and Mrs Winifred Sibley.

Your Executive Committee as elected at the AGM includes the Officers of the Trust: Garry Titmus – Chair; David Marriage – Vice chair; Faith Hopkins – Secretary and Brenda Hitchcock – Treasurer plus Tim Benton; Anthony Brand; Harriott Brand and Chris Hodgson.

## Civic Matters

The Newsletter of the Sleaford and District Civic Trust

No. 2 Spring 2019

### The AGM

The Community Room at Sleaford Town Council was full to capacity on the night of our AGM. We welcomed Members and the public as well as the four Groups being awarded commendations for their great efforts in and around Sleaford. Those receiving the recognition Certificates were:



Mel Stanley - Street Sign Painting Project



MosArt - Bench on Eastgate Green



Louise Hill and pupils at Ancaster C of E Primary School, Grantham  
St.Mary's Catholic Primary School, Church Lane Primary School  
Sleaford, Heckington St. Andrew's Primary School - For the mosaic panels at Sleaford Station



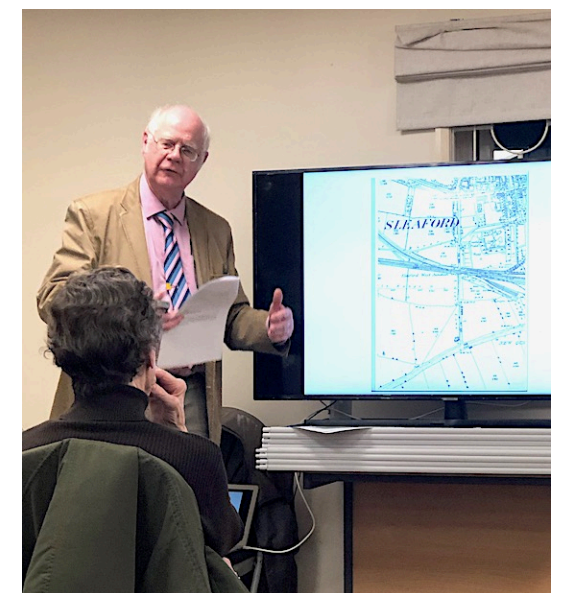
River Sleas Clean Up Group - Cleans large stretches of the River Sleas on a monthly basis with volunteers

The regular AGM business was concluded along with those Members present ratifying our revised Constitution. Under our new arrangements the roles of Secretary and Treasurer became separated and we welcomed Faith Hopkins as Secretary with Brenda Hitchcock continuing as Treasurer. Following on from a refreshment break the evening concluded with a presentation by Douglas Plowman entitled "A New Approach to Sleaford Castle".

This was a lively and engaging session which presented a number of thought provoking ideas about the how; the when and the why of the Castle. In drawing upon the published works of John Blair\*, Doug questions might our so-called Castle in fact be a Bishop's Palace since a number existed and were contemporaneous at that time?

In stimulating a range of questions about the history of the Castle and the quality of the available sources this links across to the Castle Project and the need for more evidence. The long term investigations will include a geophysical survey and a modest trial excavation.

(\*Blair, J, (1993) "Hall and Chamber: English domestic planning 1000-1250" from Jones, M, Manorial domestic buildings in England and Northern France pp.1-21, London: Society of Antiquaries of London)







The Trust is pleased to announce that we have been awarded £34,000 by Heritage Lottery and this with an additional £6,200 raised from Lincolnshire Community Foundation and other sources will enable us to start the Fountain Restoration Project.

A Water Fountain is a device, usually in a public place, that can send up a flow of water for drinking. Although it is recorded that there were water fountains in Greek times, the first known fountains in the UK was in the 1850's.

Between 1750 and 1900 the population of the country had increased from 9 million to 41 million. By the mid 1850's more people were living in towns than in the countryside. Some in towns had private water supplies, but many lived in squalid conditions in courts and the majority took water from street or yard pumps with water that was contaminated with sewerage. This resulted in Cholera and Typhoid.

Philanthropic reformers saw the need to improve the supply of public drinking water. The Government introduced the Metropolis Water Act in London. The first water fountain had been installed by a local benefactor in Liverpool in 1854, but it

was Great Stink of 1858 finally moved the politicians to act, and the first London water fountain was installed in 1859. Some felt the supply of clean water would purge the poor of their sins and many fountains were sited near to a church. Many were called Temperance Fountains as they provided water to lessen the reliance on weak alcohol or small beer.

It is thought that there were over 2,000 fountains since 1854. Many had ornamental features with fancy carved stonework supported by pink granite columns.

The Water Acts – especially that of 1871, gradually took effect and with the introduction of water directly into peoples' homes resulted in the use of public water fountains declining, until by the late 1950's many had been abandoned and sometimes been totally removed.



The ornate stone water fountain was erected in 1874 by the tenants of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marquis of Bristol as a mark of respect. The carved inscription says "In Memory of Frederick William sixth Earl and second Marquis of Bristol, by a few of his Lincolnshire tenants erected in the year of our Lord 1874".

The fountain has stone foundations, four polished granite columns with

stone bases, intricate stone carving with a Gothic style canopy of Ancaster limestone and a stone slate pyramid roof. The fountain is a Listed Grade 2 building and local heritage asset.

Water at that time for some of the poorer classes was taken from the River Slea which was also used as a drain to get rid of waste! This resulted in an early death for many. Indeed in those days a "health report" of the 1830's reported that many of the poorer classes died in their 30's. For the new fountain fresh spring water

was sourced from a spring underneath the Peacock & Handley Bank in Northgate – now Lloyds Bank. The fountain however was not without it's problems. Vandalism in 1895 when "youths blocked the water outlet with a pebble".

As the town became larger in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century many local springs began to dry up. Thus the water fountain was turned off in 1927. It has been disused ever since. Now the Fountain is disregarded by the town. Many when asked do not know it exists, yet they probably walk past it quite often.

The restoration project will see the water restored and the fountain gently lit into dark evenings. With much help from NKDC fresh water will be piped from the Market Holders' Hut some 150ft away. Of course in this day and age we have to take precautions against Legionnaires Disease and this will be done. There were debates as to whether the fountain should be lit by up-lighters in the surrounding ground, but the final design is that it will be illuminated from within the roof space.

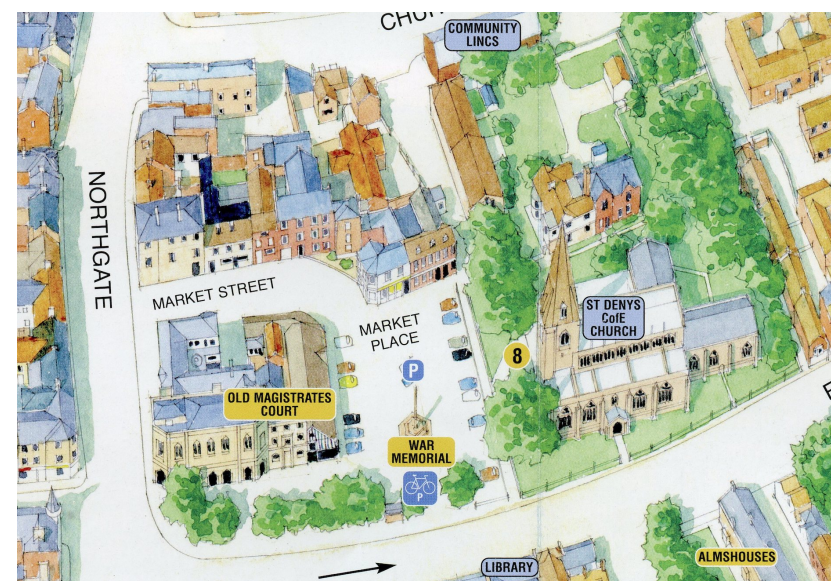
The Building works will be sub-contracted to a local company Carre Heritage and work is due to start at the end of April and be finished by September 2019.

There is to be outreach into the community with work at the local schools and a show on Water Fountains in Sleaford Museum. The children will learn about water in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Of course the use of "once only" plastic materials is in the news. The Fountain should play a part in reducing plastic waste.

You will know that both NKDC and the Town Council are working to improve the image of the town, especially Southgate and the market Square areas.

The project a good example of the Sleaford Civic Trust working closely with the Town Council and North Kesteven District Council to ensure the historic features of our town are protected.

David Marriage



that the Fountain has disappeared from consciousness. The works being carried out will surely make this, once more, a major and visible feature of Sleaford's landscape.

As David indicates many in Sleaford are seemingly unaware that the Fountain exists. Over time it has been neglected and grown darker with pollution. Certainly it is a point of congregation when schools are out but otherwise an unrecognised feature of the Town.

Look at the excellent 3D map in the information case on the Market Place which highlights many places of interest in Sleaford. What do you see – or rather what is missing? By the former Magistrates Court where the Fountain is placed all that the cartographers have shown are trees. Sadly demonstrating

Anthony Brand