

DISCOVERING BINGHAM

Quarterly NEWSLETTER of the **Bingham Heritage Trails Association**
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BHTA: Increasing public awareness of our heritage in Architecture, Folk & Natural History, Archaeology & Geology



LONG ACRE TEST PITS

The 2016 archaeological test pits campaign is now over. As shown on the above map, we dug seven pits on both sides of Long Acre, one on Fisher Lane close to the junction with Long Acre and three behind the Chesterfield. All of them were dug between 4th July and 3rd August. Thanks to all the volunteers who did the digging, sieving, washing, bagging, weighing and database entry. We could not do any of this without them!

The reason for doing the Long Acre and Fisher Lane pits was to try to find some evidence that Long Acre might originally have been a Norman road. The Chesterfield pits were opportunistic. We failed to get permission to dig there three years ago, but now that the pub is closed Punch Taverns did not hesitate to say yes. We dug the back lawn, which

is on the edge of the large Roman site that was revealed when the flats were built there after closing down the bowling green.

If you look at a map of Bingham you will see that the streets are laid in a rectilinear pattern. This has been interpreted as the same as

the layout of a Medieval planned village. In it there is a main street (Long Acre and Long Acre East), a south back street (The Banks) parallel to it and a north back street (Market Place, Church Street and East Street). The cross lanes are Fosters Lane, Cherry Street, Market Street, Jebb's Lane and Fisher Lane. The map that BHTA devised for 1586 is quite convincing about this interpretation because Long Acre was called Husband Street at that time and all the farmers who lived in Bingham had places along it. The counter

argument, that this is not a planned village, exists because it is unusual to have the church, market place, the rectory and the manor house on a back street rather than the main street.

In the first pits project we only dug one pit on Long Acre though there were two that were at junctions with cross lanes. The Long Acre pit yielded nothing older than 15th C, so we dug the 7 new ones this year to see if we could find anything older. All were on the stretch between Market Street and Cherry Street.

The Chesterfield pits yielded more or less what we expected with a good assemblage of medieval pottery and some rather nice bits of Roman pottery



A buried wall found behind the Chesterfield Arms. It probably dates from the 19th century. It is mostly built with stone wall with bricks used only at the end. The purpose of the wall is not known (yet).



A cobbled yard that once was at the back of 19th century cottages on Long Acre that were demolished in the 1950s. A drain had been laid, cutting through the cobbles before the yard was covered in asphalt. The drain pipe is stamped John Knowles, Woodville, Derby. The company made drain pipes after 1871.

including Black Burnished Ware, which would have been expensive at the time and used only by a wealthy householder. Preliminary findings from the Long Acre pits, however, are puzzling.

Most of the pottery was late 17th to 19th C and in one pit Victorian pottery was embedded in the basal clay. We know that there were at least ten farms along this stretch of road in 1586 and six of the pits yielded some pottery from this period, but none of them yielded much that was older than about 1550. The earlier, medieval, pottery has not yet been closely dated, but there is so little of it that it is fairly clear that there was little activity here in the middle ages. Certainly there is no good evidence from any of the pits that people lived along Long Acre before about 1550. We were told that two of the pit sites were in places that were cattle enclosures up to the mid 20th century and that some of the soil in

some of the evidence for earlier occupation. This means that the question about whether or not Long Acre was originally a street in a medieval planned village will probably never be answered.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAID

[Grantham Journal](#)
February 4th 1944

AN EYESORE AND A MENACE

Mr Sidney Shephard, M.P. was present at the quarterly meeting of Bingham Parish Council, presided over by George White. At the request of the committee of the Bingham Wartime Tree Planting and improvement of Amenities last Autumn Mr. Shephard was approached with the knowledge of the parish council as the most likely person to be able to solve the long-vexed question of whose shoulders should bear the responsibility of the maintenance of the Bingham

Market-place which is like a quagmire in wet weather - a menace to drivers and pedestrians alike in the blackout, and a depressing eyesore in the daylight - and when, if the ownership were determined, this spacious market square with its beautiful market cross might be converted into a beauty spot with flowering trees and shrubs to the delight of both young an old - stranger and resident. Mr Shephard is taking infinite pains and is probing every source of information - The Commissioners of Crown Lands, who hold the toll rights, Lord Carnarvon estates, and then the Notts. County Council who maintain the four crossroads over it, as Bingham Council do not want to accept the responsibility of it with its complexities, even as a free gift.

The thin soil in all the Long Acre pits leads to the speculation that something like this might have happened at other sites; thus removing

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Mr Shephard, it would appear, was unable to solve the question of ownership because over two years later -

[Grantham Journal](#)
July 26th 1946

SHOWMEN'S RIGHTS AT BINGHAM

The proposal to effect improvements to Bingham Market-place is being held up by investigations into the old charter rights to showmen to hold their fairs there.

The Clerk, Mr W. B. Birch, told Bingham Rural Council yesterday week that the question of the ownership of the Market-place had to be settled before money could be spent on it by the council. He was authorised to put the position before the Home Office for clarification.

Grantham Journal
November 15th 1946

GERMAN SOUNDED "LAST POST" AT REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

A German Prisoner-of-War took an active part in British Legion gathering. Because no one was available to sound the "Last Post" and "Reveille" at the Remembrance-day service in Bingham parish church on Sunday morning, the British Legion officials gave approval to the gap being filled by two Germans, who were conveyed from Whatton camp in a jeep. The calls were given by bugle and drums. One member of the Legion considered it was a fine gesture to invite the Germans to take part in the service, to which members of the Legion paraded.

Grantham Journal
November 29th 1946

PLANS FOR A COMMUNITY HALL

The recently suggested building of a community hall is meeting with opposition on the grounds of expense. One parish councillor says that the general rates cannot be expected to bear any additional burden. The British Legion are considering building a hall and it is felt that this would be a better course.

(So a community hall was not built in the 1940s by the Council, nor was the British Legion Hall ever built.)
[Ed.] We are still waiting!

BINGHAM'S BUILT HERITAGE

1 Grantham Road

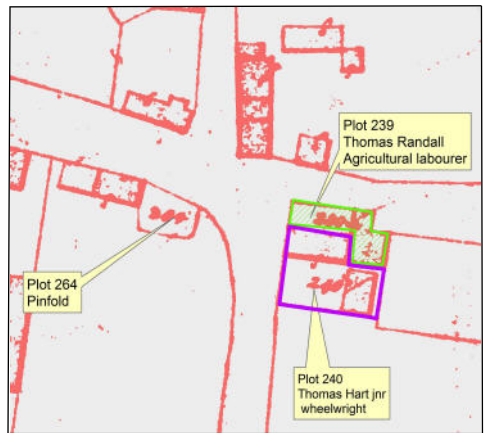
Over the years, we have been able to consult the deeds for a number of houses in Bingham. These often reveal interesting stories about the development of Bingham. You can read these on our web site (click on Built Heritage, then House

Histories). Some more are in preparation, including number one Grantham Road.

This is an old cottage next door to the computer centre, but how old? Straight joints in the walls indicate the original house has been extended twice, although the brickwork on each section match, but is it all as old as it looks?

The main part of the computer centre building used to be a wheelwright's workshop. The 1841 tithe map (top right) shows that originally the workshop and a house were part of the same plot, owned by the Earl of Chesterfield (as was most of Bingham). Wheelwright Thomas Hart junior leased the workshop and a small house at the south eastern end of the plot. Old maps show that sometime between then and 1883 that house was demolished and a new one built which now forms the west end of the present house. The brickwork of the extension seems to be of a similar age and thus one might think both were built soon after 1883.

The lower photo (right) of the wheelwright's shop taken about 1900, was then occupied by Reuben Hart, (Thomas' son) shows this not to be the case, as the cottage is clearly a "two up-two down building with a chimney stack at each end. The windows and



door faced the wheelwright shop giving easy access between the two.

So why in the present cottage (shown in the upper photo from a similar camera position) are there only small windows and when was it extended eastwards? You need both the deeds and oral history to find out! In 1921 The Earl of Carnarvon sold the property for £550 to wheelwright Herbert Taylor of Scarrington. He tried and failed to evict Rebecca Hart, Reuben's widow, and in 1925 sold the property to tailor Sheldon Marsdon.



By 1939 a shoeing blacksmith named Hiatt was in possession and six adults lived in the house, still two up-two down. During the war it was also home to a couple of evacuees from Great Yarmouth. One of them, Bev Goodrun told the present owner of a bedroom divided by a curtain. So the cramped house still had not been extended.

The first extension, to add a third room upstairs and down, was actually built by Mr D Pockney who had bought the property in 1961 and sourced reclaimed matching bricks to build "phase 2". He changed the orientation of the cottage from north to south and filled in the old ground floor windows. In the early 1970s the present owners built a third phase, using similar sized red bricks. Both phases used solid 8" walls to match the original as the law relating to cavity walls still had not come into force.

The house and workshop was only sold off in 1968, and thus became 1a Grantham Road, the modern extension to the shop was built in the late 1970s. Number 1a became successively a joiner's shop, a coppersmith and latterly a computer shop. The bend was "improved" in the early 1980s; the line of the old route and the position of the original safety barrier can still be traced outside the computer shop. A plan for road improvement had originally been drawn up in 1910!

BINGHAM IN WW2

We announced in the March 2016 Newsletter our intention to follow our work on Bingham in World War 1 by initiating a project on World War 2. This work is now underway and is concentrating, to begin with, on those who gave their lives before moving on to research the stories of those who survived.

Researching World War 2 presents different challenges from our WW1 project, in particular because many of the relevant Census and military records remain closed for reasons of data privacy. On the other hand, we have the advantage that there are still Bingham residents who have their own recollections of WW2 or who have access to the memories and personal archives of relatives and friends. We are grateful already to have accessed some relevant records through the good offices of Bingham British Legion. These are proving a useful addition to the official sources we can utilise.

We are keen to hear from anyone who has relevant family records or recollections including memories of everyday life and the impact of hostilities on the Bingham community. David Mason who is leading the project can be contacted as shown below or via the website.

The Bingham Heritage Calendar 2017

Bingham Celebrations



This year's calendar theme is "Bingham Celebrations". It can always be used at celebrations events, from Royal Anniversaries, to special occasions and local culture. We have brought together a range of photos and stories of these events, together with some old colour views of Bingham to relive the microcosmic nature of many historic celebrations.

It has become tradition for us to feature the Buzzaess on the cover of our calendar. This annual Christmas Market is an enjoyable social get together, centred on the illuminated Buzzaess.

2017 LECTURES Return to the New Methodist Church Hall at 7.30pm

Thursday 26th January

Dr. Thoroton -
Potions and Pedigrees
Adrian Henstock

Thursday 9th March

Tales from the Trent
Bridge Pavilion
Peter Wynne-Thomas

Thursday 11th May

Bingham's Great War
Geoff Ashton

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