

# DISCOVERING BINGHAM

Quarterly NEWSLETTER of the **Bingham Heritage Trails Association**  
[www.binghamheritage.org.uk](http://www.binghamheritage.org.uk) Registered Charity No: 1090475 Issue No. 33 - September 2011

BHTA: Increasing public awareness of our heritage in Architecture, Folk & Natural History, Archaeology & Geology



## OUR LADIES TAKE TEA - 1860s STYLE

The celebrations for the 150th Anniversary of the construction of the Butter Cross in 1861 were initiated at the Town Summer Fair on Saturday 11th June with the monument decked in floral displays which were made possible by the generosity of over 24 local clubs, groups and businesses that sponsored the event. The decorations remained on view for over a week and we are pleased to report that dire predictions of damage by vandals proved unfounded. We mounted a display of *Victorian Bingham* at the Fair, under the Cross at the weekly Thursday market and again at the following Saturday Farmers' Market. On this occasion those who attended the market were also entertained by the Robert Parker Wind Quintet playing two programmes of music mainly from the Victorian period with the Toot Hill School "Tootlers", under the direction of Colin Smith, performing a selection of contemporary music during the central section of the programme.

At all three events BHTA members dressed in period costumes were present in the Market Place representing ten of the worthies of 1861 Bingham. This involved fairly long periods of standing and walking around chatting to our visitors so it was not unreasonable that there were occasional breaks for refreshment. The picture above shows our ladies relaxing with the 'cup that cheers but does not inebriate'. From left to right they are: Hilda Smith as Mary Miles, wife of the Rector Robert Miles - Joyce Allen as Mrs. Charles Doncaster the Draper and Outfitter - Sue Hodson who played her own great great Grandmother Mary Barnes representing the poor Cottagers of the town - Joan Ashton as Mrs. James Horsepool the Butcher's wife and Wynne Thompson as Sarah Hutchinson wife of farmer John who was also a Sergeant in the South Notts Yeomanry.

## THE 2010-2011 AGM LOOKS FORWARD

The purpose of an Annual General Meeting is to review and report to the membership on the past 12 months and this duty was carried out by the BHTA officers in the Council Chamber of the Court House on 30th June but as the Chairman, Peter Allen, emphasised this was no time to rest on our laurels and we needed to look forward to 2012 and beyond.

The following brief items summarise some of our main activities as presented at the AGM and also include some updates on progress since the meeting.

### Arboretum

At last all the trees in the cemetery have been identified. We had serious problems with some of them and it needed an expert who had worked in the Nottingham arboretum to come along and do the final identifications. We now know the names of over 40 different tree and shrub species in the cemetery, but we are going to label only the 29 tree varieties. Some of them are uncommon in public places in Bingham, but they may exist in gardens. Though there may be examples of the rare specimens elsewhere none are as easily accessible to the public as the ones in the cemetery. With luck,

Bingham's Arboretum will be open to the public before the end of 2011 - we are ready to order the name labels for the trees.



### Roman well

The well saga is nearing a conclusion! We have planning permission and now await the agreement of Rushcliffe planners to the detailed design and the proposed information board. It should look something like the photomontage above.

A local contractor has been appointed and we hope to have the well installed in the cemetery by the end of September. We are asking for volunteers now to pressure wash the stones, arrange the stones into their correct order and help organise the delivery to site. Ring 01949 875177 to register your interest in helping.

### Bingham Town Trail

As we have reported in previous issues of the newsletter we are receiving regular requests from both youth and adult groups to conduct historic tours of the town and we are happy to continue doing these from time to time. However, when we were planning the Roman Well and arboretum project this led to the idea of producing a written guide.

We are well on with the preparation of a town trail leaflet describing the main heritage features of a circular walk from the Market Place to the arboretum and back. We are grateful to Ovy Designs of Fairfield Street for donating their time to design the leaflet. We also hope to follow this later with a children's trail.

### GARDEN FINDS

We have called an end to the Garden Finds project and have asked the street wardens to collect the finds that people have told them about and bring them to the HQ. So far we are aware of only one outstanding find and that was a Roman coin. (pictures below) It was minted in Trier, now in Germany, in AD 331-335 during the reign of Emperor Constantine in celebration of the building of Constantinople as the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire.



About the size of a modern 5p, this is not a rare coin, but it is an interesting one. We have not finished examining the other finds yet. When we have done we will produce a report for each householder. Our main hope is that the finds will help us identify more places to put archaeological test pits. We will report in more detail about this in the next issue.

### THE NEXT PROJECT

To carry out our next project we submitted an application for a grant to the Heritage Lottery Fund on 22<sup>nd</sup> July. It will be ten weeks before we hear if we have been successful. Unlike ten years ago when we first started bidding for Lottery money, competition is now much stiffer and we are by no means certain of success. The project is called *The roots and development of Bingham Town*. It has two parts. In one we plan to dig 30-50 one-metre square archaeological test pits in gardens and public places. Your response to our request for offers has been terrific and at the time the bid went in to the HLF sites in 49 gardens had been offered. In the other part of the project we are going to do a detailed inventory of the old domestic, commercial, industrial and farm buildings in the town. We have picked out some for detailed architectural survey and dating using tree rings. Again, public response has been terrific and we were able to tell the HLF that 12 properties had been offered to us for the detailed treatment.

### AN EXCURSION EXTRAORDINARY

*Another story from our researches in the newspaper archives.*

*Nottingham Journal  
Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June 1850*

On Friday morning last a number of artisans were engaged in convivial occupation at the White Lion Inn, after a week similarly spent. It would seem that a protracted course of Bacchanalian pleasures had begun to pall upon their tastes

and a more wholesome desire for a jaunt to some quiet neighbouring village was unanimously expressed by these holiday loving individuals. A quiet trip to Barrowby, distant about two miles from Grantham, was proposed and assented to and a conveyance qualified to accommodate their number was then sought after. It being known that a phaeton belonging to a Bingham ironmonger might not be in actual use, means were devised for possessing themselves of the same. In the absence of the owner, his wife consented to their request after receiving an artful appeal, having for its burthen, an invalid parent's desire for half an hours drive. A similar and equally successful artifice was employed in procuring a horse. In the collection of the necessary gear for the latter they were not so fortunate and an unheard of contrivance of ropes and string were substituted for the deficient harness. On completion of these preliminaries, five jovial young fellows, representing the trades of blacksmith, smith, agricultural implement maker and bricklayer, had the vehicle drawn to a remote part of the town and took their seats therein, and notwithstanding their already crowded state, actually allowed three others the favour of a ride for some distance. Nothing of moment occurred during their transit to their destination, but when they started back, at a late hour, one party took possession of the reins and another of the whip and the grotesque equipage began the descent of Barrowby hill, a very steep declivity, at an alarming speed.

Such was the incapacity of the driver, or rather drivers, that they suddenly checked the horse's pace, which instantly brought the carriage into collision with his heels; for either from an oversight or wilful indifference the breechband part of the tackle had not been appended. As a consequence, the horse was restive in the extreme, and the front board was instantly kicked into fragments. One of drivers was thrown upon the hindquarters of the horse and kicked severely upon his ribs and other parts; another was also pitched out and run over by the vehicle and sustained bruises on the head and limbs and a third, it is said, was thrown into a ditch, while another was flung into the road. The remaining occupant, terrified beyond measure, alighted and seized the horse's head and endeavoured to allay the plunging and rearing of the frightened beast; but to no purpose. By the aid of a knife and that of its own exertions, it ultimately became disentangled and with the shafts still dangling at its heels, took its own course and eventually reached its own stable in Bingham. One party, on being raised, was found to be unconscious, and fears of the most serious kind were, at the time, entertained. Leaving him under the care of the nearest surgeon, the rest, more or less suffering from injuries, pursued their way on foot and arrived at Bingham at about three o' clock in the morning, leaving the battered vehicle in a field by the road side. The news of the accident rapidly traversed the town and the greatest concern was felt for the party left behind. One of his friends took an early train, while another was

despatched with a suitable conveyance, should he survive and his condition admit of his being moved. To the astonishment and delight of all, he arrived on the 8-12am train, lame, wearing a discomposed air and not a little humiliated. Immense perturbation was displayed by the proprietor of the phaeton on being acquainted with the unparalleled style in which his property was seen proceeding along the tumpike road. The surreptitious mode by which it was obtained was duly descanted upon and properly condemned; the offenders were threatened with warrants, summonses and the county court by turns, with a vehemence truly awful and with what soreness of mind he receive the intelligence of the catastrophe, it is impossible to portray; nor was the owner of the horse less profuse in his vituperation on the blameworthy characters.



*In case you are wondering, the Phaeton is a light, fast four-wheeled carriage usually drawn by one horse although rigs for a pair were made. In the 1850s it was the equivalent to a soft-top sports car with seats for two but as the above picture shows it often had a 'dickie' seat at the rear for the 'footman'. How in the story it accommodated, 'Five jovial young fellows' not to mention, 'three others.....for some distance' is extremely difficult to imagine!*

While we are flicking through the newspaper archives here is another item from the *Nottingham Journal* 24<sup>th</sup> June 1859

### A FEMALE PREACHER

On Sunday last, a large influx of people assembled in the Temperance Hall to enjoy the gratification of listening to a Miss Naylor, who had been engaged to preach two sermons therein. It is somewhat remarkable that a lady preacher should have been chosen by the congregation worshipping there, consisting as it does of those whose sympathies are with the Wesleyan Methodists denomination and who seceded from that body in 1843. The antipathy of the latter to female occupants of the Pulpit is well known and the practice properly prohibited. At the conclusion of the services, the sum of £10 was collected for the benefit of the trust funds of the above building.

### SORRY - WE GOT IT WRONG

In our June 2011 issue we confidently identified a house on the Grantham Road as 'The Dairy Farm, Bingham' from a c.1900 picture postcard. Although the two buildings are of very similar design Mrs Margaret Linley has informed us that up to the 1950s there was an old barn on the land to the west which would have been there in 1900. The most likely location for the Dairy Farm seems to be in the East Street area the house having long since been demolished.



### IS THIS THE OLDEST PHOTOGRAPH OF BINGHAM YET FOUND?

In the week before going to press we have been loaned a very faded and damaged photograph by a local family. Having enhanced the original, it shows the parish church and what is now Parr Close and Number 19 in Church Street. As there appears to be no roof on the nave the picture must date between the two restorations, ie after 1846-7 and before 1873. We believe the rebuilding of No. 19 was c.1860 and the elevated camera position may be close to the Court House that wasn't built until 1858. A lot more research is needed to reveal all this picture could tell us.

### LETTER FROM AMERICA

[*Bingham, Back in Time*] arrived yesterday and it's wonderful! I've only had time to dip into it using the index but it will be a fantastic resource for expanding my family history in Bingham...I've long wished for a work on Bingham--now my wishes are answered. I'm particularly interested in the growth of the community between 1600s and 1700s which is as far back as I am in my research with the early Olivers, Castledines, Pilgrims, and Brooks. Thank you so much for the book. Cheers, Tamara Compton

### BHTA CONTACTS

General e-mail: [bhta@binghamheritage.org.uk](mailto:bhta@binghamheritage.org.uk)

CHAIRMAN: Peter Allen - 01949 831575

VICE CHAIRMAN: Geoff Ashton - 01949 875177

SECRETARY: Jack Wilson - 01949 838275

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Robin Aldworth - 01949 839991

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### ANNUAL HOT POT SUPPER

**Saturday 26th November**

7.30pm W.I. Hall

Tickets £12 incl. Wine

**Ring 831575**