

DISCOVERING BINGHAM

Quarterly NEWSLETTER of the **Bingham Heritage Trails Association**
www.binghamheritage.org.uk Registered Charity No: 1090475 Issue No. 9 - September 2005

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

A QUIET SUMMER ?

Some of us thought that after we finished field walking in early June we would have some time off before the next season began in October. Silly of us!

The last finds we collected had to be washed, given grid references and information about them entered into the database. Then all the finds had to be sorted for the specialists and each find individually numbered. Only then could they be handed over. So far, we have specialists for the flints, medieval and post-medieval pottery, stoneware, glass, clay pipes, bones, Roman pots and the 19th and 20th Century china.

Some of the results are coming in. The strategy for last season was to survey part of the area north of the railway line that 10,000 years ago was occupied by a lake, the margins of the lake and the hinterland well back from it. We have found Palaeolithic and Mesolithic flints along the lake margin. In those days it was a proper lake and it seems that hunting groups of our Stone Age ancestors probably camped alongside it. We looked at the lake area west of Chapel Lane expecting to find little of interest and were surprised when an



To mark the 60th Anniversary of the end of WW2, the theme of the BHTA stand at the Town Fair on the 12th June was 'Wartime Bingham'. Using photographs from the private collections of David and Margaret Sibley, Dot Mabbott, Eric Sharp and our own files, the display showed how the town looked and the people who gave their voluntary services in the Home Guard, Fire Brigade, etc. between 1939-45.

The stand attracted a lot of interest from the many visitors and we also recruited some new members and won the cup for the 'Best Dressed Stall'. (see insert)

During the week of the Festival we ran a Prize Picture Quiz, sponsored by Lovejoys - Residential Property Solicitors. At the Fair all the correct entries were put in a hat and Mrs Gail Chamberlain of Aslockton made the draw for the three lucky winners: Steven Shanks, Mrs Clark and Derek Groombridge. The answers to the quiz are given on page 4.

enormous amount of material turned up. It seems that here the lake had been very shallow and by Roman times it had silted up. Nothing older than Roman has been found there, but there is some Roman pottery, lots of Medieval pottery and a good deal of material from the Tudor and

Stuart periods. We have evidence from another source that there might have been crofts along Chapel Lane in Elizabethan times and in the hedge survey we did two years ago we found some of the oldest hedges in the parish here. Now the archaeology is supporting this. --->

BHTA 2006 Calendar £3.00
- on sale at the Newagents in Eaton Place from October

The area we called hinterland is the high land south of the A52 from Starnhill Farm westwards through Spring Farm. This area was divided into three arable open fields in medieval times. In those days it was usual for household rubbish to be thrown onto the farm middens and into the privies in the houses in the village. All this would end up spread over the fields. Some of the earliest pottery we have found in these fields is Stamford ware dating from before the Norman Conquest, but there is a lot of 13th and 14th century pottery, even including some medieval glazed roof tiles. It may be that this was when the open fields became fully developed. Most of the pottery was made in Nottingham, but we have some that was imported from other parts of England, such as south Yorkshire, Humberside and Lincoln. Among the 16th century pottery we have one piece of a stoneware jug made in Cologne in 1594. There were clearly some affluent farmers living here in Elizabethan times. **Watch this space for further updates.**

In our other project the churchyard survey with the U3A and funded by *Awards for All*; the basic surveying is nearly done, again with the help of lots of volunteers. A full report on this will be made in the December issue.

BHTA Power Point Projector and Display Boards

Subject to availability, we are happy to consider loaning our equipment to local charitable organisations. Please contact our Chairman for further details.

BINGHAM 800 YEARS AGO



King John and King Philip II

Did you know that a mediaeval dispute over the ownership of Bingham nearly provoked a war between England and France? This fact has been unearthed from documents in the National Archives by Dr David Crook of Grantham, writing in the latest issue of Nottinghamshire's historical journal, the *Transactions of the Thorton Society*.

Almost exactly 800 years ago – in 1204 - King John and the English were driven out of Normandy by the French King Philip II. As a consequence many Norman barons who owned lands on both sides of the Channel were forced to choose between either the English or the French crown and to renounce their property in the other country. The manorial rights over Bingham were then owned by Fulk Paynel (or Pagnel, a member of the family who gave their name to Newport Pagnell, etc), but he decided to live in Normandy and to give up his Nottinghamshire lands in the hope that one day they would be restored to him.

In 1230 King Henry III, John's son and successor, went to Brittany hoping to gain Breton support to regain some of his former Norman land. Here he was met by two of Fulk

Paynel's sons supported by 60 armed Norman knights who urged him to invade Normandy, apparently chiefly motivated by an attempt to regain Bingham and their other English estates. King Henry was only restrained from agreeing by his chief minister, even though the Paynels offered to lead the English army themselves if the King would lend them 200 knights! Even as late as the 1260s the family was still pressing its claim to Bingham but to no avail.

One interesting sidelight of this incident is that when the Paynels gave up Bingham, King John ordered a valuation to be made of the estate, and this document provides us with a detailed enumeration of the farmstock belonging to the Lord of Bingham on St Augustine's Day, 26th May 1204. It included 18 oxen, 2 bulls and 9 bullocks, 16 cows (of which 11 were milkers, 13 were pregnant but two [*sic*] were not), 131 ewes and 54 lambs, 10 pigs and 8 piglets, 3 geese and 6 fowls, and 26 cheeses. It seems the Vale of Belvoir was famous for its cheese even in those days!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ANNUAL HOT-POT SUPPER
Saturday 29th September
7.30pm. WI Hall
Tickets: £10 incl. wine
RING 831575

4th SEASON of BHTA
FREE PUBLIC LECTURES
 A series of three lectures is being planned, the first to be held before Christmas and two in 2006. The dates, topics, speakers and venues will be announced soon, so.....

WATCH THIS SPACE!

IT'S ON THE WEB

This pair of photographs taken about 80 years apart is one of 15 comparisons on the 'Then and Now' page of our web site. A brief summary of the information given there is as follows:

The Wheatsheaf Inn, built in 1792, has changed little; the wooden shutters have gone as have the semi-circular canopy and the swan-neck gas bracket and lantern. Modern additions are the hanging sign and the floodlights under the eaves. These are only applied details, but the arched brickwork over the ground floor windows are structural and have been replaced by straight lintels. These arches are a local building style that can still be seen on some of the older buildings in the town. It is unfortunate when details like this are lost when conversions or repairs are carried out. When the 'Then and Now' page was written, we thought the picture was taken c.1908 but we are now not so sure. The motorbike and sidecar parked opposite and the hemline of the dress worn by the young lady walking along a grassy path where there is now pavement, suggests a later date of c.1920.

On the north side of Long Acre, the pictures show the three-storey Vaults Hotel, probably built some time in the 1700s as the house of the Needham family who farmed the two-acre plot bounded by Long Acre, Market, Union and Needham Streets. When the original thatched roof was replaced with a tiled roof in the late 1800s, the shallower pitch allowed the wall to be extended giving added height



in the attic rooms. Beyond the Vaults Hotel, the two-storey building was added to the hotel, post 1800, as a 'drinking house'. The form of the frontage can still be seen. The pair of narrow windows remain and the arched cart entrance has been closed with glass bricks and a door into the public area of the Post Office that moved from Market Place in 1933.

Beyond this can be seen three cottages that are still there but from here to the corner of Needham Street was demolished in 1985, completing the Needham Street clearance started in the 1950s.

On the other corner, the earlier picture shows the Primitive Methodist Chapel,

built in 1818, that is now the Horse and Plough with a lower lean-to building at the eastern end.

Beyond this point, on the south side of Long Acre, there is the white gable end of No.16 as well as the ridge end of a building on Walker's Farm that was demolished in the 1970s to create Walker's Close. At the end of the road, the White Lion pub can still be seen.

OUR 2005 AGM

The 2005 Annual General Meeting of the Association was held on the 28th. June with eighteen members attending.

Peter Allen, Chairman, reported that all the targets set for the first year of our

Stage 3 Project had been met. Eight and a half thousand finds from the Field Walking had been catalogued and were ready to go for expert identification. The survey of Crow Close had been done and we are awaiting results. Work on the 1586 map had not yet been started. Suggestions from the Open meeting held after last year's AGM had been considered and suggestions on maps and collections of materials were underway. A proposal to stage an historical play was also under consideration but needed someone with an interest in this to undertake its organisation and development. The Chairman appealed for any Members interested to contact him. The Associations Annual Statement of Accounts was accepted and it was noted that the Projector had been purchased as proposed at the last AGM. This would be made available to other community groups within the Town

together with the Associations Display Boards.

Changes in the Executive Committee membership were the election of Sue Brough to replace John Bannard who had resigned and John Perry to replace Tony Stockwood as the Town Council representative who had stood down because of ill health. The meeting asked the Secretary to write to Mr. Stockwood to thank him for his work and to wish him a speedy recovery.

The Secretary reported that the Local Heritage Initiative which has funded the Association's various Projects would cease to exist from the Spring of 2006 after which our activities would be funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The meeting also heard that membership of the Association now stands at 81. The Chairman thanked the Officers and Members for all their hard work during what had been a very successful year.

HOW TO CONTACT OUR OFFICERS

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ALLEN Joyce	COMMITTEE. Membership & Minutes Sec.	107 Grantham Road. 831575
ASHTON Geoff	VICE CHAIRMAN Built Heritage, Coordinator of field walking (Finds) and Churchyard mapping	19 Church Street. 875177
BROUGH Sue	COMMITTEE	11 Hazel Close 838672
HENSTOCK Adrian	COMMITTEE History	24 Long Acre 837510
PERRY John	COMMITTEE Town Council Representative	29 Cogley Lane 875231
SMITH Hilda	COMMITTEE. Oral Histories	11 Abbey Road. 837781
SNOWDIN Roger	TREASURER	26 Gillotts Close. 839148
WILSON Jack	SECRETARY Natural History, Deputy Coordinator of field walking	3 Quantock Grove. 838275

Prize Draw Picture Quiz Answers

- 1) Kirkland House from Newgate St.
- 2) Cemetery, The Banks
- 3) Corner of Tip-Top Laundry, Moor Lane
- 4) 4 & 6 Station St.
- 5) 19 Market Place
- 6) 19 Fisher Lane
- 7) 39 Long Acre from Market St.
- 8) Rear of Brompton Dentists from car park
- 9) Manor Cottage next to Junior School entrance
- 10) 1 Fisher Lane
- 11) 10 Gillott's Close
- 12) 10 Market St on Union St.
- 13) Beauvale House Market Place
- 14) 19 Church St.
- 15) 5 Cherry St.
- 16) Bowls Club, Long Acre
- 17) 8 Kirkhill
- 18) Church House, East St.
- 19) 5 Long Acre
- 20) 61 Long Acre
- 21) Horse & Plough Long Acre
- 22) SE corner Tithby Rd/ Long Acre
- 23) Chesterfield Arms Church St.
- 24) Bradshaw Cottage, 34 Long Acre

The two remaining sites were: Midlands Computer Solutions, Grantham Road and Nat West Bank, Market Place. On the BHTA stand there were c.1900 photos showing these respectively as Reuben Hart, Wheelwright & Blacksmith and James Thomas Brown, Ironmongers & Glass Warehouse.

Thanks to Lovejoys who sponsored the Quiz and to the Horse and Plough, Experience Fine Wines and UGC Cinemas who kindly donated the prizes.