



APRIL AND MAY MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Spring Edition of the 2024 newsletter.

To open the Spring Edition we announce our forthcoming events – Continuing the theme that was suggested by the questionnaires that were received on what events the membership would like to happen these are the events planned for the next four months:



Wednesday, April 17th, Sam Mullins, OBE, Former Director, and Chief Executive of the award-winning London Transport Museum in Covent Garden on the subject of 'The New Harborough Museum, how we did it in 1982'

After 28 years of leading the London Transport Museum organisation, Sam stepped down from his position in 2023, but continues his career as a historian, writer, and presenter.



Wednesday, May 15th, Sandy Leong, on the subject of 'The Bishops Finger'.

Sandy is an historian, published author and a professional speaker. Sandy will give a lighthearted look at the history of British Pubs. The British public house started life as a Roman Wine Bar and dates back over 2000 years. Ale was central to the Anglo-Saxon sense of community, the place to get drink, often using a brush as a sign. An amusing evening is assured.



Wednesday, Jun 19th - Peter James will be talking about his involvement with a Formula 1 Racing Team.

Peter returns to the Society to talk about his involvement with a Formula 1 Racing Team, including some of the innovations some teams developed to try to stay in the lead!



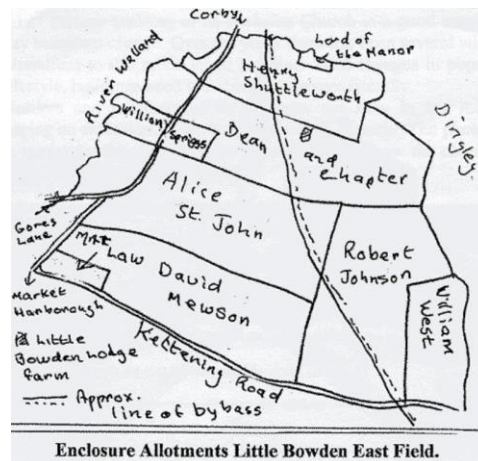
Sunday June 23rd - A return visit to Rothwell Bone Crypt – This is for those of you who unfortunately missed the last visit. Details will be announced later from Phil Baildon, and Kevin via the membership notification. Again, tickets will be limited.

Please note that monthly events are advertised online with both the Harborough Mail and HFM Events. They are also announced verbally on HFM Radio. Details can also be found on the Society Website, [Little Bowden Society - Michael-milsom.org.uk](http://LittleBowdenSociety-Michael-milsom.org.uk) plus the monthly membership notifications sent out by Kevin

The Society Facebook Page has been developed by Kevin to attract more members. If you are a Facebook user, please visit our page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/61446724600520> and give us a like. Alternatively, if you use social media but do not use Facebook, I have recently set up an Instagram Page Little_Bowden_Society, to help promote our meetings.

The East Field of Little Bowden

This story has been reproduced from the Society website with permission of its author, Pam Aucott. Pam is a well-respected local historian with a wealth of knowledge on the Market Harborough area.



For hundreds of years Little Bowden was a small agricultural village surrounded by three large open fields. Much of this land is now covered by new housing. The latest area for development has been the piece of land between the River Welland, Kettering Road and the old parish boundary. This area was covered by the East field, one of the three open fields of Little Bowden village.

Under the open field system of agriculture each field was worked on a three-year rotation. One-year peas and corn, the second-year wheat and the third year the field was left fallow. The farmers in the village had their lands dispersed in strips evenly distributed throughout the parish. As time went on exchange and sale often resulted in several adjoining strips being in single ownership. The size of the strip varied but most common was the one rood land some 8 yards wide by 220 yards or one furlong long, supposedly as much as a team of oxen could plough in one day.

The individual lands were grouped into furlongs, and these were perhaps reminiscent of the fields we have in our landscape today, except there were no hedges. Boundaries between furlongs might only be marked by a change in the direction in which land was ploughed or a strip of grass called a balk. Although the furlongs have disappeared the memory of them is retained in some of the new street names, Flaxland Close, Stinford Leys, Long Brimley Close and Stablegate Way are all based on furlong names. Stablegate Way or staple gate as it was originally named was an ancient road which extended across the East field as a continuation of glebe Road. A gate was the name for a road in areas under Scandinavian influence, whilst the staple was a post marking the road. This road was still visible as a grassy hollow in the field before the housing development occurred.

This open field system of agriculture persisted until the eighteenth century when the parish was enclosed, and the land divided into blocks and allocated to individuals who had previously had rights in the open fields. It was at this time the hedgerows were planted to demarcate each individuals' holdings. Some of the larger allotments were subdivided and planted with hedges to create the fields which remained until recent development began. After the enclosure the first building on the land of the former East field was Little Bowden Lodge farm or Tithe farm as it was called initially.

This was probably completed within a few years of the enclosure of the parish in 1780. The farmhouse was built on an eighty-acre plot which had been allocated to the Dean and Chapter of Christ Church college Oxford, in lieu of the tithes they had previously received from the St. Mary's lands within the parish. Christ Church also held lands in Great Bowden and together with the Little Bowden lands was known as the Great Bowden Rectory Estate. This property was finally sold in 1926 when the Little Bowden land was purchased by the Moseley family. The far buildings remain to this day although now they are on the other side of the bypass.

Development of the old East field was delayed until new sewers were laid in the late nineteen eighties, but progress since has been rapid and now the land as far as the A6 bypass has been lost to agriculture.

Market Harborough Museum reopens after re-display of work.

The Market Harborough Museum reopened on March 21st after a two-week closure to allow changes to the Hallaton Treasure display, including never seen items, including replica helmets. The reopening has been well covered by HFM and featured on BBC1 East Midlands News.

The collection has been the museum's main attraction since going on display in 2009 having been found at the turn of the 21st century. A Harborough Movie Makers film of the find was featured at our AGM in January.

I was fortunate to attend a preview, along with other Museum Volunteers on March 19th, and can thoroughly recommend a visit.



Photographs courtesy of Market Harborough Museum

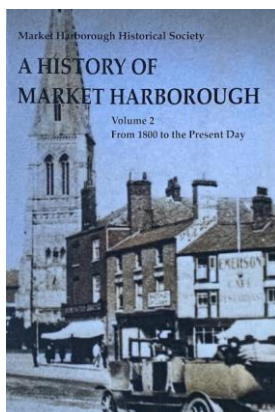
Little Bowden Information Leaflets

Back in 2001, the society, with sponsorship, published various leaflets about Little Bowden, which included various people, guided walks, and buildings of interest. As much has changed over the past 20 years, these leaflets have now been updated and reprinted. They are on sale at £3.00 for the three. These are on sale at Monthly Meetings or from Phil Baildon.



A History of Market Harborough – Volume 2

From 1800 to the Present Day



The Market Harborough Historical Society has just published their long awaited second volume, A History of Market Harborough. This volume is from 1800 to the present day. Two of the contributors are our society members, Phil Baildon and Pam Aucott. Pam is also one of the two assistant editors.

I was fortunate to have been bought an early copy as a gift and find it a very informative and enjoyable read. As of writing the Market Harborough Historical Society has not updated their website yet regarding the new publication, but if anyone is interested in buying a copy, please look at their website www.marketharboroughhistoricalsociety.org.

The Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum is now well established.

This gives residents more of a say in planning and land use in their community, as well as tackling issues such as flooding, traffic, and the care of green spaces.

Six of our Society members are on the Forum Committee, and they are working with other Forum members to develop a 'neighbourhood priorities statement' with a longer-term view of writing a Neighbourhood Plan.

There is more information on the HDC website. Log onto www.harborough.gov.uk – latest news - Town's first neighbourhood forum established in Little Bowden.

The Transport Group are already lobbying Central Government, LCC and HDC to try to avert the threat by Leicestershire County Council to cut subsidies for local bus services, plus planning applications within Little Bowden.

Phil Bowden, a Forum Committee Member, reports that an application has been by the Little Bowden Scouts for S106 money to rebuild and enlarge their Scout Hut.

If any members have any concerns, they would like to discuss, the Forum can also be contacted at bnfharborough@gmail.com.

In the next newsletter Simon Hobbs, from the Neighbourhood Forum, and Councillor Peter James will be writing an update from their presentations at the January AGM.

Future Newsletters.

If any member would like to contribute to the next newsletter, which will be the June to August Summer issue, the copy date is May 31st. Please send to me via email to awcherrington@gmail.com.

Anthony Cherrington, Publicity Co-ordinator, Little Bowden Society Committee, March 30th, 2024