



Grantham
Civic Society

www.granthamcivicsociety.co.uk

masthead artwork by Georgina Green

Newsletter

December 2022

Grantham Civic Society aims to:

Preserve the town's remaining fine or historically interesting buildings

Monitor the upkeep of green spaces

Keep a watching brief on new developments

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Great Gonerby post office



Diary dates (booking details on page 4)

Please put the following dates in your diaries for future events.

Thursday 15 December 2022

Christmas meal at The Angel and Royal
12 noon for 12.30 start

Thursday 19 January 2023

Breakfast meeting at Belton Park Golf Club
9.00am for 9.30 start
The programme for 2023 will be outlined

Friday 17 February

Talk by Catherine Edwards on the Archaeology of Grantham's Southern Relief Road
Grantham Museum 2.30pm

Friday 24 March

AGM with talk, hopefully by Gareth Davies MP
Grantham Museum 2.00pm

Thursday 6 April

Quiz Night and buffet
Belton Park Golf Club
6.30 for 7.00pm

From the Chairman

2022 is ending on a high for us with 209 members, over 1870 following us on Facebook, 422 on Twitter and 184 on Instagram with thanks to Treasurer Ruth and Secretary John for handling much of the many contacts. Fifteen years ago we had 60 members so we are very pleased at the increase in numbers.

Organising our programme of talks, visits and events is always a complicated job which the committee shares out. It would be helpful if we had at least a couple more members. Many of you might be reluctant to step forward so we are offering you the chance to attend one of our committee meetings to find out what goes on to see if you might be interested in joining us. There is no obligation but you will see us all in action and learn more of our planning. We hold Zoom as well as meetings at one of our homes from 10am for about 2 hours every couple of months. If you interested or just curious please email or ring me.

With best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year from all of your Committee
Courtney Finn

Lichfield visit

Our visit on Thursday 27th October to Lichfield was a great success, with a turnout of 27 departing promptly from The Meres by coach at 9am. We had a swift journey and were met in Lichfield by our hosts from Lichfield Civic Society. They are a struggling organisation, in that they have a reasonable number of members but not enough people willing to step up to Committee roles. Nevertheless they do have regular speakers and try to continue to comment on Local Planning matters.

The committee members who met us had gone to a lot of trouble to prepare for our visit and seemed extremely pleased that we had decided to visit their beautiful city.

We started with a coffee at "The Bistro" café, and an introduction from our hosts, before splitting up into smaller groups for guided tours of interesting parts of the city and also the Cathedral Close, which took up most of the morning. We found various places to have lunch and, in the afternoon, we explored the city or went on tours we had missed in the morning, before meeting back up for a cup of tea and cake at "The Bistro" and finally catching the Coach home, with everybody being ready on time to leave!

Lichfield surprised some of us with the quality and number of fine Georgian buildings it contains and the lovely, walled Cathedral Close, all of which was perhaps a very pleasant surprise, being so close to the Black Country industrial areas. Some of us hope to return to spend more time exploring the City.



We expressed our sincere thanks to the members of Lichfield Civic Society for all their kindness and attention during our visit, and offered to return the compliment and host a group of their members in Grantham, maybe in 2023.

Attached is a copy of their most recent newsletter noting our visit to them.

Graham Cook



The photograph above shows the Boer War memorial carved by Lichfield stonemasons Bridgeman & Sons (sadly no longer in business) which is located in York, near the Minster, so we may see it on our visit to York next Summer (spoiler alert for our 2023 programme) They retained one of the carvings intended for this memorial in Lichfield as it was considered too militaristic to go on the York memorial!!



November Talk by Bob Brownlow

Escritt and Barrell, Auctioneers: Their role in the history of Grantham

To a packed room at Grantham Museum, on Thursday 10 November, Bob Brownlow gave us a fascinating and witty talk covering the early history of his old firm, Escritt and Barrell, from the foundation of the business in the 1860s up to the 1920s. He described how Henry Escritt built up his auctioneer and valuer business as well as becoming a partner in the Grantham Journal in its early days. Bob explained how Henry became extremely successful with both ventures, taking into partnership, in 1904, CF Barrell Auctioneer of Spalding. Bob explained that Henry was not averse to publicising his own business, and denigrating the opposition, through the pages of the Journal! He loved and ran the cattle market in Grantham, which had the enormous benefit of its proximity to the railway for the transport of livestock to and from market. He also became entrusted with valuation of substantial local estates such as Burley House and Denton manor and was heavily involved, for example, in housing developments in Grantham including the large area developed east of the river, on land owned by Lord Harrowby, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; the area which became New Somerby.

Bob talked about how Henry handed over control of the Grantham Journal to his son and retired to Bournemouth but decided to return to live and work in Grantham after the tragic death of his son in 1910, winning back control of his beloved Grantham Journal and continuing to work in the town thereafter. He thoroughly modernised the printing methods at the Journal in his time

Bob was thoroughly applauded after his talk and answered a number of questions from interested members of the audience. **Graham Cook**

Historic building concerns

Your Committee has been working, for some time, to try to get some action taken to halt the decline of Grade 2 listed Bow House on Manthorpe Road, adjoining the Old Burial Ground which so many of you have visited on our Heritage Weekend openings. This has principally been led by our Treasurer, Ruth Crook, who has diligently researched the previous owners of the house, which has effectively been abandoned and has ivy growing through the roof. Since 2020 Ruth has tracked down that the couple who last owned the house died some time ago and she has, so far unsuccessfully, tried to trace any descendants. She has also tried to get SKDC, Heritage Lincs and Historic England to intervene, but none of them seem able to get involved unless we can track down an owner. Frustratingly, a neighbour to the house says that a man does turn up randomly for a few days, with keys to get into the house, but then disappears again for months. We will continue our searches on all fronts.

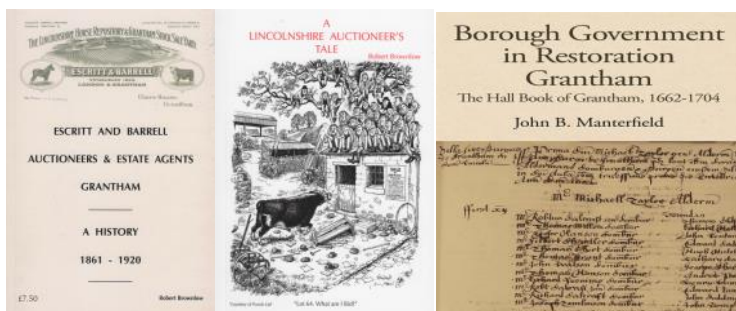
We have also been trying to get some action taken by SKDC to enforce repairs, or at least temporary support, to the front of the old Barkers Café on Vine Street. There was a serious collapse of the front rendering some time ago and we have at last, after many weeks, received confirmation from the Planning Department that they are pursuing the matter with the owners, and for now at least, the blue tarpaulins and stronger metal fencing around the area will offer some short term protection, both to the building and to passers-by. We will continue to monitor and chase up this matter on members' behalf, and hope that a more permanent repair can be organised to this fine historic building, right in the heart of the town and just around the corner from the Angel and Royal. **Graham Cook**



Book stall

Copies of Bob Brownlow's book on Escritt and Barrell are available for £7 as well as his humorous 'A Lincolnshire Auctioneer's Tale' also £7 and also other new and used books in good time for Christmas stocking fillers. John Manterfield's book 'Borough Government in Restoration Grantham' is also available, at £25.

John Manterfield



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Grantham Civic Society

www.granthamcivicsociety.co.uk

Membership

Membership forms can be obtained from Ruth Crook or downloaded from the website. Membership currently costs **£12 per annum** (£22 for two people at the same address)

Events for the coming months.....

Breakfast meeting

Thursday 19 January 2023

Price £10 pp for full English breakfast

Details will be announced for the programme of events for 2023

Names to Graham Cook and payment to Ruth Crook by Thursday 12 January please

February talk

Friday 17 February

Talk by Catherine Edwards on the Archaeology of Grantham's Southern Relief Road

Grantham Museum 2.30pm

Free entry

Friday 24 March

AGM with talk, hopefully by Gareth Davies MP

Grantham Museum 2.00pm

Free entry

Thursday 6 April

Quiz Night and buffet

Belton Park Golf Club

6.30 for 7.00pm

Price to be confirmed

Names to Graham Cook and payment to Ruth Crook by Monday 27 March please

PLEASE MAKE ALL PAYMENTS FOR THE EVENTS ABOVE IN ADVANCE OF THE EVENT AND ON THE WEBSITE IF POSSIBLE RATHER THAN BY CHEQUE.

Sexty Brothers clockmakers of Grantham

Ruth Crook, our Society Treasurer, recently received an enquiry from clockmaker Jon Shaw regarding 19th Century Grantham clockmakers, the Sexty brothers. Richard William Sexty appears in the 1851 census as a 22year old watchmaker and is listed in Whites directory in 1856 as in business in the High Street. He was joined in 1857 by his younger brother Henry and they were thereafter known as Sexty brothers. They are noted in Hugh Watson's book "**Keeping Time**". RW Sexty died in 1863 but Henry Sexty continued the business until c1913.



To my mind, *Keeping Time* is one of the best researched and well-illustrated books ever published on the retail trade of the town as well as on the specific development of clock and watchmaking. It extends to 323pp and I have one new copy available at £19. Please let me know if you would like a copy.

Jon Shaw has told us that the Sexty Brothers clock shown left is one that he is currently restoring

John Manterfield

