



February 2017

Welcome to the latest Castle Transformation Newsletter

Welcome to our round up for February.

This issue features:

- Project update
- Light Night round up
- Survey - Help us out with Robin Hood
- Scott's column - Caves stories with Scott Lomax
- Object of the month - Lace sample
- Olympians at the Castle



Project update - February

Welcome to February's news. Lots happening around the site and lots of information and feedback being gathered. We'd love it if you could help us out with our short survey too. Please read on...



Archaeology - This month the project team has been meeting with the City Archaeologist and members of the professional design team to explore various aspects of the planned archaeology works on site at the Castle.



Several areas have now been identified where significant archaeological investigations will have to take place before building works can commence. One of these includes the whole footprint of the new Visitor Centre, which will be located near the gatehouse. Due to the scale of the work it is anticipated that some archaeology may take place at the castle very soon, so watch this space!

Light Night surveys - We would like to thank everybody who stopped in the cold to talk to us during our consultation at Light Night at Brewhouse Yard!



Despite the freezing temperatures we managed to have some fantastic conversations with visitors about our proposals for the first floor of the Brewhouse Yard Cottages. This sort of input is vital during this stage of our project, as the testing of concepts can either challenge or reinforce the design proposals, often bringing unique perspectives.



Site surveys - During February the site has been busy with various surveying teams conducting final surveys. Topographical surveys have been carried out in the grounds of the Castle and Brewhouse Yard to further inform the landscape designs, and the service wing of the Castle has been 3D laser scanned to enable BIM (Building Information Modelling) for this area of the site.

Can you describe Robin Hood? - During half term, members of the content development team spent a day talking to visitors about Robin Hood. A five minute survey was conducted on site at the Castle, with visitors describing 'their Robin Hood'. Thank you to everyone who took part. We got some fantastic responses and lots to think about at this crucial time in the project.

For your chance to share your views about Robin Hood please see the feature below.



Have your say on Robin Hood

This month, we have been conducting visitor surveys at the Castle to find out what people think about Robin Hood.

Now it's your turn...

[Complete this short Survey Monkey questionnaire](#) for us which is a few short questions about our famous folk hero.

There are no right or wrong answers, this is all about your opinion and personal preferences.

We really appreciate your help. Data from this survey will feed into our plans for the new Robin Hood Gallery, currently being designed by exhibition designers [Casson Mann](#).

[Back to top](#)

Light Night at Nottingham Castle

It was another beautiful (if cold) Light Night event up at the Castle and Brewhouse Yard with thousands of visitors coming to see the site lit up and with several interesting installations.

If you have any great shots then please forward them to:
nottinghamcastleproject@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

We are particularly looking for images taken of the installation in the tunnel.

The images below were taken by students from [Central College](#) - Fantastic job!

[Back to top](#)

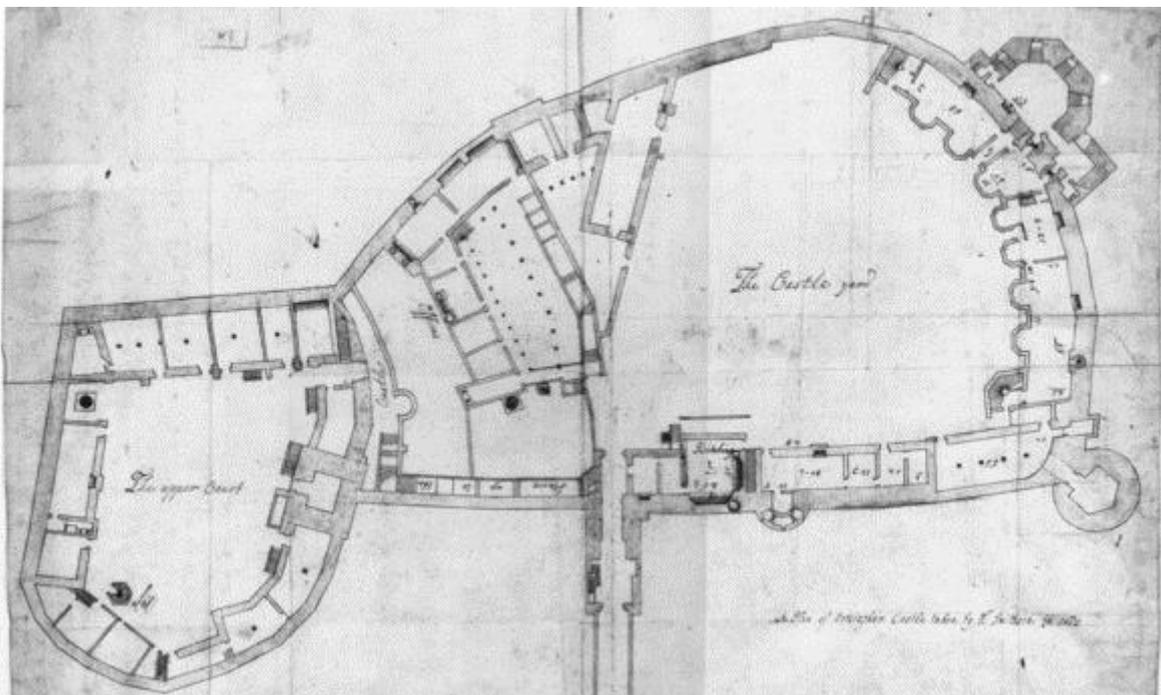


Scott's Findings

Welcome to the twelfth column from City Archaeologist, Scott Lomax. This month, he celebrates the 400th anniversary of the drawing of a detailed plan which helps us more fully understand what Nottingham Castle looked like prior to its demolition in 1651.

Order to destroy - Following the Civil War Colonel John Hutchinson, who was Governor of the castle and the town of Nottingham (for the Parliamentarians), requested that the castle be destroyed. When explaining why it had been destroyed, to a 'heartily vexed' Oliver Cromwell, he claimed it was because the castle was no longer needed and it was a burden to the town, no doubt because of its poor condition. The truth is that Hutchinson did not agree with Cromwell's military activities as Lord Protector following Charles I's execution, and was particularly angered by the behaviour of Cromwell's supporters. Rather than allow Cromwell's supporters to gain control of the castle he organised its destruction.

Demolition - In 1651 the castle was demolished, using gunpowder, but the gatehouse, parts of the curtain walls, the base of the tower commonly known as Richard's Tower, the north-eastern tower of the Middle Bailey and the Middle Bailey bridge all survived (albeit in relatively poor condition) and can still be seen today. The foundation courses of other structural elements of the castle survive beneath ground, and have in part been investigated through archaeological excavation. Future archaeological work associated with the castle transformation is likely to reveal more of the medieval castle.



The Smythson plans

Proof of building works - There are many historic texts which provide details of building works at the castle and so give an idea of some of the buildings that existed, when they were built and what they were built of.

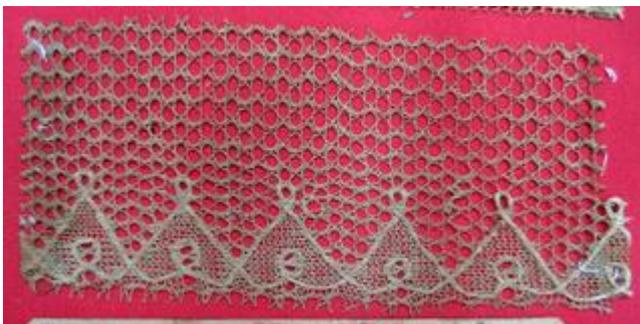
John Leland who visited the castle in 1538 wrote, 'The bass court is large and mighty strong, and there is a stately bridge (with pillars bearing beasts and giants) over the ditch into the second ward, the front of which at the entrance is exceeding strong, with towers and portcullices [sic]. Within is a fair green court fit for any princely exercise. The south-east parts of the castle are strong and well towered, within the old tower there is another court tho' somewhat less than the last mentioned.'

Smythson plans - However, it is the plan drawn in 1617 by the architect John Smythson which offers the greatest understanding of the Upper and Middle Baileys of the castle and the structures that once existed. Following Leland's visit very little work was undertaken at the castle (apart from occasional maintenance) until 1643 when the ruinous building had to be strengthened so that it could be a suitable garrison for the Parliamentarians in the Civil War. And so the plan drawn in 1617 gives us an excellent idea of what the castle would have looked like during the reign of Henry VIII, and with further documentary research it is possible to understand the castle's appearance during the reigns of earlier monarchs.

John Smythson's father, Robert, had designed [Wollaton Hall](#) among many other important buildings and John had assisted his father with many of his later projects. In 1617 John produced a plan of Nottingham Castle which thankfully survives today. It is drawn in ink on fragile paper measuring 37.5cm by 54.6cm. The plans shows not only walls, but also stairways, doors, fireplaces, wells, the original entrance to Mortimer's Hole from the top of the Castle Rock (a new entrance was carved when the Ducal Palace was built) and even garderobes. Some of the buildings within the castle complex are labelled and it is possible to work out the likely function of many of the other buildings.

Some errors - There are some errors in the plan, which is to be expected when one considers the changing topography of the site and the primitive survey equipment available. For example there are some walls which are not shown on the plan which are known to have existed and the size of the north-eastern tower is not quite correct, but on the whole it illustrates what the castle looked like 400 years ago and offers a good basis for future historical and archaeological research projects targeting elements of the castle.

[Back to top](#)



Object of the month

What is it?

This month we are highlighting one of the earliest surviving examples of machine-made lace ever produced.

Why is it significant?

As the Lace Market reminds us, the lace industry played a significant role in the history of Nottingham for over 200 years. The growth

of the industry was fuelled by developments in machine lace and by the early 1900s it employed one third of Nottingham's working population.

Tell me more

Although small and unassuming, our cotton lace sample illustrates an important stage of machine-made lace development. Dating from 1769, it is made up of triangles of plain knitting and net ground, it was originally white in colour.

It was made by Robert Frost of Arnold who refined "The Tickler" that had already been added to a stocking frame. He used a carved wooden cylinder, like on a barrel organ, to prompt the ticklers, which transferred the loops in the lace from one side to the other, to create a net pattern. The thick outline thread or gimp was embroidered or run in by hand to emphasise the pattern.

In our opinion

"Robert Frost was one of the many clever innovators of Nottingham who played a part in the creative and fast changing lace industry of the 18th and 19th centuries. This small sample shows how men and women have always worked together combining machines and handwork to create a finished piece of lace."

Judith Edgar - Curator of Lace, Costume and Textiles Collection, Nottingham City Museums and Galleries

[Read more about the history of the Lace Market](#)

The lace sample will feature in the new Nottingham Lace Gallery currently being designed by exhibition designers [Casson Mann](#).

[Back to top](#)

Castle in the news - Olympians visit the Castle

There was a whole new kind of exhibition at the Castle last week as Olympic medal winning triathletes, the Brownlee Brothers along with female athletes Jodie Stimpson and Sophie Caldwell visited Nottingham to launch the British Triathlon Mixed Relay Cup.

This event will be held in the city on Victoria Embankment, September 2.

[Read more about the triathlon event and book spectator tickets](#)

[Back to top](#)

