



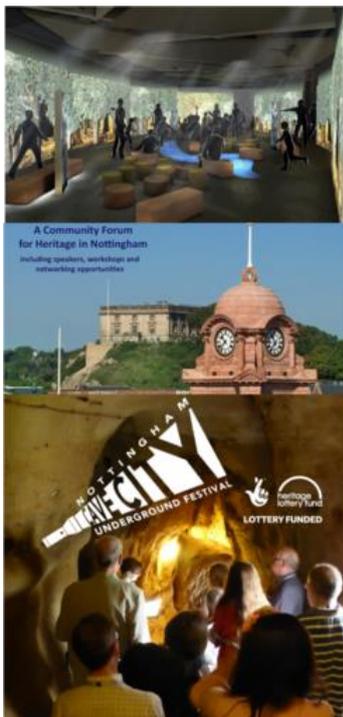
March 2018



Welcome to the March Castle Transformation Newsletter

This month, we feature:

- Project update
- We Dig the Castle
- Object of the month - Carved wooden horse leg
- Jade's Column - Robin Hood Pageant and Illuminate
- Scott's Column - Reconstruction project



Project update – March 2018

Welcome to our March project news...

Work for Robin Hood Gallery - This month, we were excited to hold a review of the content and designs for our new Robin Hood Gallery, currently under development. Experts in digital and immersive experiences from all over the country gathered for a day of thought provoking debate and we were delighted with the resulting suggestions. Exercises like this are a really important part of the development process as we strive to ensure that our end product exceeds visitor expectations and achieves our aim of being an enjoyable and absorbing Robin Hood experience.

Nottingham Heritage Partnership Day - The Project Team was happy to speak at this event on 24 March, updating the attendees on the progress of the project. The event was attended by a number of community, private and public organisations across the city with an interest in Nottingham's heritage.

Alongside various speakers, a number of workshops were on offer for participants, facilitated by Nottingham Black Archives and Trent and Peak Archaeology amongst others. An enjoyable and informative day was had by all and we look forward to working alongside the Nottingham Heritage Partnership in the future.

Caves Festival - With the Cave City Festival fast approaching (date for your diaries - 11 to 13 May!) the Project Team has been hard at work developing a full programme of events in conjunction with our partners across the city.

We have a sneak peek for you this month as we can announce that we will be hosting a secret cinema event in one of Nottingham's caves. We'll have to keep you guessing as to the location though, as this will be kept firmly under wraps for the time being.

Please [check the event website](#) for more information as events are confirmed. We hope to see you there!

We Dig the Castle returns

...uncovering more of the 1000 years of history at Nottingham Castle and Brewhouse Yard.

We are delighted that We Dig the Castle – Nottingham Castle's annual training excavation – will be returning this summer. The 2015-17 excavations focused on the Outer Bailey, uncovering new evidence of the 19th-century allotments and the Ducal Palace gardens, and may be a track or platform for the spotlights used in the grounds by the Royal Hoods.



In 2018 trainees can look forward to a brand new programme including not only to the Outer Bailey but also Brewhouse Yard, the caves and the Castle walls. This is the first time for these areas.

At the gatehouse, on Castle Road, investigations will aim to locate the medieval ditch that ran around the curtain wall, while also recording the Castle fortifications.

In Brewhouse Yard, in the first archaeological investigation since the 1970s, we will look for evidence of the buildings depicted in the earliest maps, developing a new understanding of how this area might have looked in the medieval period.

Fieldwork and training opportunities will include test-pitting, excavation and recording, finds identification and post-excavation, and, for the first time, augering, digitisation and historic building recording.

"The We Dig the Castle programme provides a key element of our Museum Service Research Strategy and complements a range of other collaborative programmes. Together, they are yielding far greater understanding than ever before.

I look forward to seeing the picture unfold and I am certain that it will be a fascinating experience for all those taking part." **Ron Inglis, Service Manager (Museums & Galleries)**, Nottingham City Museums and Galleries Service

"There will be more exciting opportunities, with excavation above ground and in some of the caves, building recording work and plans for geophysical survey to locate the outermost medieval ditch of the castle." **Scott Lomax, Acting City Archaeologist**, Nottingham City Council

We Dig the Castle runs from 16 July to 17 August (weekdays), and is for ages 14-plus (under-16s with an adult).

[Visit the website](#) for more information about joining We Dig the Castle, and the archaeology and finds uncovered in previous years, see or follow We Dig the Castle [on Facebook](#)

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Object of the Month

What is it?: This month we have chosen a carved wooden horse's leg as our highlighted object.

Why is it significant?: This item was produced to repair the equestrian statue of the First Duke of Newcastle which was located above the centre of the East Front of the ducal palace. The first duke was an accomplished horseman who had built riding schools at Bolsover Castle and Welbeck Abbey.

Tell me more: Until the Reform Bill Riot in 1831 when the statue was vandalised, it was assumed to be a single block of stone. Its destruction revealed separate pieces joined by two large iron cramps in the horse's chest. The replacement of the horse's leg, which had been disguised with stone effect paint, also became common knowledge

The compensation enquiry heard that a painter had placed a ladder against the statue some years before causing the original leg to break off. An architectural valuation of compensation of £250 for the statue was countered by one of 150 guineas for what had become "an aged horse".



In our opinion: "This is not only an architecturally significant item, in that it reveals more about the iconic statue of William Cavendish (the originator of the ducal palace) but a historically interesting one, in that the rioters specifically targeted the statue as part of their assault on the Castle."

Dr Richard A Gaunt, Curator of Rebellion

The carved wooden horse's leg will feature in the new Rebellion Gallery currently being designed by exhibition designers Casson Mann.

[Read more about William Cavendish](#)
[Nottinghamshire History writes on William Cavendish](#)
[Read more about the history of dressage](#)

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Jade's Column - Robin Hood Pageant

"After a rainy Saturday afternoon, the sun finally came out to greet us on Sunday morning; just in time for day two of the Robin Hood Pageant.

As the steps filled up with families, couples and mothers and children celebrating Mother's Day in medieval style, Robin Hood and the 'Sheriff' welcomed us all in a rather comedic manner with lots of banter, the kids were loving it.

We also got to meet the real Sheriff of Nottingham Councillor Glyn Jenkins. The two Sheriffs seemed to get on OK - see below.

After a light-hearted battle reenactment, some pretty impressive fire breathing and an applauded effort at using a diablo by the non-official Sheriff, it was time for some beautiful falconry.

The birds of prey soared above and across the crowd's heads, perching on the railings and almost posing for pictures. It was quite amusing as none of the birds wanted to listen to the handler, instead they wanted to do their own thing and put on their own display for us which was easily one of my favourite parts of the day.

Last but not least, the jousting began! Dramatic music, beautiful horses, hilarious comedy, and all in all a great action packed performance from the Knights of Nottingham. What a great day out at the Castle!



Illuminate - Rebellious Retail

Jade also had a really interesting meeting with a local arts group this month...

"This month, the super talented Illuminate team presented to us the work they had produced as part of their Rebellious Retail Project.

The idea of this project was that they were to come up with and design prototypes of products relating to the new Rebellion gallery which could be sold in the castle shop

once the transformation is complete.

We were extremely impressed with the designs they had come up with, which they explained were inspired by the artefacts chosen to represent the story of the Reform Bill Riots in 1831, which resulted in the Ducal Palace being set aflame by a group of rioters. Subverting the images with graffiti style designs also tied in with the rebellious theme.

The group did a lot of research in to popular products in gift shops by visiting the Nottingham Contemporary gift shop and the Castle gift shop (amongst others), picking out products which they liked. This led to them choosing to make mugs, magnets, bags, purses and note books. They also did some screen printing workshops to see how it worked and even had a go at it themselves. The project has also gone towards them completing an Arts Award which is great!"

In next month's newsletter we will be sharing pictures of their designs and prototypes with you and asking for some feedback on them so look out for that!



Scott's Column

This month, Scott talks about his major archaeological reconstruction project and the detective work that has helped to unveil a real medieval character from the city.

"Thank you to everyone who came to my 'A Face From the Past' talks at the beginning of March.

If you were not able to attend last time, there will be another chance to hear the findings of the research, which has been taking place for 9 and a half years. The research has shed new light on Nottingham during the medieval period.

The talk discusses, in detail, a little known medieval burial ground in Nottingham city centre and the documentary and scientific research that has revealed important new information about some of the city's medieval inhabitants.

Details of injuries, health problems, where the individuals lived for parts of their lives before coming to Nottingham, details of diet, the history of the period in which they lived, and the face of one of the individuals will be revealed during this hour long talk. There will also be time for questions and the opportunity to discuss this site, or anything else to do with the archaeology of the city, after the talk."

The talk will be held again at the Castle, on Saturday 7 April. For further details please visit. [Book your tickets now](#)

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Lace panel from February newsletter

Apologies, the caption for the lace panel was incorrect in our last edition. [Carol Quarini's](#) work at Wollaton Hall on 17 and 18 March is a response to the Battle of Britain Lace panel which was pictured. We captioned this as Carol's work. We hope you enjoyed the exhibition. Thank you to newsletter reader and Lace specialist, Dr Gail Baxter for pointing this out.

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