



**Welcome to the second edition of the Castle transformation newsletter!  
July 2015**

**What's been happening over the last month?**

Work is progressing well on development of plans for the Castle transformation and on the Stage 2 Heritage Lottery Fund bid, due to be submitted in summer 2016. Highlights include:

- A review of architects Purcell's designs for round 1 bid has been undertaken, resulting in a number of alternative design options. Final requirements have been established and Purcell are now working on revised designs for the visitor centre and for the restoration of the Ducal Mansion.
- The internal curatorial team has been meeting with our exhibition designers Casson Mann to develop ideas and progress plans for the interpretation of the site and its collections.
- The Project Team has been investigating the possibility of using BIM (Building Information Modelling) throughout the project. This 3D scanning technology has a variety of applications, not just to the project architects but also as an interpretative tool for use in engagement activities and even project communications. Preliminary scans took place in the Castle Courtyard on 13 July.
- Partnership development work is ongoing. Collaborative opportunities are currently being explored with Nottingham Trent University and RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects).
- Discussions have started concerning the opportunity for a greatly enhanced cave offer at the Castle. As part of the redevelopment project more of the Castle's hidden cave network will become publicly accessible, integrating the cave experience fully into the visitor offer.



**Archaeology Live!**

Nottingham Castle is currently hosting a major archaeological dig which started on Monday 13 July and is now well underway in the area between the bandstand and the curtain wall.

The excavation aims to add to knowledge and understanding of the medieval period in Nottingham. Top layers of soil are revealing evidence of 19th century life on site, but it is hoped that deeper layers will reveal evidence of occupation and activities during the Middle Ages. Nottingham Castle was one of only a few "Royal Castles" which were controlled by the monarchy directly rather than by local lords and so gives us an opportunity to look at the nature of royal power and authority across a number of formative periods in the history of this country.



Dr Paul Johnson from Trent & Peak Archaeology said: "Nottingham Castle has always been central to the history of the city; from the Norman Conquest and the Civil Wars, through to civil disturbances in the 19th century, this site has seen a lot of action over the years. For an Archaeologist this means that there is the potential to discover some very interesting evidence that will help us better understand the heritage of the area."

Members of staff are on hand throughout to talk about the dig and how it fits with the planned £24m transformation of the Castle. This dig ends on 14 August.

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**Profile – Richard Gaunt, Associate Professor in Modern History at the University of Nottingham, specialising in British History c.1780-1850.**

"In April, I began a three-year residency with Nottingham Castle Museums and Galleries as their new 'Curator of Rebellion and Social Justice'. My title is always a cause of conversation and many of my new colleagues are envious of the impeccably 'cool' credentials it bestows. The residency is part of an ongoing partnership between the University and the Castle to develop closer academic relationships. Alongside my normal University duties, I am working part-time with the Castle's established curators, including Adrian Davies, to help develop the new 'Rebellion Gallery', which is at the heart of the Castle transformation. The post itself has been funded by Arts Council England."



**Object of the month - Behold! The head of a traitor**

Nottingham Castle recently displayed the block on which the head of Jeremiah Brandreth was placed, after he was hanged for High Treason in 1817. The block was loaned from Derby Museums and Art Gallery and Richard Gaunt (profiled above) provided the historical context for the display. Jeremiah Brandreth was one of the leading rebels in the Pentrich Rebellion of 1817, a failed workers' revolt. He was known as 'the Nottingham Captain'. After being hanged, Jeremiah Brandreth's body was laid on the block so that his head could be chopped off. He and two of his conspirators were the last people to be beheaded with an axe in Britain.

Objects like this are currently being selected and researched as the basis for the new Rebellion Gallery – a key feature of the Castle transformation - which will explore Nottingham's history of rebellion and social protest from medieval times through to the present day.

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**Kids Go Free at Nottingham Castle offer**

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