



September 2019

## Welcome to the September Castle Transformation Newsletter

This month, we feature:

- **Project update** - Tapestries, Stained Glass, LEGO
- **Archaeology Update** - An intriguing find
- **Nottingham Castle Trust News** - Alabasters
- **Object of the Month** - Puzzle Jug
- **Top Trumps** - No. 5: Robin Hood
- **G F Tomlinson** - One-year on
- **Robin Hood Pageant** - Choose Your Side



[Watch the latest time lapse images for September on our website](#)



## September 2019 – Project Update

Welcome to our project news for September 2019

**Tapestry conservation** - Earlier this month our prized 17<sup>th</sup> century tapestry maps were sent off for conservation work to the National Trust Textile Conservation Studio in Norfolk. Work to be done includes surface cleaning, and replacement fastenings required for hanging. We are delighted that these maps are getting the attention they deserve and will be ready to take pride of place in the new Rebellion Gallery next year. (Images shown depicts tapestry maps before the conservation work).

**Stained Glass project** - Our Camm Bros window research volunteers have been hard at work this month. As well as a site tour for those who hadn't already viewed the location of the window arch, they also made a visit to the Museum Service Registry based at the Waterworks Building at Broomhouse Yard. The purpose of this visit was to scour the archives for any mention of the window and learn all we could from the various ledgers, day books and correspondence at our disposal. Thanks must go to Eileen who made this very easy for us and was a great help. For details of what

we found out be sure to check out our project blog which is due to go live on the website in early October!

**Robin statue meets LEGO** - Visitors to the Robin Hood statue this month may have noticed some unusual activity, as Robin was briefly donning some colourful LEGO accessories as part of a national LEGO public engagement activity. This project has temporarily transformed famous landmarks around the country – the LEGO designs used were all inspired by ideas proposed by children. We think Robin looked great!

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## Archaeology Update - An intriguing find! from Trent and Peak

Thanks to project archaeologists, Trent and Peak for the news and images of a really interesting find on site...

"We have recently uncovered two previously undiscovered features of the early Medieval Castle whilst working in what will be part of the new Robin Hood Gallery and on the access road to the south of the Ducal Palace. These features add new understanding of previously unknown phases of the Medieval Castle."



"Work in the Boiler Room required the removal of a small section of bricks revealing a void which had been back filled with stone and rubble. Once cleared out this revealed a circular feature which measured 1.72m across and was set back into the wall by a depth of 1.5m. **(See the image above for detail on this find)** It was first thought that the circular feature was possibly an oven, however after further examination it was decided that this was not the case. The sides were open to the air and would be unable to retain heat effectively. It was also noted that the stonework at the back of the feature showed no evidence of being directly affected by high temperatures, which would be expected in an oven."

The undercroft is directly below the spiral staircase suggesting that this was possibly the main access to the undercroft. It has been tentatively suggested that the spiral staircase could have continued upwards and run into Romylowe's tower, constructed in 1362, giving access from one of the lowest areas of the castle in the undercroft to one of the highest in the Middle Bailey."



"Close to the location of Romylowe's tower over the wine cellar, a small section of medieval wall has been uncovered. **The image to the left shows the medieval remains that are part of the curtain wall of the Upper Bailey** that would have formed the main defensive wall of the Upper Bailey."

"During the excavations in 1998-99 an area outside the south side of the Ducal Palace was excavated and a large section of the curved curtain wall was exposed."

"This section of the wall was measured as being 2.5 meters thick. The new fragment of wall was less than a meter wide. Presuming the curtain wall was at least a similar thickness all around the Upper Bailey this goes to show the level of truncation. The curtain wall would have been demolished during the slighting of the Castle after William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, purchased the site in 1661."

(Images credited to Trent and Peak)

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## Nottingham Castle Trust News

### 'Pride of Bordeaux': Nottingham Alabaster Restored to St Michel Basilica

Nottingham alabaster has captured the imaginations of artists and religious institutions across the world. These carvings, since the fourteenth century, have found themselves spread in abbeys and churches across the world, including some in Portugal, France and even Iceland. Nonetheless, as The Times newspaper recently reported, St Michel Basilica in Bordeaux, France, has found that this covetousness comes at a price.

In 1993, it was discovered that the alabaster sculptures in the Basilica had been stolen in 1984 and replaced with modern fakes. What's more, it has taken 25 years for the reliefs to be returned to their rightful place in the Basilica, with the sculptures being returned to the church just days ago.







[The Times 'New niche' article](#)

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Their return will be welcome news not just to those in the fine art industry, but also to the people of Nottingham. Our city's alabaster is some of the last remaining British sculpture-work to survive the Pre-Reformation period, and we are proud to announce that the Castle will be showcasing a collection of these works: the largest of its kind in Europe. These beautiful sculptures will demonstrate the once world-renowned talents of medieval Nottingham artists, and celebrate their legacy.

From the beautiful alabaster carving 'Flawford Virgin & Child' (Pictured) dating back to circa 1380 to the altarpiece fragment 'The Holy Church', (Second image) there will be something for everyone in this unique and dynamic collection.

**References:**

[Read the Times article](#)

[Alabaster piece in Nottingham Post](#)



## Object of the month

**This month we feature a puzzle jug from the Castle's saltglaze pottery collection...**

**What is it?** - September's object is an 18<sup>th</sup> Century Nottingham saltglazed stoneware puzzle jug which would have provided entertainment and the opportunity to lay wagers on drinking from it without spillage!

**Why is it significant?** - Nottingham was an early centre of saltglazed stoneware production. During the production process salt was thrown into the kiln during the higher temperature part of the firing which gave the end product its name & distinctive finish.

James Morley opened a pottery on Barkergate sometime between 1688 and 1693. By 1700 he was producing illustrated cards advertising his saltglazed stoneware commemorative mugs &

loving cups. Further potteries opened in Nottingham, but by 1790 Staffordshire had gained the monopoly of trade and all of the Nottingham potteries had closed.

**Tell me more** - Puzzle jugs were very popular in homes and inns, the necks were decorated with patterns of holes which made drinking without spilling impossible unless the concealed tubes which ran round the rims & down the handles were used. Our jug also has three spouts, two of which would have needed fingers covering them to avoid spilling the ale, watching the drinker attempt to do this would have been very entertaining.

The Puzzle Jug will feature in the new Early Nottingham Craft Gallery currently being designed by exhibition designers Casson Mann.

[Bingham Heritage description of Stoneware finds](#)  
[Mentions in A History of the World - BBC](#)

## Top Trumps #5

Welcome to the fifth in the series of Castle stories, turned into a game of Top Trumps. Top Trumps #5 is The Legend himself - Robin Hood

[Sherwood Forest History](#)  
[Robin Hood on BBC History Website](#)

We really think our scores will split the judges on this one - what do you think? Please [email us](#) to let us know whether you agree or disagree with our scores.

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**NOTTINGHAM CASTLE PROJECT**  
*1,000 Years of History*



## Top Trumps #5

**Robin Hood, the legendary  
Nottinghamshire outlaw**

**Circa thirteenth century**

The first written reference to "Robyn Hood" appeared in 1377 although these adventures involved King Richard and Prince John from earlier times. Robin and his followers were outlawed for rebelling against harsh government and his enduring story makes Nottinghamshire's outlaw one of the the most famous in history!



## NOTTINGHAM CASTLE PROJECT

*1,000 Years of History*



## Top Trumps #5

### Scores

Style - 98

Claim to Fame - 100

Rebel Rating - 100

Dreadful Deeds - 35

Popularity - 100



### References

[sherwoodforesthistorv.blogspot.com/p/outlaws-villains.html](http://sherwoodforesthistorv.blogspot.com/p/outlaws-villains.html)

[bbc.co.uk/history/british/middle\\_ages/robin\\_O1.shtml](http://bbc.co.uk/history/british/middle_ages/robin_O1.shtml)

## Contractor update - The latest from G F Tomlinson

As we head into one year on-site, the re-development works are well underway!

The extension to the Ducal Palace is progressing well, with the roof steel structure now fully enclosed ready for the zinc roof and the final dry lining and plastering now being undertaken.

Inside the Palace, the transformation works continue with a high level decoration taking place to the corncicing and laylights to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.



Ground floor service installations are complete with the service trenches being closed in and are now fully upgraded and filled back in. The existing Rebels Gallery roof has been removed, refurbished and is in the process of being reinstated. Externally, works to the North and Central parts of the Ducal Palace roof are complete and works are underway to the South elevation.

The new Visitors Centre oak cladding is being installed and the final fix of mechanical and electrical works are taking place. All windows are now fully fitted, with just the main entrance doors to be installed early October.

Repairs to the Gatehouse are progressing well, with the re-placement stone being delivered to site in the next few weeks.

**Richard Oldfield – G F Tomlinson Project Manager**



## Robin Hood Pageant

This unique immersive experience will take you back to 12th Century Nottingham to witness the epic struggle between the Sheriff of Nottingham and Robin Hood. Choose Your Side.

As you enter through the forest, the sounds and smells of Robin Hood's encampment will guide you to his merry band of outlaws hiding out. Close by, a royal hunting party, led by the evil Sheriff of

Nottingham, is about to snare their biggest prize of all. Will word get out on Robin's location? Will the Sheriff's men ride in to challenge his supremacy of the forest? Who will win the hearts of the people?

**Did you know? All Pageant ticket holders also receive complimentary admission to Newstead Abbey and grounds (worth up to £10 per person)**

Plus see local minstrels, artisans and characters. Eat, drink and be merry. Learn a trade or two. Have a go at archery to see if you make the cut to become one of the merry band of outlaws. You may even meet the man who would become a legend.

**All arena activities are included within the price of your ticket with the exception of food, drinks and retail.**

**It's the perfect Half Term treat for all budding outlaws**

**Adult £15.50**

**Children £11.50**

**Family £45.00 (up to 2 adults and 3 children)**

Don't miss out [Book today!](#)

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*Watch the Robin Hood Pageant trailer*

