

October 2020

Welcome to the October Castle Transformation Newsletter

This month, we feature:

- **Project update** - Dining space, handover, green laying
- **Play area update** - Archaeology and build
- **Makers' Table update** - Louise Dunning, Curator
- **Nottingham Castle Trust news** - Volunteers and commemorating history
- **Top Trumps** - No.18 - Lucy Hutchinson - Diarist and Governor's Wife
- **Contractor Update** - G F Tomlinson site handover



Image: City Archaeologist, Scott Lomax speaking to a group at Brewhouse Yard in the Cosmic Ray Cave with stories of 'The Visited Folk' on a tour in October 2017 ([Read more](#))

There are more images and latest news at [the Nottingham Castle Facebook page](#)

Project update - October

Come dine with us – It has been great to see the development of the kitchen and restaurant facilities on site over the past few months. The catering offer at the Castle will include a café in the Visitor Centre, providing drinks, snacks and light lunches, and a restaurant with full menu inside the Ducal Palace. The restaurant is in the same location as it was previously - the kitchen and servery however, have been moved to an adjacent room, leaving much more space for diners. The finished spaces are light, airy and inviting – check out that gorgeous lighting!

Site handover - You will see in the article below that a huge milestone for the project was reached this month, as the site was handed over by main contractors G F Tomlinson. It will really be very strange on site without them, as they have been hard at work transforming the Castle for the last 2 years. The finish they have created is extraordinary, restoring the Ducal Palace to its former glory, as well as creating a brand new gallery and visitor centre. Please see below for further details.

Seeds sown - Landscaping works have started in earnest over the past few weeks. Perhaps the most visible of these works is the removal of the hard standing on the Castle Green, which has been used as the site compound for the last two years. Top soil has been levelled across this extensive area, and the painstaking task of turfing has commenced (see pic). Hydro seeding of the slope leading to the middle bailey has also taken place, as has turfing around the Visitor Centre and East terrace. It's beginning to look less like a building site!

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Play area update

An exciting archaeological feature was uncovered earlier this month during ground work preparations for the adventure play area. This came as a surprise to the team, as earlier trial pits had uncovered very little evidence of significant archaeology in the area.

The features uncovered are medieval and later in date and would have formed part of the rock cut ditch that wrapped around the Upper Bailey.

The feature has been examined and recorded by York Archaeological

Trust, the City Archaeologist and Historic England.

The find prompted swift action to redesign and relocate a section of the play area, ensuring that any interventions have no detrimental impact to the buried history of our site.

Below are some pictures of the development so far. It's going to really be a fun place to explore!

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Makers' Table update

Work is progressing well on the interactive touch table that will be an important element in the new Crafts gallery at the Castle.

This will give visitors an opportunity to touch alabaster carvings and salt-glaze pottery replicas of the real artefacts on display in the gallery, made by contemporary craftspeople.

They can also try their hand at throwing an 18th century salt-glaze pot or carving a medieval religious panel on two bespoke games on i-pads situated on the table.

Stonemason Louis Russell and gilder Saena Ku at [London Stone Conservation](#) have started work on three replica alabaster panels of *The Adoration of the Kings*, showing three different stages of hand carving, painting and gilding.

Working initially from a 3D scan and photographs, they have been in detailed conversation about the possible colours and patterns of the panel with Curator Louise Dunning, aiming to be as accurate as possible to the original 15th century religious carving in Nottingham City Museums' collection.

Louise has also been working with *Clay College, Stoke*, whose Director Kevin Millward is throwing replica 18th century salt-glaze pots. His students are then decorating them with a variety of techniques, which are still used today, including carving, piercing, combing and rouletting.

During a visit to the college, she saw some sample pots before they were fired and was interested to learn that Kevin and the students have been enjoying puzzling out how the pottery was thrown and that they were impressed with the skill and creativity of the 18th century Nottingham potters.

Photo captions:

Above - NCM 1954-38 *The Adoration of the Kings*, carved around 1460, collection of Nottingham City Museums and Galleries.

Below left - Stone mason Louis Russell from London Stone Conservation working from a 3D scan of *The Adoration of the Kings* in his studio.

Below right - Clay College, Stoke, student Sharon working on piercing one of the mugs for the touch table.

Large image - Samples of unfired salt-glaze pottery, demonstrating different decorating techniques at Clay College, Stoke.

Inset - Some of the pigments that will be used to paint the panels; Nottingham's panel has lost a lot of its original colouring over the centuries.

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Nottingham Castle Trust News

NOTTINGHAM
CASTLE
VOLUNTEER

A new look for Volunteers at Nottingham Castle

Nottingham Castle launched a brand-new look for their volunteer programme this month. The volunteer brand, which has its own logo and golden yellow colour, will adorn all assets associated with the Castle's volunteer programme, and is a distinct but complimentary look to the Castle's brand, which was launched last month.

The new brand was announced on social media with a series of posts celebrating volunteers and exploring the benefits of volunteering: from enhancing creativity and developing skills to creating connections and gaining a sense of belonging to a team.

The Castle will be offering a variety of volunteering opportunities when they reopen next spring, and are carrying out remote 'find out more' chats over the coming months that will share opportunities, ideas and will introduce potential volunteers to the team.

Find out more about volunteering, and keep updated with their find out more sessions by signing up to [their volunteer newsletter](#)

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Click the image to watch

Fire and Caves!

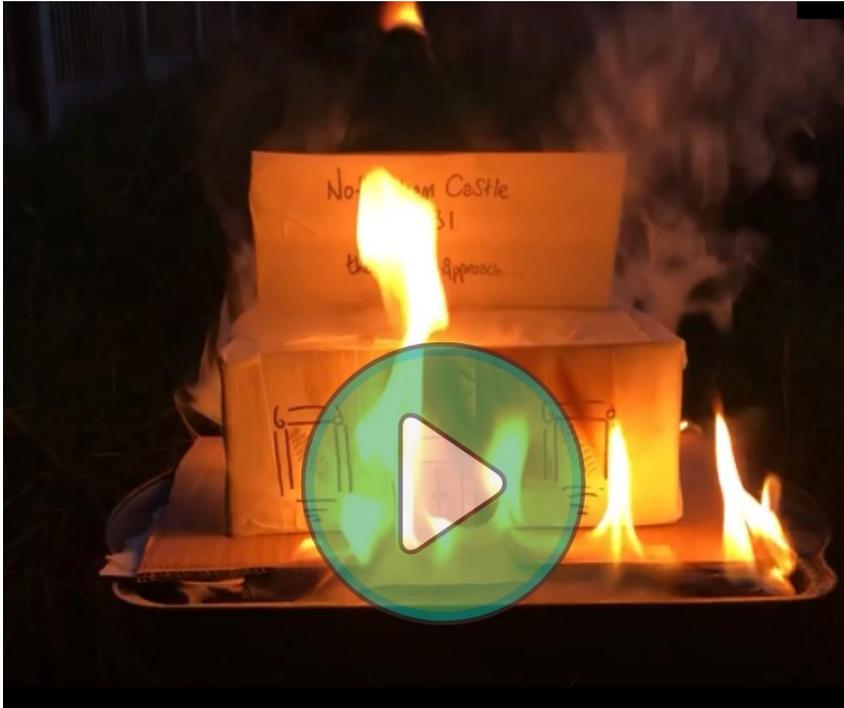
The Castle celebrated two historical anniversaries online in their own unique way this month.

The 10 October marked the anniversary of the burning of Nottingham Castle following the Reform Bill Riots. To allow modern-day Nottingham residents to watch the Castle burn, just as they did in 1831, the team recreated the event – with a cardboard replica of the Castle, of course!

On 19 October, they told the tale of the cave tunnel which is now known as Mortimer's Hole. It is through this tunnel that supporters of King Edward III entered the castle to depose Roger Mortimer, who was ruling as regent at the time. The Castle team recreated the 1330 event, which also gives a sneak peak of the newly restored Castle cave tunnels, which will open along with the Castle next year and are more accessible than ever before.

The videos and threads exploring the events can be viewed on their social media accounts. You can see the Twitter thread films by clicking the image links above and below this piece.

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Click the image to watch

Newsletter signups

Nottingham Castle News

Sign up to Nottingham Castle's newsletter for all their need-to-know news! They will only contact you with the most exciting stories - and you can unsubscribe whenever you want: <https://mailchi.mp/6385a674cd6d/website-signups>

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Top Trumps #18

Welcome to the eighteenth character in the series of Castle stories, turned into a game of Top Trumps.

Top Trumps #18 is **Lucy Hutchinson** - Wife of John Hutchinson: Parliamentary Governor of Nottingham Castle

Find out more at:

<https://spartacus-educational.com/STUhutchinsonL.htm>
<https://earlymodern.web.ox.ac.uk/life-lucy-hutchinson>

Please [email us](#) to let us know whether you agree or disagree with our scores.

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Lucy Hutchinson 1620 – 1681
Diarist & wife of the Civil War Governor
of Nottingham Castle

Lucy was an intellectual child who preferred reading to playing with her toys. Her diary recorded the lives of herself, her husband John Hutchinson and their children living at Nottingham Castle during the English Civil War. She also wrote poems, translations of Latin texts and manuscripts on a variety of topics.



Lucy Hutchinson 1620 – 1681
Diarist & wife of the Civil War Governor of
Nottingham Castle

Scores

Style - 23

Claim to Fame - 36

Rebel Rating - 55

Dreadful Deeds - 5

Popularity - 55

References

- <https://spartacus-educational.com/STU HutchinsonL.htm>
- <https://earlymodern.web.ox.ac.uk/life-lucy-hutchinson>



Contractor News - G F Tomlinson

Nottingham Castle is a step closer to becoming a world-class visitor destination and heritage site following the completion of major improvement works. Specialist restoration works and a brand-new visitors centre has now been handed over by Midlands contractor [G F Tomlinson](#).

Preservation of the site was paramount throughout the project, and one of the key and most

complex elements of the build was work to the Grade I listed Ducal Palace, which will house the new Robin Hood and Rebellion galleries.

Working closely with Historic England, stonework and lime plaster restoration was undertaken to bring the building back to its former glory. A particular focus of the sensitive restoration was ensuring repairs remained in line with the heritage of the original building.

The history and heritage of the site, which dates back to Norman times, meant any excavations had to be carefully considered. Extensive surveys were carried out to ensure areas of archaeological interest were identified, and the unique archaeology of the site was preserved, recorded and protected.

Whilst on site, G F Tomlinson recycled 97% of its construction waste, contributing positively to the local environment and the climate change agenda. The contractor also provided many opportunities for local people including 27,000 hours of employment, training and social value initiatives.

Further opportunities included local school and college site tours, graduate work experience placements, apprenticeships and employment opportunities, alongside support for local charity Framework – which focuses on housing, health, employment, support and care for people across the Midlands.

The image below shows the team on site:

Keri Usherwood, Communications and Marketing Manager, Nottingham City Council
Richard Oldfield, Project Manager, G F Tomlinson
Nigel Hawkins, Head of Culture & Libraries, Nottingham City Council
Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Culture, Councillor Dave Trimble
Hugh White, Director of Sport, Culture and Parks, Nottingham City Council
Kevin Dodds, Associate Construction Director, G F Tomlinson
Richard Hamblin, Project Director, Nottingham City Council
Andy Boam, Contracts Manager, G F Tomlinson
Josh Barber, Project Manager, Mace
Richard Smith, Operations Director, Mace

[Read more about the developments](#)

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