

Wigstons' Voice

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WIGSTON CIVIC SOCIETY
REPRESENTING WIGSTON MAGNA, SOUTH WIGSTON & KILBY BRIDGE
AUTUMN 2015



NEWLY REFURBISHED BELL STREET WITH NEW PAVING,
STREET FURNITURE AND TREE PLANTERS

www.wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk
Founded In 1978

*"We strive to make the
Wigstons a better place
in which to live and
work"*



EDITORIAL

I hope you are enjoying the new look Wigstons' Voice newsletter. We are endeavouring to make sure it contains up to date news on local issues and events, but this can only be done from the information that you send in. If you are a member of a local heritage or history group we would welcome details about your meetings or events which we will publicise for you.

Many thanks for all the contributions to this issue. Send your articles and information to me by e-mail or post, (addresses below).

Peter Cousins

WIGSTON CIVIC SOCIETY COMMITTEE AS ELECTED AT THE AGM JUNE 2015

Chairman	Peter Cousins	chairman@wigstonscivicsociety.org.uk
Vice Chair	Maureen Waugh	vicechair@wigstonscivicsociety.org.uk
Secretary	Colin Towell	secretary@wigstonscivicsociety.org.uk 07813 782 899
Treasurer	Val Beesley	treasurer@wigstonscivicsociety.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Val Beesley	membership@wigstonscivicsociety.org.uk
Website Administrator	Peter Cousins	webadmin@wigstonscivicsociety.org.uk
Publicity/Events	Nicola Alexander	publicity@ wigstonscivicsociety.org.uk
Newsletter Editor	Peter Cousins	news@wigstonscivicsociety.org.uk 13 Langton Road, Wigston, Leicester LE18 2HT

Committee meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at Age UK, Paddock Street, Wigston Magna, starting at 7.15pm. All Members Welcome

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Spring edition of Wigstons' Voice contained details of our next events and now is the time to order tickets.

ANNUAL PUBLIC LECTURE

The Annual Public Lecture this year is on Tuesday, 29 September at 7.30pm in the Maple Room at AGE UK in Paddock Street. The lecture will be given by Rowan Roenisch on the subject of Ernest Gimson and Stoneywell. Many members will have already visited Stoneywell, the latest National Trust property in Leicestershire which opened earlier this year.

Rowan's talk will be illustrated and will reflect her involvement in setting up the property and training the guides for the National Trust with a special emphasis on Ernest Gimson's involvement.

Places are limited and so it is advisable that you contact Colin Towell on 07813 782899 or email cftowell@aol.com. Admission is £3.00 including light refreshments. It is hoped that we will maintain our record and have another full house for our annual lecture. Please be aware that the lecture is open to the public, so please tell your friends, relations and neighbours.

WIGSTON REMEMBERS

This event is an evening of commemoration of World War I, and is the second of the Society's commemoration events taking place in the centenary years of the duration. Earlier this year we put on the talk by Peter Cousins on the Boys and Girls of WWI and in 2016 we hope to be involved in a re-enactment of a parade by troops from the Barracks to the former railway station on the Kop.

The commemoration event will take place on Saturday 31 October at 7.30pm at the former Abington Academy on Station Road, Wigston, Leicester LE18 2DH.

The programme will consist of music, songs and words with a local community choir, The Harmonics; Marion Morley; Banjo Des; Robin Jenkins with his Humour in the Trenches and Dave Andrews of Radio Leicester reading WWI poetry. There will be a reading of the 'Lights Going Out' speech and a video recording of the last post ceremony at the Menin Gate.

Tickets are £7.50 including a glass of wine and may be obtained from Colin Towell on 0116 2889638; Peter Cousins on 0116 2884638 or Jane Callis on 07983 614989, cash or cheques payable to Greater Wigston Historical Society with order please.

GRASS VERGES

In the borough the quality of each cut of the verges on estate roads seems to be reasonable although the number of cuts in the season is not sufficient and the grass is allowed to grow too long in between and looks untidy. This was the subject of a recent letter in the Mercury (31 July) by a Wigston resident but referring to City verges especially along Glen Hills Way. These verges have been allowed to grow wild apart from a one metre strip at the edge of the road. It may have been thought that the verge had been allowed to grow wild to protect the daffodil bulbs as they die off after the brilliant spring show. But no. Leaving the verges is a new policy but I am advised that before they get a once a year cut a person has to walk through the long grass to make sure that there are no objects or serious litter lying there that will cause a problem with the mower or injury to the operative.

The letter made the point that this is a major access road to the City and that long grass containing dead dock leaves and other weeds will not impress visitors whether they be for pleasure or business. We want to attract high powered businesses to the city so we must look smart and business like ourselves. A further letter on 6 August made the point that allowing the verges to grow wild was good for wild life and was pleasing to the eye especially for pedestrians rather than those hurrying by in the comfort of their cars, apart that is from the monetary saving to the Council of less cuts in the year.

These cut backs also apply to country lanes except near road junctions where visibility would be impaired if the verges were not cut. But can we please have foliage cut back near to road signs and even traffic lights as this too causes danger and confusion.

Colin Towell

11TH CHILD OF ORSON WRIGHT

As you are probably aware my "obsession" for several years has been researching the life and times of Orson Wright, the entrepreneur who masterminded the building of South Wigston and much much more. In my research I had found that he had 10 children with his wife Ada between 1874 and 1887. In fact the 1911 Census states ten children, six living and four who had died. The four that died were all under two and a half years old.

Recently the Leicestershire & Rutland Family History Society published a new data CD of baptisms in Oadby, Wigston, South Wigston and Glen Parva. I thought this would be useful to fill in a few baptism dates of the Wright children in South Wigston. I looked at the index and got down to their last child Orson Stanley born in 1887.

Imagine my surprise when looking further on I saw Wright, Montague son of Orson and Ada, baptised 23 January 1890! Further research showed that he was born in January 1889, and died of bronchitis in February 1890 aged just 13 months old. Ada, who had her first child at the age of 20 and the last one at the age of 37, had seen five of them die in infancy. She herself died fairly young at the age of just 54 in 1908.

Peter Cousins

PLANNING BRIEFS

The Society receives formal notification from the Borough Council of planning applications within the Conservation Areas, this is in the form of a letter. If further details of the application are needed an officer of the Society looks up the application on the Council's website and if necessary then visits the application site. A letter is also received about major planning applications which are not in conservation areas. A further way in which the Society learns about applications is through the weekly list of all applications and decisions which the Council issues by email each week to a number of interested parties including the Civic Society.

The Committee discusses each notified or major application at its monthly meeting and decides whether or not to make comments. Any agreed comments are then emailed to the Council. There are a number of major application sites in the Borough that are ongoing and members keep a watching brief on these which are included in the agenda each month.

The position with ongoing major applications is as follows:

Land off Pochins Bridge Road: This site is now nearly built but there is concern that pedestrian access to and from the site could be improved by using existing and proposed footpaths as shortcuts, these are being investigated.

Land off Newton Lane: An application for full planning is awaited. It has recently been made known that adjustments are to be made to the Newton Lane/ Moat Street traffic lights, we await this action to see if safety is improved.

Dorset Avenue: There continues to be traffic issues on Dorset Avenue as a result of attendance at the church, these are being monitored as are speeding problems in the area.

Moat Street Heating Elements site: The housing site is reported as sold but the buyer is unknown. Occasional activity on the site takes place.

HM Young Offenders Centre: The Government has announced that it will not proceed with the major expansion of the site.

Europa Building on Newton Lane: It would appear that some repairs are being carried out to the building, and that it is being used as a factory.

Canal Street: Although the completion of the Gambles factory as flats together with the previously completed Grand Hotel and the Devas factory has greatly improved the street scene in Canal Street, work on Oldershaw's yard is only spasmodic and as far as can be ascertained the compulsory purchase of the Hat and Cap factory is ongoing although a planning application for conversion into flats has been submitted.

Kirkdale Road: There has been no further news on the development of this site.

It was pleasing to note that the decking that was being erected in front of the Horse and Trumpet pub was removed as it was in fact blocking a public footpath. Apart from this, the pub looks very pleasant following its external repaint.

The Society is very concerned about the external condition of the Elms Social and Services Club on Bushloe End. A letter has been sent to the Club asking what action it is intended to take to improve the condition of this very prominent building.

Members are pleased to record that work is progressing on the double shop unit on Bell Street which will result in a Customer Service office for the Council. Initially there was some concern by Members that this application goes against the Council's own policy of restricting the use of shops, as, in effect, office units. There is another example of this in Leicester Road opposite the end of Aylestone Lane where a craft shop will be converted to an office for an estate agent and building society although this will involve a move from a similarly used unit further along Leicester Road.

Colin Towell

TWO STEEPLES WALK

Some fifteen years ago our Society devised a walk around Wigston. So many parishes in Leicestershire have a Parish Walk. Until recently leaflets about such walks could be picked up at libraries etc. Now they are only available on the internet. Whereas a parish may have a four to five mile walk in a rural setting here in Wigston a circular walk through the countryside would be impossible. So we trespassed into adjacent parishes to make a ten mile walk starting from St Wistan's Church and finishing at All Saints Church.



If your idea of a walk is to knock off a few seconds from A to B then this walk is not for you. Over these fifteen years many new walking groups have sprung up as walking has become much more popular. Taking into account the total population the number of folk who join such a group is small. These days the benefits of such groups are well published. A pub lunch at the end of a walk may be an incentive.

The Two Steeples Walk is a leisurely walk to St Wistan's at Wistow, a coffee at Wistow, lunch at Kilby and further refreshment at Kilby Bridge. For those finding the distance too far there is the 49B back into Wigston.

St Wistan is our local saint. He was murdered at Wistow on 1st June 849. It was over a family dispute as to who should be the King of Mercia. So around the 1st June next year it is hoped to organise a walk to encourage more to take up walking for pleasure.

Will you be there?

Colin Hames

Oadby and Wigston District

Wigston

All Saints Church
All Saints Church was built between 1280 and 1320 in the Decorated or Late Gothic style. Built of Enderby granite it has a tall recessed spire of limestone.

The Meres

The Meres, an ancient boundary between the parishes of Wigston and Wistow, is thought to be part of a prehistoric road between Stow-on-the-Wold and Burrough-on-the-Hill.

St Luke's, Newton Harcourt

In St Luke's churchyard there is a tombstone in the shape of a church. In winter the churchyard is full of snowdrops and in the nearby woods there are acornites.

Newton Harcourt

Double Rail Lock

Kilby Bridge

Fishing Lakes

Soil was dug from here and transported by rail to build the Wigston to South Wigston road over the railway, a quarter of a mile away.

St Wistans Church

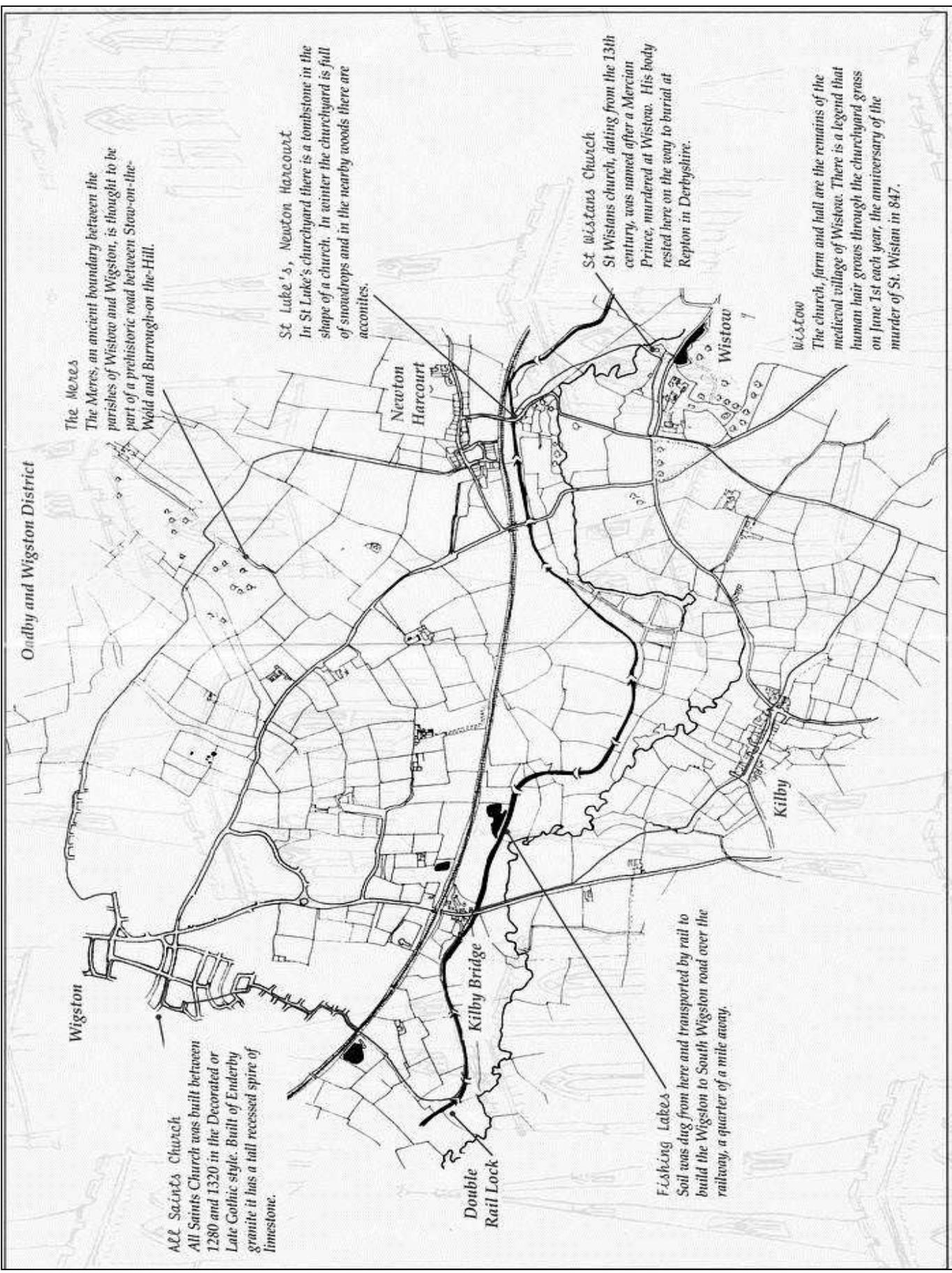
St Wistans church, dating from the 13th century, was named after a Mercian Prince, murdered at Wistow. His body rested here on the way to burial at Repton in Derbyshire.

Wistow

Wistow

The church, farm and hall are the remains of the medieval village of Wistow. There is a legend that human hair grows through the churchyard grass on June 1st each year, the anniversary of the murder of St. Wistan in 847.

Kilby



AGM AND THE CONSTITUTION

Our AGM this year was delayed from its usual date in May because this would have been the day before the general and local elections and so it was finally held on 9 June. The meeting was well attended with 26 members and 8 guests being present.

The outgoing Chair, Maureen Waugh gave an excellent report on the year's activities and the outgoing Treasurer presented the accounts which showed the Society to be in a healthy position financially. This was due to income from the special activities during the year which were the Charles Moore Lecture, the Orson Wright walk, the Annual Lecture and a skittles evening underlining the importance of these extra activities.

Both Maureen Waugh and Peter Holmes stood down from their roles as Chair and Treasurer respectively and Peter Cousins and Val Beesley took over. Maureen and Peter were thanked for their work over the last years. Maureen was appointed as Vice Chair and Peter Holmes as Accounts Examiner.

We are still looking for a Minute Secretary, please consider if you are able to take on this key role and think if any of your friends or relatives may be able to do so. Plenty of help will be given to ease the lucky (?) person into the job!

May Hilton and Norman Fisher stood down from the Committee but May will continue to attend meetings when she can and she will continue to represent the Society on the Pride in the Borough committee.

The AGM approved some changes to the Constitution. There were no changes to the Objects of the Society but changes were made to bring the Constitution up to date and to ensure that current practice is reflected in our governing document. In this respect the Executive Committee is now open to all members and the public but members of the public are expected to join the Society after attending three Committee meetings. A junior subscription rate was also introduced.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE A COPY OF THE CONSTITUTION PLEASE CONTACT THE SECRETARY. IT IS ALSO AVAILABLE AS A DOWNLOAD ON THE CIVIC SOCIETY WEBSITE. www.wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk

After the formal meeting, Certificates of Commendation were awarded to the County and Borough Councils for their work in Bell Street and facilitating the Jubilee Plaque, The South Leicestershire College for its buildings including the Devas Building (the Bobbin Factory) and the traders organisations in Wigston Magna and South Wigston for their work on the Christmas lights and events last year.

In accepting the Certificates the recipients gave an interesting update on their work and involvement in our area of interest. We shall continue to identify projects for receiving Certificates of Commendation to encourage the local authority, developers, traders and service providers to maintain high standards in the design of their buildings and other work that they are engaged in



TONI FAZAEI, CHAIR OF GOVERNORS AT THE SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE COLLEGE RECEIVING THE COMMENDATION CERTIFICATE FROM THE CIVIC SOCIETY CHAIR MAUREEN WAUGH

“Wigston Remembers”

An Evening Of Commemoration Of World War 1
On Saturday 31 October 2015
Abington Academy, Station Road, Wigston, LE18 2DH
7.30pm until 9.30pm

Hosted By
The Leicestershire & Rutland Family History Society,
The Wigston Civic Society and
The Greater Wigston Historical Society

Masters Of Ceremonies: Peter Cousins and Colin Towell

Part 1

Derrick Pearce “Banjo Des” - WW1 Music & Songs
Marion Morley - Poetry & Readings
The Harmonics Choir - Songs
Dave Andrews (BBC Radio Leicester) - WW1 Poetry
Robin Jenkins (Leicestershire Record Office) -
“Humour in the Trenches”
Robin Jenkins - “Lights Going Out”

INTERVAL

Drinks In The Foyer (Included In The Admission Price)

Part 2

Derrick Pearce “Banjo Des” - WW1 Music & Songs
Marion Morley - Poetry & Readings
The Harmonics Choir - Songs
Dave Andrews - WW1 Poetry
Menin Gate Last Post Ceremony Video & 2 Minutes Silence

TICKETS £7.50 Per Person Available From:
Colin Towell 2889638 Peter Cousins 2884638
Jane Callis 07983 614989

DO YOU KNOW WHICH BUSINESS IS GOING IN TO THESE TWO SHOP UNITS IN BELL STREET?



From late summer 2015 the two units will house:

THE NEW CUSTOMER SERVICES CENTRE FOR THE OADBY & WIGSTON COUNCIL

The services that you access at the Council Offices on Station Road will be moving in to Bell Street, making access much easier.

Opening hours to be announced.

BELL STREET PEDESTRIANISATION

Many members will have seen the publicity about the full pedestrianisation of Bell Street and hopefully will have taken part in the consultation. The Society submitted its own response supporting the move. After some discussion it was also agreed that cyclists should also be banned from using the street. The outcome of the consultation is eagerly awaited.

CHANGING PLACES

"Changing Places" - sounds like a mash-up TV programme between "Wanted Down Under" and a home design show presented by Roddy Llewellyn Bowen and someone called Kirsty.

In fact, "Changing Places" rooms are the much improved facilities to be provided for disabled users, when the new swimming pools at Wigston and Parklands are opened (one CP room at each site). These rooms have the following facilities for disabled users:

- Dedicated toilet and shower, with usual grab rails, alarm cord, etc;
- Ceiling hoist;
- (Treatment) bed;
- More space for assistants to help.

Parklands has, and Wigston will have:

- Dedicated toilet in male and female changing rooms;
- Dedicated toilet and shower;
- Cross-trainer in the gym with touch screen for blind users;
- Arm-cycle for a wheelchair user;
- Level access, doorway compliance and parking spaces for disabled users;
- Both pools will have a hoist and wide side access stairs at the shallow end.

I'm delighted to see that Oadby & Wigston Borough Council is providing much improved leisure and sports facilities for disabled people, of whom, only a few currently attend Parklands. When the new pools are opened - target date is now November - there will be much scope to develop activities, fitness training and sport for disabled people.

There are implications for staff training: specialist training would be necessary to give informed and safe advice to disabled users; and if, for example, a wheelchair basketball team was established, there would quite a queue for the two or three accessible showers, especially after a home match.

Maureen Waugh

USEFUL LOCAL WEBSITES

Greater Wigston Historical Society:

www.wigstonhistoricalsociety.co.uk

Leicestershire & Rutland Family History Society:

www.lrfhs.org.uk

Leicestershire Record Office:

www.leics.gov.uk/record_office.htm

Oadby & Wigston Council:

www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk

South Wigston Shopping:

www.southwigstonshopping.com

3rd Annual Illustrated Lecture
Tuesday 29 September 2015 @ 7.30pm
ERNEST GIMSON & STONEYWELL



The New National Trust Property In Leicestershire
Built as a summer home by Arts and Crafts architect-
designer Ernest Gimson for his brother Sydney

PRESENTATION BY ROWAN ROENISCH
(Conservation Advisor, The Victorian Society)

Venue:

**The Maple Room, Age UK,
Paddock Street, Wigston LE18 2AN
Admission £3.00 Including Refreshments**

BOOKING ADVISABLE

**Contact Colin Towell 07813 782899 E-Mail:
cftowell@aol.com**

AS PART OF LEICESTER HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2015

**LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
ARE HOLDING A FREE OPEN DAY AT:
PILOT HOUSE RESEARCH CENTRE
UNIT 4B, PILOT HOUSE
KING STREET, LEICESTER LE1 6RN**

**THURSDAY 10 SEPTEMBER
9.30am UNTIL 5.00pm**

OPEN DAY WITH THE LRFHS EXPERTS

**STUCK ON YOUR FAMILY HISTORY?
WANT TO GET STARTED?**

BRING ALONG YOUR PROBLEMS FOR EXPERTS ADVICE

**SEE OUR LATEST ACQUISITIONS:
BAPTISM, MARRIAGE & DEATH INDEXES
TRENCH MAPS - WW1 WAR DIARIES
LOCAL BOOKS**

**ALL 11 INTERNET COMPUTERS HAVE THE
COMPLETE LRFHS CD COLLECTION INSTALLED**

**TOURS OF OUR FACILITY THROUGHOUT THE DAY
E-MAIL: chairman@lrfhs.org.uk
OR CALL: 0116 288 4638
TO BOOK A TOUR**

**SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP DEALS
AVAILABLE ON THIS DAY ONLY**

E MAIL ADDRESSES



I am sure that members will be a bit tired of being asked for their email addresses but I must stress how much better, quicker, fuller and more efficient our communication could be if we were able to send emails rather than written communications.

On occasions there is something urgent that we need to tell our members about, but if we have to write and post or hand deliver there is often not time to do this so, quite honestly, it is not done. A good example is, that in Leicester Civic Society, the Chairman sends a monthly update by email and in our own case it would be possible to forward the weekly list of planning applications and decisions which is issued by the Council and other regular updates from such organisations as Civic Voice.

I can assure members that we will not pass on email addresses to others, that addresses will be held in the Secretary's address book only and we will use the 'blind copy' button when we send out emails to you so that other members cannot pick up your email address. At the moment only two of your committee members are not on email and all the others allow their email addresses to be used for agendas, minutes and other communications. If you are not on email we will of course continue to let you have hard copies of the newsletter.

So, I appeal to you to let the Society have your email addresses.

Colin Towell, Secretary

Send your email addresses to:

webadmin@wigstoncivicsociety.org.uk



BEWARE OF COMPUTER SCAM TELEPHONE CALLS

The scam always starts the same way: the phone rings and the caller – usually with a foreign accent – asks for the householder, quoting their name and address before saying I am calling for Microsoft or TalkTalk or BT even your Bank, saying "*We've had a report from your internet service provider of serious virus problems from your computer.*"

Internet providers or your Bank will never telephone you about computer problems. Especially take care with calls purporting to be from TalkTalk as these scammers are very clever and have got away with large amounts of money.

HOW THE LEICESTERSHIRE ROUND CAME ABOUT

On a balmy Welsh evening in July 1978, as I followed a flock of white-faced sheep along Offa's Dyke, while the larches threw long shadows along the ancient path, the idea of a major walk which would embrace all of Leicestershire first came to my mind. Leicestershire may not seem the immediate choice for a circular walk. Yet much of the countryside is remarkably beautiful. Our historical heritage is rich too, with the names of many villages and districts scarcely changed from the days when the Vikings, their spirits sweetened by conquest and the mild climate, settled down to live out their days here, far from the frozen north.

A millennium earlier, the Romans also made settlements here although perhaps they yearned hopelessly for olive trees and the shimmering Mediterranean. In Leicestershire we have no olive trees or golden coasts but we do have a greatly varied landscape of woods, gently rolling hills and rich green pastureland. We also have a splendid network of ancient paths and tracks. The 100 mile walk, named The Leicestershire Round, and developed by Leicestershire Footpath Association, was based on this network linking up twenty-seven attractive villages as well as passing an iron age fort and the cross roads of two great Roman thoroughfares; Fosse Way and Watling Street.

Another feature is Bradgate Park, where Lady Jane Grey, the nine day Queen whose youthful head was lopped off in the Tower of London in 1554, spent much of her life. Bosworth battlefield where Richard 111 tried to exchange his kingdom for a horse is another landmark and to the east are Foxton Locks, the longest staircase of canal locks in Britain.

Mary Essinger

MYSTERY PHOTOGRAPH – WHERE IS IT? ARTHUR VILLA 1875



ANSWERS TO THE EDITOR PLEASE