

## EDITORS' NOTES

### Millenium Activities

The arrival of the new Millenium has produced a wave of activity amongst local history societies. The Thoroton Society celebrated the occasion with a series of historical 'roadshows' at different venues around the county, attended by archaeologists, archivists, local historians and other related experts, as well as a series of summer excursions each based on one of the ancient administrative districts known as 'wapentakes' or 'hundreds'. Throughout the county a considerable number of new village histories have appeared, produced either by established local history societies or by new bodies set up for the purpose. Many of these were assisted by grants from the Millenium Commission, enabling a high standard of publication to be achieved. Some take the form of conventional parish histories, some concentrate on the 20th century, and some on the community in the year 2000. All, however, will make an invaluable contribution to the history of the county for use by both present and future historians. Those which have been produced to date include Bradmore, Bunny, Car Colston, Eakring, East Bridgford, Epperstone, Lambley, Rempstone, Upton, Willoughby-on-the-Wolds and Woodborough.

### The Nottinghamshire Living History Archive

This project, under the aegis of the Millenium Awards scheme, completed the first of its three years in 2000. The first group of awardees has completed its final edited outputs, which range from oral and video recordings to exhibitions and publications. A wide range of topics have been studied, including the experiences of Second World War evacuees in Nottinghamshire and the transformation of Clifton from a rural village to a city housing estate. Applicants are now being sought to undertake projects in the third and final year of the scheme. The results of all the projects will ultimately be stored in Nottinghamshire Archives and copies of much material made available through local libraries.

### Archaeological News in 2000

#### *Barton-in-Fabis Roman Villa*

A geographical survey using resistivity suggested the existence of a hitherto undocumented building or range, some 30 x 30 m in extent, belonging to the Roman villa at Barton-in-Fabis, south west of Nottingham. The villa had been recognised in the 19th century and was subsequently partially examined by excavation in the 1930s and 1940s. The building now located seemed to face a court or garden, in which was a circular building, identified in the 1930s, and other features. Preliminary excavation suggested the main building was abandoned in the later 2nd or early 3rd century. Apart from pottery, the finds included window glass, painted wall plaster, two latch lifters, loose tesserae and tiles. Work will continue in 2001. (Contributed by Jenny Laing).

#### *Ancient Route between Ratcliffe-on-Soar and Leicester*

Research has been carried out on the suspected course of an ancient routeway running between Ratcliffe-on-Soar and Leicester by Stephen Lycett as part of his A-Level Archaeology examination. The results of this investigation strongly suggest that the route may have its origins in the Romano-British period. Indications were that the road was present at the bank of the River Soar, close to the location of the Romano-British settlement at Ratcliffe-on-Soar/Redhill, Nottinghamshire, and then continued southwards via Kegworth, Shepshed, Bradgate Park and Anstey to Leicester. Its northern terminus would also have been within two miles of the Roman villa site at Barton-in-Fabis. The route of the road is illustrated and described in S.J. Lycett's article 'New Light on a suspected Roman road between Ratcliffe-on-Soar and Leicester', in the *Transactions of the Leicester-shire Archaeological and Historical Society*, 73 (1999), 72-9.

***Keighton Deserted Mediaeval Village, University Park, Nottingham***

Work was carried out by students from the Department of Archaeology of the University of Nottingham during June 2000 on the deserted medieval settlement of Keighton, previously investigated in the 1950s and 1960s. It was hoped that the excavation would establish the western limit of medieval habitation, in addition to providing students with practical training. The site chosen for investigation was an artificial platform, which geographical survey had suggested might prove informative.

The excavation revealed a drystone wall, surviving to an average height of 0.46 m, composed of skerry slabs and sandstone and averaging 0.43 m wide. About 2 m was exposed, and it was presumed that it continued west of the area excavated. Bonded to it at right angles at its eastern end, was a second wall of similar width, of which about 1.5 m survived, apparently robbed out at the southern extremity. Associated pottery suggested a date for this structure in the 13th to 14th centuries. At the south-east corner of the excavation, about 0.75 m from the wall, a shallow pit was found, dug to a depth of about 0.24 m and containing medieval pottery sherds. To the south of the pit and walls were a number of irregularly positioned post-holes, and to the east of the wall was a ditch, running north to south, approximately 2.6 m wide and 0.45/50 m deep, which had been recut and had a posthole at the bottom. At the bottom of the ditch were sherds of splashed ware and shelly cooking pot, indicative of its use probably in the early 13th century.

These features were provisionally interpreted as being associated with industrial activity, probably potting, though ironworking also seems to have taken place. It is increasingly likely that Keighton was not a typical medieval village, but appears to have been an 'industrial estate' occupied primarily with the production of pottery and tiles and also ironwork, probably for nearby Lenton Priory. Work is planned to continue in 2001, and it is hoped that a fuller interim report will be published in the next volume of *Transactions*. (Contributed by Lloyd Laing).

**New Publication**

The manufacture of stockings was for centuries one of the staple industries of Nottinghamshire following the alleged invention of the hand knitting frame by the enigmatic William Lee of Calverton in 1589. The early development of the hand-frame industry in both London and the East Midlands in the early 17th century led to the formation of a livery company known as The Worshipful Company of Framework Knitters. Although the Nottingham industry largely broke free from the restrictions imposed by the London based body in the early 18th century, the Company played an important role in the history of the textile trade. This history has now been documented in a lavishly illustrated volume, drawing on records held both by the Company and by Nottinghamshire Archives. *The History of the Worshipful Company of Framework Knitters: the Art and Mystery of Framework knitting in England and Wales* is written by Sheila A. Mason and published by the Company in 2000 (ISBN 0-9538998-0-2). The contribution of William Lee and his friends and relatives to the development of both the Company and of framework knitting prior to 1657 is followed by a brief account of the materials of framework knitting, including the frame, and a full account of the organisation of the Company and how it differs from other livery companies.

Subsequent chapters chart chronologically the Company's position within the overall context of the hosiery industry, including the important role it played in the development and management of framework knitting during the start of the industrial revolution. In each chapter there are subsections on the Company's relationship with, and its contributions to, the City of London, the composition of the Company and its recruitment of members, plus arrangements for education in its craft and the evolution of its Almhouse Charity.

The conversion of the Worshipful Company of Framework Knitters into a modern Livery Company during the late 19th and early 20th century is fully detailed.