



**August 2017**

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### **Welcome to the latest Castle Transformation Newsletter**

We're a bit late! apologies, but we've been a bit delayed due to holidays and a busy events weekend. Anyhow, here is the news for August.

As we welcome in September, Our August 2017 issue features:

- Project update
- Harriet joins curatorial team
- Heritage Open Days - Visit the castle for Free
- Mela, 10 September
- FREE cave tours courtesy of the transformation team at the Mela
- Jade's Column (Teen Twitter Takeover and We Dig the Castle)
- Object of the Month - Golden Prospects. St. Catherine's Well, Land's End, Cornwall, John Brett
- Scott's Findings - a historical anniversary



#### **Project update**

##### **Welcome to the project update for August**

**Meeting with HLF** - This month, the Project Team was excited to host representatives from various East Midlands Heritage Lottery Funded projects at the quarterly HLF Major Grants Workshop. The day was focused on the importance of evaluation, with presentations and Q and As led by the HLF Head of Evaluation Kion Ahadi. We were happy to give an update on our project and offer a tour of the site pointing out particular areas for development.

##### **Training with Autism East Midlands -**

Last month our Project Assistant attended training delivered by Autism East Midlands, focusing on autism awareness and promoting autism

friendly environments. She recently shared her learning from this training with the wider Project Team, which we found both interesting and invaluable. Provision and support for visitors with autism has already been carefully considered as part of our project development stage, including working with specialist access consultants in earlier stages of the project.

**Interpretation developments** - August has seen real progress in the development of the interpretation plans for the site. Content leads have been hard at work finalising revised briefs for gallery areas, curators have been putting the finishing touches to object lists and collections staff have been busy photographing and measuring newly selected objects. This has been a massive undertaking so a huge thanks to all involved. All of this work provides a rich resource with which our exhibition designers Casson Mann can refine their amazing gallery designs.



### Harriet joins Castle curatorial team

Thanks to funding from the [Headley Trust](#), and to [Nottingham Castle Trust](#), we have a new member of the curatorial team at Nottingham Castle.

**Harriet Hathaway** joined us from Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery in June for four years, as Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts. She will have a particular focus on our amazing ceramics collection

and, working with our Curators of Fine and Decorative Arts, she is already making a great contribution to our work on the Castle transformation.

Just a few weeks into her new role, Harriet said: *"I am delighted to be working with the Castle at this exciting time. I have already been hands-on with the collection through the packing and re-design process, which I have really enjoyed. Everyone has been so welcoming and supportive and I look forward to the next few years and the opportunities they will bring."*

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### Visit the Castle for free on Heritage Open Weekend (9 & 10 September)

Each September, around 40,000 volunteers across England organise over 5,000 events to celebrate our fantastic history and culture at [Heritage Open Days](#). In Nottingham, it's a Heritage Open Weekend.



Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery and The Museum of Nottingham Life will open the doors to celebrate our heritage, community and history. This is a great chance to see hidden places and try out new experiences – and it's all FREE.

On Sunday, the grounds will also host the Mela (see below) so you can enjoy the Castle alongside the celebrations. [Read more about the event](#)

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## Enjoy the Mela on Sunday 10 September

Nottingham Mela continues its important legacy as the first National Mela which launched in 1988, and this year also marks the 70th anniversary of Indian Independence, and the creation of Pakistan and Bangladesh.

To mark the anniversary, this year's Nottingham Mela is bigger than ever, with a weekend extravaganza filling New Art Exchange (NAE) on Saturday 9 September and in the grounds of Nottingham Castle on Sunday 10 September. Entry is free.

For further information and more details [visit the event website](#)

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## Join the Castle Transformation Team at the Mela! and help us with our research by testing a cave tour for FREE!

The team will be at the Mela event at the Castle on 10 September and, as newsletter subscribers, we're offering you the first chance to grab some tickets for the free test cave tours we are running...

**Tours run at 1.30\* and 3pm\***  
(spaces are limited)



This is an exclusive offer to our subscribers. You have the first chance to book on... Just use the password **nottmcastle1**

On Sunday 10 September, we invite you to travel back to 1688 and meet cook Grace Porter who is recruiting hardworking families to join the kitchen hands at Nottingham Castle.

As she prepares for the imminent arrival of Princess Ann, to discuss plans to overthrow her father, James II, in favour of her sister Mary, she will be seeing families for cave tours. These will run at: 1.30pm, and 3pm

The tour will start at the Wine Cellar and finish at David's Dungeon caves. The aim is to test out

the route, stories and public interaction, as we plan for family-friendly tours for the Nottingham Castle Transformation.

Grace will be asking you to linger a little to complete a feedback survey at the end, before she goes off to finalise the food deliveries with the local merchants.

Families with children are particularly welcome but please be aware the tour involves uneven floors and staircases, so wear appropriate footwear.

[Read more and book your slot](#)

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### Jade's Column

Our apprentice, Jade tells the story of two activities that took place this month - the social media takeover day and the end of We Dig the Castle...

Teen Twitter Takeover - The [Kids in Museums](#) Teen Twitter Takeover Day took place across the country and more excitingly at the Castle on Friday 11 August. It was an immense success for the project team and the teens themselves!

The teens were left very much to their own devices with a high level of trust – they were a lovely bunch who had previously done work experience at the Castle and got along with each other extremely well.

After a brief introduction to the day we gave them their 'I've taken over' stickers and left them to tweet away. They came up with lots of hilarious and genius tweets from referencing the well-loved Game of Thrones to mimicking paintings and statues.

They even got to experience the community dig and talk to some of the archaeologists using this as an opportunity to tweet what they had learnt!

They had some great responses and interactions with our followers; one person replied to a tweet with "What would you do if you were king for the day?" to which our teens responded "Our first decree would be to help those in need, and renovate all the old Historical Buildings in Nottingham" which was a brilliant answer! – All in all, a very enjoyable day!

To see more of our tweets [follow our twitter account](#)

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### **Cheerio to We Dig the Castle**

On Friday 18 August we said goodbye for now to the amazing trainees, volunteers and archaeologists at We Dig the Castle.

They had a group reunion for everyone who had been involved in the dig including an overview of the finds and arguably the best bit... Their famous posh lunch Thursday!

Amongst other pieces, they found two different phases of a green house, an old

brick platform possibly for search lights, and carbon arch rods which were possibly to do with WW2 spotlights and clay pipes.

Although they found some Medieval pieces, these were in a Victorian layer so they believe these could have just have fallen in during times when work was being done to the Ducal Palace.

The Medieval layer hasn't been completely explored yet but you can just about see a tone of orange which they believe to be a medieval deposit.

For now the dig has been preserved and covered up but we're already excited to see what they find next time!

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### **Object of the month**

#### **What is it?**

As a tribute to the end of the summer holidays, our August selection is an oil painting of a Cornish landscape. "Golden Prospects. St. Catherine's Well, Land's End, Cornwall" was painted by John Brett in 1881.

#### **Why is it significant?**

Brett was strongly influenced by John Ruskin, a leading art critic and champion of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. This initially secret society opposed the Royal Academy of Art's view that the Renaissance painter Raphael's work was the ideal for other artists to aspire to.

#### **Tell me more**

Ruskin urged artists to "go to nature" for inspiration & treat subjects with maximum realism. John Brett specialised in highly detailed landscape paintings demonstrating precise geological & botanical references. Both he and Ruskin used photography as reference material and this can particularly be seen in Brett's close attention to detail, in, for example, the lichen on the rocks. In

"Golden Prospects" his sons Michael and Jasper feature as the two children placed in a very closely observed natural setting which also captures the unique nature of the light on the Cornish coast. The title 'Golden Prospects' refers to the anticipation of a large catch of fish that the distant boats are bringing in.

Golden Prospects, is a very popular painting with our visitors and will feature in the new Art as inspiration Gallery currently being designed by exhibition designers Casson Mann.

[To find out more about the Pre-Raphaelites, please visit the Tate Gallery website](#)

For more on John Brett, please visit the [Five Minute History](#) or [A Victorian.com websites](#)

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### **Scott's findings**

**Welcome to the eighteenth column from City Archaeologist, Scott Lomax. This month, he explores the anniversary of an historic event...**

"This month saw the 375th anniversary of an event of great importance to English history, which took place in the shadow of Nottingham Castle.

It was on a particularly gloomy and windy Monday on 22 August 1642 when a silken banner was first placed on view on the Castle Rock, so that it could be seen for miles around. The banner, which had been painted by Nottingham man Robert Large, was decorated with either a red cross and two lions upon two crowns, or a depiction of the King's arms with a hand pointing to the crown and the motto 'Give to Caesar his due'. It was flown from a long staff, painted red, which, it is said, required approximately twenty men to hold in order to keep it upright.

The banner formed the Standard of King Charles I, who had arrived into Nottingham three days earlier with his two sons and an army and cavalry said to include 800 horses. Rather than stay at Nottingham Castle which, by this time, was in a ruinous condition, Charles stayed at Clare House (also known as Thurland Hall) on Pelham Street.

The banner was first, according to one account, hung out of one of the turrets of the Castle but the king requested that it be erected in an open piece of land so that any man wishing to come close to it could do so. The piece of land selected was immediately outside the northern bailey of the Castle, in the area known today as Standard Hill. Standard Hill was one of a number of mounds, natural and artificial, that once existed to the north of the Castle. One had a windmill upon it during the 17th century and was known as Windmill Hill and another was known as Derry Mount.

On that Monday evening a spectacular procession led from the Castle to the hill that was to become known as Standard Hill. The procession consisted of the king, his sons the Prince of Wales and the Prince of York, his nephews Prince Rupert and Prince Maurice, bands, troops of cavalymen and hundreds of infantry men. The Standard was fixed into the ground and, following fanfare, a proclamation was read appealing to the townsfolk to take up arms in support of the king. Eventually Charles returned to Clare House and the Standard was returned to the Castle.



*Nottingham Castle (King Charles I Raising His Standard, 24 August 1642) Henry Dawson (1811–1878) Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery*

"It has often been written that the Standard was blown down on the first evening, and that this was an omen of the king's impending failure in his battle against Parliament, but this may not have been the case. One account states that although the Standard was blown down, that did not occur until more than a week after it was first erected.

For the following three days the ceremony was repeated, with the Standard raised to gain the king support in what was to be known as the English Civil War. 22 August 1642 is often regarded as the start of the Civil War but in reality a number of minor skirmishes had already occurred.

After those first three days the Standard continued to be erected but not to the same pomp and ceremony.

The King left Nottingham, in September, disappointed with the level of support he had received in Nottingham. Later the Castle, and the town of Nottingham, fell to the Parliamentarians and came under the Governorship of Colonel John Hutchinson. The ruinous Castle was repaired and strengthened, and defences were created around the town. Nottingham, and its Castle, were the scene of skirmishes and sieges which saw the death of a number of men from both sides and the destruction of one of the three medieval churches in the town: St Nicholas's Church. Following the Civil War, the Castle was demolished, in 1651, to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Royalists, and also the hands of some of Oliver Cromwell's supporters, the motives of whom were questioned by Hutchinson.

The Civil War is therefore an important part of the history of Nottingham Castle and Nottingham as a whole. The Castle development project will present stories of the Civil War and other turbulent periods of Nottingham's history with a new Rebellion Gallery.

There is a lot of documentary evidence regarding the Civil War and events which took place in Nottingham. I have touched upon some of this evidence in previous newsletters, but what about the physical remains of the Civil War? The defences, the battles and skirmishes that caused death and destruction, the use of the Castle and its eventual demolition all left their mark."

**Next month, Scott will outline the archaeological evidence which has been found at the Castle, and elsewhere in Nottingham, which helps our understanding of this chapter of Nottingham's past.**

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