



September 2017 (Updated)

You will have received this newsletter on Friday but since then, the links to book spooky Halloween tours with Scott Lomax are now live...

Welcome to the latest Castle Transformation Newsletter

Our September 2017 issue features:

- Project update
- Object of the Month - Glass Jellyfish - Leopold and Rudolf Blascka
- The Mela
- Jade's Column - Scaffolding update
- Spooky goings on in Nottingham coming this October
- Scott's Findings - Civil War archaeology
- Exhibitions at Nottingham Castle



Project update

Welcome to the project update for September

National Trust visit - This month the project team was excited to welcome a team of Consultancy Managers from the National Trust for a tour of the site and an update on our project. We always love talking about plans for the site and this was no exception. It was great to share experiences with experts in the field and give them a taster of what to expect at Nottingham Castle over the next few years.

Cave tour pilots - During the fabulous Mela at the Castle on 10 September (more info below) the project team was hard at work piloting cave tours with some of our lovely newsletter readers.

We were delighted that the tours booked up in a matter of minutes and we extend a huge thank you to those who came along to help us with this piece of work.



The feedback generated during these pilots will now be analysed and used to inform further developments to scripts and routes. If you were unable to book onto this event due to high demand, keep your eyes peeled for further similar opportunities which will be advertised in forthcoming newsletters.

Lincoln Castle visit - Members of staff from Lincoln Castle and their Heritage Management Team also paid a visit to Nottingham Castle this month. This was a great opportunity to share our proposals and have a good chat with representatives from a site which has already completed a major Heritage Lottery Funded project within the East Midlands.

The opportunities for shared learning offered through this partnership are immense, particularly as there are many similarities between the two projects – both being Norman castles for one. We look forward to continuing our relationship with Lincoln Castle throughout the project and meeting up again with them soon!

Object of the month

What is it? - A glass jellyfish made during the late 19th century is September's Object of the Month.

Why is it significant? - The jellyfish is a scientifically flawless glass specimen created by father and son Leopold and Rudolf Blaschka which spans the fields of art and science.

Tell me more - While the Blaschka family business made glass ornaments and glass eyes, Leopold also made glass flowers as a hobby. During two weeks becalmed on a ship to America in 1853 he studied and sketched marine invertebrates. Hearing of his work, the Dresden Natural History Museum commissioned 12 glass sea anemones. Before underwater photography was possible specimens were traditionally studied from displays in sealed jars of alcohol. Glass specimens proved to be superior and the Blaschka Company built a highly successful mail-order business supplying them to prestigious museums, universities, aquaria and private collections around the world.

In our opinion - "In an age when scuba diving and underwater filming and photography are commonplace, it is difficult to imagine just how extraordinary the Blaschka creations would have seemed to their audience. The techniques used to create their work still baffle experts and the range of their specimens provides an amazing record of the species that existed in our oceans in the nineteenth century."

Yvonne Armitage, Nottingham Castle Project volunteer

The glass jellyfish will feature in the new Art as Inspiration Gallery currently being designed by exhibition designers Casson Mann.

[Guardian: Sea of glass: the underwater world of Leopold Blaschka](#)

[Leopold and Rudolf Blaschka](#)

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The Mela at Nottingham Castle

The team spent a great day up at the Castle for the Mela and met some really interesting new people to talk to them about the transformation project. We even met a chap from Australia who was over for a visit and was very interested in the cave systems.

As well as piloting the new cave tours, we were able to see how performances and demonstrations work in the spaces around the site including the dance programme, a line-up of live music performances, sports, street-food stalls, art and craft workshops for children.

There was even a dramatic dhol drum procession into the Castle grounds to kick off the day! A twist on the Lord Mayor's Parade!

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Jade's Column

One of Jade's responsibilities is to document the scaffolding with regular photographs in order to detect any possible changes.

Our apprentice, tells the story of the scaffolding on site...

"As some of you may have noticed, there has been a new accessory added to Nottingham Castle - some scaffolding! I spoke to **Stuart Armitage from the Morton Partnership**, our

structural engineer to give you all a better insight. "

Where is the scaffolding? "It is on the Gatehouse Bridge to the Castle."

Why is the scaffolding there? "The scaffolding has been put in place to provide temporary support to the historic stonework, particularly where this has developed an outward bulge over time."

What is the scaffolding doing? "It is a short-term measure until the project works commence which include for permanent repair and stabilisation to the historic stonework."

We'll be sure to update you on the scaffolding along the way!

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Halloween at the Castle

Be spooked and entertained with a whole host of [Halloween activities in the City for October](#). Explore dungeons, carve pumpkins, there's something for everyone.

There is also a brand new cave tour hosted by our own Scott Lomax...

The Visited Folk

(Plague in Nottingham between 1349 to 1667)

[Saturday 28 October 11:00, 13:30, 15:00](#)

[Sunday 29 October 11:00, 13:30, 15:00](#)

[Monday 30 October 11:00, 14:00](#)

[Tuesday 31 October 11:00, 14:00](#)



Tours are being held at the caves at **The Museum of Nottingham Life at Brewhouse Yard** (£6, includes entry into the museum) Booking is essential as space is limited.

In 1349 the Black Death killed an estimated 1000 people in Nottingham. Subsequent epidemics (referred to as visitations) resulted in the loss of smaller, though still significant, numbers and led to large parts of the medieval town being deserted. Nottingham could not cope as more and more people died of disease in what was a time of great poverty. Bodies were hurriedly buried and fear undoubtedly spread through the population. To prevent the spread of the disease cabins were erected outside the town and caves cut into the rock beneath the Castle began to be used to isolate those who became known as the Visited Folk.

In this talk archaeologist Scott Lomax will discuss the documentary and archaeological evidence of this important part of Nottingham's past, how it helped shape the city we know today, and will guide people through the caves which were once inhabited by the Visited Folk

Tickets for these events and other October activities are available at the [October in Nottingham Website](#)

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Scott's findings

Welcome to the nineteenth column from City Archaeologist, Scott Lomax. This month, we have the first instalment of a two-part series on archaeology of the Civil War in Nottingham.

"We are lucky to have some quite detailed descriptions of Nottingham during the Civil War and the creation and strengthening of defences of the town. Lucy Hutchinson's biography of her husband, Colonel John Hutchinson, Governor of the town of Nottingham, and the Records of the Borough of Nottingham provide a lot of information.

For instance we know from these sources, that the 'very ruinous' Castle was greatly repaired to form a garrison for the Parliamentarians and for hundreds of the people of the town who sought safety. We know also that a 'work' was built in front of the castle gatehouse in order to act as a defence and that the castle's defensive ditches/moats were recut. The texts also state that some streets were blocked with boulders, the Leen Bridge was slighted and that there was a major defensive ditch and bank around the town.

In addition to documentation there has been some evidence identified through archaeological work, at the castle and in the wider city, to reveal the physical remains left by by this conflict between the King and his Parliament.

The images below (Top to bottom) are: Richard's Tower graffiti, the clay pipe from St Nicholas Church, the Fisher Gate Civil War Ditch



The Occupation of Richard's Tower

A large amount of graffiti was carved into the stone of Richard's Tower, which stands at the northwestern corner of the castle. The graffiti, consisting of names, words and crudely drawn faces and figures, is believed to date to the Civil War when it was occupied by Parliamentary soldiers. Deposits excavated in the 1970s also revealed rubbish which the men had left behind, including broken pottery, clay pipe fragments and animal bone. There was evidence to suggest the well within the tower had been deliberately filled in, probably in 1642 by the Royalists before they abandoned the castle, so that it could not be used by their Parliamentarian enemies.



St Nicholas's Church

The brick-built St Nicholas' Church we see today replaced an earlier, medieval, building which played a key part of the Civil War. During the siege of the castle in 1643 the Royalists occupied the tower of the church and used this elevated position as a platform to bombard the castle. Following the retreat of the Royalists the church was slighted, by the Parliamentarians, and later completely pulled down. Archaeological work by Nottingham City Museums and Galleries in 1989 and 1991 revealed some of the foundations of this earlier church as well as objects that were dropped/discarded by those who were demolishing the church, including a clay pipe which was smoked by one of the men engaged in the work.



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The Town Defences

Nottingham had a defensive ditch around the perimeter of the town from approximately 1100. This was widened, in part, during the mid-13th century and a wall was built around part of the town. The wall was demolished by the Civil War but the ditch continued in use, along part of its course, well into the 18th century. During the Civil War this ditch, which had become partly filled due to a lack of need for the ditch, was cleared out and widened so that it could be an effective defensive feature. Excavations at Park Row in 1967 revealed the medieval town ditch had been recut during the 17th century, probably during the Civil War. A substantial ditch, believed to date to the 17th century, was excavated in 1971, 1973 and 1978 at Fisher Gate and was interpreted as a defensive feature.

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Exhibitions at Nottingham Castle

[HORSE-PLAY](#)

16 September - 31 October 2017

Nottingham Castle Museum & Art Gallery

[Arianne Churchman](#) has taken a folk costume worn by the Hopper Joe character in the Cropwell Bishop Plough Monday play as the focus for HORSE-

PLAY. This smock was last worn in 1895 and is now on permanent display in Nottingham Castle.

Arianne is the winner of the Nottingham Castle Open 2016 solo exhibition prize. Within her practice Arianne investigates British folk traditions and celebrations using performance, film, sound and sculpture. She questions how we might import or re-imagine ancient rituals, beliefs and rites within our modern life.

[Shifting Landscapes](#)

23 September 2017 – 31 March 2018

We experience landscape in so many ways and it rarely stays the same. Shaped by the elements, it also bears the traces of what we have done to it. Landscape continues to provide rich inspiration for artists, as it has done for centuries. Shifting Landscapes is inspired by one of them, Conrad Atkinson, and a group of his works which we have recently acquired for the Museum's collection.

Other artists featuring in the exhibition include Thomas Joshua Cooper, Alice Channer, Paul Sandby, Richard Wentworth, Wolfgang Tillmans, Thomas Sidney Cooper, Susan Hiller and Jitka Hanzlová.

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