



**Leicestershire  
& Rutland**

Heritage Forum

**Leicestershire and Rutland  
Heritage Forum**

**HERITAGE AWARDS  
2023**

**The Century Theatre, Coalville  
Thursday, 5th October 2023**

**[www.lrhf.co.uk](http://www.lrhf.co.uk)**



# The Heritage Awards

The Leicestershire and Rutland Heritage Awards, held every two years, have this year been organised by the Leicestershire and Rutland Heritage Forum. The Forum is delighted to be able, once again, to meet in person for a live award presentation.

This year there are eleven categories, which were open to any museum, heritage group or individual based in Leicestershire or Rutland.

We have received 41 project entries from 24 organisations.

This year, for the first time, all entries were included in the judging of both Museum of the year and Heritage Group of the year.

You can read brief summaries of all the entries on the following pages.

## Programme of Events

**6.30: Welcome drink  
and nibbles in bar area**

**7.00: Introduction and Welcome**

**7.15: Winners announced  
and awards presented**

**8.45: Closing remarks**

**9.00: Close**

**Host: Stuart Render**

# Acknowledgements

Leicestershire and Rutland Heritage Forum  
would like to thank:

Evan Rees and The Century Theatre

Simon Brown, Charlie Gregson and Gurinder  
Mann for judging the entries

Stuart Render for hosting the event

Our photographer, David Harms

Llynda Baugh and Wendy Freer  
for their help this evening

## 2023 Categories

<b>Protecting Heritage</b>
<b>New Directions in Heritage</b>
<b>Archives and Research</b>
<b>Supporting Heritage</b>
<b>Surviving and Thriving</b>
<b>Best Project Under £1000</b>
<b>Best Project Over £1000</b>
<b>Working with Children and Young People</b>
<b>Heritage Hero</b>
<b>Heritage Group of the Year</b>
<b>Museum of the Year</b>

# Protecting Heritage Entries

## **Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust - Ringing In The Future**

With staff support, a small, dedicated army of volunteers have “moved mountains” to sort, clean, measure, label, catalogue, photograph, pack and conserve our Museum Collections for future generations, safeguarding c. 1,750 objects through appropriate conservation measures. Volunteers donated hundreds of hours to this gargantuan project over 2+ years.

## **Blaby District Council - ‘Buried Bouskell’ Restoration Project**

The ‘Buried Bouskell’ project explored the history of the Ice House in Blaby’s Bouskell Park and restored it to its former glory, helping to preserve its structure and heritage for the future. The project included a community archaeological dig, which enabled hands-on learning for local volunteers and schools.

## **Loughborough Grammar School Archives - The Headmaster’s Chair**

To restore the original Headmaster’s Chair from when the school moved to its current site in 1852. In particular it featured in a famous photo of 1875 after Headmaster Wallace had died at the school. The vacant chair with the rest of the staff indicates this.

## **Leicester City, County & Rutland At Risk War Memorials Project Project - Their Names Liveth for Evermore - but only just!**

The last 20 years has seen a veritable cascade of closure of churches, chapels, working men’s clubs and factories, mainly in the city. Very many had fine War Memorials and Rolls of Honour which were no longer wanted.

Without our intervention they would have become victims of vandalism, theft, sold for scrap, broken or just dumped. Their sacrifices would be lost forever.

## **Swannington Heritage Trust - Accessibly protecting the Califat Engine House Complex**

A 16-year excavation of the 1854-1873 Califat coal mine engine house and mine shaft was completed with the brickwork consolidation protecting the remains of excavated structures. The site was landscaped to ensure ease of maintenance. The addition of post and rail fences enables visitors to safely view the buildings.

# **New Directions in Heritage Entries**

## **Foxton Canal Museum Foxton Canal Museum - Home is Where We Are!**

Our aspiration is to make Foxton Canal Museum a space for local people to feel welcome, included and represented. We identified and reached out to new partners who had connections to local people and communities who do not currently visit and asked them to help us make positive and tangible changes.

## **Coalville CAN - Making the Invisible Visible**

Coalville CAN works alongside local people making visible, connecting and growing the hidden strengths and talents that exist in Coalville and area. Heritage is our foundation; we have firmly embedded this by developing a gallery for exhibitions and space for local Makers within our creative community ground floor hub in CANHQ.

## **Breedon Priory Heritage with Pudding Bag Productions - Breedon Lives**

To celebrate the 900th anniversary of Breedon as an Augustinian Priory, ten historical characters were chosen. A monologue written for each was performed, in costume, in the church on 3rd September. Audio recordings were made so that future visitors can hear about the lives of these people from Breedon's past.

## **Loughborough Library Local Studies Volunteer Group - Loughborough Heritage Forum**

An initiative, as ratified in 2021, bringing together heritage and arts organisations in Loughborough twice-yearly, to announce and collaborate with events and projects in the town.

## **Sir John Moore Foundation Museum - An Orange in the Clockwork**

New STEAM education programme, working with schools to produce a creative response to our 1697 clockwork mechanism. This involved working with members of the local community, investigating the history of our clock and clocks in general, and looking at how clocks are made. Celebration assembly in schools.

# Archives and Research Entries

## **Whitwick Historical Group - Creation of Digital Archive Index in Media Room**

The Media Room contains books relating to family history, the history of Whitwick and adjacent villages, heavy industry, transport, religion and sport; parish records; census returns; magazines; maps; microfiche; microfilms; CDs; DVDs and assorted paper documents such as deeds, researched family histories and newspaper articles.

## **Loughborough Library Local Studies Volunteer Group - “Market 800” Celebrations: Research and Publication**

A project researching the 800-year history of Loughborough’s markets and fair by Loughborough Library Local Studies Volunteer Group, culminating in an historical archive and a publication contributing to “Market 800” – Leicestershire County Council’s and Charnwood Borough Council’s joint celebrations, exhibition and events in the town during 2021.

## **Swannington heritage Trust - Beyond the magazines - sharing Swannington’s history**

Swannington Heritage Trust reviewed 594 articles from 30 years of its members’ magazine “Now and Then”. It compared the historical research articles to the Trust’s website content and made over 500 updates to the website to share the information with the public, receiving a lot of positive feedback.

# Supporting Heritage Entries

## **Culture Leicestershire - Medfest Community Panel**

Bosworth Medieval Festival two-day event returned in August after a break of 3 years and attracted over 4,500 visitors, re-enactors and traders from across the UK. This year we launched a community panel made up of volunteer representatives from audiences who would not usually visit to evaluate it.

## **Swannington Heritage trust - An Essential Water Supply**

The Trust laid 400 metres of pipe through Trust land to connect its building to the mains water supply, so that events could be run with a flushing toilet and drinks. Volunteers spent 250 hours in baking sun and torrential rain, supported by a contractor with a mini digger.

# Surviving and Thriving Entries

## **Loughborough Carillon - Re-engaging with our audience**

After a very long closure, firstly a major refurbishment of the building and then the Covid19 pandemic we had lost touch with our audience and indeed the people of Charnwood.

## **NW Leicestershire District Council - Heritage on Your Doorstep**

The arrival of COVID-19 meant we would not be able to run our District wide event called Hello Heritage which encourages the public to take part in guided walks and tours and visit heritage sites and exhibitions. A solution had to be found to continue sharing our wonderful heritage.

## **Charnwood Museum - Friends Online**

The Covid-19 pandemic with its prolonged lockdowns and social distancing removed the ability for the group to meet, socialize and fundraise. Not only did the organization survive, it thrived – embracing technology to not only deliver a varied programme of activity but attract new members too.



Historical notes relating to the CENTURY THEATRE can be found on page 12.



# Best Project Under £1000 Entries

## **Culture Leicestershire - 2021 Garden Season**

2020 pandemic related lockdowns meant our volunteers faced their biggest challenge yet: reclaiming the unique Jacobean gardens back from nature. But they didn't stop there; introducing a new wildlife pond and engaging trails, they transformed this unique period garden into an educational, multi-sensory, inclusive and joyful experience.

## **Desford & District Heritage Society - Desford Pop-up Museum**

2nd/3rd July 2022 was the weekend of the Desford Heritage Festival, which marked the official opening of the Desford Heritage Trail. The project was to transform the Village Hall into Desford's 'Pop-up Museum and mount an exhibition using our archive material for the weekend.

## **Spiral Projects - The BIG Dig**

122 people took part in 'have a go' archaeology where they learnt to use metal detectors, how to dig test pits, how to identify finds and how to dowse. The BIG dig was open to all ages and abilities and run as an open event over one day.

## **Anstey Local History Society - A Photographic Exhibition: Anstey at the Beginning of Queen Elizabeth II's Reign**

The project commemorated the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in an accessible and relevant way for the residents of Anstey, both past and present, using photographs, documents and maps from the Anstey Millennium Collection.

## **Pudding Bag Productions - Ashby Past Continuous**

Bringing to life the stories of a selection of characters from Ashby's past, exploring what they had in common despite coming from different eras in time and from different backgrounds and presenting it in an engaging and interesting way through drama and film.

## **Swannington Heritage Trust - Opening our sites to a wider audience**

Swannington Heritage Trust increased accessibility to Hough Mill and two former coal mine sites (now woodland and acid-grass heathland) by installing gates next to a car park enabling Vehicle users and pedestrians' access when volunteers are not present. This has diversified and increased audience and facilitated greater engagement with heritage

## **Sir John Moore Foundation Museum - Clockwork film**

We asked one of our volunteers to produce a documentary film about our 1697 clockwork.

# Best Project Over £1000 Entries

## **NW Leicestershire District Council - Heritage Outdoor Gallery**

We created an outdoor gallery of giant photographs (showing how the town has looked over the years) being displayed around the town of Coalville. These were hung on buildings in or near the same positions as they were taken.

## **Blaby District Council - Heritage Walking Trails**

The Heritage Trails are a collection of walking routes, created to uncover local history and inspire walking across the district. Each walk takes you on a journey into Blaby District's past, taking in points of interest and local attractions along the way. They are complimented with a Tourism Map and Guide.

## **Jacqui Gallon Art - Labours Lost**

Through a diverse range of creative practices, this project re-imagines the lives of workers once employed at Nanpantan Hall, originally an Edwardian Country Estate just outside of Loughborough, presenting these 'lost labours' as an archive of place. Nanpantan Hall and its grounds were the venue for this three-day event.

## **Quorn Local History Society - Heritage Boards Illustrating the History of Quorn**

To develop a permanent exhibition illustrating the by-gone days of the Leicestershire village of Quorn.

## **Ashby de la Zouch Museum with Pudding Bag Productions - Digital Touchscreen**

A touchscreen was installed in the main gallery with an attractively designed, interactive interface giving visitors access to a range of resources from the collection. The contents include 19 films of local history sites in town, produced by Pudding bag Productions, articles, documents and photographs from the Museum's collection.

## **Swannington Heritage Trust - Improving Hough Mill audience experience with audio guide**

Swannington Heritage Trust improved accessibility to heritage and enhanced the visitor experience of the Grade II listed, 200-year-old, Hough Mill through the introduction of a new simple to use hand held audio guide system which explains the history and operation of the windmill.

## **Navrang Arts - Rebuilding Lives: 50 Years of Ugandan Asians (Leicester)**

In 1972 over 60,000 Uganda Asians were forced to leave their homeland and 10,000 settled in Leicester. It is a story of families and community.

# Working with Children and Young People Entries

## **Spiral Projects - The Legend of the Bear**

Sixty Year 4 children from Hugglescote Primary School created a mosaic based on the legend of a bear that is said to have once lived in the village. This was a perfect opportunity to engage with young children about folk tales and how they preserve our heritage stories.

## **Loughborough Bellfoundry Trust - Kids In Museums Takeover Days**

We worked with Year 4 pupils from our local school, Cobden Primary, which serves the most deprived ward in Leicestershire. Part of the national “Kids in Museums” movement, children “took over” the Bellfoundry for a day in 2021 and 2022, helping them gain confidence, learn new skills and have fun!

## **Pudding Bag Productions - The Beaumonts of Barrow upon Trent**

A class of Year 6 children took part in interactive history teaching activities in school, visited a historic house and made a film drama exploring the 17th-century lives of the Beaumonts. This Leicestershire based Catholic family had a branch based in the children’s own village in the 17th century.

## **Leicestershire Transport Heritage Trust - Introducing Dennis and Friends**

The ‘Dennis and friends’ project promotes one of the Trust’s best loved vehicles, a 1977 Dennis double-deck bus, by utilising digital platforms and live events. Dennis’ adventures are shared in a fun and exciting way with a younger audience, educating them about transport heritage and the work of our Trust.

## **Sir John Moore Foundation Museum - Museum Tour**

Working with Pudding Bag Productions, we made a film which gives a walk-through of the museum. Students from the Sir John Moore primary school were the tour guides. This helps those with mobility problems to access the museum. For example, many members of our Local History Café have never visited our museum.

# Heritage Hero Entries

## **Swannington Heritage Trust - Mike Luff**

Mike is a founding member of Swannington Heritage Trust. He has supported SHT tirelessly since the early 1980's participating in technical projects and land management. He was on the management committee for 30 years. Now 82, Mike still volunteers weekly and is the only volunteer with a tree felling permit!

## **Sir John Moore Foundation Museum - Andrew Moore**

Andrew has worked hard to write the Museum newsletter every month, without fail. It often runs to ten pages. He makes podcasts and records oral history, runs the Local History Café jointly with other volunteers, and almost single-handedly made a documentary about our 1697 clockwork.

## **Culture Leicestershire - Anila Sisoda**

Anila has been an unsung hero in the Loughborough community for over 20 years. She voluntarily co-ordinates Anand Mangal, a multicultural women's group for the over 60's whose members she has supported to embrace multiple cultural challenges this year from co-curation of Museum exhibitions to delivering cultural exploration workshops for schools.

## **Desford & District Heritage Society - Kate Twitchin**

Kate has come up with innovative ideas to inform and enthuse both new and well-established residents, of all ages and backgrounds, about the history of their village. She has proved that History can be fun!

## **The Century Theatre**

The Century Theatre is Britain's oldest surviving travelling theatre. At the end of World War II, in 1945, many city centre theatres had either been destroyed or had been left with poor substitutes. The theatre was created to fill this need by being a completely portable stage, auditorium and dressing rooms, together with the box office, mobile living quarters, offices and stores.

It was the brainchild of John Ridley, a theatre enthusiast and engineer at the Stetchley works in Hinckley. It was designed and built by John Ridley, Dick Bull and Rob Robinson in Hinckley between 1948 and 1952. The name Century Theatre was chosen because it was non – committal, holding no political, social or religious implications.

In 1995, the Century Theatre became redundant following a Lottery Grant to build a new theatre by Derwent Water in Keswick. In the following year, it was acquired by Leicestershire Museums to be based permanently in Coalville; just a few miles north of its original construction site in Hinckley. The theatre runs a full programme of plays, musical shows and films

For more information see The Century Theatre website: [www.centurytheatre.co.uk](http://www.centurytheatre.co.uk)