

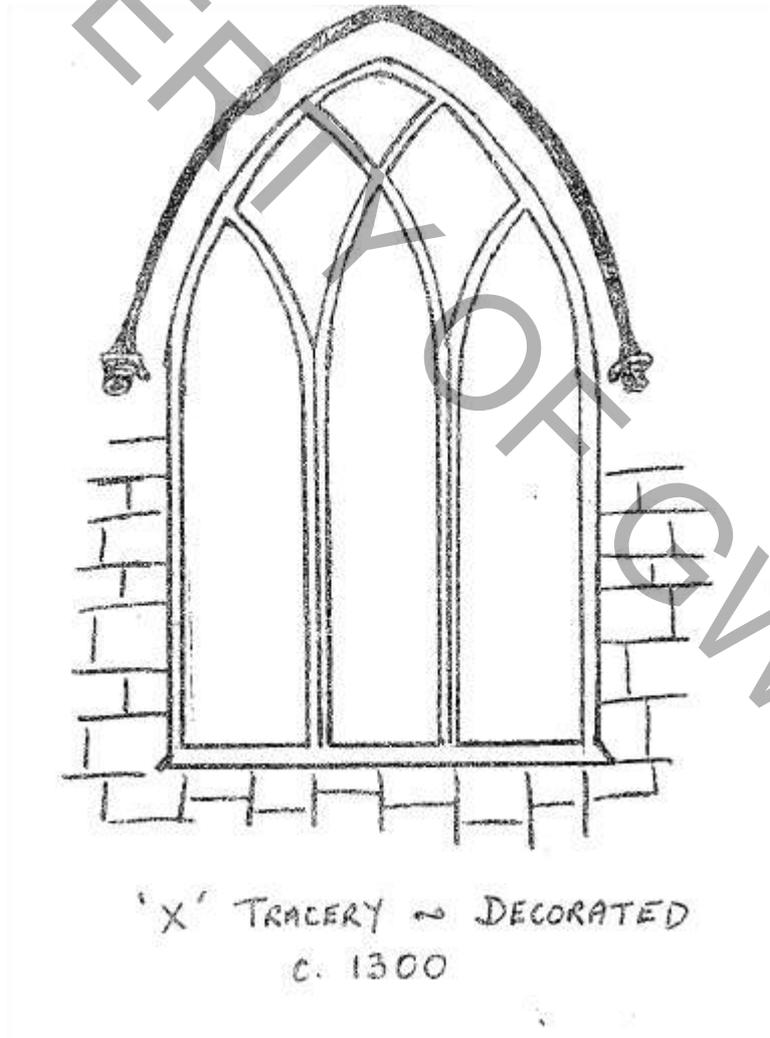


Greater Wigston Historical Society  
White Gate Farm, Newton Lane, Wigston Magna Leicestershire

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**Bulletin 17**

**FEB '87**



**NOTICES ... NOTICES ... NOTICES ... NOTICES ... NOTICES**

**PROGRAMME**

Please note the various changes in date !!!

**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 1987**

A.G.M. 7.30pm at Wigston Liberal Club.

Plus the planning of our input into the Bushloe End Project over the next year.

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 1987**

Combined meeting with Wigston Civic Society. At 7.30pm.

The Community Room, Guthlaxton, entrance opposite the Swimming Baths. A good show for this meeting, please try to attend!

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 1987**

I hope this meeting will be at 42/44 Bushloe End, so that all Society members can be shown around. Meet there at 7.30pm

**May 1987 ..... No Date Yet Fixed**

I am trying to arrange a visit to the Frame Knitting Museum at Ruddington, Notts.

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 1987**

If progress goes according to plan, this meeting will be in the form of a working party at Bushloe End. Details Later.

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**ATTENTION**

Before Easter plans are underway to have a mini-History Fair at Guthlaxton to create local interest in the Bushloe End project. The Society will be involved and I hope everyone will do their best to attend.

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**MEMBERSHIP / SUBSCRIPTIONS**

This will be on the agenda for the A.G.M.

Subscriptions are due in February, and the Treasure will be collecting them at the February Meeting.

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**Editor's Note**

The publishing dates for the Bulletin are the 1<sup>st</sup> Feb, 1<sup>st</sup> June and 1<sup>st</sup> Oct. Please let the Editor have articles three clear weeks before those dates.

New Address .. 2 Paget Court, Paget Street, Kibworth, Leics.

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## **OCTOBER MEETING 1986**

After a résumé of the Bushloe End situation, (full report to follow in a later article), the members settled down to a slide show and reminiscence about Wigston Past from Bill Ward. The combination of Bill being a local man and his interest in photography means that he can be relied upon to tell and show in a most interesting way, the recent history of Wigston.

This evening was no exception! The anecdotes and memories were added to by the audience as we journeyed through the decades. Bill's own photographs were supplemented by slides of older photos and postcards, going back into the nineteenth century.

We spent some time looking at Leicester Road, and noted some of the large houses. The Poplars ... which reminded people of Frank Freer and Jimmy Hartop, property dealers and developers. Wigston Grange built in 1810 belonging more recently to Arthur Hill a Hosiery Manufacturer. Around 1860 the Grange was occupied by the Quaker, Thomas Burgess. Grange Road, near to the Royal Oak, is well worth walking down ... there are some excellent Victorian houses.

Billy Clay's Garage, a forerunner of Bishops, was seen ... He used to make cycles with the trade name "Go Easy Cycles", Aylestone Lane was known as Sand Pit Lane. Frederick Street was Mill Lane and at one time water from underground was used to drive a mill there.

The Bell Inn in Leicester Road, takes its name from the Blue Bell Inn which was in Bell Street in the 1840's.

We then moved down Bell Street and other Wigston Roads, many stories were told about every location. Well after 9.30pm we thanked Bill Ward for a fascinating evening and look forward to his next journey into Wigston Past.

## **NOVEMBER MEETING 1986**

Once again some considerable time was spent on reviewing the situation as regards the saving of the Frameknitters Cottage and workshop in Bushloe End, (report to follow). Ian Varey then gave a talk about Church Architecture in Leicestershire. He explained that church building periods coincide with periods of local prosperity. For this reason not all the national styles of architecture are well represented in our Country and conversely one of the rarer national styles. Transitional, is well represented in Leicestershire. (See main article) At the end of the meeting Mr. & Mrs. Baines provided Beaujolais Nouveau for all members.

## **DECEMBER MEETING 1986**

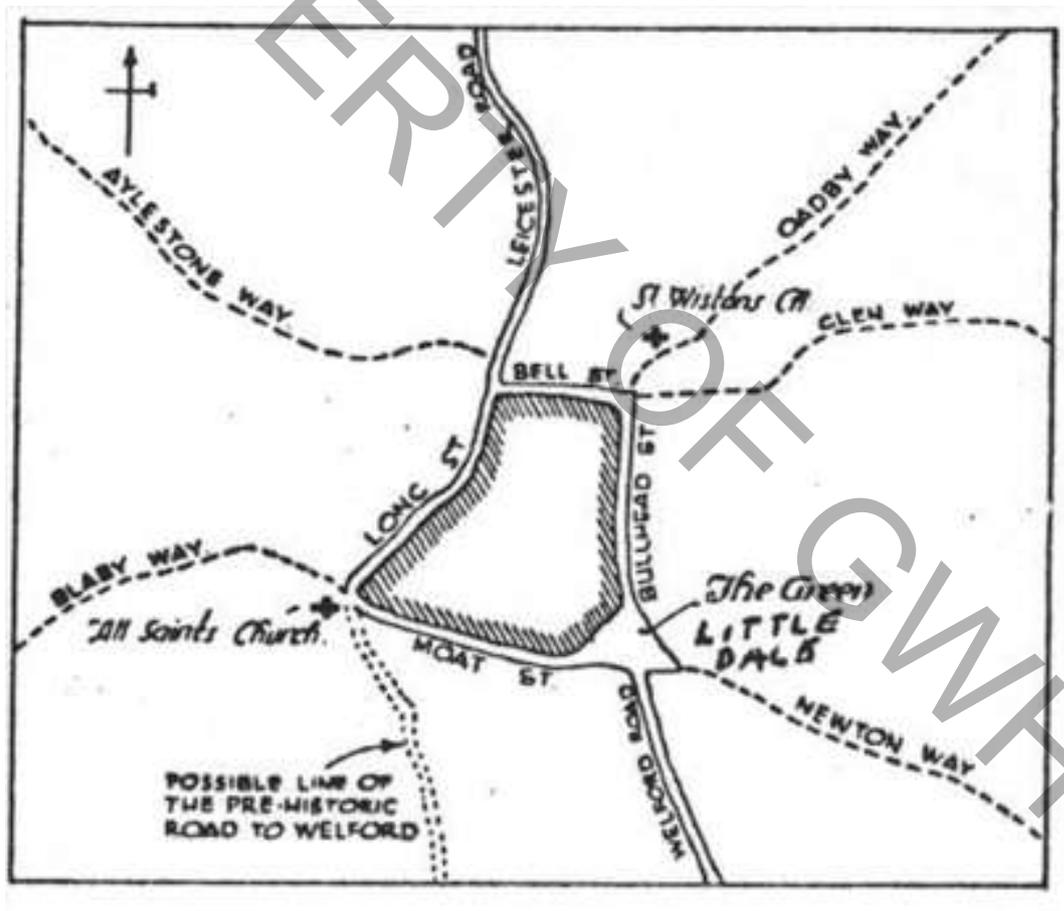
On Wednesday December 17<sup>th</sup> the Society held its third Christmas Party. There were 22 members present. As is now the custom, members were divided into three teams, named after the three great fields of old Wigston, Tythorn, Mucklow and Goldhill. Ian Varey was quizmaster.

The quiz was in four sections,

- a) Quick Response, that was naming a given item all beginning with the same letter;
- b) Mystery Objects, a selection of things from the Wigston Museum;
- c) Correctly finding and naming Wigston roads on a medieval map of Wigston. This proved very popular.

We then broke from the quiz for refreshments. A delightful buffet spread had been prepared by Mrs. Bingley and Mrs. Lanston, enhanced by contributions from other members. Feeling content after our food and wine, we returned to the last section of the quiz .... General questions based on picture slides. Of course the room needed backing out and this provided an excellent opportunity, for those who wished to have 2forty winks". Some must have done for the lead changed hands and at the end of the quiz Mucklow emerged as the winners.

After prizes had been given to the victors and vanquished alike the evening closed.



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## **Report on the Frameknitters Cottage ... Bushloe End Wigston**

January 23<sup>rd</sup> 1987

From September to December 1986 many of us have been filled with mixed emotions over the progress or lack of it as regards 42/44 Bushloe End. Despair was followed by elation which in turn was followed by frustration: then hope and finally possibilities. Many people have helped financially, practically and with advice, but none has worked harder than our President, Duncan Lucas.

Looking back the turning point probably occurred in November when the County Council decided that, while they could not provide any money towards saving Bushloe End, It should be saved. What the Council agreed to do was to instruct the Museum Services to give all possible assistance to those trying to save the building.

This resulted in a meeting in late November, with guidance from Council Staff, to form a Trust, whose aim would be to co-ordinate fund raising, and to purchase and repair 42/44 Bushloe End.

The Name of the Trust was to be 'The Oadby and Wigston Buildings Preservation Trust'; the title being left wide in case further buildings / area should become available in the future. The normal rules governing Trust were then explained and nominees for Trustees were suggested. It was then agreed to seek registration with the Charity Commissioners.

Confirmation of this registration is expected shortly

It was agreed that negotiations should be entered into as regards purchasing the property.

A publicity campaign was then discussed and agreed in principle, with an agreement to finalize matters at the next meeting on Jan 5<sup>th</sup> '87.

### January Meeting

At this next meeting, information about Trustees and the Trust's intended activities were compiled for the Charity Commissioners. Mr Millington, Editor of the Frameknitter's Journal was asked to be a Trustee, by the Chairman and seconded: and Mr R Kempton, a local Hosiery Manufacturer was asked to be the Trust's Patron. Both Gentlemen agreed.

Acquisition was then discussed. This is possible but most of the money will be in the form of a loan over a twelve month period.

The hard work of fund raising is only about to begin!!!

A co-ordinated Publicity Campaign was planned and is ready to be launched. This can not be done until we are in possession of the property. Local Businesses will be canvassed and through the local press, the people of the Borough and County.



With that idea in mind I have tried to condense a few notes on the rather overlooked Leicestershire Churches to help you appreciate their development, and then suggest one or two trips out so that you can discover the charm of these churches for yourselves.

There are many books that will give you the names of the different styles and the dates when these periods started and ended. E.g. Parish Churches by J C Cox & C B Ford.

Anglo/Saxon	Pre Norman Conquest
Norman	1066 to 1180
Transitional	1150 to 1200
Early English	1200 to 1280
Decorated	1280 to 1350
Perpendicular	1350 to 1535

The trouble with lists such as this is that they give an indication of the timescales only! In fact each region of England is date wise different to its neighbours. For example the farther away from the S. E. of England the later the date for the various styles. Ideas spread slowly and people were more 'conservative' in their ways.

Not all styles are well represented in every county. Wars, famines, plagues etc. affected different regions more or less severely. Similarly, economic forces in different regions were continually changing. In the good times people had money to spend and church building, extending, repairing was one of the things that benefitted.

In Leicestershire, little remains of the Saxon Churches. There must have been many, but most were probably made of wood and thatch and so have not survived. St Nicholas' church in Leicester has the most extensive Saxon remains, but these can only be seen inside ... triangular headed windows, massive stone masonry walls etc. Parts of the windows remain on the inside at Foston, Aylestone and Birstall.

Shortly after 1066, the Midlands and the North were in revolt against William and huge areas of countryside were devastated. Leicestershire suffered badly under these attacks and recovery was slow. As the economy of the area began to pick up again the Civil War between Stephen and Matilda broke out and ruin returned.

There are, of course, exceptions .... The beautiful church of St Mary de Castro was founded in 1107 by Robert Count of Meulan and first Earl of Leicester. The position of its founder accounts for it being built at this time. St Nicholas' church was largely rebuilt at this time in the Norman style, round headed windows and arches, massive round pillars, thick stone walls with infrequent and small openings in them. In the villages, Norman work is rare, but there are instances at South Kilworth, Allextion, Arnesby etc.

After the Civil War recovery in Leicestershire was rapid. It coincided with the period known as Transitional Style. This style was of a very limited duration, and in many counties it is missing completely, but in Leicestershire it is well represented. It spans the period between the rounded Norman and the pointed Gothic. It can be seen at

Tilton, Hallaton, Gilmorton, Theddingworth, Swinford, St. Margaret's Leicester and many other churches. Twyford is of particular significance .... The pillars and arcading are thought to be by the same mason as Oakham Castle.

The first of the true Gothic Styles. Early English, is almost completely absent in the County. There seems to have been a sudden slump in economic life, lasting some thirty or forty years, during which years little or no work was done on the churches of the County. It must have been very local for the Early English Style is well represented in neighbouring counties. Sibleby has some of the typical Dog Tooth moulding of the period, Peatling Magna a fine founder's tomb, Hallaton and Gtreat Easton also have work from this period and Hallaton Church can boast one of the finest in the country. The Lancet Window the other typical Early English feature is almost totally absent.

The revival of economic life in the late thirteenth early fourteenth century coincided with the period known as Decorated and it is in this style that most of the best in Leicestershire churches occurs. Pointed arches are graceful and tall. Pillars are made of four half rounds in a quatrefoil shape. Windows have delicate flowering or geometric tracery. Clerestoreys were added to many churches. The whole period is one of light, delicate structures that give a feeling of airyness and space. Stoke Golding, Kegworth, Appleby, Kibworth, All Saints Wigston are among some of the fine Decorated Churches. Perhaps the finest is Gaddesby, but my favourite is Stoughton.

The waves of plague, known as the Black Death, between 1340 and 1360 brought a halt to church building. Leicestershire suffered very badly and recovery took well over a hundred years. The wars of the Roses 1460 to 1485 largely fought over the Midlands was a further agent in hindering recovery.

It was not until the late 1470's that church building in the County began in earnest. By this time styles had changed the Perpendicular style was now in fashion. Melton, Loughborough, Market Harborough, Ashby, Bottesford, Oadby to name but a few, all show the Perpendicular Style. The pillars are cluster pillars. Windows still have the pointed Gothic arch, but the tracery contains many more straight lines. Towers make a return often with pinnacles at the corners. Clerestory's became the rule rather than the exception, most showing the straight line tracery.

There was an abrupt end to the development of the Medieval Church in 1535 when Henry VIII broke with the Catholic Church, dissolved the Monasteries and became head of the English Church himself. The development of church architecture of course did not stop but it was one of the major landmarks.

Before outlining several trips that you might like to make it is worth pointing out that very, very few churches were built entirely in one style! To build a church was a great undertaking and usually took several generations. Furthermore they were continually being repaired, altered, enlarged usually in the style of the time. This makes most churches a hotchpotch of many styles. When looking at churches, look at the main features first, the windows, arcading, roof, doors, towers and spire etc and if you are stumped, or wish to know more do what I do ... buy a Parish Church Guide Book!

### **Trip 1**

Leave Leicester on the Melton Mowbray road through Syston to Reasby  
At Reasby turn right to ...

Gaddesby	mostly of the Decorated Period
South Croxton	very early Decorated Period
Twyford	Transitional Period
Tilton	Transitional Period
Thurnby	Central tower cross plan church
Stoughton	Decorated (much restored)

### **Trip 2**

Leave Wigston on the A50 heading South .. After the Mowsley turn bear right at the next junction for N. Kilworth. Cross over the A427 to South Kilworth.

South Kilworth	One of the few County examples of Early English work Some Norman work
Swinford	Transitional Period

Retrace your route to the A427 and head for Theddington.

Theddington	Transitional Period
Market Harborough	Decorated and Perpendicular
Church Langton	Perpendicular
Libworth	Decorated
Oadby	Perpendicular