

CURATOR'S COLUMN

Zara Matthews
Keeper Harborough
Museum



I must start as always with a huge thank you to all the museum staff, volunteers, Friends and members of the Market Harborough Historical Society who continue to work so hard to support Harborough Museum.

The past twelve months have seen the Museum close in preparation for the new displays, which will showcase The Hallaton Treasure. The displays at Harborough Museum are just part of a much larger project which will conserve, interpret and promote the Southeast Leicestershire Treasure, purchased by Leicestershire County Council in 2007. The total cost of the project is £933,872 which includes purchasing the finds, conserving the finds, displays at Harborough Museum and at Hallaton Museum, two touring exhibitions, web based resources, workshops for schools and community groups, and events for the public.

The project is supported by grants from The Heritage Lottery Fund of £650,600, £100,000 from The Art Fund, the UK's leading independent art charity, £35,000 from the Museums and Art Galleries Improvements Fund, £35,000 from the MLA/V&A Purchase Fund Grant, The Headley Trust, Renaissance East Midlands and local contributions from the Friends of Leicester and Leicestershire Museums, the Leicestershire Museums Archaeological Fieldwork Group and the County Council, as well as private individuals. The support of Harborough District Council is also gratefully acknowledged.

The Treasure display at Harborough Museum includes many of the coins, the silver ingots, the silver bowl and the tankard handle. The Roman cavalry helmet remains at the British Museum where it is undergoing conservation treatment and will return to Harborough Museum once that work is complete. In the meantime visitors are able to view footage of the helmet during this treatment via a webcam in the Museum.

The exhibition explores what we think was happening at the site and the reasons why these objects were buried 2000 years ago. Visitors are asked to consider what they think was happening, through the interactive games and models throughout the displays.

A short film made by the Market Harborough Movie Makers about the initial find and subsequent excavations introduces the displays and further footage explaining about the finds in more detail is available on the computer interactives within the exhibition.

Harborough Museum itself is significantly re-arranged, with a new shop and reception area. The new displays include the door from the stables at Lubenham, and artefacts and information about the railways in and around Harborough. Old favourites back on display include the Liberty Bodice, the Vamping Horn, the long case clock and Falkners' boot and shoemaking Workshop.

Special events planned for 2010 include an exhibition showcasing the work of local photographer Gulliver Speight, and "Harborough's Hidden Talents" part of our Local Heroes series of events celebrating local people. Looking to the future the Museum continues to work with the Naseby Trust and an exhibition about the Battle of Naseby is planned for later in 2010. There will also be the continuing programme of craft activities for children during the school holidays and we'll be joining in the annual Market Harborough Christmas Shopper's Evening in December.

2009 has been an exceptional year for Harborough Museum which would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the staff and volunteers who have given me so much support, encouragement and inspiration. I hope you will be able to visit Harborough Museum and enjoy the new displays.

Note about Harborough Museum:

For information about opening times and special events please phone the Museum on 01858 821085 or email [HYPERLINK "mailto:harboroughmuseum@leics.gov.uk"](mailto:hyperlink) harboroughmuseum@leics.gov.uk

Harborough Museum is operated in partnership by Leicestershire County Council, Harborough District Council and the Market Harborough Historical Society.