

# ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2024

INVESTIGATING LOST LANDSCAPES

## *TRIALS, ODD BALLS & A BREAD BAG*

Looking back on this year, it would be all too easy to 'stay stuck in the mud' with all those rain-sodden memories of a year that seems to have erased summer from the calendar. And yet, beneath those cloudy skies, some amazing moments shone through.

On the field, we brought two historic landscape studies to a close which was, in equal measures, a success and a sadness. We have been working with Anthony and Caroline at Long Clawson and with Janet, Jim and Ben at Harby for seven years respectively. The learning from the studies has proved to be a valuable insight into the life and times of two distinctively different landscapes, and they both have their own stories to tell. It is heartwarming to know that the artefacts and the reports will be held in safekeeping at Mill Farm & Canal Farm so that these stories can be shared for many years to come.

At Hoveringham, we are beginning to reveal a medieval landscape that has been lost to the world since the beginning of the fifteenth century. Incredibly, hidden away in a bread wrapper for the best part of ten years was a c. 11th-century belt fitting which introduced us to the de Hoveringhams, the Goushills and the Battle of Shrewsbury. Be careful about what you throw away In your bread wrappers!

We have been forging ahead with the Langar and Stathern investigations, venturing into a new collaboration on the Sutton Roadside Mystery at Granby Cum Sutton, and flying high with the newly acquired drone, which has added another dimension to our historic landscape investigation resources.

Off the field, new collaborations are forming around studies into medieval roof furniture, how a Romano-British farming estate worked, and we can celebrate with a huge amount of pride, a 'working together' adventure with the good people of Stathern that saved a church tower.

The Langar Odd Balls seminar at the Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds brought a six-year investigation to a close and it attracted an online audience of over 4,500 people.

Taking the trial of Richard Thomas Parker out on the road around Nottinghamshire has been a truly enlightening and rewarding experience. Juries are giving their verdicts on the last man to be publicly hanged in Nottingham, and the post-talk discussions are shedding new light on the proceedings every single time.



We also put the King Killer, Colonel Francis Hacker on trial in St Guthlac's Church at Stathern under the watchful radar of a long-eared bat, and the verdict is a closely guarded secret!

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- ✦ Talks, Talks, Talks 2
- ✦ The Trial of a King Killer 2
- ✦ The Goushill's of Hoveringham 3
- ✦ The Langar Odd Balls 3
- ✦ Who We Are, What We Do & How You Can Contact Us 4



[www.the-field-detectives.com](http://www.the-field-detectives.com)

## TALKS, TALKS, TALKS

### TAKING RICHARD THOMAS PARKER ON TOUR

***“He had shot and killed his mother ”***

Richard Thomas Parker was the last man to be publicly executed in Nottingham for wilful murder, on Wednesday 10th August 1864. He had shot and killed his mother and it was sensationalised at the time as ‘The Fiskerton Tragedy’.

Parker was Catherine’s first cousin four times removed, and the knowledge of his heinous crime was passed down her family. So, she set about a research project to uncover the real facts and actual events of the shooting.

It is a tragic and fateful story that Parker was hanged for. His only defence was that he said it was an accident.

In 2024, Catherine set about a tour of twelve Nottinghamshire Women’s Institute groups, including Fiskerton, to tell Parker’s story and for the ladies to decide upon their own verdict. The talk has been incredibly well-received by very attentive audiences.

So, what are the juries from across the WI groups telling us?

“Nasty piece of work, but he didn’t deserve to hang.” “Would the law today still find him guilty?” “No sympathy at all.” “Send him to Australia and let them hang him there!” “It would make a really good film.” “He might have been bipolar.” “Alcohol will have a devastating effect on anyone.” “He wasn’t right in the head.”

The diary is already filling up for 2025 for further WI juries to decide his fate.

What Would You Decide?

Please contact us if you would like to hear the story and participate in the trial.



## THE TRIAL OF A KING KILLER

### COLONEL FRANCIS HACKER

The Trial of Francis Hacker premiered in St Guthlac’s Church, Stathern, on Saturday 26th October 2024. The good people of Stathern sat in judgment of a trial that took place in 1660. The High Sheriff of Leicestershire oversaw their verdict, and it is a closely guarded secret.

Francis was a member of the militia committee for Leicestershire and bravely played a part in the defence of Leicester. He was a leading cavalry commander at the Battle of Willoughby Field in 1648.

But it is Hacker’s important role in commanding the soldiers who escorted King Charles I to and from Westminster Hall during his trial, that earned him such a coveted place in history. He kept the Death Warrant in his safekeeping for 11 years, signed the order to the executioner and was present on the scaffold when King Charles I had his head removed from his body. On the return of the monarchy, Francis was tried and convicted for the part he played in the execution of Charles I. He paid the ultimate price and was hanged from the Tyburn gallows on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> October 1660.

The Trial of Colonel Francis Hacker back in 1660 was part of a much broader showcase of retribution and one that warrants further reflection and analysis. The 17<sup>th</sup> century reflects some of the uncertainty of our very own troubled times.

What Would You Decide?



## THE GOUSHILLS OF HOVERINGHAM

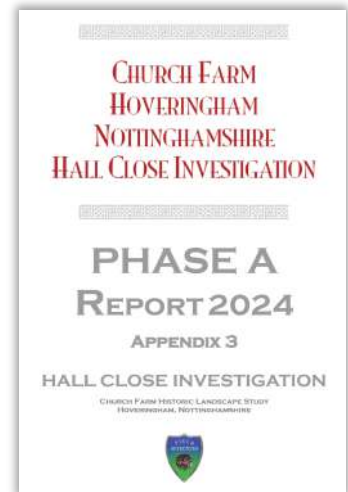
### THE MYSTERY OF A LOST MEDIEVAL LANDSCAPE

The historic landscape investigation at Hoveringham in Nottinghamshire followed a telephone conversation on Saturday 18th February 2023 that led to The Field Detectives being invited to investigate the mystery of, 'I've got something in my field'.

A very small part of the field was excavated many years ago, and although the excavation was minimal, it did reveal evidence of building footings. Unfortunately, no report was produced and nothing more was heard about it until now.

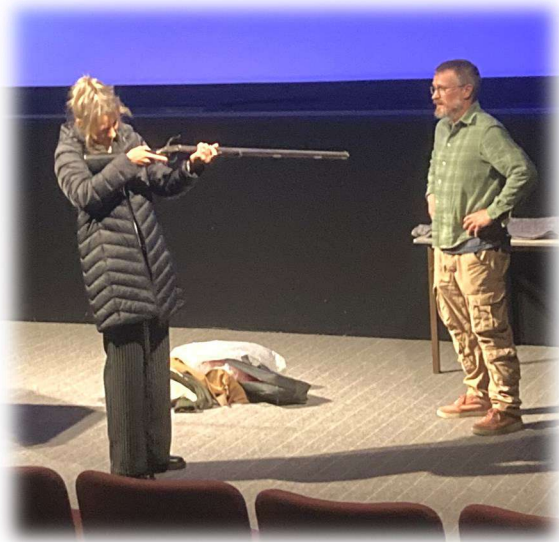
We know that there were at least three church phases here in Hoveringham and that the c. 14th-century church foundations lay under the Victorian church which was built in 1865. However, the site of the original Saxon church is disputed, although arguably, it was most probably built on the same footprint as the later Victorian one. We have also become aware of a once-celebrated Georgian Spa. Apparently, it was situated on the field at the back of the church and was filled in around 1824.

Just to add a further candidate that might fit the man-made earthworks seen on the field called Hall Close at the back of St Michael's church, there is a local belief that this was the site of an early manor house/hall that one belonged to the Goushill family c. 13th to early 15th century.



George pictured left studying the revealed stone structures he always believed were there

***“I’ve got something in my field”***



Pictured above is Justin Russell teaching Catherine how to hold a Staudenmayer air rifle

***“Cinderella’s Lost Shoe”***

## THE LANGAR ODD BALLS

### A MYSTERY NO MORE



The Field Detectives came across an unusual design of lead shot while carrying out a field survey in South Nottinghamshire in 2018. The unusually designed lead projectiles represent an interesting and almost forgotten branch in the development of small arms ammunition.

After six years, the mystery of the Langar Lead Balls was revealed at the Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds on Wednesday 16th October 2024. The Field Detectives navigated their way through a sea of Red Herrings until the truth was uncovered when they came across a man from Germany and Cinderella's lost shoe in the shape of a bullet mould.

You can view the unveiling of the mystery of the Langar Lead Balls on the Field Detectives website under Current Investigations.

So far, over 4500 people have looked in! Check out the comments referencing an association with Star Trek!

# The Field Detectives

## Historic Landscape Studies

### WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

*The Field Detectives seek opportunities to survey fields that can tell us more about how our historic landscapes evolved* - by sharing the stories that we uncover from our field survey activities, we help to inform a better understanding of how our historic landscapes evolved over the centuries. On completion of the field survey activities, a field survey report is produced that precisely records all of the associated survey finds (coins, artefacts, pottery etc.).

Once the field survey reports have been processed, the artefacts are curated as a landowner-held Historical Landscape Study Collection where they are safeguarded for further research and study. With landowner approval, a community presentation/display can then be arranged where the information is shared and an opportunity is provided for the local community to get involved in future research activities.

By submitting the completed field survey reports as an exact finds location record, and by working closely with our heritage sector colleagues, we are establishing a growing archive of landscape-focused historical studies. These context-recorded studies are held in trust by the respective landowners who act as heritage custodians, which in turn, safeguards a unique set of rich historical landscape investigations for further study and learning.

If you want to be the focus of our next investigation, give us a call - Every Field Tells a Story...

Mob: 07896 225 691 Tel: 0115 9377 318

email: [fielddetectives@talktalk.net](mailto:fielddetectives@talktalk.net) website: [www.the-field-detectives.com](http://www.the-field-detectives.com)



**Richard Pincott**  
Survey Director &  
Historic Landscape Detective



**Catherine Pincott-Allen**  
Family Historian, Author & Historic  
Landscape Detective



**Steve Wells**  
Finds Photographer, Treasurer  
& Historic Landscape Detective



**Sophie Chell**  
Historic Landscape  
Detective



**Brian Lovett**  
Farmer & Historic  
Landscape Detective



**Julie Penaluna**  
Artist & Historic Landscape  
Detective



**Alan & Sylvia Massey**  
Prehistory Consultants &  
Witch Bottle Experts



**Jill Barlow**  
Historic Landscape  
Detective



**John Barlow**  
Historic Landscape  
Detective



**Tim & Jenson Elsworth**  
Historic Landscape Detectives



**Jane Morris**  
Dowser &  
Historic Landscape Detective



**David Bate**  
Geologist & Historic  
Landscape Detective



**Cherry Bishop**  
Historic Landscape  
Detective



**Barry Topliss**  
Historic Landscape  
Detective



**Peter Ball**  
Historic Landscape  
Detective



**Aileen Ball**  
Historic Landscape  
Detective



**Roger Whitehead**  
Historic Landscape  
Detective



**Lady Helen Nall**  
Historian, Artist &  
Historic  
Landscape Detective



**Justin Russell**  
Archaeologist &  
Munitions Consultant