

RUTLAND LOCAL HISTORY & RECORD SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 700273

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*** **PRESS INFORMATION** ***
*** **NEW PUBLICATION** ***

Uppingham's prisoner of war hut revealed in Rutland Record 37



This year's issue of the Rutland Local History & Record Society's annual journal, *Rutland Record*, has just been published, and as usual includes much of special interest to Rutland historians.

In one of the main articles, Sheila Sleath traces the history of a wooden hut which was originally part of a World War I prisoner of war camp at Uppingham, erected in 1917 and now in its centenary year surviving – much altered and in a different location – as the venue for Uppingham Indoor Bowls Club. After the closure of the camp at the end of the war the hut served as a social club linked to what was to become the British Legion. Whist drives, dances and many other events were held there, and then it functioned as a cinema for the town until 1937 – the cover illustration reproduces a poster for one of the films shown in the 1920s. After that, indoor bowls became its primary use, and today the former prisoner of war hut is the permanent home of the Indoor Bowls Club, of which Sheila is a keen supporter.

First, though, Brian Needham, the honorary historian of Oakham School, sets out the sequence of the hereditary trustees of the Archdeacon Johnson

foundation from the late sixteenth century to the present day, pointing out that it is quite by chance that Johnson remains the surname of those of Robert Johnson's descendants who have held that office. It is a sometimes colourful and certainly complex story, and it is remarkable that today's honorary trustee, the founder's 10 x great-grandson, is only the thirteenth to have inherited that responsibility, some four hundred years later.

The other main story is that of the Lowther family, Earls of Lonsdale, and their association with Rutland in general and Barleythorpe in particular, a story recounted by Alan Crosby, editor of the *Local Historian* and someone very familiar with that family's origins and associations with Cumbria. He shows how in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the spectacular rise in that family's wealth, land and fortunes, reflected in their purchase of the Barleythorpe estate just outside Oakham, was to lead inexorably to an equally spectacular fall due to their uncontrolled and extravagant expenditure, particularly that of the 5th Earl, Hugh Lowther, whose colourful life is well remembered in Rutland.

The issue closes with an account of artefacts recorded with the Portable Antiquities Scheme in Rutland, including some remarkable 7th century gold finds, and annual reports on historic building surveys and on the activities of record offices and local societies with an interest in the history and archaeology of the county.

The Society's Honorary Editor, Tim Clough, said, 'Once again, we are grateful for the expertise of contributors with a special interest in Rutland's long and varied history. *Rutland Record* is free to members, and we encourage anyone with an interest of Rutland's past to come and join us – full information about our activities including our meetings and our other publications is given on our website, www.rutlandhistory.org'.

Copies of the new publications can be obtained as usual from the Rutland Local History & Record Society at the Rutland County Museum for £5.00 (plus £2.00 p&p), via local bookshops, or on-line via www.genfair.co.uk. ISBN-13: 978-0-907464-57-0.

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