

## BLHS President's Report 2024 - Barbara Cast

Bleasby Local History Society is now in its 44<sup>th</sup> year and continues to be a very successful organisation with a much-appreciated annual programme of talks by excellent speakers on a variety of subjects from Nottingham's Caves and the recently found Rutland Roman villa through to a super romp around the differing archaeology of our historic churches and, ending the year, a very popular talk by our own John Huddleston - an insight into Newark's early 20<sup>th</sup> century industry and social life. This coming year's programme, starting yesterday, is equally exciting - including talks on bones, mediaeval musicians and their instruments, the Norton Disney Iron Age and Roman site with its Dodecahedron. All welcome for a modest donation or become a member, again at a very reasonable amount for the year.

As well as our lectures, and occasional visits, there are the rare occasions when our constitution allows for the society to make representations to the appropriate authority - usually the District Council - when historic buildings or the conservation area appear to be at risk from inappropriate planning proposals.

I am, as ever, very grateful to Jenny, our Secretary, and to our Treasurer Brenda, and to the small committee.

On the subject of funds, the cost of lectures is usually £50 as a norm and we have to omit some speakers because our reserves are too small. So we are very pleased to welcome new members and also to receive useful sums from others who come to individual meetings - the more friends who come along, the more we can spend on speakers.

On preparing for our annual general meeting in March, we realised that there were two very important anniversaries this year - one is that the Great War commenced on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1914, so it is the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and the other anniversary is that Bleasby's devastating plague was in the year 1604, arising firstly in Gibsmere with the first death on 2<sup>nd</sup> April of that year - so this year of 2024 is its 420<sup>th</sup> anniversary. These are surely two anniversaries that we should both remember and acknowledge.

We very much look forward to seeing you at our meetings - look for details of our lectures on noticeboards and the website. Or ask to receive emails about what is on next!