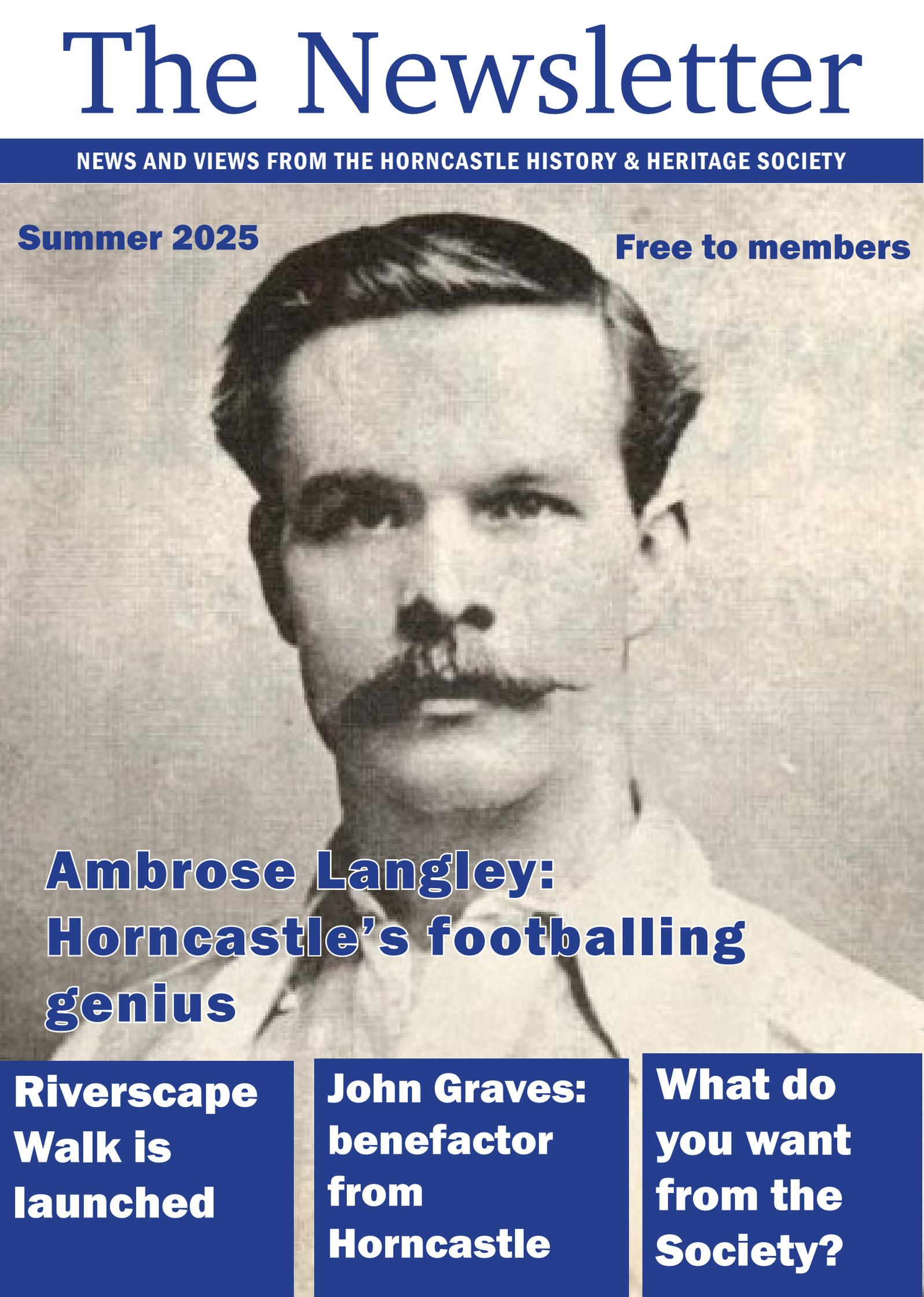


The Newsletter

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE HORNCASTLE HISTORY & HERITAGE SOCIETY

Summer 2025

Free to members



Ambrose Langley: Horncastle's footballing genius

**Riverscape
Walk is
launched**

**John Graves:
benefactor
from
Horncastle**

**What do
you want
from the
Society?**



EDITORIAL

What do you want from the Society?

Dear Members

I'd like to wish you a warm welcome to this new issue of our Newsletter. May I start though with a question - what would you like to see us doing over the coming year?

We're a very successful society. We have many members, valued volunteers and a busy committee. We do a lot of things: a varied programme of walks and talks, look after our precious Town Archive, publish books, work closely with other voluntary organisations - that's just some of what we do.

But are there other things you would like us to do? Horncastle has a rich heritage which we are determined to protect, as our Constitution requires. Our town is rightly celebrated as a brilliant location to live and a great place to visit. But the condition of a very small minority of some build-

ings within the town's Conservation Area is a concern, with issues like uncontrolled vegetation growth and evidence of general disrepair or neglect offering an unfortunate contrast to the great majority of well maintained properties.

Legal responsibility for enforcing planning controls and serving improvement notices on owners and landlords rests with East Lindsey District Council. We would like to support and co-operate with them. We have written to your ELDC Councillors to arrange an initial meeting, and we would also like to re-open a dialogue with ELDC's officers. We already work closely - and, we think, very effectively - with voluntary organisations and the Town Council on a range of projects.

Are these the things you would like us to do, or do you have other suggestions? Please bear in mind though that we are all volunteers with other commitments.

I hope you enjoy this Newsletter. We hope to publish further editions roughly four times a year. If you'd like to write an article, contribute a photo, send us a letter, or you just have a question for us, do please drop us a line. We'd love to hear from you!

Adam Cartwright

Chairman, Horncastle History & Heritage Society

OUR CONTACT DETAILS

Need to ask us something? Is there something you'd like to tell us about? Have you some feedback for us?

**The best way of getting in contact is via our email address
horncastlecivic@gmail.com**

**Or visit us at our Archive Room at the Joseph Banks Centre,
7-13 Bridge Street, Horncastle LN9 5HZ (side entrance)**

We are open Tuesdays and Wednesdays between 10 and 12

Riverscape walk launched



IAN MARSHMAN reports on the opening of Horncastle's Riverscape Walk - and the plans for a new nature reserve

East Mercia Rivers Trust have recently launched a new waymarked walk as part of the Horncastle Riverscape Enhancement Project. So why not make the most of the sunshine this summer and explore the hidden gems to be found on our doorstep? You can pick up a leaflet from the Joseph Banks Centre or scan the QR code on the waymarkers.

Horncastle History & Heritage Society helped create the 1.6 mile walk, which highlights some of the town's riverside heritage, and includes photographs from our Archive. We also helped test the route back in March, leading a guided walk for visitors as part of Discover Lincolnshire Weekend.

It isn't just history though, along the way there are tips on some of the plants and wildlife to look out for in Horncastle's precious chalk streams. The walk also takes you past some of the features created by the project, including the new sculptures to be found around the Water Mill Basin and the Millennium Wood behind Tesco.

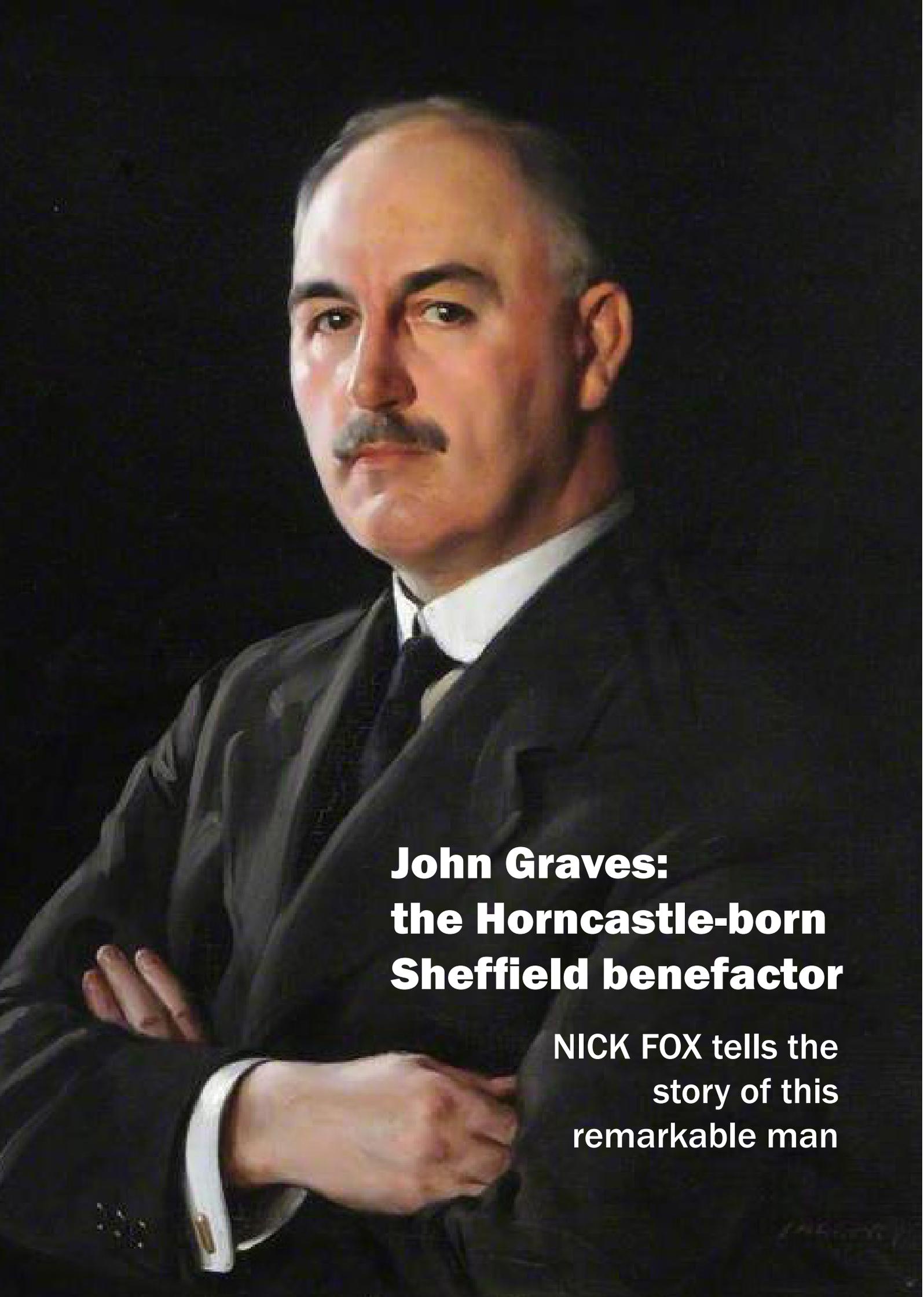
ELDC has just announced funding for Phase 2 of the project, with £222,481 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which means the Trust can create a new public nature reserve on land at the confluence of the Rivers Bain and Waring. This was an idea first suggested in the Horncastle Riverscape Report, which the Society helped produce with partners from Horncastle Together. It will be exciting to see plans for this historic green space develop.



LEFT: One of the very popular sculptures around the Water Mill Basin

BELOW: Scan the QR code on these waymarkers along the path for an online guide





**John Graves:
the Horncastle-born
Sheffield benefactor**

**NICK FOX tells the
story of this
remarkable man**

John George Graves was born on 22nd August 1866 in Horncastle, the son of Thomas, a master butcher, and his wife Julia. When John was eight years old the family moved to Heckmondwike in Yorkshire. After finishing school at Batley Grammar School John was apprenticed to a German watchmaker in Sheffield. By the end of the decade he had set up his own business as a watchmaker in Furnival Street in Sheffield. During the 1890s he expanded his business interests into jewellery, silver smithing and cutlery in Arundel Street.

Graves was a successful merchant who recognised the potential of ordering products by post. In 1897 he launched a mail order business which was to make his fortune. Five years later, in 1902, his turnover was estimated at £1million a year. After his death in 1945, the mail order business was acquired by Great Universal Stores.

With his wealth he became more involved in the running of the city, taking on roles of Councillor and then Lord Mayor. He became Alderman in 1926 and was granted freedom of the city in 1929.

One of his keenest passions was the public ownership of open spaces. A number of parks in and around Sheffield were established as a result of his enthusiasm and financial support. The largest park in Sheffield bears his name, Graves Park. He donated 248 acres of land for the establishment of this park with the aim of preserving the 1000 year old woodland.

Graves was also a very keen art collector. He not only contributed to the development of a library and art gallery, but also donated 700 pictures from his personal collection. In addition, he donated funds to the Sheffield University and the Children's Hospital.

A remarkable and generous benefactor to the city of Sheffield.



LEFT: Graves Park, Sheffield. RIGHT: Just one of Graves' many newspaper adverts

OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Your Committee have several ideas that we're working on at the moment. We would like to commission a Blue Plaque to commemorate **Ambrose Langley**, Horncastle's finest ever footballer, who appears on our front cover this edition. Langley, who started his career with Horncastle Town, went on to play for Sheffield Wednesday and to manage Hull City. He was born in 1870 at what's now Harpars Bar in South Street, and that would be the most fitting place for a memorial to him.

We're also working on more books, including:

- The Railway that Horncastle Built, by Chris Bates
- Skegness to Horncastle Walk, by Mary Silverton
- Horncastle Pubs by Kev Woodward
- Folktales Round Horncastle by the Rev. Alpass Penny (updated and illustrated edition)

Finally, our next exhibition is planned to be about **William Marwood**, the famous Horncastle executioner from Victorian times. More details about that soon - watch this space!

ARCHIVE REPORT

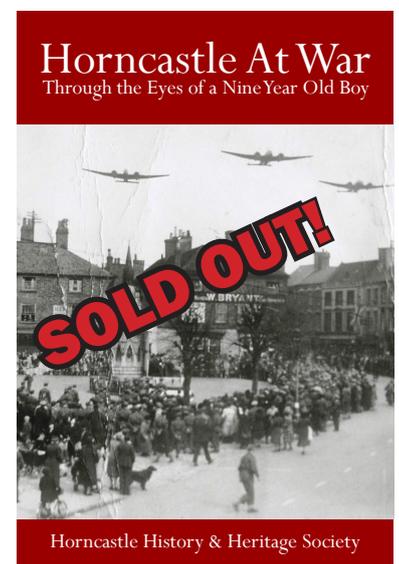
Five years of collating the donations which David Robinson presented to the Society have now drawn to a close, explains MARY SILVERTON

We now get regular donations from the people of Horncastle or people who have connections to the town in the past. As a result, our library now contains approximately 100+ books or booklets or magazines. Many of these are fairly unique and all are interesting. Members may borrow any of these for free.

The archive has very much a local focus, and as a result is probably the only place where you will find records on local people and families and businesses. Also, extensive collections on some famous local figures such as Marwood, Annie Dixon, Dr Harrison, and the Crowder family. Recently we have been fortunate to receive Peter Foster's photograph collection and intend to display it shortly. We have added a new display cabinet thanks to donations made in memory of June Benton in which we can display some of the models we purchased from Doncaster museum. We are currently building a file on W A Poucher, a renowned photographer and perfumier who was born in the town.

Our research and documents provide material for the books we publish, the blue plaques which we erect and the talks which take place each month. If you have any Horncastle related material that you would wish to see protected for the future, please contact me through the website or email horncastlecivic@gmail.com.

RIGHT: One of our best-selling books ever has sold out (but don't worry, we're organising a reprint)



New Chairman

Ian and I thought we should have an official Chairman's handover photograph - so here we are standing in front of a suitably historic building on a glorious evening a few weeks ago.

Adam Cartwright

Accounts approved

We are delighted to say that our independent reviewer has approved our annual accounts for the year ending 31 March 2025. Thanks to Mary for all her work on our financial side, which is absolutely vital to the Society.



**Our new website is up and running!
Why not take a look at horncastlehistory.co.uk**



BATTLEFIELD TOUR

Winceby
October 12th
Interested?

Please let us know by 28 September if you'd like to join in. The walk will be on roads, footpaths and over fields for 2 to 3 hours, so it may not be suitable for all

Email us at horncastlecivic@gmail.com

Walk provided by the Battlefields Trust

Preserving, researching and interpreting
Britain's battlefield heritage



HORNCASTLE HORSE FAIR

7-9 AUGUST 2025



THE MANE
EVENT
SATURDAY
9 AUGUST
10AM-4PM

A FREE ARTS &
COMMUNITY EVENT
FOR EVERYONE!

CELEBRATING
OUR HERITAGE,
CREATING NEW TRADITIONS

@HORNCASTLEHORSEFAIR



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND



Horncastle History
& Heritage Society

PHOTOS:
@PHILCROWPHOTO