

# Curator's Column

Lindsay Souster  
Keeper



SILVER SINGLE CASED POCKET WATCH, SIGNED JOHN SPENCE, MARKET HARBOROUGH (DAMAGED), ENAMEL DIAL WITH ROMAN NUMERALS, VERGE MOVEMENT WITH SQUARE PILLARS, PIERCED COCK, NO 2022, 4.2CMS.

Nb. THIS APPEARS TO BE THE ONLY EXTANT WATCH BY JOHN SPENCE (1724-1783).

SILVER PAIR CASED POCKET WATCH, SIGNED - GEORGE WHITLEY, MARKET HARBOROUGH, WHITE ENAMEL DIAL WITH ARABIC AND ROMAN NUMERALS, VERGE MOVEMENT WITH SQUARE PILLARS, PIERCED AND ENGRAVED BALANCE COCK AND BACK PLATE, HALLMARKED LONDON, 1765, 5.5CMS.

LITERATURE: JOHN DANIELL, LEICESTERSHIRE CLOCKMAKERS, 1975 P.41. THE ONLY WATCH BY WHITLEY NOTED BY DANIELL IS THIS EXAMPLE.

Sale catalogue descriptions by Gilding's fine art auctioneers, Market Harborough.

The Museum benefited from the presence of both a Keeper and Assistant Keeper during 1999 allowing an extensive programme of 18 Special Event days mainly aimed at children. Our annual History Conference attracted its largest audience of recent years, and is now integrated in the programme of the Historical Society.

Exhibitions included 'Wartime Airfields of Harborough' – done with the help of local aviation enthusiasts, 'The Regent Autocar Company' – in conjunction with local Austin car enthusiasts, '1000 Years of Great Bowden', and 'Power Jets – The Story of a Pioneer' (Sir Frank Whittle) using important artefacts from our collections at Snibston. The most recent display 'Success to the Railway' celebrates 150 years of Market Harborough Station. Our Millennium Exhibition, 'Harborough to Tartary – The Incredible Journeys of Anthony Jenkinson' – was done with the assistance of the Millennium Team. In preparation for this exhibition the Temporary Display Area has been redecorated and new spotlights installed.



Two rare watches from Market Harborough clockmakers came up for auction in the summer. One of c.1760 by John Spence and one of 1765 by George Whitley were purchased for the Museum, using the joint resources of the Harborough Museum Purchases Fund and the new Leicestershire Museums Purchase Fund. Other acquisitions of particular interest include a collection of historic toys from Ullesthorpe, the cashier's window from the Ritz Cinema in Market Harborough, and a collection of agricultural bygonies from an informal museum collection on an old farm at Swinford. Three large ledgers and a scrapbook from the Edwardian horse-dealing business of JH Stokes of Great Bowden have been acquired and deposited in the Record Office.



Susan Stretton left the museum staff in 1999 and we should like to pay tribute to the work she has done for the Museum over the years. In her place has come Clare Hickman, who is already planning future exhibitions on her own initiative. The decision by Harborough District Council to end lone working at the museum at weekends has meant that additional part-time staff will be joining our team.

From May 2000, Fred has gone on secondment for two years as Keeper of Collections for Leicestershire Museums and Lindsay has been appointed for the same period as Keeper of Harborough Museum. This has been a very busy time for Lindsay as she has also just got married.

Fred Hartley and Lindsay Souster