



# PILGRIM TRAILS

June 2019

*Welcome to our newsletter - Pilgrim Trails.  
This is our fifth publication charting the progress towards  
the completion of the 'Pilgrim Roots' Project.*

## 'MOUSIE' TAILS

*Robert 'Mousie' Thompson Commemorative Plate Presented to Babworth Church*

No one knows exactly how many **carved mice** are hidden in the pulpit and pews at All Saints Church, Babworth. Or at least, if they do, they are not telling! What is known, is that the carved oak mice are the trademark of Yorkshireman, **Robert Thompson**, born in 1876, who dedicated his life to the craft of carving and joinery in English Oak. It was he who carved the oak fittings in beautiful **Babworth Church**.

The famous mouse symbol, found on every item crafted by Robert Thompson's has an uncertain history. The story told by Robert Thompson himself was that one of his craftsmen remarked that they **"Were all as poor as church mice"** Whereupon Robert carved a mouse on the church screen he was working on. That particular mouse has never been found but it has continued as a trade mark of **quality** and dedication to craftsman ever since.

**Babworth Church** is known as the spiritual home of the **Mayflower Pilgrims** as it was here that **William Bradford** of Austerfield and **William Brewster** of Scrooby came to hear **Reverend Richard Clifton** preach. When he lost his livelihood at Babworth, Clifton held secret meetings at Scrooby Manor, and the beginnings of the Separatist movement were born.

To commemorate the forthcoming **400th anniversary** of the **Mayflower** journey in 2020, **Bassetlaw District Council** and Sally Outram, Director of Mayflower Pilgrims jointly commissioned a bespoke collection plate from Robert Thompson's company, complete with mouse, to present to vicar Cora Yarrien.

Cllr Jo White, Deputy Leader of Bassetlaw District Council said "We wanted to present this plate to Babworth as a symbol of our thanks to the vicar and church wardens at All Saints Church who have gone out of their way to make **visitors welcome**. We have seen a marked increase in Mayflower descendants, tour operators and journalists coming to this area as interest in the **2020 anniversary** builds, and we appreciate that Babworth is first and foremost a much loved place of worship with a very **loyal congregation**, this gift is as much to Babworth's parishioners as it is to Reverend Yarrien."

## Destination - KINGS CROSS

*Promoting the Pilgrim Roots Region at Kings Cross Station*

A **team** from North Nottinghamshire **"let the train take the strain"** on a trip to London to promote Retford and the surrounding area. Cllr Garry Clarkson, Retford's Deputy Mayor, joined the team from North Notts & Lincs Community Rail Partnership (NNLCRP), the **Poacher Line**, and the Association of Community Rail Partnerships (ACoRP) at an event in **Kings Cross Station** in London on Friday 17th May 2019. Dressed in his mayoral robes, Cllr Clarkson was a very popular subject for photographs with many of the visitors.



It was a very **successful day**, and the **new signage** at Retford station reinforces the importance of Retford as a **gateway** to the **Roots** region.



*Cllr Jo White, Rev Cora Yarrien and Sally Outram*

## WINNER ANNOUNCED! The Nottingham Roosevelt Memorial Travelling Scholarship

The **County Council** wanted to do **something a little different** to mark the 2020 anniversary.

So after agreeing to **sponsor** the **2020 Nottingham Roosevelt Memorial Travelling Scholarship** to America <https://rooseveltscholarship.org/> it was agreed with the Trustees that a one off Mayflower Scholarship should be created to mark 2020 – such is its **importance** to the **county**.

After a challenging **2 stage** interview process, **Joe Danks** has been awarded and accepted the scholarship. The scholarship trust was **established in 1946** as a living memorial to President Franklin Roosevelt and is open to young working men and women between the ages of 20 and 35. The aim is to enable them to **visit the USA** to obtain and bring back, **experience**, knowledge and skills to benefit Nottinghamshire and to study and benefit from the **way of life of the American** people.



**Joe** is fresh from a **year-long musical** residency at the **National Maritime Museum** which saw him interpret some of the stories and material through song culminating in a major performance on the **Cutty Sark** and the release of an album of traditional and **folk music** called **Seaspeak**.

Building on Joe's residency experience, he is now entering into the first stage of his research in the UK – accessing archive material, **music of the period** and speaking to many of our local and national experts on the pilgrims to understand the **importance** of the **Nottinghamshire story**, the reasons for the journey and the way of life that the pilgrims left behind. Then in early 2020, Joe will travel to America to meet those closely related to the story – the **Wampanoags**, the descendants and those with no direct linkage but living in communities which are gearing up to **major multi-cultural commemorations** in 2020.





## New Mayflower Room commemorates Gainsborough's Pilgrim roots

A room has been opened at the **United Reformed Church**, Gainsborough, which exhibits the history of the Mayflower Pilgrims and their experiences in the area and beyond. Earlier this month, an **event took** place to celebrate the opening of the room, with performances from national dance project **'The Imagination Museum'** forming part of the day.

The event is part of a **three-year project** leading up to 2020, the **400 year anniversary** of the sailing of the Mayflower to the US, a key historical event for communities across the UK, US and the Netherlands. Many of the passengers on board the Mayflower were from this region. West Lindsey District Council's former Chairman, Mrs Pat Mewis, attended the performance and officially opened the **Mayflower Room** at the **Church**.

West Lindsey District Council, also attended the event, and said: "The new Mayflower Room in the URC is a fantastic **community-led** addition to telling the local **Separatists' story** and how it is connected to Holland and America. The 'Imagination Museum: Mayflower 400' **performances** in Gainsborough have been well-received at our **two key Pilgrims' heritage sites**. We're looking forward to a special celebration performance in November as part of 2019's Pilgrims Festival."

The performances see **three eccentric** tour guides lead you on a journey through history, using movement, text and music to **explore** what it was really like for many of the passengers from this area who travelled from England to America aboard the Mayflower in 1620.



*Imagination Museum Dancers*



## From Babworth to the New World – local artist working on a new Pilgrim Exhibition



*Bonita and John*

**John Harris** says I worked as an artist for 40 years, working for galleries and publishers, my wife Bonita is currently head of art at a school in Mansfield. At the beginning of this year I moved into a studio space in **The Hub** in Retford to relax and paint whatever subject I wanted.

Within The Hub is a **Pilgrim Museum**, I thought I would take a look. After reading all the information available I asked "Who are they? What did they look like?"

**No one knew**, plenty of information about what they did, that's not what I wanted to know I wanted to know who they were as people. What drove them to take their **beliefs** and **life** choice to the **New World**. Making a pact all people are equal which became the bedrock of the greatest power and democracy in the world.

We are creating a **series of paintings** following the **key character** Pilgrims from nearby, featuring their successes and failures. Wherever possible we are putting the **human face** on The Pilgrims with particular **reference** to the **women** who must have had extraordinary faith, love and stoicism to do what they did.

Some of the **paintings** are complete, some are work in progress - they will feature, Babworth Church, Scrooby Manor, Boston (Lincolnshire), Gainsborough Old Hall.

Each painting will have an explanation about the person, or the event, if I can find a friendly printer **souvenir cards** will also be available.

The paintings will be on **exhibition** around the region, events and times have yet to be decided upon. Any ideas of a suitable subject for a painting or any **exhibition space** that can be available at any time from November 2019 to November 2020, please contact me direct - John Harris, email: harris.john19@sky.com or through Sandra Withington.

## Calling all community groups - Mayflower - The Pilgrims Journey

We have been **contacted** by a gentleman who has written a **resource book** that forms the basis of a play about the Mayflower. Wynn and Ella Pritchard write: 'We are particularly interested in the family of William Brewster, as my wife originally a Brewster, has **family connections** in the area dating back some considerable time. To celebrate the 400th anniversary of the **Mayflower journey** and our **links** to the Brewster family we have written and performed a **one-hour play** with original music aimed at amateur **group performances**.

The resource book includes a historical account in **words and songs** of the journey taken by Brewster and other pilgrims. The cast can include people of all ages and we give suggestions for simple and effective **costume** and **set design**. The songs are set out in an easy-to-follow melody and chords format and are **designed to be accessible** to anyone able to play a guitar, keyboard or other chord-based instrument.

The **book is available** from Amazon at £8.99 entitled Mayflower: The Pilgrims Journey. If you are thinking of putting a community play together do let us know.

## The Pilgrim 400 apple continues to blossom!

**Invitations** have now been despatched to our partner destinations in the Mayflower Compact to accept a **Pilgrim 400 apple tree**, grown by horticulturalist John Stirland. The first tree will be planted in Scrooby at their annual show on 7th September and the second tree will be planted in the grounds of **Provincetown Museum, USA** in the fall.

John reports that the **blossom** is spectacular and this year's crop of fruit will be used to test on apple recipes contained in a Mayflower 400 **commemorative recipe book** being compiled by local author and photo-journalist Sally Outram.



## New MAYFLOWER 400 Self Guided Tours APP is launched

**Mayflower Self-Guided Tours** app, an innovative and informative free app has been launched that provides users with easy to follow self-guided tours of the UK towns, cities and villages connected to the Mayflower. **App users** will find free, guided walks and driving tours of each of the villages, **towns and cities** connected to the Mayflower, which include Scrooby & Babworth, Austerfield and Doncaster, Immingham and Gainsborough from the Roots area and destinations further afield including Worcestershire and Leiden (Holland).

The app makes use of **GPS** to notify users of nearby places of interest, allowing visitors to follow in the footsteps of the **Mayflower Pilgrims** and explore all the stops on the Mayflower trail at their own pace.

The Mayflower Self-Guided Tours app also offers access to each of the **walking guides offline**, so that users can take the tours in their own time and in any order. To download the free Mayflower self-guided tours app to your device, visit **Mayflower400UK.org/app**

## Contact

Email [Sandra.withington@bassetlaw.gov.uk](mailto:Sandra.withington@bassetlaw.gov.uk)  
Tel 01909 533533  
[www.pilgrimroots.org](http://www.pilgrimroots.org)

