

# LEYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Issue 93 December 2019

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019

## A Tour around the Historic Midlands

For this year's trip, we have three very different stops, the first is the Castle where Queen Elizabeth I was very familiar with and where she was courted by the Earl of Essex. Then it is on to the town of Leamington Spa which was the in place to be in the days of the Spa towns, with a surprising connection to Leyland as we will see. Lastly on our way back we will call in at one of the most iconic public houses on the canals of Britain namely the Greyhound Inn at Sutton Stop before heading for home.



The first Kenilworth Castle was established in the 1120s by the royal chamberlain, Geoffrey de Clinton, who built most of the Norman keep. In the early 13th century King John added an outer circuit of stone walls and a dam to hold back a great lake, so creating one of the most formidable fortresses in the kingdom.

In 1266 Simon de Montfort held Kenilworth against the king through an extraordinary six-month siege – the longest in English medieval history. In the 14th century John of Gaunt, son of King Edward III, developed the castle into a palace, building the great hall and lavish apartments. The castle was a favoured residence of the Lancastrian kings in the later Middle Ages – Henry V even built a retreat here at the far end of the lake.

In 1563 Elizabeth I granted the castle to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, who transformed Kenilworth into a magnificent palace. Famously he entertained the queen here for 19 days of festivities in 1575. The castle's fortifications were dismantled in 1650 after the English Civil War.



**Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

**15<sup>th</sup> Annual Historical Society Trip to Kenilworth Castle & Leamington Spa**

**The cost includes coach and entry to the Castle**

### **Itinerary**

**8.00 am – Depart from Tesco car park**  
**10.15 am – Arrive at Kenilworth Castle**  
**12.45 pm – Depart Kenilworth Castle**  
**1.00 pm – Arrive at Leamington Spa**  
**2.00 pm – Meet Guide for tour of town**  
**5.00 pm – Leave Leamington Spa**  
**5.30 pm – Arrive Sutton Stop**  
**6.30 pm – Depart Sutton Stop**  
**8.15 pm – Arrive at Tesco car park.**  
**Cost £20.00 (deposit £10.00)**

The town of Leamington Spa, originally known as Leamington Priors was a tiny village until about 1800. The value of the mineral springs was known in the middle ages, but it was not until 1784 that the small village began rediscovering its saline springs and started building baths around some of them.

In the period just prior to 1810 it had become obvious that the town's existing Bath Houses could not cope and plans were made to build a bathing establishment on a scale surpassing anything yet attempted. A syndicate was formed to provide the necessary funds.

A company was formed to buy the land on the west side of the Parade for building purposes. This was the start of the 'new town' and eventually in 1810 a spring was discovered on land owned by Mr Greatheed – a member of the syndicate – on the north side of the river, but only a stones-throw away from the old town.



**Hawkesbury Junction** or **Sutton Stop** is a canal junction at the northern limit of the Oxford Canal where it meets the Coventry Canal. The alternative name, Sutton Stop, arises from the name of a family which provided several lock keepers there in the nineteenth century and the hamlet is home to the Greyhound Inn to which we will take a very short walk today.

**15<sup>th</sup> Annual Historical Society Trip to the Kenilworth Castle & Leamington Spa – 14<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020**

**Please book me .... Places on the coach, deposits of £10.00**

**Print Name (s) ..... Signature .....**