

A ROBIN HOOD REALITY CHECK!

A MISCELLANY OF PAST AND PRESENT FACTS, OPINIONS, COMMENTS,
QUOTATIONS AND VIEWPOINTS THAT GIVE A BROAD PERSPECTIVE ON
JUST WHERE THE ICONIC LEGEND STANDS IN 2016.

ALL THE DATA AND STATISTICS QUOTED ARE BASED ON
RESEARCHED INFORMATION THAT WAS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE AT THE
TIME OF PUBLICATION.

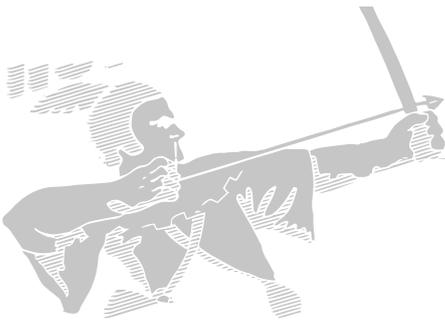


INTRODUCTION

“In differing ways, the traditional stories of the Robin Hood legend often impact on a diverse spectrum of information and creative arts, ranging from historically related facts to various aspects of contemporary popular culture. Consequently, the subject of the globally renowned hero of English folklore has become extensively complex but the observations included in this publication should provide a brief snapshot of some of the key facts, issues and perceptions surrounding Robin Hood at the start of 2016.”

(Bob White – Chairman, World Wide Robin Hood Society)

- 1** **There is NO undisputed historical evidence available that can conclusively prove Robin Hood ever existed or who he really was.** However, with the unlikely prospect of a “Richard III moment” and the discovery of a DNA linked skeleton, it probably no longer really matters, because, over the centuries, fiction has triumphed over fact and the Sherwood Forest outlaw has become a global icon of popular culture.
- 2** **Tales of Robin Hood have been in existence since his early suggested associations with the Pagan beliefs of the mystical Green Man of the Forest** and across the decades, generations have established him as the quintessential people’s hero of English folklore, resulting in his present-day status as a self-promoting legend with international recognition.
- 3** **Like it or not, the Nottingham city and county local authorities are inseparably linked to the Robin Hood legend and have no choice in the matter.** They cannot “cherry-pick” the mixed blessings that the traditional historical associations bring and have to accept the world famous links at face value – warts and all! As a result, the authorities have often been accused of seemingly “getting on and off the Robin Hood roundabout” when it conveniently suits them and in the eyes of the outside world they are often seen as appearing to have scant regard for the potential economic benefits of the legend, paying it little more than “lip service”. Past experience has also shown the Robin Hood connection to be “both a blessing and a curse” - generating both positive and negative coverage. However, despite being seen as somewhat unpredictable, the subject of Robin Hood never fails to spark interest and controversy in the local, national and global media.
- 4** **“The malleability of the story is reflected in Robin Hood himself, who is not much more than a gathering of qualities – some of them contradictory.** By the character’s very “sketchiness”- he is a man well fitted for the fluid possibilities of his adventures that allows his interpreters, or the audience, much scope for their own involvement. Robin Hood has changed so much and so often since the Middle Ages that there seems to be no one element common to his make-up. In other words, over a period of more than 700 years the Robin Hood tales have constantly been in a state of flux. The steady flow of books and films etc. demonstrates not only the legend’s continuing appeal throughout the world but also its astonishing amenability to fresh interpretation.” (Kevin Carpenter, academic and author of “The Robin Hood Encyclopaedia”)



5 Many worthwhile, charity-based initiatives have been founded on the popular principles of the legend by organisations that have recognised the high profile that the Robin Hood connection generates in terms of publicity and awareness relating to “robbing the rich to give to the poor” and fighting for causes against injustice. Two prominent examples are the Robin Hood Foundation which cares for the needy and the homeless in New York City and the Oxfam co-ordinated Robin Hood Tax campaign lobbying for a core fund to be created to help tackle global famine and humanitarian crises.

6 The Robin Hood legend impacts on so many areas of interest and popular culture that the World Wide Robin Hood Society have had to create 22 specific categories in their archives and on their website. They cover Robin Hood in history and legend; in business and commerce; in the community; in spirit and religion; on location; in education; in food and drink; in popular culture; in literature; in poetry and verse; on stage and screen; in music; in art; in humour; in science fiction; in ecology; in sport and pastimes; in principle; in tourism; in marketing; in the media and in the 21st Century. All of which reflects the sheer complexity and scope of the iconic legend and why it has continued to intrigue and fascinate generation after generation.

7 One of the greatest assets of the Robin Hood legend is its ability for the story to be constantly re-told and “re-invented” in numerous ways, which consequently ensures that Robin Hood remains a topical and iconic figure that is frequently featured in media stories around the globe.

8 “Robin lived at some time between 1250 and 1350 during the reigns of the first three Edwards.” claimed author and historian, Jim Bradbury in his 2002 comprehensive analysis of the historical evidence available on Robin Hood. According to Bradbury, “He was outlawed and pursued a criminal career. He operated first in Yorkshire and then in Sherwood and Nottingham – probably with survival as his main aim. So far as we know, he had nothing to do with the Crusades, had no love called Marian, was not an enemy of Prince John or a friend of King Richard and was not especially caring about the poor!” This of course only represents one specific view on the legendary outlaw and the Society’s research to date clearly shows there are well over 25 names and plausible theories put forward by historians and academics claiming the possible origins of exactly who Robin Hood really was!

9 In terms of his heritage and legendary status, Robin Hood has become a million times richer as a global icon of popular culture than as a genuine historical figure. The motion picture industry has always recognised the visual appeal of the Robin Hood legend from the very first critically acclaimed silent film starring Douglas Fairbanks, to a host of classic box office blockbusters through the subsequent decades and at the time of writing this leaflet we are aware of five Robin Hood-related Hollywood movies currently in various stages of production. In 2015, several books were also published reflecting the story in different genres.





10 **Walt Disney had a personal fascination with the Robin Hood legend**, which is why he made both live action and animated versions of the tale, as well as comedy shorts featuring some of his popular cartoon characters. He believed that marketing his fantasy creations as if they were “real” individuals or bona fide commercial products was the key to their successful and lasting popularity and history has proved his theory to be right!

11 **“He is a national folk-hero and also a symbol transcending international boundaries.** As a peasant hero Robin has come to symbolise justice, freedom from oppression and the struggle against tyranny in all its forms. It is this symbolism that is perhaps most significant, the sense that the actions of the common man are worthy, and on occasion, able to influence the course of human events. It seems fitting, then, that although the tales of Robin Hood have developed a vibrant life of their own, upon investigation the legend itself seems to be firmly rooted in history.” (Dan Shadrake, Britannia battle re-enactment society)

12 **Over the years, the amount of paper used in the numerous Robin Hood related consultations, feasibility studies and reviews commissioned by the various local authorities probably accounts for more trees than currently exist in the present-day Sherwood Forest!** Even more alarming is the fact that the collective cost of all these fruitless paper exercises could possibly have financed the creation of a quality Robin Hood visitor attraction several times over! The list of failed ventures includes the Tales of Robin Hood and the World of Robin Hood visitor attractions together with numerous medieval village style proposals. The reasons for their eventual demise varied from lack of investment to wrong location and several proposed schemes only used the Robin Hood connection to help secure property developments and showed no long term commitment to the legend.

13 **“We’re a bit like a band that refuses to play its biggest hit!”** was how Nottingham City Councillor, Nick McDonald responded to the frequent criticism of the local authorities by the public and the media for failing to fully capitalise on the potential economic benefits of the global appeal of the Robin Hood legend. In fact, in 2004, the BBC Television’s “Inside Out” programme filmed a feature that highlighted just how little there actually was for visitors to Nottingham to see about Robin Hood!

14 **“There has been a feeling for as long as I can remember that Nottingham has underused and undersold one of its greatest assets.** In the past, attempts to promote Robin Hood have been regarded as flimsy and lightweight and it needs something to really hold the public’s imagination.” (Ted Cante, Chairman of the Nottingham Castle Trust.)

15 **“I was highly excited walking up to the gate but once through it was “HUH!” To my dismay, the guard told me that the Castle got destroyed during the Civil War in the 1600’s. I was despondent!”** These were the observations of David Miller from the Utah Desert, USA after bringing his family all the way to Nottingham to experience at first hand a fascination with the legend of Robin Hood that he had passionately held since his childhood!

16 Although it was well-known that the Robin Hood legend was popular all around the globe, it was only with the development of the internet that the true extent of its international appeal became apparent. When the name “Robin Hood” was typed into Google on 2nd June, 2015, the search engine came up with 66,700,000 results! When all the other key characters and locations associated with the traditional tales were also individually “Googled” and added, the Robin Hood legend collectively totalled a staggering 1,356,011,000 results!

17 The most important aspect of effectively managing Nottingham and Nottinghamshire’s traditional Robin Hood associations is the need to realistically strike an acceptable balance between its benefits and its potential difficulties. Visitor expectations need to be satisfactorily met but not to the extent of Nottingham becoming an urban version of a tacky seaside resort!

18 A wide range of companies and organisations (local, national and international) have recognised the publicity and marketing value of profiling a Robin Hood connection and have deliberately chosen a Robin Hood brand name to promote their products and services. In many cases they have no real claim or links with the legend at all but they recognise that the general public firmly believe the Robin Hood name stands for a fair and just deal and hope that by association, such principles might help establish their business or organisation to also be seen as credible and trustworthy in the public’s eyes!

19 “In terms of shared heritage and mythology, there is now a more proactive attempt to re-incorporate Robin Hood into the city’s identity. With contemporary challenges such as widening income inequality and the social impacts of austerity, the Robin Hood legend could be seen as gaining greater relevance.” (Chris Lawton, Senior Research Fellow, Nottingham Business School)

20 Some historians and academics believe that the origins of the Robin Hood character are possibly derived from the mysterious and mythological “Green Man” of the ancient medieval May Games who symbolises the fertility cycle of the natural world and the re-birth of the seasons. With the growing emphasis on eco-environmental matters, such legendary Robin Hood associations offer the potential for some powerful marketing and publicity opportunities to promote the appreciation and conservation of the Natural World and its fragility.

21 In marketing and publicity terms the generic Robin Hood “brand” ticks every box in the promotional textbook and is the envy of cities and locations worldwide. However, the irony of the Robin Hood issue is that having reached the ultimate pinnacle of marketing success and become an instantly recognised established icon, over the decades, to the shock-horror of the outside world, the ability to successfully capitalise on the real potential of that enviable status seems to constantly elude the authorities!

22 For over eight centuries the characters and principles of the popular tales have continued to fascinate and intrigue each new generation and they still have a social relevance to many of the key global issues currently facing the world today!



23 **“I believe that before Nottinghamshire can maximise the potential of the Robin Hood legend it will be necessary to package what is known through folklore, historical records and the places associated with Robin Hood into a totality that can be marketed to a number of different markets.”** This was one of the comments made by an events company MD in response to the Society’s 2015 Robin Hood Business Survey. Two other comments made to the Survey were: “Massively under-sold as an opportunity for local businesses – particularly in retail and tourism. There needs to be a bigger sense of pride. It’s all very well “us” in the city down-playing it but visitors WANT it!” and “Marketing specialists will always advise on capitalising on strengths. Firms pay fortunes and often fail in efforts to gain brand awareness. One of the most powerful brands in the world is Robin Hood, ranking in line with Coca Cola, MacDonald’s yellow “M” and Disney – time to wake up and smell the coffee!”

24 **The late Jim Lees, was a respected local historian and author who campaigned tirelessly to try to prove that Robin Hood really did come from Nottingham.** However, he always said that whenever people asked him to tell them about Robin Hood he would ask if they wanted to hear the historical truth or the legend and 9 times out of 10 they would say “the legend!”

25 **The rich heritage of place names and locations associated with Robin Hood and other members of his merry band reflects the extensive popularity of the traditional tales** and how far their impact has spread around the world. Street names, hotels, inns and public houses, together with thousands of commercial business and company names are all a testimony to the phenomenal appeal of the legendary folk hero.

26 **On October 9th, 1966, the then Sheriff of Nottingham, Councillor Percy Holland, actually officially pardoned Robin Hood** and stated that he “shall be welcome in the City of Nottingham at all times!”

27 **The global appeal of Robin Hood and his legendary associations with Nottingham Castle and his arch-enemy the Sheriff of Nottingham continues to draw visitors to the City and Sherwood Forest 365 days a year.** In fact, it is a self-promoting, un-stoppable marketing and publicity juggernaut that sadly is currently seriously under-provided for and often disappointingly fails to live up to visitor expectations. The legend has attained such a high global profile that, hypothetically speaking, if for some draconian reason the authorities were to withdraw any references to Robin Hood from the City and County’s promotional and publicity material, it would doubtless have only limited impact, as Robin’s fame is so firmly established in global popular culture that visitors would still continue to seek the Robin Hood experience for generations to come!

28 **Tales of Robin Hood and his exploits are thought to have been originally passed on in story and song by the travelling minstrels and troubadours of medieval times.** The first literary reference to him came in 1377 in William Langland’s “Vision of William Concerning Piers Plowman”. By the start of the 15th century the first poem about the outlaw had appeared and it is believed that around the same time the “Gest of Robyn Hode” was assembled from several earlier tales. This 13,900 word work has subsequently been published in various forms and continues to be the subject of much scholarly interest and interpretation.



29 **Even though Robin Hood and Manchester United Football Club would appear to have little in common, they are both world famous icons in their own right** and ironically, they both share the same basic problem of how to get the maximum potential benefits from their respective huge global fan bases!

30 **When researching the commercial use of Robin Hood related names in the food, drink and hotel industries, an initial sweep on Google randomly revealed numerous public houses, inns, hotels, bars, restaurants and bistros etc. throughout the length and breadth of the UK, as well as establishments in the following international locations:**

Accra (Ghana), Bondi Junction, Frankston and Gippsland (Australia), Bailey Island (Maine, USA), Orange & Waverley (New South Wales), Norwood (California, USA), Ningbo (China), Alanya and Hisaronu (Turkey), Big Bear Lake (California USA), Adelaide, Ballarat, Sydney and Victoria (Australia), Cedar Falls (USA), Arnhem (Netherlands), Aachen (Germany), Bermuda, Chicago, Rehoboth (Delaware, USA), Laganas (Greece), Montreal (Canada), Philadelphia (USA), Jersey, Kent (Ohio, USA), New Jersey (USA), Washington and Van Nuys (USA), Valley Road (Clifton, USA), Benidorm, Lloret de Mar and Puerto de la Cruz (Spain), Paphos (Cyprus), Bangkok, Barcelona and Benalmadena (Spain), Colorado Springs (USA), Istanbul and Taksim (Turkey), Magaluf and Salou (Spain), Los Angeles, Cedar Mountain (North Carolina, USA), Sherman Oaks (California, USA), Stalis (Crete), Thailand, Tenerife, Valencia, Zurich and Bloomington (Illinois, USA).



31 **According to the respected historian the late Eric Hobsbawm, a true “Robin Hood” must have begun their outlaw career as a victim of injustice and NOT as a result of committing any actual crime.** They prove that justice is possible and that poor men need not be humble, helpless or meek. Professor Hobsbawm believed that the Robin Hood legend cannot die and why he is invented even when he does not really exist! “The poor and oppressed will always have need of him as the people’s champion, for he represents justice, without which kingdoms are nothing!”

32 **Many famous names have been inspired by the Robin Hood legend and have publicly made reference to aspects of its ideals.** These include authors Mark Twain and John Steinbeck; the US President, Barack Obama and the late Steve Jobs, co- founder of the Apple I.T. empire. Movie makers Steven Spielberg and George Lucas were also childhood fans who drew inspiration from the Sherwood hero for some of their characters and plot lines, recognising that although everyone initially becomes familiar with the Robin Hood legend in their childhood, the impact and appeal of the romantic adventure tale stays with us throughout life, categorically proving that it is a misconception to assume that Robin Hood is just for kids! Stan Lee, the legendary graphic artist behind Marvel Comics recalls in his autobiography that it was seeing the Errol Flynn “Adventures of Robin Hood” film over and over again as a young boy that sparked his imagination and led to the creation of his superheroes such as the Incredible Hulk, the Amazing Spiderman, the X-Men and the Fantastic Four .

33 Sculptor James Woodford meticulously researched the details for Nottingham's famous Robin Hood Statue and created a stocky-built figure that depicted how the historians believed medieval foresters from the period would look.

The public however, were expecting an Errol Flynn type interpretation, sporting a pointed cap with a jaunty feather – so a controversial debate was born that continues even to this day, with comments still being made about Robin's headgear being an authentic, forester's leather skull cap rather than the triangular felted hat that Flynn wore!

34 In 2004, when the former Chief Executive of Experience Nottinghamshire, Professor John Heeley, first took up his position, in a lengthy article in the Nottingham Evening Post, Business Post supplement (9/11/04) he stated in headline quotes that “We should build on Robin's fame to draw crowds.”

Further adding that pursuing a major attraction built around the legendary hero was a “no-brainer.” He went on to say, “We need a major attraction, backed by private sector investment that capitalises on the legend and would give us a fantastic base on which to build short breaks. Robin Hood is known and loved worldwide and we need a 365 day a year attraction of Legoland significance that operates to the very highest standards.” Yet, ironically, within just a few months, he introduced the widely-ridiculed “Slanty N” identity campaign and comments received in response to the Robin Hood Business Survey carried out in 2014/15 clearly implied that this embarrassing debacle still casts a long shadow over any branding issues for Nottingham and that creative marketing companies remain very wary of getting their fingers burnt!

35 The British Library has almost two thousand Robin Hood related items catalogued in its collection. These include nearly 1000 books, together with articles, musical scores, audio works, journals, maps and theses etc.. The University of Nottingham also has a collection of Robin Hood related books in its Manuscripts and Special Collections section and the World Wide Robin Hood Society also holds several hundred books, articles, audio, video and graphic items, together with access to numerous examples of Robin Hood's representation in popular culture.

36 “Robin Hood is one of the most valuable pieces of property that Nottingham has got. Not so much intrinsically but as the embodiment of an idea. He is the public relations man's dream – handed to the city on a plate, for whenever Robin Hood gets a mention Nottingham gets a hefty plug –absolutely free” - (These observations were made over 35 years ago by veteran Nottingham Post journalist, Emrys Bryson and his statements are still valid today!)

37 Because Sherwood Forest originally stretched northwards up to Barnsdale Forest in Yorkshire, periodically, claims are often made that Robin Hood actually originated from that county and it was where many of his legendary exploits took place! In 2004, the issue reached a new level when Yorkshire MP David Hinchcliffe introduced a non-binding motion in the House of Commons, calling for the House to recognise Yorkshire's claim to the legend! Nottinghamshire MP for Bassetlaw, John Mann dismissed Yorkshire's claims as a “historically inaccurate myth” and the long-standing popular culture references to Nottingham Castle and the Sheriff of Nottingham in the traditional, legendary tales once again blew the Yorkshire theory to pieces!



38 **“Every generation creates for itself the Robin Hood that it needs.** The traditional material can be tailored to suit the times and its extraordinary adaptability adds to its widespread popularity. The vitality of the legend has the capacity to pull in the audience from the start and is an idyll that seems to appeal to deep human needs – universal and timeless!” (Brian Alderson, Chairman of the Children’s Books History Society and former editor of the London Times).

39 **Claims that you cannot create a visitor attraction around a mythical figure like Robin Hood are totally disproved** by the success of such ventures as the Sherlock Holmes Museum on Baker Street, London; the Harry Potter Experience at Elstree and even Peppa Pig World, near Southampton.

40 **There are 7 supposed grave sites that claim to be the final resting place of Robin Hood** but ironically, considering all the Robin Hood tourist focus that popular culture has bestowed upon Nottingham, these supposed “graves” mostly lie overgrown and forgotten miles to the north, south and east of Nottingham city! Although each of these sites has a limited degree of plausibility, none can be supported by authentic archaeological evidence and rely for the most part on links with traditional folklore. The 8 key contenders claiming to be Robin Hood’s “burial place” are Kirklees Priory in North Yorkshire; Kirkstall Abbey, near Wakefield; Nostell Priory at Wragby, nr. Doncaster; Wakefield Cathedral Church of All Saints; Loxley churchyard, Staffordshire; Holbeck, Nottinghamshire and Crosby Ravensworth in Westmoreland.

41 **Nottinghamshire County Council are currently involved with the development of a new Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre in conjunction with the RSPB** and when asked for an up-date on the project they responded as follows:

“Contracts have been signed with an RSPB-led consortium to build a new visitor centre and manage the world-famous Sherwood Forest Country Park. The consortium comprises the RSPB, the UK’s leading conservation charity, working with Thoresby Estate, Continuum Attractions and The Sherwood Forest Trust. The legally binding agreement seals the deal for the £5.3m project – with major investment to build a new visitor centre, bring a huge boost to the region’s visitor economy and protect and preserve the unique and impressive natural habitats of Sherwood Forest Country Park.

Councillor John Knight, Committee Chairman for Culture at Nottinghamshire County Council said “This is a significant and exciting moment for our world-famous Sherwood Forest country park, Robin Hood and the Major Oak.”

The county council will remain responsible for running the current visitor facilities and country park through the design and development phase until the new centre opens. The county council has also stipulated that safe and free access to the Forest will be maintained by the RSPB and its consortium of partners. The RSPB-led consortium will now move forward with the planning phase of the project by tendering for the design team and appointing a lead architect to develop detailed plans in consultation with stakeholders and the local community and seek planning permission next year. Construction could then start on site in 2016 with the new visitor centre open to the public by winter 2017. The visitor centre would be located at Forest Corner, close to Edwinstowe village – providing a stunning gateway to historic Sherwood Forest for all.”



42 **With the aid of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant the recently formed Nottingham Castle Trust is currently engaged in a £24 million refurbishment project.**

We asked the Trust to update us as to their current progress and to clarify to what extent their proposals would reflect the traditional associations with the Robin Hood legend, recognising its global appeal and potential to sustain a world class visitor attraction. This was their response:

“As part of the re-development at the Castle there will be an immersive, highly interactive gallery on Robin and the Rebels targeted at families, school students aged between 8-14 and all interested Robin Hood fans. The gallery will be entertaining, memorable and thought provoking. The gallery looks at the development of the Robin Hood legend, including asking where did the stories and ballads come from and finding out why, if Robin Hood didn't exist, people felt the need to invent him. As well as unpicking the stories of Robin, the outlaws, Sherwood Forest and Nottingham Castle, the gallery looks at the development of the modern beliefs about Robin built through popular culture, especially films and television.

The research for the gallery is being led by Dr Richard Gaunt, from the history department at Nottingham University together with Adrian Davies from the Nottingham Castle team. The gallery design is by Casson-Mann who are the award-winning designers for the new World War 1 galleries at the Imperial War Museum, London. The design for the gallery will include immersive films, multi-user interactive games, theatre as well as displays of objects and other source materials.

As well as detailed research, the team is identifying objects that will form part of the core display both from the Museum's own collections and elsewhere. They are also looking at a number of episodes of rebellion connected with the Castle and Nottingham, part of their research is considering the role of Nottingham as a centre for dissent before and after the time of Robin. At present the team is hard at work in the research phase and will be developing the detailed content for interactives, story-telling and the other displays early in 2016”.



43 **From a geographical perspective, Robin Hood is said to predominantly have “historical” associations with locations in the six English counties of Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Lancashire and Cumbria.**

However, there are also places with a Robin Hood reference in Berkshire, Cheshire, Essex, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Herefordshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Northumberland, Shropshire, Somerset, Surrey, Warwickshire and Wiltshire.

44 **“Robin Hood did not die. Like the old soldier, he simply faded away. But not from the pages of legend.** Long after the colourful and bloodstained pageant of kings and princes, knights, ladies, monks and minstrels has passed on through history, who, at last has made the greatest impression on our destiny? Dare we say that the true deeds of ordinary men, of Robin Hood and his like, may in the long term, have had the greater effect on society and upon the freedom of the common people both here and abroad? Even in our modern world, the battle against ignorance, poverty and social injustice goes on and the fight for freedom seems never-ending. But men would do well to remember Robin's ancient vows of chivalry.” (Tony Molyneux-Smith, author of “Robin Hood and the Templars.)

45 The “Man or Myth” / “History versus Fantasy” debate that surrounds the Robin Hood legend frequently creates divisive argument. However, although some sections of the academic world are critically dismissive of modern day popular culture references to the legend, they could be accused of having “double standards”, for many of the earlier historical documents they study are in reality only the written accounts and opinions created by the scribes and storytellers of the time - similar in concept to the contemporary versions and viewpoints on the legend that authors and writers continue to produce today!

46 “Over the years, the Legend of Robin Hood has lost nothing in the telling. Indeed, it is with the telling that the legend originated; many have since placed Robin Hood under the microscope and tried to document, explain and justify him but as the Sheriff found out, he is a very slippery and elusive character!” (Richard Rutherford-Moore, author and historical advisor.)

47 As the legend developed Robin Hood’s personal characteristics became much harder to define and the highly respected Professor Stephen Knight, often referred to as the world’s premier Robin Hood scholar, summed up the dilemma in his mythic biography by stating “So in the twentieth century Robin, both cinema star and novelist’s hero, stood sensitive cheek by sturdy jowl with a figure weighed down with facts, history, location and his own elements of wishful thinking and values.”

48 “Whoever Robin Hood was, and whenever, precisely, he lived, he would have been as much a part of, and influenced by, the nature of his surroundings as we are today. His life cannot be separated from his “times” because without those times there would have been no famous outlaw, only a man who lived and died largely unnoticed and who was quickly forgotten” (David Baldwin, medieval historian and author of “Robin Hood – The English Outlaw Unmasked”)

49 The City of Nottingham owes an enormous debt of thanks to local businessman and benefactor, the late Phillip Clay, for his visionary gift of the Robin Hood Statue and the surrounding figures and plaques. Fortunately, over the 64 years since its original unveiling in 1952, the statue has provided the ideal photo opportunity for tourists visiting the city from home and abroad. Without Mr. Clay’s generosity, what else of significance would there currently be for visitors to see about Nottingham’s legacy of the world’s greatest outlaw!!

50 “No English Hero can claim anything like the enduring mythic stature of the Outlaw of Sherwood. He is also the only lasting myth to arise from the high Middle Ages and the last western legend to achieve a sustained international appeal. Never again would any European figure be the centre of so truly living and vibrant a mythology!” Jefferey Syngman, author of “Robin Hood: The Shaping of the Legend.”





ABOUT THE WORLD WIDE ROBIN HOOD SOCIETY

The World Wide Robin Hood Society is an internet-based organisation that globally promotes the Robin Hood legend and its associations with Nottingham and Sherwood Forest. It is NOT a re-enactment group.

Founded in 1998 by a group of marketing, promotional and information technology professionals, it has developed one of the leading Robin Hood related websites that is used extensively by the UK and international media. The Society handles press and media enquiries; assists film and television production companies and co-ordinates research and requests for information from the travel and tourism industry, students and academics and individual visitors and enthusiasts. It provides a diverse information resource and the extensively used website averages around 1000 visits every day.

The organisation also maintains an established network of knowledgeable contacts and links with many Robin Hood related interests including: - **the legend and its historical and academic associations; places of interest and tourist attractions; movies, television, documentary, DVD and computer game productions; literary, artistic, musical and dramatic connections; collectables and miscellaneous trivia; talks, guided tours and accommodation; costume and weaponry hire and re-enactment groups.**

The Society has successfully campaigned along with other pressure groups on numerous Robin Hood related issues and also lent its support to various good causes and promotional initiatives. It was a member of Nottingham City Council's Castle Working Group and is currently represented on the Robin Hood Marketing Liaison Group. To help fund its activities, the Society seeks sponsorship where appropriate and also operates an on-line shop stocking gifts and souvenirs.

The Society is part of Robin Hood Limited, a not-for-profit organisation who have a registered office at Sherwood Business Centre, 616A, Mansfield Road, Sherwood, Nottingham, NG5 2GA Tel:(0115)9245434 or e-mail info@robinhood.info or visit the Society website www.robinhood.info

