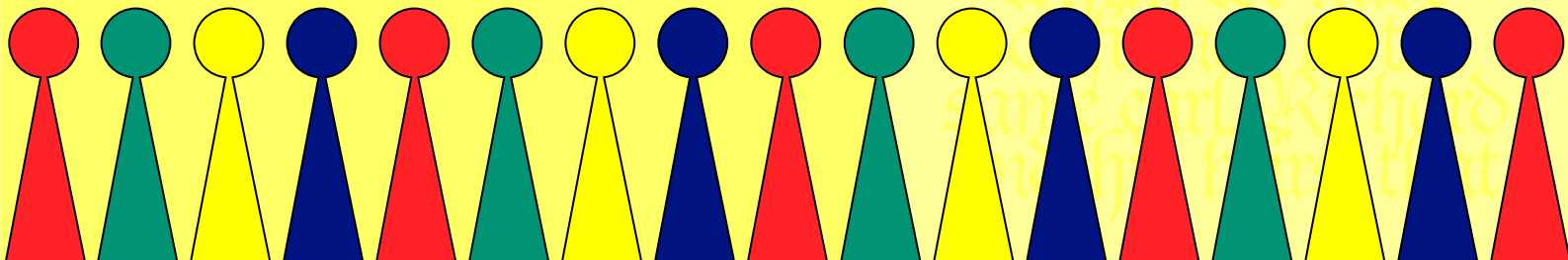


1204-2004
The **Rothwell**
Charter

~ Rothwell ~
Northamptonshire

beloved Richard earl
of Clare and his
heirs that they may
Monday with all
liberties and free
customs belonging
as it hath heretofore
held on Monday so
never the less it be
not to the hurt of
neighbouring
markets. Besides
which we grant by
our present Charter
which we have



What is the Rowell Fair Society?

Rowell Fair Society - working to preserve the traditions of our town

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We are delighted to present this very special book and to have been invited to write an introduction for it.

The book has been produced by selecting just a few of the hundreds of photographs which were taken during a memorable year for all of us in Rothwell. We are most grateful for the generosity of the contributors who presented them for us to make our selection.

As you turn the pages, the story unfolds and you will see how the 800th year of the granting of our Royal Charter was celebrated. From the time, on a very cold January evening in 2004, when we all assembled to process to the church for a Service of Thanksgiving and Commemoration to the joy of the final event - the Celebration Dance - in January 2005.

For those of you who attended some, or all, of the events organised during Rowell Fair week from 5th June to 12th June in 2004, you will be reminded of the tremendous atmosphere of fun and, indeed, deep civic pride, which pervaded. For those of you who were not able to attend,

then we hope that these photographs will portray those same feelings to you.

Let us now lead you through this wonderful publication. Study the photographs carefully - it is surprising how much you notice each time you look at the same print! Read the comments and above all enjoy the book.

2004 was indeed a very special year for us in Rothwell and we hope that this record of events will give joy to its readers for many years to come.

George Johnson
President of the Rowell Fair Society

Robert Denton
Bailiff to the Lord of the Manor

Left: George Johnson.

Left: Robert Denton



The Torchlight Procession and Church Service

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Courtesy Northamptonshire Evening Telegraph

Mark Spendlove, Chairman of Rothwell Town Council and Mayor of Kettering Alan Pote are escorted into the Church.

The Torchlight Procession and Church Service was the first event planned for the year of celebration. The Charter of King John was signed on January 26th 1204 and our Service of Thanksgiving was held on January 25th 2004. All of the town organisations were invited to attend and on a bitterly cold January night the Market Hill was filled with people wishing to join the procession.

So vast was the crowd that the Reverend Canon George Burgon exclaimed "Standing room only!" This event was a record attendance with over 1,000 people packed into the parish church. The buoyant service was led by the Bishop of Brixworth and involved local school children contributing to the music and readings including both Charters.

Such was the atmosphere of fun and civic pride that this event set the tone for the whole year.

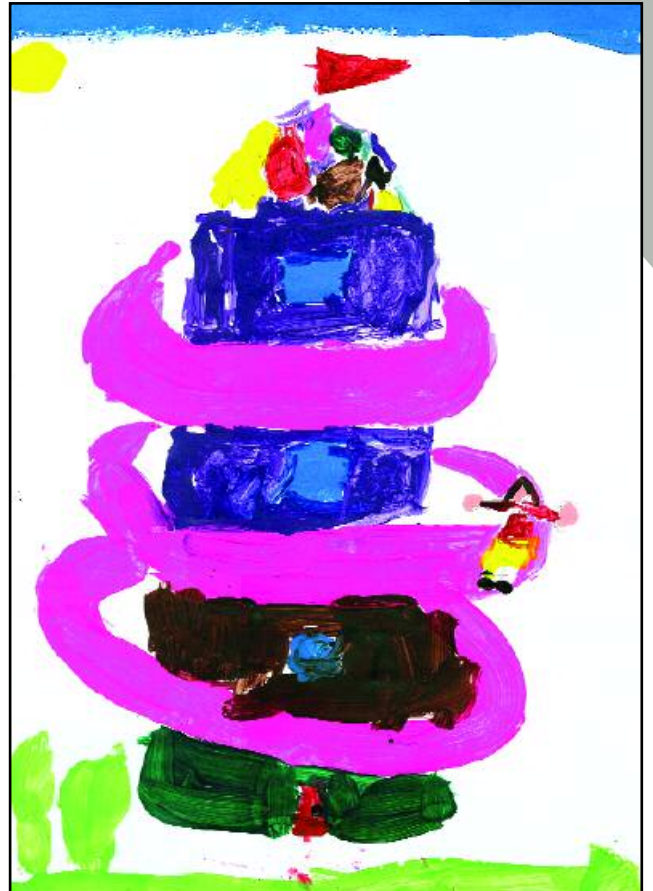
King John's charter - 1204

Be it known that we have granted, and by our present Charter do confirm to our beloved Richard earl of Clare and his heirs that they may have their market of Rowell on Monday with all liberties and free customs belonging, as it was formerly held on Sunday so never the less it be not to the hurt of neighbouring markets. Besides which we grant by our present Charter which we have confirmed to the same earl Richard and his heirs, that they may have a fair at Rowell at the Feast of the Holy Trinity, for and during the space of five days, so that never the less it be not to the hurt of neighbouring fairs. Wherefore, we will and firmly declare the aforesaid market and fair of us and our heirs in perpetuity well and in peace freely, quietly, fully and with honour with all the free customs belonging.



John

Flag competition and Coin Mint



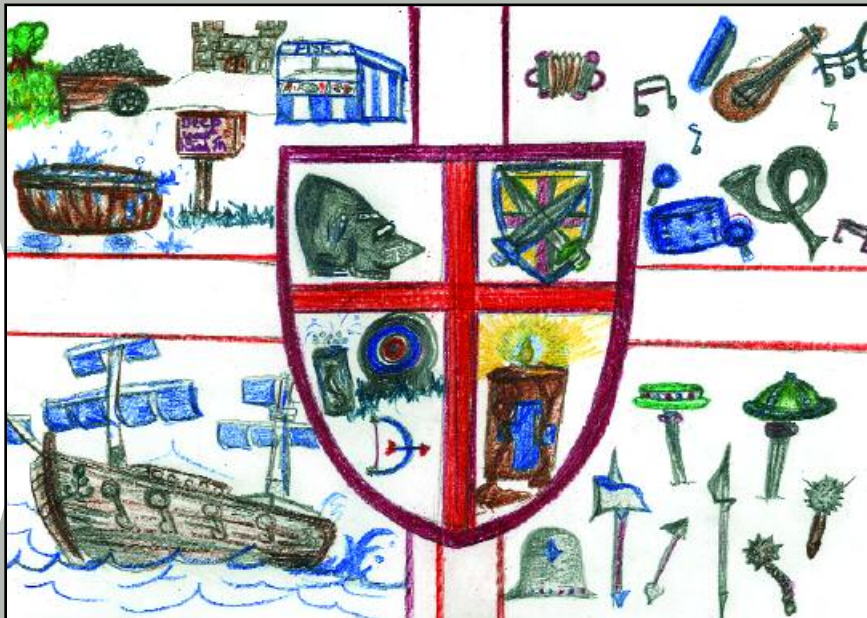


And the winners are !! Opposite page: Louisa Scotney Junior school and Megan Harris Infants school. This page, top: Jodie Almond Montsaye College, bottom: Joe Candela also Montsaye College.

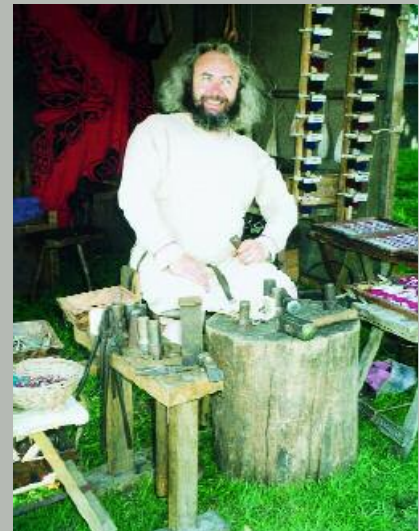
The pupils from the 3 schools from the town were invited to design flags depicting various ages throughout the 800 years.

From these the best 4 entries were made into full size flags which were then displayed in the main street of the town during the fair period.

The winners of the competition each received prizes and in addition donations were made from the Rowell Fair Society to each of the schools for their funds.



Grunal Moneta, the travelling mint craftsman, at work striking the specially commissioned coins by hand.



The Fair & Fireworks

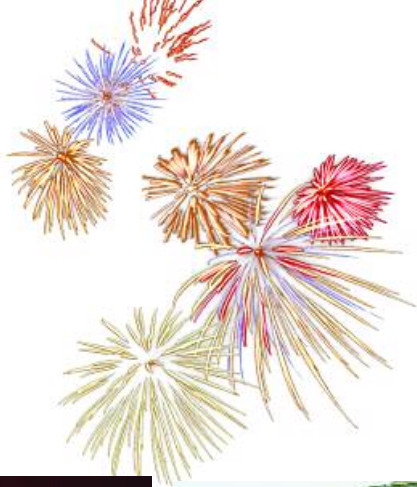
The Fair opens on the Saturday before Trinity Sunday. And we were blessed with excellent weather and a superb crowd attended.



Above: the Ghost Train and stalls on the Market Hill, above right: the teenagers enjoy the Hi Energy ride, right: the young ones have fun on the Runaway Train, far right: how far can you see from this? Not quite to the London Eye, bottom right: this really was the white knuckle ride of the Fair.



"Oooooobb aaaaabb."
The fireworks lit up the sky on the



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Whizz bang!!!



first Saturday night.



Top left: ancient and modern side by side, centre left: the dodgems are always a popular ride for young and old, bottom left: some 'victims' on the White knuckle ride, above: the Waltzer on its transporter, top: the Formula ride on the Bell Hill.

The Sunday morning procession





The cavalcade which takes place on Sunday morning is a colourful and popular spectacle and always draws, particularly in 2004, a huge crowd. Many of the Cavalcade participants took part in the rest of the day's festivities, some with gusto!



Rowell Fair



Top row: King John & wench, the Society President George Johnson always has an eye for a lady in uniform, entertainment in the Manor Park, some people just love to dress up and win a prize as well, the local authority sponsored the garden display depicting the 800 years.

*Left: King John's Knight at Arms.
Bottom row: Rob Martin's medieval re-enactment group preparing to draw blood, the Civic parade led by the Lord of the Manor Mrs Zandra Powell, accompanied by Gretton Silver Band.*



Sunday

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Above: musical entertainment from The Net and JP Disco.

Rowell Fair Sunday

Model Exhibition

On the Sunday, a tradition now exists whereby a model exhibition is staged in the local hall. This is organised by Dave Springthorpe and supported by fellow enthusiasts. Over the years this has become so popular that it has developed from just a model exhibition to now one that includes photographs and paintings by local artists. It is considered to be one of the finest model fairgrounds exhibitions in the country.

Right: Meccano big wheel, built by John & Michael Molden star of the model show, far right: The Bailiff Robert Denton with John Molden, King John and wench admiring the handiwork.





The Blessing of the Fair

In 2004 the chairman of the council **Glenda Weston** revived the custom of having a Civic Service on Trinity Sunday and then processed to the fairground for the traditional Blessing of the Fair. For the first time the Fair opened on the Sunday afternoon and was extremely well supported by townsfolk and visitors.

Left: all assembled for the Blessing of the Fair conducted by Reverend Canon George Burgon.



First Charter reading at 6.00am at Parish Church, West door.



Second Charter reading at site of New Inn and Balls Foundry.



Third Charter reading at the Greyhound Inn with traditional horseplay.

The Proclamation



The Proclamation Ceremony begins at the stroke of six o'clock in the morning outside the west door of the Church on the Monday after the Feast of the Holy Trinity (known locally as Rowell Fair Monday). After this reading, the Bailiff rides on horseback accompanied by a bodyguard of halberdiers and the Rowell Fair Society Band and the Charter is read at all the public houses, or sites of those now closed, in the town. After each reading a hearty cheer is given for "God save the Queen and the Lord of the Manor" and the National Anthem is played. The party is then presented with drinks from the landlords which include the traditional Rowell Fair rum and milk for the Bailiff, a drink designed to keep the early morning chill away, with beers for the halberdiers and the band. After some good humoured horseplay, where the local youths try to disarm the halberdiers, the procession moves onto the next hostelry where the ceremony is repeated. Pictures shown here are from Fairs throughout the last century.



Sixth Charter reading at the site of the Chequers in 1909.

Rowell Fair



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In 1968 there was a real danger of the Proclamation dying out and it was quickly realised by a few in the town that some drastic action had to be taken to save the tradition of the Proclamation of the Royal Charter Fair.



Seventh Charter reading at the Woolpack.

A town meeting was called on Thursday, 29 February 1968 and from that meeting, the Rowell Fair Society was formed. The Society was born to work to preserve the traditions of our Ancient Charter Fair and it has certainly succeeded in that aim and is now one of the largest organisations in existence in the town.

For many families, Rowell Fair is still a time for homecoming. The traditional fare of home cured ham and Rowell Fair tarts would have been prepared. People who have moved away make a point of returning from far and wide to be at home with their families and friends.

Rowell Fair is one of those medieval customs which the tides of progress and modern living have failed to submerge. People will say that Rowell Fair is not what it used to be. The answer, of course, is that it never was! For an event to have survived for 800 years it must have had to change with the times.

So, Rowell Fair lives on, remains unique, and long may it continue to do so!



Final Charter reading at Rowell Charter pub.



Revitalised Rowell Fair band.

Rowell Fair

We can proudly boast that the Rowell Proclamation Ceremony is unique; not just in Northamptonshire but throughout the entire country. Many other townships have a charter fair but these are usually owned or organised by



the Showmens Guild or by the local authority. Rowell Charter Fair is owned by the Lord of the Manor of Rowell and the manorial rights have been held by the same family for nearly 400 years.

The Ceremony is usually attended by between 1,000 and 2,000 people, and this number often doubles if the Fair happens to coincide with the Spring Bank Holiday. In 2004 the estimated crowd was about 5,000.

And all of this takes place at 6.00am! So unique it most certainly is!



Monday

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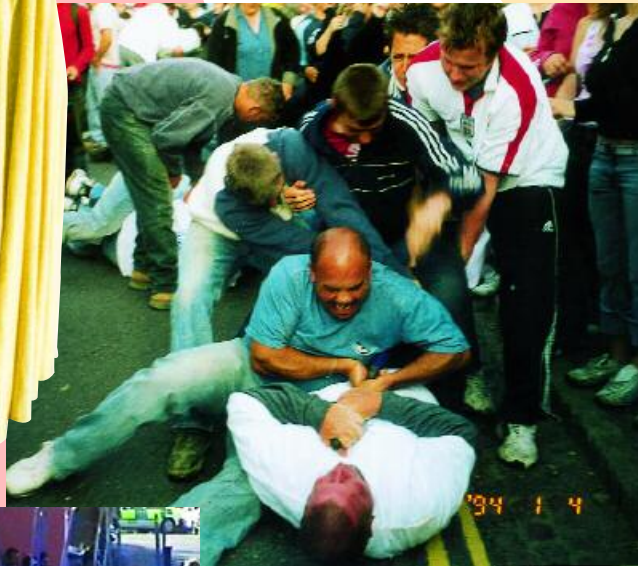


*Top row from far left: the crowd assembled outside the Rothwell House Hotel (formerly the Vicarage), the Lord of the Manor, Mrs Zandra Powell and Major Powell await the arrival her Bailiff, the Civic heads assemble with the Lord of the Manor prior to the Proclamation.
Bottom row: Graham Burberry's steam roller is up to full steam and raring to go, the BBC 'Inside Out' team with presenter David Whiteley, prepare for the day's recording for a documentary shown in September 2004.*



*Right:
Grunal Moneta
blows the horn to
start the proceedings!*

Rowell Fair



Bottom left: Rowell Fair Band in full flow (all volunteers organised by Cliff Bland), top left: traditional tussle (good natured of course!!!) as the locals try to disarm the Halberdiers, above: a sun drenched morning as the 800th Charter procession moves around the town.

Monday



This year the townsfolk were awakened even earlier on the morning as our team of bellringers rang out a quarter peal in celebration.



Right: certificate showing details of the peal and ringers, far right: the active and ceremonial Halberdiers.
Top right: a fancy dress competition is judged at the Pub.

1204 - 2004

The Rowell 800 Charter

On the morning of Monday, June 7th 2004, the bells of the Holy Trinity Parish Church, Rowell were rung prior to the SOth Proclamation of the Fair for twenty centuries, spanning 800 years. The ten members of the local band were:

1. Elizabeth A Batts	6. Nathan Quilford
2. David Kingman	7. Murray A Colerain
3. Owen Austin	8. Richard H Lolling
4. Colin W. Cragg	9. Helen Packer
5. Dennis Marie Scary	10. Michael J Hawkins

It was on the day, at local request, together with four regular supporters of the Wednesday Practice, rang a specially composed Peal to mark the occasion:

THE PETERBOROUGH DIOCESAN GUILD
On Monday 7 June 2004, at 5 hours and 50 minutes.

A PEAL OF 800 YORKSHIRE SURPRISE ROYAL

1. Brenda M Dixon	6. Anthony D Sarokin
2. Elizabeth A Batts	7. Murray A Colerain
3. Helen Axelsen	8. Alan J. Berris
4. Robin Wilson	9. Chris N Shepherson
5. Richard H Lolling	10. David Kingman

Composed and Conducted by Murray A Colerain

Memorandum the Edward Peal and the 800th anniversary of the granting of the Rowell Fair Charter by King John.



Rowell Fair Exhibitions and

As it was the 800th year the Heritage Centre kindly supported the Fair throughout the year and held regular exhibitions as well as selling items of memorabilia.

One successful event was the Rowell Fair Tart Competition organised by Ann Jones.



For the entire month of June an exhibition was organised in the local library and had many appreciative visitors as was apparent by the comments in the Visitors Book.

Rowell Fair memorabilia was available to enable enthusiasts to commemorate this historic year including a specially commissioned montage by local artist Phil Stenning.



memorabilia



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Left: "Where shall we start?" says Stan White, Dave Springthorpe and Diane Smith, Below: Rowell Fair Society sold T shirts, bats and pictures as items of memorabilia.



Above: the finished item, left: Trevor about to nail his thumb to the board.

All events were publicised extensively by our local correspondent Norman Mason in the 'Down Your Way' column of the Kettering Evening Telegraph. Local radio Connect FM also lent their support to the festivities.



The 2005 Dance

As the 800th year drew to a close a celebratory dance was organised by the Rowell Fair Society

The theme was 1940's (as Rowell Fair did continue even during the war years) and music was admirably supplied by the Forties Band who have had a long and close association with the Society over the years. Mr Mudge, a local entertainer, provided some spectacular amusement. As you can see from the pictures here, everybody got into the mood and some even dressed up appropriately.





Biggles and party flew in for the night!



And finally.....

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Rowell Fair provides an ideal opportunity for friends, families and visitors to meet and spend time together in this hectic world and community spirit and pride was very high during 2004.

All of the 2004 events depended upon volunteers and sponsors. Grateful thanks go to all who supported and organised this 800th year in whatever capacity.

Our thanks also go to everyone who participated and attended. This was a truly historic and memorable occasion for our town of Rothwell.

The Rowell Fair Society has naturally focused on the events of 2004 but this book is a tribute to everyone who has been involved with Rowell Fair over the last 800 years.

Here's to the next 800 years!

Rowell Fair Committee 2004

Chair	Robert Denton
President	George Johnson
Secretary	Richard Messinger
Treasurer	Frank York
Committee	Les Munton Eric Page Alan Marlow Ian Pratt Mark Spendlove Alan Garaghty Tom Hooper Margaret Marlow Phyllis Dines Doug Eustace
Membership Secretary	Doreen Eastland

Rowell Fair Steering Group 2004

Chair	Robert Denton
Secretary	Sue Johnson
Group members	Graham Main Mark Patrick Richard Messinger
Entertainment Coordinator (Co-opted)	Paul Johnson

King James Charter of 1614 granted to William Cockayne, the Lord of the Manor.

This is the Charter which is now read each Rowell
Fair Monday morning.



Whereas, heretofore, His late Majesty King James the first and
his progenitors, Lords of the Manor of Rowell had, and used
to have, One Fair in the year, to be holden within the said Manor,
which said Fair is now by good and lawful means come to Sandra
Maunsell Powell.

She, the said Sandra Maunsell Powell, doth by these presents notify
and declare, that the said Fair shall begin this Monday after the Feast of
the Holy Trinity, and so to continue for the space of five Days next,
after the holding and keeping of it, and no longer, during which time it
shall be lawful for all Her Majesty's Subjects to come to, to go, to buy
and to sell all manner of Cattle, Merchandise, and other Stuff being
saleable ware and allowed to be bought and sold by the laws of this
Kingdom. No Toll for Cattle; Stakes for Horses, Sheep-Pens, Shows
and Stalls are charged for as heretofore. And she further chargeth and
commandeth all manner of persons within the liberties of the said Fair to
keep the Queen's Peace in all things upon such Penalties as the Laws
and Statutes of this Kingdom are provided.

God save the Queen and the Lord of the Manor.