

Treasurer's Report by Jim Mitchell

Firstly may I say that I am willing to continue as Treasurer.

The balance of the income is up just over £ 225 on last year. This figure should however be taken in context as you will see the donations for the year were extremely high. This was due to Jacky's excellent efforts in fundraising for the war memorial restoration. Were it not for this we would be showing a deficit of approximately £900.00 for the year. The reason for this was the expenditure on publications to the tune of approx £2100. We have, however, recouped £94 of this from the sale of the two publications and I have no doubt that in time they will more than pay for themselves. The membership subscriptions were slightly down on the previous year but not significantly. Unfortunately the application for Gift Aid was unsuccessful. HMRC believe that as there are benefits to membership of the Society we cannot claim gift aid.

I do not anticipate any major expenditure this year other than the war memorial costs which should almost entirely be offset from donations.

Thank you all for your continued support at raffles and other fund raising events which contribute greatly to the finances of the Society.

Re-election of auditor, Mr Bernard Harrington. Proposed by Jim Mitchell and seconded by Kay Brown.

Archivist's Report by Ann Marie Murphy

In the Highworth Community Centre, in the Dormers, the History Room is providing a very useful facility to store documents, photograph, maps and artefacts. We are still in the process of being collated and sorted, which is being undertaken with Diana Sims.

We have received documents and photographs during the year including - Postcards, China, donated by Maureen Tanner depicting Highworth and Hannington. Photographs donated by a member of the Camera Club showing various Highworth Events over the years and a document detailing the works schedule to construct Southfield school. We have now in our archive, various artefacts including - A rifle box belonging to Pleydell-Bouverie from the 1st World War, A printed window screen from the Vorda Works, Vehicle plates from Bartrops and printed blocks and plates from Bartrop's advertising material.

From our archives we are able to put on displays; for example, Jacky Clark put together a display on the Mat Factory, which was for the 'Made in Swindon' Exhibition at the Swindon Library last October.

For the Roman May Day Event this year, we put together a display on the Romans in Highworth Library, in which we used our own artefacts including Romano-British pottery from the Haresfield Site. We also a Roman pot loaned by Mike Stone. Other material was loaned by the Corinium Museum in Cirencester and The Wiltshire Heritage Museum in Devizes. Finally, I would like to thank all those who have loaned, donated items and helped to put together displays. Proposed by Denise Arnel. Seconded by Jim Mitchell.

Webmaster's Report by Paul Newton-Smith

Visits to the website this month: 2507 of which 963 are first-time visitors. Therefore, 1544 are repeat visitors. Visits to the website year-to-date: 16382, 8206 of which are first timers and 8176 repeat visitors - roughly 50:50. Visits this month are from Germany, Canada, Australia, Holland, China and Japan.

This month, our Links page has been very popular with About Highworth and Galleries close behind. In addition, there have been a lot of hits on Coleshill House and the Spooky Site. Also the Abba Fan Club which apparently ran from an address in Sheep Street.

Proposed by Denise Arnel and seconded by Kay Brown.

Election of Officers

Lorain Nixon was proposed by Gordon Youngusband and seconded by Jim Mitchell.

Chris Suter was proposed by Denise Arnel and seconded by Paul Newton-Smith.

Any Other Business

Desne Rose suggested that we list the committee members in the newsletter.

Joan Craigie reported that recipients of the Victoria Cross were to have a memorial paving slab in their home towns. She has contacted the organisers and suggested that we have one in Highworth for Rex Warneford. She has been informed that Highworth has a good case and was debated by the Council last Tuesday. More information to follow during the coming year.

Perry Barrett proposed a vote of thanks to the committee for their sterling work over the last year.

There being no further business the Annual General Meeting closed at 8pm.

DON'T FORGET Monday 29th September 7.30pm - Council Room
OUR NEXT MEETING IS ON... AGM followed by a talk on
A Jumble of Letters. (See website for details)



Hello and welcome to our Summer 2014 newsletter. It's been an exciting year for Highworth Historical Society and we hope that you've enjoyed the various events and lectures. However, we're always open to comments and suggestions so, if you'd like to make a contribution to the Society or have any ideas for us, contact us by e-mail to chris@highworthhistoricalsociety.co.uk or write to us at the address at the end of this newsletter.

Visit our brand new website on: www.highworthhistoricalsociety.co.uk

Chair's Report

The War Memorial work is now finished and has been noticed and commented on by many people. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the fund. A very big thank you to Jacky for being the power behind the project.

Thank you to Denise for providing another varied and interesting programme of speakers. With such a wide range of members' interests, this must be quite a challenge.

Ann Marie and Diana are still working on the catalogue of the archives. This will then be available to view.

Paul has now completed work on our new Society web-site: A "must have" in this day and age.

Finally a big thank you to all committee members for the time and effort that they put in over the year.

We have maintained a presence at various events in the town. Hopefully the people who took away membership forms will come and join us.

Now for the "not so good" news. Over the year we have lost two committee members. Jacky and Martin resigned for health and personal reasons. They will be sorely missed. Next year Kay and Jim will have to stand down under the rules of the society. We really need one or two people to join the committee, to oversee the activities and keep our Society on the right tracks.

There are also jobs which could be "stand alone" with reports back to the main committee.

The jobs available are:-

1. Organising one or two outings a year to places of interest.
2. Anyone willing to conduct tours of Highworth on an ad hoc basis. Training can be given!
3. A programme organiser, perhaps two friends together. Denise would be willing to explain the job. (Needed to start arranging the 2016-2017 programme)
4. We need some help with the Library displays. Would anyone like to help us with this?

We do not want to get to September 2015 and find the Society short of people to run it. So go on. "Make my day and volunteer-you know you want to!"

I can be contacted on 01793 764811 or chrissuter16@googlemail.com
Thank you, Christine Suter. (Chair)

Subscriptions will be collected at the AGM on September 29th.

Minutes of the 2013 AGM will be found with this newsletter. They will not be read out at the meeting. We are trying to keep the business side as short as possible to allow more time for our speaker.



Treasurers Report



The Society's finances remain in good health. The War Memorial work has been carried out and thanks to some very generous donations and a grant of £500.00 from the Thomas Freke and Lady Norton charity the cost to the society for the restoration

was £298.00. This I believe was an excellent result and may I express my thanks to all members of the Historical Society for their contributions. Book sales continue to progress steadily and our fundraising events are always well supported and provide a welcome additional income to the Society. Our main expenditure this year has been on updating the website which should enable us to generate extra income through on-line sales.

Jim Mitchell, Treasurer

Archivist's Report



Another busy year with the continuation of the archiving and recording of all society's assets. A very big thank you to Diana Sims who has been a tremendous help in this mammoth task. We have also appeared at various shows and events such as

a coffee morning in May, the ever popular May Day Market and the Warneford Summer Fayre, to name just a few. These events are important to us as it gives us the chance to promote our society and hopefully boost our membership.

The library displays have covered a wide range of topics including Pubs and Breweries, the 1920s and World War I. We are always on the lookout for items we can borrow to make these displays as interesting as possible, so if you have anything you are willing to let us use please let me know.

Over the year various people have donated and loaned various documents and records to the society, for which we are very grateful. These include a lot of information relating to the Silver Band building, WWI information from John Kennedy and items from the 1920's from Perry Barrett. We have also received a selection of maps used by Bartrops.

The History Room at the Highworth Community Centre has been a real asset as it allows us to sort, store and keep everything together in a dry, warm and safe environment.

The latest artifact we have news on is that the original Highworth sign from the old railway station has been brought back to Highworth from storage at Steam Museum in Swindon. We hope to have it back on public display very soon, so watch this space for news.

Ann Marie Murphy, Archivist

Monthly Lectures

29/9/14	A Jumble of Letters	Chris Viveash and Wendy Vicary
27/10/14	The Tears of War	Charlotte Fyfe
24/11/14	Sons of Swindon/Highworth in the Great War	Mark Sutton
15/12/14	A Winter Wasail	BroKen Konsort
26/1/15	William Cobbett	Jo Clark
23/2/15	An Album of Camp Photos	Andy Binks
30/3/15	Place Names and the Landscape	Dr Simon Draper
27/4/15	Nicholas Hilliard and the Art of the Miniature	Dr Gillian White

More details on all these talks can be found on our website.

Webmaster's Report



This has been quite a year for the society's website. It has been given a complete makeover and brought right up to date with lots of new sections. For instance, all you social media savvy members can now follow us on Twitter and Facebook and there will soon be a shop where we hope to sell lots of Highworth themed merchandise.

Other new sections include Graveyard Surveys, which were compiled by Chris Suter and Barbara Jones who spent many hours trying to decipher worn or damaged tombstones! These two busy members also compiled Snippets from the Parish Register, a humorous look back at some of the more unusual entries from the register. All in all, we are very pleased with our new site so please take the time to go and have a look and tell us what you think.

The site is never really finished so please send us any items, photographs, records and documents that you think might be of interest and that you are willing to share. They will all be much appreciated.

You can see the new website now on www.highworthhistoricalsociety.co.uk

Paul Newton-Smith, Webmaster

Stop Press



The Graveyard surveys carried out by Chris Suter and Barbara Jones are just one of the fantastic new areas on our brand new website. Go and see for yourself at:

www.highworthhistoricalsociety.co.uk

After a lot of work by Ann Marie, our archivist, plus a fair amount of heavy lifting, the sign that used to adorn the platform at Highworth railway station is coming home! Preparations are now underway to have it mounted on permanent display in the town. We are sure you will agree that it will be good to see it here again.

Watch this space for more information coming shortly...



CONTACT US

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2013 AGM MINUTES



Minutes of Annual General Meeting of Highworth Historical Society Held on September 30th 2013 at the United Reformed Church

The acting Chair, Bryan Lawton acting for Jacky, Jo Clark opened the meeting at 7.30pm by extending a warm welcome to all members after the summer break.

Apologies

Apologies were received from Jacky Clark (acting Chair) and Jo Clark.

Minutes

The Minutes of the 2012 Annual General Meeting were read by the Secretary, Mrs Kay Brown. They were accepted by the members and signed by the Chairman, proposed by Paul Newton-Smith and seconded by Colin Dawson. Chairman's Report by Jack Clark and read by Bryan Lawton

Well, another year has slipped by at an alarming rate and soon we shall be enjoying a packed programme of events for our 42nd year. This year has seen excellent support from members and from casual visitors, I am sure, because of a very varied and interesting programme imaginatively and ably put together by Denise Arnel. We started the year by exploring the Isle of Wight with Colin Brading and his Steam Railway talk and ended with Daniel Rose and his address about the Mechanics Institution; all interspersed by Medieval Church Paintings, Court Martials in WW1, Medieval Sword Play, the Work of Swindon Photographer William Hooper and Snipers of the Great War. We were fortunate too to have two extra talks - one about the Highworth Pot and the other about the geophysics of the Market Square. Our thanks to Denise for a stimulating and interesting programme.

Our new recruit Martin Summers has really earned his spurs by finding interesting field trips for members which have been thoroughly enjoyed by many. Opportunities to visit Inigo House, Westrop House, Inglesham Church and Bletchley Park were eagerly accepted by members and we hope to do more of this in the forthcoming months. We also hope to have more Quiz nights too. This is such a good fund raiser and we are grateful to our secretary Kay Brown for doing this and making them such fun.

This year has also been one of seizing every opportunity to sell our publications Highworth Town Trail by Jo Clark and Fun Frolics and Festivities by Chris Suter. We sold them on a market stall at the Saturday market, we sold them on the Roman May Day and we had a successful book launch (accompanied by some very tasty cakes!) We sold them in Swindon Library where I did a presentation on the History of the Mat Factory and I sold some more when I plucked up courage and meandered round a few pubs in Highworth. They are, of course, available at the Lighthouse Bookshop and the library and also at our meetings. When we have sold just a few more, we shall publish another tome.

At one of our committee meetings, Jim Mitchell, our Treasurer, advised that the War Memorial was looking very shabby and, to cut an extremely long story short, we obtained permission from the Council to refurbish it. This is a very technical job and requires scaffolding and specialist professionals to do the work. Well, I am delighted to say that behind the scenes fundraising has gathered together the money and the work has been authorised. My challenge to you is for every member to collect £5 - either by enterprise, digging deep in your pockets or asking neighbours for a small contribution. This way, we shall have enough to finish the job and perhaps have a small buffer for ongoing maintenance. Most importantly, we shall have all contributed. When the work is complete, we shall ask the churches and secular organisations to rededicate the memorial.

This year, we have tried to obtain as many membership fees either by post or at the annual meeting. We made this decision to try and keep our costs down and we do appreciate your co-operation in this matter.

I shall not be at the AGM and Dr Bryan Lawton has kindly agreed to chair the meeting this evening. We still need new committee members and, in the medium term, we shall need a Chairman. Please put your name forward if you would be prepared to join us and I will revert to Vice Chairman if a suitable person puts their head above the parapet. The responsibilities are not onerous - just a monthly meeting (in the pub) and if you have a skill we shall, of course, try to persuade you to put it to good use! Finally, thank you to members for their participation and questions and for making the meetings lighthearted and fun. I also thank the committee for all their hard work during the year and not forgetting our archivist, Ann Marie Murphy, who is not a committee member - she is very much appreciated.

Minutes of the AGM were proposed, accepted and seconded.

Matters Arising

None.