



# Newsletter 2016



**1658 at Highworth Station. 13th May 1961**

Hello and welcome to our 2016 newsletter. It has been another busy year and we hope you have enjoyed the various events and talks. We are always on the lookout for new ideas, so if you have any suggestions or would simply just like to comment on what we do we would love to hear from you. You can email us at; [chris@highworthhistoricalsociety.co.uk](mailto:chris@highworthhistoricalsociety.co.uk)



## From the Chair

Another year has flown by, thankfully not as hectic as the previous one.

We have listened to some very interesting talks (thank you, Denise), welcomed a lot of visitors and also some new members.

The good news, and project for the next year, is to get our new room at the Community Centre up and running. The room is now empty and, after a little cleaning and a touch of paint, will be ready to move our archives and display cabinets into it. We plan to have an open day when our members and the town will be able to come and see some of the archive material that we hold. Eventually we would like to offer times when anyone researching the history of the town or their family history can come and work in the room. All this will depend on those wonderful people called volunteers!

Our thanks for the project so far are due to Paul Newton-Smith and Ann Marie Murphy who, along with Keith and Sarah, have helped to sort and catalogue our holdings. I know they have enjoyed this so, if you would like to take part, please contact

Ann Marie for more information.

At present, as we have no talks organiser, I have compiled the programme for the next year. I hope that I have found something to appeal to a wide audience. I have now started to look at the year 2017/18 but would welcome anyone who would like to take on this job. Also, if anyone has ideas for talks/speakers please let me know, preferably with contact details for the speaker.

We still need people who are able to set up our projector and computer when needed. You do not need to be present every month; it would just be useful to have a list of names and phone numbers or people we can call upon if Paul is unable to attend, as he would normally do this for us.

Finally if there are any new members who would like to join the committee we would love to welcome you. Every society needs new ideas and new blood if it is to thrive.

I am looking forward to seeing you all on September 26th for a very short AGM and then a talk on, 'Commando Raids in Norway' by Peter Williams. Many of you will remember the excellent talk on Russia that he gave last autumn.

Christine Suter, Chair

[www.highworthhistoricalsociety.co.uk](http://www.highworthhistoricalsociety.co.uk)



## The Committee

Our new members, or even some of our older ones, may not know who is on the committee or how we function.

We meet about nine times a year. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are finished by 8.45pm at the latest. Members, at present, are:

Christine Suter: Chair and programme arranger, at present. (01793 764811)

Cecilia Olley: Secretary and tea/coffee maker at meetings. Help in the kitchen always welcome, just go in and offer!

Pat Bliss: Treasurer.

Kay Brown: Monthly newsletter producer. We missed this last year while Kay was dealing with a new job and family illness.

Ann Marie Murphy: Archivist and display manager for the library. Help with either of these jobs always welcome. (01793 764575)

Sue Morgan: Membership secretary.

Jim Mitchell: Was our treasurer for many years, now takes over when Pat has her annual trip to Australia.

Paul Newton-Smith is our webmaster.

Seeking more information please contact Christine, or speak to any committee member.

Subscriptions.

These remain at £10 for the year. Please renew at the AGM, or you can send/deliver a cheque to Pat Bliss at, 12 Gilmore Court, Highworth, SN6 7FG.

Cheques made payable to Highworth Historical Society.



## Treasurer's Report

A successful year financially with a constant membership and a large increase in the number of visitors many of whom we hope will become full members for the coming years.

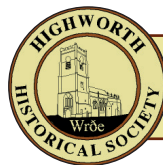
Our monthly raffle is well supported by members and visitors and remains a valuable source of revenue for the Society.

The sale of the various publications remains constant through the Library, Lighthouse and lately through the website with on-line sales. This is an avenue which we hope will increase as the excellent Website is becoming ever more popular.

The main expenditure has been for our excellent speakers and rent for the URC and the Community

Centre where we have a room for archives etc. Thank you to everyone for their support and we look forward to seeing you all in September.

Pat Bliss, Treasurer



## Webmaster's Report

This year has seen me try something new with the photographs in our collection. I uploaded a selection onto one of the Highworth Facebook pages in June and July which received a great deal of interest and resulted in a lot more visits to our website. The number of visits jumped to 2530 in one month, so this is something I will do again.

The website continues to attract visitors from all over the world and so far this year 11,827 people have come to see what we can offer.

I will continue to update and enhance the site and I would welcome any suggestions you may have.

Paul Newton-Smith, Webmaster



## Help Required



Can anyone shed some light on the companies named on this pot and water bottle?

The storage jar is sealed with a cork stopper but we have no idea what was kept in it.

The bottle has 'Highworth Mineral Water' on one side and 'Powell & Ricketts, Makers, Bristol' on the other.



Any information with regards dates etc would be gratefully recieved. Thank you.

Ann Marie Murphy, Archivist



## Archivist's Report

We now have the new and bigger facility at the Community Centre in which we are currently putting everything together and our thanks goes to the trustees of the Community Centre for making this space available. Also, they have provided additional shelving which is much appreciated. We have also received a donation of a plan chest from Paul Newton-Smith which is a very useful addition to our storage facilities.

During the year Keith Bateman and Sarah Gardiner have come on board undertaking the archiving and they have made fantastic inroads in logging our various artefacts, historic papers, photographs and books and our thanks go to them. This means that we are nearer to putting the information onto the website which will enable more people to have access to it.

We have also been lucky to have items donated to us which include a Tankard and Shield of Highworth Home Guard from WW2. Documents donated include items on Highworth Clockmakers and the Scrabble Club. There are also photographs of the Royal British Legion Women's Section and of the Matting Loom. Also included is a picture of Redlands and a programme from 1960 for a concert at Warneford Scholl in aid of Refugees.

As well as collecting items, we loan them out and the WW2 Air Raid Siren was loaned to Graham Carter who took it around schools in the area as part of his WW2 project.

Library Displays during the year have included 'Items depicting Highworth' which included old post cards and various ceramic items.

To fall in line with the May Day theme of an 'Intergalactic Market', the display was changed to the 'History of Space Travel'. During the week of the May Day Market itself, and with the help of the May Day Committee, the display was extended to include various artefacts from various Science Fiction films and TV programmes such as Star Wars and Doctor Who.

As this year's Festival Year theme is 'Youth and Technology' we have a display on the 'History of

Mobile Phones', which includes actual old mobile phones, so go along and see if your first one is on display.

A couple of additional displays we have undertaken during the year were at Coleshill where the theme was the 1940's, when we had the opportunity to show some photographs of Highworth during this period.

We also had a stall at the May Day Market, when our various publications were available to purchase and our display showed the societies activities and events over the years.

Ann Marie Murphy, Archivist



One of our recent acquisitions

## MONTHLY LECTURES

### 2016

26th Sept. WW2 Commando Raids in Norway  
31st Oct. The Shipston-on-Cherwell Rail Disaster  
28th Nov. The Traitors. Burgess, McClean & Philby

### 2017

30th Jan. War Horses. The Purton Remount Depot  
27th Feb. The working life of the Railway Navvy  
27th Mar. Edward Loveden Loveden  
24th Apr. The Mat Factory in Highworth  
22nd May. The Frome Hoard

More details are on our website

## Information from the 2015 AGM

# Annual General Meeting Highworth Historical Society

Monday 28th September 2015

Meeting opens: Time: 19.30

Apologies: Kay Brown, Wendy Eason Gibson

## Minutes of previous AGM

Acceptance – Proposer: Paul Newton Smith      Secunder: Colin Dawson

## Chair's Report

Change of constitution suggested. At present we have difficulty in finding people willing to serve on the committee.

The change suggested is that: - Committee members holding the post of Chair, Secretary and treasurer must cease the post after 6 years, for at least 1 year. They can still remain on the committee.

Proposer : Denise Arnell      Secunder : Dodo Rawlings

## Treasurer's Report

Audited by Mr Harrington who will no longer continue and a new auditor to be found.

Expenses - £350 for new display cabinets.

Raffle brings in a good income.

Problem being posed by forthcoming closure of the National Westminster Bank in Highworth. Other avenues are being explored. The Post Office has been dis-counted as a viable option.

## Matters Arising

Re-election of committee members

Proposer: Jim Mitchell      Secunder: Kay Brown

Re-election of Auditor – Bernard Harrington

Proposer : Gordon Young-Husband      Secunder : Ann Marie Murphy

Any other Business

Next year's programme will be arranged by Chris Suter, as Denise Arnell is standing down.

Close of AGM: Time 19.45.

The 2016 AGM will take place on September 26th at 7.30pm  
at the United Reformed Church, High Street, Highworth.

Followed by a talk on 'Commando Raids in Norway' by Peter Williams.