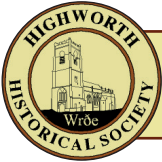


Visit our website at www.highworthhistoricalsociety.co.uk



Hello and welcome to our 2017 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



From the Chair

Another year has flown by, thankfully not as hectic as the last one! Our History Room is now finished and has been admired by all our visitors. Thanks are due to Paul Newton Smith for the artwork, and for co-ordinating the necessary building work. We also thank him for the beautiful Highworth prints which now adorn the walls of the Community Centre.

Thanks to all the committee members who wielded rollers and brushes to cover up the original paint. The Archivists report will appear elsewhere in the Newsletter but thanks are due to Ann Marie for all her hard work, and to her helpers Keith Bateman and Sarah Gardiner. As our holdings are now catalogued we plan to have the list on our website eventually. We have already started to have requests for researchers to visit the room, so something else to think about.

Elsewhere you can read the report on our first Open Day last February.

Thanks also to Margaret Ayres for running the raffle and to the tea/coffee ladies. Without all these people we would have a very poor Society.

NEXT MEETING

September 25th 2017: AGM at 7.30 followed by:
'Old Highworth in photos and words.'

By Ann Marie Murphy, Paul Newton-Smith & Christine Suter.
With some of our archive photos learn more about the town and the people.

In the past year we have welcomed more members and visitors. Hopefully you have all found something in the meetings to enjoy, and will be renewing your membership for the 2017-18 season.

New publication : We are working on a new book to feature 'then and now' photos of the town. Kay Brown is taking the 'now' photos to correspond with the archive pictures that Ann Marie has found. Kay's husband will be involved in the setting up of the book. Watch out for more details, and thanks to them all.

Now... we're looking for some lovely people to help us out in the coming season and there are various ways that you might like to help.

1. One or two new committee members coming on board would be marvellous. To have new people with fresh ideas is vital for the health of any society.
2. We hold a number of wills, mainly from the 18th century, which need transcribing. Most of these have very clear writing and are easy to read. If anyone is interested in this work we would run small working groups at the History Room. Please contact Ann Marie.
3. The next Open Day is on November 11th. 10am to 4pm. If anyone is willing to help at this event please let me know, and the time you would be willing to attend. This year's AGM. As usual this will be short, with a prompt start 7.30pm. The talk will start at 7.45pm. Using our photos this will be a walk around the town, telling stories of some of the people who lived here. Some are amusing, some sad. These are tales that I have found in research into local newspapers. Hopefully you will enjoy the wander.

Christine Suter, Chair

email us at: info@highworthhistoricalsociety.co.uk



The Committee

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.
(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.

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.

Subscriptions.

These remain at £10 for the year. Please renew at the AGM, or you can pay in advance by sending or delivering a cheque to Pat Bliss at, 12 Gilmore Court, Highworth, SN6 7FG.

Cheques made payable to Highworth Historical Society.



Treasurer's Report

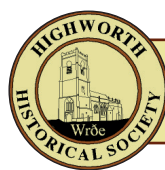
Another successful financial year with a slight increase in membership and for a second year a large increase in the number of visitors. Many of 2016-17 visitors have now joined for the coming year which is a good omen for the coming season. Our monthly raffle continues to be well supported and remains a valuable source of revenue for the Society. Our thanks to Margaret for her hard work each month.

The sale of the various publications through the Library, Lighthouse and through the excellent website continues and it is hoped more titles may soon become available.

The main expenditure has been for our excellent speakers and the rent, setting up and improvements to the History Room at the Community Centre. This is proving a valuable asset for storing archives and for members and visitors to visit.

Thank you to everyone for their continued support and we look forward to seeing you all in September.

Pat Bliss, Treasurer



Webmaster's Report

The number of visits to our website hit just over 21,000 in 2016 which is pretty impressive for such a specialised site. The increase in number has no doubt been influenced by the fact that I have continued to upload photographs from the archives onto the various Highworth based Facebook pages which has resulted in people wanting to see more. Most of the work I have carried out on the website over the last few weeks has been in the background to make sure the site is secure and to try and stop the hackers visiting us, but now I have just started to work on the numerous postcards that I was kindly allowed to copy and hope to upload them soon so you should see improvements to the site in due course.

On top of that, the display work in the history room at the community centre is now complete so please come down and have a look. I hope you will be impressed. While there please take time to wander around the centre and have a look at the large format photographs of old Highworth that are now displayed around the building.

Paul Newton-Smith, Webmaster



Archivist's Report

It has been another busy year for the archiving team with many requests for information ranging from information about various homes and businesses in the town to people researching their family history. Special attention was given this year to listing and cataloguing as many of our artifacts and documents prior to exhibiting or storing them in the history room based in the Highworth Community Centre. This task was made far easier and completed a lot more quickly due to the hard work and dedication of society members Keith Bateman and Sarah Gardiner who spent many hours on the task. On 11th February we held an open day to enable members and the public to visit the history room and to view a large selection of artifacts and documents which are now on permanent display. We also expanded the exhibition into the adjoining



Abba Fan Club Memorabilia

room to enable us to show far more than we usually can. In particular, people really seemed to enjoy looking through the albums of old photographs and many memories and stories were heard of 'Highworth in the good old days!' In fact, the open day was such a success that we now intend to do it all again in November. Details will follow in due course.

The history room is proving very popular, and although, due to time and commitment restraints, it is not open on a regular basis, people can arrange to visit either just to have a look around or to gain access to all the archives for research purposes. Simply contact me for details.

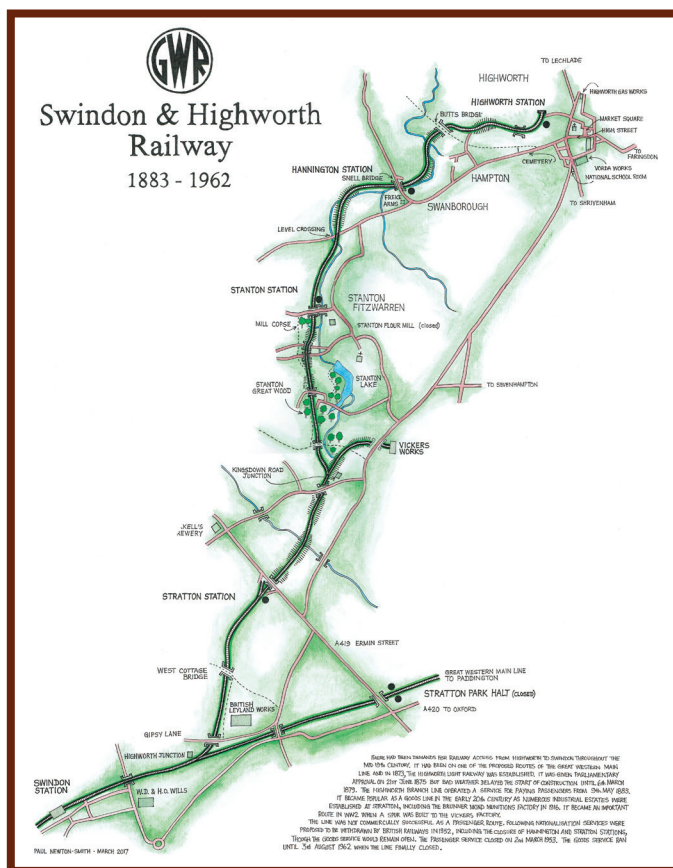
We have also been lucky enough to have recieved a number of artifacts and donations this year to add to our ever growing archives. These include:

- A set of very interesting photographs and part of a loom from the Oriental Mat Factory which used to be in Brewery Street.
- Photographs and slides from Highworth in the 1960s and 70s.
- Copies of the Highworth Parish Magazine 1960 to 1972.
- A truly amazing selection of Highworth railway items from Colin Dawson which includes a Great Western Railway sign, Level crossing gate lamp and Guards hand lamp, all of which can now be viewed in the history room.

- A map showing the route of the old railway produced to display in the new history room.
- A set of memorabilia from The Abba Fan Club which was based in Sheep Street.
- Access to a comprehensive collection of old postcards of Highworth and the surrounding villages which the owner kindly allowed us to copy. We also continue to place a display in the library



Items from the Oriental Mat Factory



Highworth Railway route map produced for the history room

which we change on a regular basis. The current display is based on The Schools of Highworth. Finally, we are constantly looking to add to our information about the history of our town, so if you have anything that you would like to donate or think we would like to see and you would be happy for us to take a copy, please give us a call.

Ann Marie Murphy, Archivist



HHS Lectures 2017/2018

September 25th 2017: AGM at 7.30. 7.45. 'Old Highworth in photos and words.' By Ann Marie Murphy, Paul Newton-Smith and Christine Suter.

With some of our archive photos learn more about the town and the people.

October 30th 2017: 'The Motor Trade 1950-1980' by Alan Nix.

Stories of the family business. Motoring before motorways, seat belts, hydraulic brakes and MOT tests. Petrol rationing and the 3 day week.

November 27th 2017: 'The social etiquette of drinking in the Georgian and Regency periods' by Martin Collinson.

The development of the drinking glass, and the tea and coffee meeting places. Also some of the men of wealth and influence who frequented them.

December 2017. No meeting.

January 29th 2018: 'Women at work in WW1' by Gerry Churchyard.

With the men away the women came out of the home and went to work. Find out the many and varied jobs that they took on.

February 26th 2018: 'The Archaeology and Early History of Highworth' by Mike Stone.

With the new building work in the town finds of the early settlers are being made all the time. Areas include the Cricklade Road area, The Willows and Priory Green.

March 26th 2018: 'The Mistresses of Charles II.' By Chris Scott.

The stories of some of these women, many of whom obtained wealth and power for their families. Barbara Villiers, the most beautiful woman of her day. Did a marriage between Charles and Lucy Walter really take place?

April 30th 2018: 'The Elizabethan Country House' by Dr. Gill White.

One of the most lively and creative periods of English country house building. Examples given include Longleat, Wollaton, Hardwick, Kirby and the alterations made to Kenilworth Castle.

May 21st 2018: 'The Supermarine Swift' by Guy Ellis.

The 'Swift WK275' was developed and manufactured in the 1940's and 50's. A spate of accidents caused it to be grounded. These issues led to a public scandal surrounding the aircraft.



Information from the 2016 AGM

Minutes of the AGM held on 26th September 2016.

Apologies : Mrs Garlic, Jim Mitchell.

Minutes of previous AGM accepted. Proposer Kay Brown. Seconder Ann Marie Murphy.

Chair's Report: As in Newsletter, nothing further to add.

Treasurer's Report: As in Newsletter. There were no questions.

Terry Williams is the new auditor. Re-election of auditor. Proposer Paul Newton Smith. Seconder Jo Clarke

Committee: The current committee is willing to serve. Caroline Pooley has joined the committee.

No further volunteers.

Re-election of committee carried by members.

AOB: Request for any WW2 information from our members.

The 2017 AGM will take place on September 25th 2017 at 7.30pm
at the United Reformed Church, High Street, Highworth.

Followed by a talk on 'Old Highworth in photos' by Chris Suter.