



# Newsletter 2019

Hello and welcome to our 2019 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)



## Information from the 2018 AGM

### Date of 2019 AGM

Monday, 30th September, 2019.

### Minutes of the AGM

held on Monday, 24th September, 2018.

Apologies: Jan Boddy, Sue Morgan.

Last year's minutes. Agreed by:

Proposer – Paul Newton Smith.

Seconder – Colin Dawson.

Chairwoman's Report: As in Newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: As in Newsletter and Balance sheet. There were no queries.

Appointment of auditor: All agreed to Terry Williams continuing.

Committee: Willing to continue. Unanimously agreed by the members.

A.O.B. None.

successful – I had a phone call on Christmas Eve asking if we had any left! Thanks are due to Paul for putting it together and arranging the printing. We are hoping that there will be another one this year. Our Open Day again went well. This year we had two displays. One on Highworth's clubs, past and present, and the other on the men who were killed in WW1.

Our usual stall at the May festivities. Dry and sunny – but that wind!

Also in May we 'inherited/adopted' the farm machinery which survived the barn fire at the Richard Jefferies Museum. They will be re-painted by some of our members and, eventually, housed in a shelter at the Community Centre. Thanks again to Paul for all his work in getting this project off the ground.

Later in the year will see our 'museum' in the old bank building. We have the safe!

More thanks.

To every one who helped at the May Festival and



## From the Chair

It is now 47 years since the society was founded. Good to think that it is still going strong, and that new projects are still being started. Last September we brought out our first calander, showing some of our old photographs. This was very

## NEXT MEETING

September 30th 2019: AGM at 7.30 followed by:

'The Story of Playing Cards'

By Dave Holden.



the Open Day. To Shelia and Marjorie who are now helping Ann Marie with the archives. Also to Eddie, Glynis and Fred who will be seeing if they can add more names to our photos. A big thank you to Fred for joining the committee.

Last but not least, to all on the committee for their work throughout the year.

New committee members are always welcome, some of us are getting a bit old! Please think about it so that we can go on for the next 47 years.

**Christine Suter, Chair.**



## Treasurer's Report

Another year passes and again a good year financially with the number of members remaining constant and an increased number of visitors.

We have again sold a large number of publications through the Library, Lighthouse Bookshop, May Fayre and meetings and through the excellent website which Paul continues to run so efficiently. The publication of the Calendars was a financial success and we are hoping for an even larger print run this coming year.

The History Room, which is a great asset for storing archives, has been well used and the Open Days have proved very popular. Our thanks to Ann Marie who puts in a lot of hours of hard work keeping it up to date and well stocked. The new venture with the room in the Lloyds Bank building will be an interesting addition to the Society.

Margaret has worked hard with the raffle each month which is very well supported and remains an excellent source of revenue for the Society.

Thank you to everyone for their continued support and we look forward to seeing you all in September when we will again be collecting Subscriptions and handing out membership cards which contain a list of the forthcoming meetings. It would be helpful if Subscriptions could be put in an envelope with name, address, telephone number and e mail address on front so that we can double check our list.

### Subscriptions.

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

**Pat Bliss, Treasurer.**



## 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. Caroline Pooley and Tracy Edwards help with the tea and coffee.

Caroline Pooley has taken over producing the quarterly newsletter.

Pat Bliss: Treasurer.

Ann Marie Murphy: Archivist and display manager for the library and the new High Street museum.

Help with any 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.



## Webmaster's Report

The website continues to generate a lot of interest with 26,776 visits recorded in 2018.

I have been busy scanning a lot more photographs and postcards (over 400 and still going) which have been donated or loaned to the society.

This is ongoing, so if anyone has some photographs which they are willing to share, please let me

know and I will arrange a time for me to collect them for scanning before returning them to you.

Alternatively you can scan them yourself and simply email them to me. My main project this year is to try and build up our photographic archive which always proves to be very popular, both on the website and on our open days and displays throughout the year.

The website also seems to be attracting a lot more visitors from overseas and the good news is that not all of them are scammers! It is good to know that the site is proving to be a valuable resource for people carrying out historical research or family history.

As ever, if anyone has any ideas on how to improve the website or other information you would like to see added please let me know.

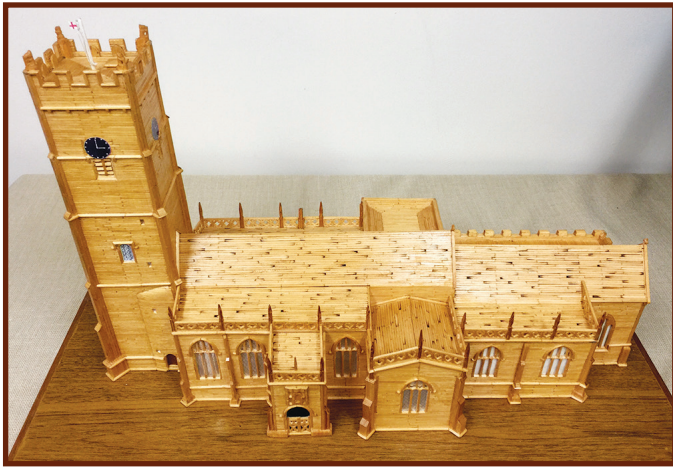
**Paul Newton-Smith, Webmaster**





## Archivist's Report

This has been another very busy year for the society as we continue to record and classify the society archive collection. This year I have been fortunate to have the help of a small but dedicated team to assist me, so thanks must go to Marjorie and Sheila. We have been very fortunate this year as we have been given some amazing new items to add to the collection including, a stunning model of St. Michael's church made entirely of matchsticks, two hassocks (cushions used for kneeling in church), various documents and of course, photographs. We aim to display some of these items in the two



new museums mentioned in this newsletter. 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



## High Street Museum Project



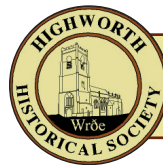
Exciting times are ahead. As you have probably heard by now, a new group called Visit Highworth Limited has been formed to take over the old Lloyds Bank building in the High Street. The aim is to renovate the

ground floor and to open a new tourist information centre and a shop selling 'all things Highworth'. It will also house a



community space for local groups to use and somewhere for visitors and locals to go to find out what's on around our area.

As part of this amazing transformation the historical society were invited to open a small museum in what was the bank safe. Grants were applied for and approved to allow the purchase of the required display equipment etc and many hours have been spent transforming the space ready for opening on 21st September. Please come along and support us. Now Ann Marie and her team just need to decide what to put in there!



## Agricultural Museum Project



As if we do not already have enough to keep us busy we have also inherited a substantial amount

of agricultural equipment which was saved from the scrapyards after a fire at the Richard Jefferies museum in Swindon.

The community centre have kindly donated some



space within their grounds for us to create an agricultural museum and talks are underway with Swindon Borough Council and various agencies to raise permissions and funds to allow us to erect a shelter to keep them all in. Watch this space! In the meantime, we are looking for volunteers to help us clean up the various artifacts and to paint them to restore them to their former glory. Contact Paul at: [paul@paulnewton-smith.com](mailto:paul@paulnewton-smith.com) for details.



## HHS Lectures 2019/2020

### September 30th 2019.

A very short AGM. Followed by:  
'The Story of Playing Cards' by Dave Holden, one of our members.

### October 28th 2019.

'Alfred Williams, a look at some of the folk songs he collected'  
These are from the Fairford/Lechlade area. Words and songs by the James Driscoll Group. Three young men from the area.

### November 25th 2019.

'The Highworth and Swindon Poor Law Union'  
Highworth was the key to the development of the Union. The Workhouse for the Union was in Cricklade Road. The speaker is Paul Wilkins.

### January 27th 2020.

'Ticket to Ride'  
The perils and pleasures of early Victorian Rail Travel. We welcome back Chris and Judy Rouse.

### February 24th 2020.

'My life as a Cold War Spy'  
As we mark the 30th anniversary of the Fall of the Berlin Wall the speaker reflects on the extraordinary, and at the time, secret operations of the British military mission to the Soviet Army in East Germany, of which he was a member in the 1980's.  
The speaker is Peter Williams.

### March 30th 2020.

'Last Orders'  
Some stories and photos of the vanished Swindon pubs. Stories of murder, ladies-of-the-night, underground tunnels, and more.  
Our speaker is John Stooke.

### April 27th 2020.

'Honouring Two Midshipmen at Gallipoli'  
Alfred Martyn Williams and Hubert Malcolm Wilson both won DSC's at the young age of 17. With six others they towed in the first wave of Lancashire Fusileers on 25th April 1915.  
Hugh Williams is the speaker.

### May 18th 2020.

'The rise and fall of a downland village'  
The story of the abandoned village of Snap near Aldbourne. The speaker is John Dymond of the Aldbourne Historical Society.

The 2019 AGM will take place on September 30th at 7.30pm  
at the United Reformed Church, High Street, Highworth.  
Followed by a talk on 'The Story of Playing Cards' by Dave Holden.