

2015/16 - Report from Longworth & District History Society (L&DHS)

It has been a busy year.

The society in 2015 had 101 members, who supported the talks and visits. On average there is an attendance of 60 at each talk. Over the year we had 40 visitors.

The monthly meetings have been very well attended. Our trips during the summer months were fully subscribed.

Within our society there are several projects going on.

The Wills Project, where the group will eventually transcribe all the old wills from our villages will be written for research use. Family Names, places where the family may have come from, relationships within the family. Who could act as a witness, and maybe who could write. The wills are photocopied from microfiche or microfilm in the Berkshire Record Office and brought home to work on. There is a diligent group working away.

TIMELINE

We hope to produce a timeline for all our villages.

ARCHIVES

We have 2 cupboards in Southmoor village hall. They are full of file boxes for each village. Under certain headings, e.g. Church and Chapel, Civic Parish, Buildings and Landscape, Business, Schools,

THE YEAR PAST

We started the year with The Battle of Cropredy with Stephen Baker who brought it all to life.

The history of making Witney Blankets.

The Apple Man Gordon MacLean told by Graham Wren who worked in the local orchards for many years.

Lord Nuffield's life by Eric Sidebottom and then we had a visit to his home Nuffield Place to complete the picture of the local entrepreneur.

The Archaeology and Stamford in the Vale, David Ashby, our local archaeologist who hopes to do some digging in our villages, watch this space and get your spades and trowels sharpened.

We had a wonderful summer evening walk in Kingston Bagpuize with Peter Keen. He had produced a booklet of information for the walk, so it can be done again.

Last visit was to The Merchants House in Marlborough. Well worth a visit if you have not been. It is gradually being restored by a local trust.

The Children of Oxford's experiences in WWII with Liz Woolley brought some very moving stories not to mention a gentleman in the audience who had come from the East End of London to Hinton Waldrist and never gone back to London again!

Hillforts of the Ridgeway with Gary Lock, a real expert, compared 3 of our local Hillforts. They turned out to be very different, from seasonal festivals, White Horse Hill, to a family farm, Alfred's Castle.

The Midnight Storyteller entertained us after our Christmas Feast.

The Longworth Rose continues and we have now produced Number 5, a snip at £1/copy.

We are interested in any little bits of local history you may have hiding away, or sitting in front of you!

Last year L&DHS was asked in connection with the Heritage Lottery Grant to write a history of Kingston Bagpuize Church, St. John the Baptist. This has now been done and printed. Thanks to Jill Muir and Jan Kelly for the writing, and the Church did the rest. It has been delivered to each house in the parish.