

Stonehouse History Group

Annual Report 2013 - 14

In May 2014 we celebrate the sixth anniversary of the inauguration of our group. Our membership remains steady at 50 with 110 names on our contacts list. This year we have had 11 events, with an average attendance of 40, plus a walk around the local mills, finishing with tea at Stonehouse Court, during the summer.

We have continued to produce an annual Journal, Issue 4 being out now. Our third calendar, featuring photographs of Stonehouse in the past, sold out very quickly.

Our main event of the year was hosting the Gloucestershire Local History Association (GLHA) Summer Afternoon. We welcomed 70 visitors from local history groups all over the County, who chose from a selection of four different walks led by our members and Steve Mills. Thanks to the Stonehouse W.I. for preparing a delicious tea. This was a very successful afternoon prompting many complimentary comments.

As part of the Summer Afternoon we prepared a range of display boards on the history of our town. These were much admired by the visitors and we have shown them at Town events such as the Celebration Day in September. We also created a display on Special Houses in Stonehouse for the GLHA Local History Day in October, which was voted 2nd best out of 18 displays. We now have a total of 24 display boards and are in the process of creating more.

In January we received a request from Stonehouse Court Hotel to assist with information about the history of the building. We provided them with a Timeline, some photographs and the entry from the Domesday Book about the Manor of Stonehouse. We enjoyed attending the opening of their refurbished lounge and bar and are grateful for a generous donation towards our funds.

We have continued to interview local residents about their memories of Stonehouse. Shirley Dicker, Jim Dickson, and Vicki Walker have interviewed the following:
Andy and Jim Blockley (Oldends Lane), Michael Hall (Police Sergeant Smith), Peggy Blanch (Regal Cinema), Geoffrey Young (Stonehouse in 1930s and 40s), Pip Parkin (Captain B. D. Parkin), Helen Bell and Pamela Bird (the Baker family).

The Stonehouse History Group website, www.stonehousehistorygroup.org.uk, is maintained and developed by Darrell Webb. It has been successful in prompting residents (past and present) to get in touch, and to communicate their memories to us and sometimes to provide photographs. We have been successful in answering many questions about the history of Stonehouse. We are particularly grateful to Janet Hudson for her valuable help in dealing with these questions.

We have offered more local walks and talks this year. We have taken four different groups around the canal and High Street areas. We have visited Year 5 classes at Park Junior School to help with work on World War II, including a local walk. Vicki Walker and Shirley Dicker have given talks to four different groups on Stonehouse Then and Now, Pubs and Special Houses.

We have a healthy bank balance, benefiting from members' generous contributions to monthly fund raising raffles. This money goes towards paying for the speakers and the hire of the premises. We are very sorry to lose our Treasurer, Carole Crisp, who has done a marvellous job organising the accounts for the past six years. Thanks to Carole for all her hard work.

Committee, May 2013 – April 2014

Chair – John Peters

Vice-Chair – Shirley Dicker

Secretary – Vicki Walker

Treasurer – Carole Crisp

Committee – Valerie Blick, David Bowker-Praed, Jim Dickson, Darrell Webb, Colin Wood.

Stonehouse History Group

Events 2013 – 14 (number attending in brackets)

May 8th 2013 (42)

AGM followed by Lionel Walrond – “*Bring your antiques*”.

Mr Walrond, former curator at Stroud Museum, gave information about a variety of objects brought along by members.

June 12th (35)

Trevor Radway – “*Postboxes*” Who would have thought there were so many varieties of postbox to be seen around the country!

Saturday July 6th (70)

GLHA Summer Afternoon hosted by SHG. A successful afternoon of local walks followed by tea at the Community Centre.

July 10th (40)

Barry Harrison - “*Lionel Hook & Sons – An Innovative Stroud Engineering Company 1903-1974*”. Stroud History Group member, Barry, gave an interesting history of this local firm.

Sunday August 25th (23)

Canal and mills walk with Steve Mills and tea at Stonehouse Court.

Another beautiful day for our walk around Bond’s Mill, Beard’s Mill and Lower Mills.

September 11th (29)

Stonehouse Quiz

A new venture for us with a lighthearted quiz won by Jim Dickson’s team.

October 9th (50)

David Smith – “*The origins of Gloucestershire*”.

Another scholarly talk by David Smith about our County.

November 13th (30)

Steven Blake – “*The Bellamy family in Stonehouse*”.

Colin Wood brought along the model of St. Cyr’s Church probably made by John Bellamy. Steven outlined the story of the travelling showmen who made the models.

December 11th (41)

Adrienne Grinyer & Ingrid Walden - “*Tudor Christmas*”.

Christmas entertainment with songs and stories as well as delicious food made by Shirley Dicker.

January 8th 2014 (39)

Howard Beard - “*An A-Z of the Stroud Area in Edwardian photographs*”

Howard treated us to more of his amazing photograph collection.

February 12th (58)

David Aldred - “*Lost Railway Journeys in Gloucestershire*”.

Unique photographs of the railway line from Gloucester to Stroud brought back memories to many of us who can remember the old stations before 1965.

March 12th (34)

Anne Crow - “*F W Harvey, Gloucestershire WWI Poet*”.

Poetry readings brought alive Will Harvey’s wartime experiences.

April 9th (37)

Tony Conder - “*Gloucester Docks Then and Now*”.

Tony’s marvellous collection of historic photographs added to the story of their development.