



## Stonehouse History Group

### Annual Report 2016 - 7



In May 2017 we celebrate the ninth anniversary of the formation of our group. Our membership is now 59 (down from 64) with 120 names on our contacts list. This year we have had 11 events, with an average attendance of 45, plus a visit to the Jenner Museum at Berkeley, the GLHA Summer Afternoon in Chipping Campden and a tour of Stroud Brewery. One of our founder members, John Peters, has resigned from the committee and we would like to record our thanks to him for all the work he has done to support the Group since 2008.

We have been working on two local history Information Boards to be erected in May outside Park Schools and Wycliffe Chapel. We are grateful for the support of the Town Council, Wycliffe College and St Cyr's Church in funding these. Unfortunately we were not successful in obtaining a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the next phase of boards. We still intend to create more boards in the future but this will be on hold until we can obtain funding.

The Stonehouse History Group website, [www.stonehousehistorygroup.org.uk](http://www.stonehousehistorygroup.org.uk), continues to be maintained and developed by Darrell Webb. Our Facebook page has enabled us to identify people and places in our collection of historic photographs. We have also been able to advertise our events and to answer enquiries about the history of Stonehouse. Darrell also designed an SHG logo which is now in use on all our publications.

Darrell also organised the creation of a plaque recording the centenary of the English Clock Tower in Buenos Aires, built with bricks from Stonehouse Brick and Tile Co Ltd. Members donated money to pay for this and it has been received by officials in Buenos Aires. We still await news of when it will be in place on the tower.

We have continued to interview local residents about their memories of Stonehouse. Shirley Dicker, Jim Dickson, and Vicki Walker have interviewed Irene Adey, Sid King, Sylvia Bliss and Stanley and Gladys Hook. We also accompanied two visitors from Australia to see where their ancestors lived around the town. Several people have sent us written memories which we intend to include in future Journals.

This year we have acquired two large collections of old photographs. Pamela Redding donated her father Donald Smith's collection of photos from the 1970s to 1990s. Dursley History Society has acquired the negatives of photos taken during the 1960s to 1990s from the Dursley Gazette. We have been given those of Stonehouse to scan and save. Thanks to Shirley Dicker for her work in scanning hundreds of photographs. Some of our members are involved in Rick Jordan's project to record Stonehouse in photographs throughout 2017.

We have continued with local walks and talks. We have taken one group of people (SP3) on the High Street walk and another (Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology) on a Second World War walk. Jim Dickson talked to 'Friends of the Gloucester Waterways Museum' and 'Stroud Local History Society' on "The Stroudwater Canal around Stonehouse". Vicki Walker and Shirley Dicker visited Scarlet House and Stonehouse Pensioners Club with our collection of old photographs. We led a history walk around the High Street with Wycliffe Cubs.

We have increased our range of displays. We have exhibited many of these in Stonehouse Library. Maidenhill School borrowed our display on the First World War, including Stonehouse Soldiers at the Somme, along with the research we have done on the effects of the War in Stonehouse, to help with their Y9 History project. We created a display on Gardens for Food, Fun and Flowers for the GLHA Local History Day in March. We have also been heavily involved in the display created for the new Cotswold Canals Trust Activity Centre in Bond's Mill Gatehouse, helping them with both information and posters. We produced information sheets for sculptures in Stonehouse Arts Week in June and hope to be involved with this project in 2017.

We were involved in the publication of a book – *The Stroud Valleys in the Great War* by The Five Valleys Great War Researchers Group published by the History Press. The chapter on Stonehouse was contributed by SHG using material from Journal Issue 4. The launch of the book in January 2017 was very successful and copies are selling well. We do not receive an income from this; however we are entitled to purchase copies at half the recommended retail price.

Our journals and calendars continue to sell well. We still have printed copies of all Journal issues available and earlier issues can be viewed on the website. Journal Issue 7 will be out later in 2017.

Our bank balance has been reduced this year due to another substantial contribution towards the Information Boards. We will be unable to contribute any more financially to these until our funds have recovered appreciably.

**Committee, May 2016 - April 2017**

Chair - Jim Dickson

Vice-Chair - Shirley Dicker

Secretary - Vicki Walker

Treasurer - Andrew Walker

Committee - Valerie Blick, David Bowker-Praed, John Peters, Darrell Webb, Colin Wood.