

Stonehouse History Group **Annual Report 2010 – 11**

The group has continued to flourish, maintaining a steady membership of 46, with 93 names on our contacts list. This year we have had 11 events, with an average attendance of 43, plus 2 outside visits during the summer. We have met on the second Wednesday of every month at 7.30 pm in the Town Hall, moving to the larger premises of Park Junior School or Maidenhill School for events where more space was needed.

Our main innovation this year has been the creation of the Stonehouse History Group website, www.stonehousehistorygroup.org.uk After discussions with the website committee, Darrell Webb has built and maintained an excellent website which gives details about the activities of the group, as well as a wealth of information about the history of Stonehouse. We have received communications from a variety of people with questions about Stonehouse history as well as photographs and information to contribute.

We have continued to interview local residents about their memories of Stonehouse. Jim Dickson, Shirley Dicker and Vicki Walker have interviewed:

Frank Woodyard (Hoffmanns), Len Taylor (Woolpack), Mrs Blick (Blick's Builders), Peggy Deuten (Stonehouse), Chris Brown (Royal Arms), Norma Tubb (Ship Inn), Mrs King (Bridgend).

Shirley Dicker and Vicki Walker were featured on Radio Gloucestershire with three walks up and down the High Street and by the church and Stonehouse Court. We have worked on the walks with the Stonehouse Partnership and are preparing to do our first guided history walk in June for the Stroud Local History Society. We have also done talks for other groups based on the High Street walk, featuring photographs old and new. These have resulted in discovering more history from local residents attending the talks.

We have continued to collect photographs of Stonehouse, many of which have been uploaded to the website. We decided to use some of these to create a set of table mats and coasters for sale. The mats feature six historical scenes and will be ready for order soon. We are also preparing to publish a calendar, which we hope will be on sale from November 2011.

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 have also purchased a microphone for our speakers and are intending to obtain a digital projector for use at venues without this facility.

The Committee

We would like to thank Kate Meyer and Myra Peters, who have resigned from the committee this year, for their valuable contribution to the work of the group and their continuing support for our activities. Francis Wathan, one of our founder members, has also had to resign due to ill health. We have added four new members to our committee which has met approximately once a month.

Committee May 2011

Chair – John Peters

Secretary (Vice-Chair) – Vicki Walker

Treasurer – Carole Crisp

Committee – David Boaker-Praed, Shirley Dicker, Jim Dickson, Ken Greenway, Linda Greenway, Darrell Webb

Events of 2010-2011

May 12th 2010

The AGM was attended by 49 people followed by -

Peter Griffin - History of the Stanleys...continued...

Peter presented a collection of photographs illustrating the changes to King's Stanley and Leonard Stanley during the 20th century. Especially interesting were photographs taken by Lionel Walrond during the demolition of many ancient buildings. Members appreciated the interesting talk and opportunity to ask questions afterwards.

June 9th 2010

Averil Kear – Your house has a history. (39)

Mrs Kear, former archives assistant at Gloucestershire Archives, talked about researching into the history of your house.

July 14th 2010

John Peters – Photographing historic and listed buildings. (33)

John gave a very interesting talk about the English Heritage project to photograph all the listed buildings in the country, which he took part in. He outlined some of the problems he encountered gaining access to these buildings and showed us some of the excellent photographic records he has helped to collect.

August 7th 2010

Tour of Sharpness Docks with Ray Wilson. (12)

A small group of members met up on a Saturday afternoon at Sharpness Docks for a tour and explanation of the history and workings of the docks.

August 21st 2010

Tour of Gloucester Cathedral (14)

In the second of our summer trips out, we were taken around the Cathedral by two guides. Our visit coincided with an exhibition of modern sculpture which added to the experience. The guides explained the history of the cathedral and we also took the opportunity to ascend the tower where we saw the bells and learned how they work.

September 8th 2010 Park Junior School

David Drew – A history of the politics of the local area (40)

David began with a presentation of views of Parliament buildings. He then outlined how the Stroud constituency had developed over the years since 1832. He showed us the list of Stroud MPs and talked about some of the main characters and their influence in the area.

October 13th 2010

John Loosley – The history of allotments in Gloucestershire (27)

November 10th 2010

Philip Moss – Hidden Gloucester Part 2 (36)

Philip returned for a second edition of his collection of photographs of unusual views of the old buildings of Gloucester. He has been allowed access to areas not often seen by the public, including cellars, attics and back entrances, showing the development of the buildings over the years. In the last 40 years, Gloucester has been careful to preserve what is left of its history.

December 8th 2010 Maidenhill School

The History of High Street and Christmas social. (53)

The committee and members had prepared displays of their research on the buildings and shops in the High Street over the last 100 years. Vicki and Shirley presented their "High Street Walk" with photographs old and new. Christmas food and drink was served and a most enjoyable time was had by all.

January 12th 2011

Ray Wilson – Gloucestershire's Industrial Heritage (44)

Dr Wilson brought along a fascinating collection of photographs of industrial buildings from the past, in the local area. He has preserved evidence of buildings that no longer exist, as well as those which have changed their usage and still thrive as businesses.

February 12th 2011

Arthur Price – Frocester in old pictures and photographs (50)

Arthur Price, farmer, geologist and historian, kept a large audience entertained with reminiscences of Frocester and the surrounding villages illustrated by his large collection of slides.

March 9th 2011

Chris Witts – My life on the Severn (49)

Chris told us of his early life working on the River Severn on the Harker oil tanker barges. He started work at 16 and worked night and day to transport the oil up and down the river. He was also a witness to a major disaster on the river when two barges crashed into the Severn railway bridge, bringing down two sections and killing 5 people.

April 13th 2011 Maidenhill School

David Smith – The murder of Edward 2nd (54)

David Smith, archivist at Berkeley Castle, came to tell us the story of the murder of King Edward II at Berkeley Castle. He explained the politics that led up to the murder and introduced us to some of the characters behind the events. He was sceptical of the popular rumour that Edward was killed with a red hot poker and instead believes that he was suffocated as stated in the original charge of murder.