



**Stonehouse History Group**  
**Annual Report May 2019 – April 2020**



During the past year, our membership increased from 71 to 73. We were sorry to lose two of our members who died during the year. Valerie Blick, who was a committee member from 2011 – 2018, and who sponsored our first Information Board, and Peter Griffin, who was a member of our group from its inauguration in 2008 and gave us several talks.

During the year we had 10 events, with an average attendance of 50. An enjoyable visit to Woodchester Mansion was attended by 22 people following a talk by Liz Davenport, one of its trustees. Seven of us joined in the GLHA Summer Afternoon in Tidenham. Unfortunately our April meeting had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus crisis, and it is uncertain when normal events will be resumed.

Shirley Dicker has continued to manage our Facebook site which generates many interesting comments and photographs. We have added information to the website and hope to continue to add more as time allows.

This year we have been working with the Stonehouse in Bloom group to create an Information Board for the redesigned Old Chapel Garden on the site of the old Congregational Churchyard. We have received a generous donation from Stonehouse resident Viv Warren towards the new board, and also sponsorship from the Midcounties Co-operative Community Fund. The posts for the board have been erected as part of the ongoing work and the board will be attached soon. Funding has been promised for more boards which we hope to create next year.

Jim Dickson has ensured that the 18th century milestone on Bristol Road has been re-erected, close to its original position but safely away from traffic, on the grass verge at the end of the cul de sac. SHG is arranging a replacement of the original plate on the front of the stone, which was lost some time ago. We are very grateful to Knights Brown Construction Ltd, and it's Site Manager, Alex Souden, for their help in moving the stone and sponsoring the cost of the new plate.

We have continued to give local walks and talks. We took part in the Stonehouse Walking Festival in September leading a Church and Canal walk and a High Street walk. We hope to take part in the 2020 Festival. We have visited Moreton Hill Care Home with our collection of photographs.

We have joined with other local history groups in the Stroud area as part of the Five Valleys Local History Association. Unfortunately the event to commemorate VE Day had to be cancelled, but there are further joint events arranged for later in the year which we hope will be able to go ahead. The GLHA Local History Day was also postponed but Janet Hudson has prepared a display on "The History of Adult Education in Stonehouse" which will be shown at the LH Day in 2021.

We have continued with research into different aspects of our town's history. Thanks to Diane King for donating a collection of photographs from Stonehouse Youth Club which we have scanned and deposited at Gloucestershire Archives. Also thanks to Mattie Ross for photographs from Stonehouse in Bloom. Stonehouse Town Council has loaned us several boxes of historic documents and photos which they have been sorting during the refurbishment of the Town Hall. We are in the process of scanning these and will be able to use them in future articles and displays.

We hope to publish Issue 9 of the SHG Journal in Autumn 2020.

We have built our bank balance back up to a healthy amount through continued sales of the calendar and journals, raffles at our meetings and generous donations.

**Committee, May 2019 - April 2020**

Chair - Jim Dickson

Vice-Chair and Facebook manager - Shirley Dicker

Secretary and Website manager - Vicki Walker

Treasurer - Andrew Walker

Committee - David Bowker-Praed, Jane Gulliford, Janet Hudson, Richard White, Colin Wood.

**Stonehouse History Group**  
**Events 2019 - 2020 (attendance in brackets)**

**May 8<sup>th</sup> 2019 (58)**

**AGM. Liz Davenport – “*The history of Woodchester Mansion.*”**

Liz’s presentation was a good introduction prior to our visit to the Mansion in August

**June 12th (54)**

**Geoff North – “*Gloucestershire’s VA hospitals.*”**

Geoff brought an interesting selection of photographs and films to illustrate his knowledge of First World War hospitals including Standish Hospital.

**July 10th (52)**

**Virginia and David Adsett – “*The Fab 50s.*”**

A great collection of objects from the past brought back memories for those of us who lived through the 1950s – most of us!

**August 14th (22)**

**Visit to Woodchester Mansion.**

**Sept 11th (53)**

***Show and Tell* - Thanks again to our members for their varied talks:**

Cresby Brown - "*Cure Bottes*", Janet Hudson - *A 19th century sailor's journal*, Paul Dicker – *P.C. Ken Dicker*, Eric Winder - *Mr Punch and the Italian connection*, Bob Lusty - *My Dad (Cliff Lusty) in Art and Gardening*, Vicki Walker - *Leslie Arrowsmith*.

**Oct 9th (27)**

**Jane Bradly – “*Let us be sweethearts: letters from the First World War.*”**

Jane talked about her research into correspondence during the War using letters from a local collection as examples.

**Nov 13th (58)**

**Dr Steven Blake - “*Gloucestershire’s Medieval Churches.*”**

An excellent speaker with an extensive slide collection, Steve explained the significance of the amazing things we can see if we visit the churches in this region.

**Dec 11th (54)**

**Jonathan Briggs – “*Mistletoe.*”**

Local biologist Jonathan is a renowned expert on all things to do with mistletoe. Gloucestershire is one of the places where it grows abundantly. He told us about the history behind the myths.

**Jan 8th (48)**

**Steve Mills - “*The Adaptive Re-use of Stroud’s cloth mills.*”**

One of our members, Steve has been researching local mills for many years. He has a fine collection of his own original photographs to illustrate the changing uses.

**Feb 12th (57)**

**John Bromley - “*The Joys of Metal Detecting.*”**

John was probably our most enthusiastic speaker of the year! He spoke about the “do”s and “don’t”s of detecting and showed us some of the historic finds he has collected.

**March 11th (34)**

**Dr Gillian White “*The history of the Teddy Bear*”**

Another excellent speaker, Gillian explored the history of the 20th century through the evolution of the teddy bear.

**April 8th 2020**

**Event cancelled because of the coronavirus “lockdown”.**