



Stonehouse History Group
Annual Report May 2020 – April 2021



The introduction in April 2020 of national restrictions, due to the corona virus pandemic, changed things dramatically for our Group. All our forthcoming events were cancelled, as were many other local history activities which had been planned for 2020-21. As a result we did not charge a membership subscription for the year.

In 2021, Myra Peters, one of our founder members, passed away as did our oldest member, Philip Walmsley. They will both be much missed by the local history community.

Our AGM was conducted via email. We thanked Colin Wood, who stood down from the committee, for all his work with the Group and welcomed Linda Collazo as a new member.

As it became clear that we would be unable to meet in person for some time, the committee investigated the possibility of offering talks via Zoom. John Parker offered to give his talk on *The History of Trees in Stonehouse*, via Zoom using the account of the Arboricultural Association which is based in Stonehouse. This talk proved very successful, attracting over 100 participants and was also popular on YouTube, paving the way for a programme of monthly Zoom meetings (see list of events). A successful fund-raising effort in October raised over £500 which paid for a new laptop, webcam and microphone. These have enabled us to host SHG Zoom meetings.

Despite the difficulties, we have continued to work on our community projects. The 18th century milestone on Bristol Road has been re-erected and the new cast iron plate is ready to be fixed to the stone when possible. The Information Board for the redesigned Old Chapel Garden on the site of the old Congregational Churchyard has been put in place. We are grateful to the Cotswold Printing Co for sponsoring a new board to be placed between the entrances to the Park Schools. A leaflet has been created to show the location of all our boards around the town, with a map designed by Rich White. We have assisted with historical information for other local projects including the installation of the new railway bridge over the canal by the Ocean.

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. We have done our best to answer a variety of enquiries about different aspects of Stonehouse history.

We are grateful for the donation of old Stonehouse photographs to our extensive collection. Thanks to Brian Humphries for his collection of local photographs. Also to David Thew for his father Sid's collection of photos of Hoffmann's during the 1960s and 70s.

Due to difficulties in selling copies we decided not to produce a calendar for 2021. Issue 9 of our Journal has been published in April 2021.

The bank balance has remained steady during a period where we have had little income or expenditure. Thanks to Simon Lewis for auditing the SHG accounts for us.

Committee, May 2020 - April 2021

Chair - Jim Dickson

Vice-Chair and Facebook manager - Shirley Dicker

Secretary and Website manager - Vicki Walker

Treasurer - Andrew Walker

Committee - David Bowker-Praed, Linda Collazo, Jane Gulliford, Janet Hudson, Richard White

Stonehouse History Group
Events 2020 - 2021

May 12th 2020

AGM via email

Talks via Zoom

An average of 50 “participants” registered for these talks. Some of these will represent two people. Some of the talks were recorded and made available via our website.

Sept 9th

John Parker - “*The history and importance of trees in Stonehouse.*”

Oct 9th

Vicki Walker – “*Some history of the pubs in Stonehouse.*”

Nov 30th

Val Kirby - “*Landscapes of Wool and Water.*”

Dec 14th

Short talks and Quiz

Jim Dickson - *The origin of the Ocean.*

Steve Mills - *A strange journey from the Bristol Channel to Eastington.*

Janet Hudson - *Graft and Craft – Some beautiful objects crafted from wood.*

Stonehouse Picture Quiz

2021

Jan 25th

Short talks and Quiz

Nick Peters - *The First Ironworker in America.*

Shirley Dicker - *Sir Henry Winston of Standish Court.*

Vicki Walker - *The History of the Post Office in Stonehouse.*

Stonehouse Picture Quiz Part Two

Feb 10th

Short talks and Quiz

John Peters - *A Day in History (WW2 in Tetbury).*

Jim Dickson – *Pillboxes along the Stroudwater canal in Stonehouse.*

Stonehouse Quiz

March 10th

John Peters - “*Six Stages of Separation.*”

Stonehouse Quiz

April 14th

Pauline Stevens – “*The Misses Kimmins’ Schools.*”

Shirley Dicker and Vicki Walker – “*Nurses at Standish VAD Hospital.*”