

Bicester Local History Society Newsletter (July 2012)

Welcome to the Bicester Local History Society Newsletter. It is our aim that we publish a quarterly edition of the Newsletter to enable members without internet access to be kept informed of forthcoming meetings, events and projects that the Society will be undertaking. We would welcome any contributions that you might like to send to us.

Forthcoming Meetings:



The talks selected for our meetings over the next few months reflect aspects of local history on a broad theme. Talks take place at St Edburg's Church Hall, Old Place Yard, Bicester at 7.30 p.m. on the third Monday of the month. The programme for the third quarter of 2012 includes:

- The Restoration of Bicester's Georgian Fire Pump – Dave Pearse (16th July)
- Summer Break – There is no talk scheduled for this month (20th August)
- A.G.M. and 'The Green Man' – Tim Healey (17th September)

Bicester Local History Society Annual General Meeting:

The A.G.M. of the Society takes place at the start of the 17th September Meeting. A review of the events that have taken place over the last year will be considered, a statement of the Society's affairs discussed and a range of plans for future activities will be unveiled. The Society would welcome any one who would like to become a Committee member or volunteer to help take forward the current and future projects the Society is engaged upon.

Local History Walks:

The Bicester Local History Society programme of 'Village History Walks' began on Sunday 10th June with an informative exploration of Lower Heyford, led by local historian Martin Greenwood. Future walks are scheduled to take place at Brill (8th July), Chesterton (19th August) and Islip (16th September). The walks take place on Sunday afternoons at 2.30 p.m. and are followed by refreshments.

A programme of 'Countryside History Walks' will enable those who wish to pursue their interest of the historic landscape to take their interest that little bit further! The walks are structured to complement the 'Village History Walks' and include countryside circuits around Lower Heyford (24th June – 3.5 miles), Brill (22nd July – 4.5 miles) and Islip (7th October – 5 miles).

Further details relating to Village and Countryside Walks are available from Pete Chivers.



Where do you want to go on Monday nights?



Bicester Local History Society is mindful that an increasing membership has created accommodation difficulties at our present venue location. One off events have been held at The John Paul II Catholic Church Centre in January and at The Clifton Centre in March to explore the possibility of moving to a larger centre for our Society activities. A questionnaire has been devised and circulated to the membership to seek their views regarding a possible change of venue to address the present problems. *Your opinion is important to us.* Please return completed questionnaires to Pete Chivers by Friday 22nd June.





Visit to the Houses of Parliament:

A Society visit to *The Houses of Parliament* took place on Tuesday 27th March 2012. The visit proved a unique opportunity to view parts of the building not usually accessible to the public. Members visited Westminster Hall, Big Ben and the Chambers of the Commons and Lords. There was also an opportunity to view original documents dealing with the business of Parliament dating back to medieval times. The visit proved a fascinating insight into the customs, traditions and workings of the parliamentary system. A number of our members had the opportunity to meet our local M.P. Tony Baldry. Thank you to Bob for organising the visit.

Get ‘Down and Dirty!’:

You’ve watched *‘Time Team’* and maybe even taken part in a dig? Now there is an opportunity to explore a piece of Bicester’s own unique history with a chance to dig at *‘The Old Priory’* in Priory Lane, thanks to the owner Robert Parkinson. Paul Riccoboni (Archaeologist, John Moore Heritage Services) will be leading a ‘Community Archaeology Dig’ at the site on Saturday 14th July to excavate a number of test pits on this previously unexplored site. An information letter has been sent to members explaining what is involved and requesting a reply from anyone wishing to assist with the digging or finds processing on the day. Please return the reply slip to Sally James by Friday 30th June if you wish to take part in this activity.



Bicester Local History Society at ‘The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee’ Celebrations:

The Society took an active part in a number of Jubilee events over the Jubilee holiday period in Bicester. These included the *‘Anvil Firing’*, a presence at *‘The Big Lunch’* and the display of *‘Bicester’s Georgian Fire Pump’* in the Carnival Procession. Below is a selection of images of the Society’s involvement at the event. Thanks to all from the Society who helped organise or took part in the celebrations. *‘Bicester Town History Trail’* leaflets and a series of plaques identifying historic town properties is to be produced in the coming months.



Community Archaeology Conference:



A number of our members attended the Council for British Archaeology *Annual Spring Conference* at St Edburg’s Church Hall, Bicester on Saturday 21st April. The Conference explored various aspects associated with ‘Community Archaeology’ and provided a number of inspirational ideas relating to the positive role community based projects can foster in the community.

The Mystery Picture:

An article in the January edition of the Newsletter asked for help in identifying a number of employees at a mystery location in Bicester. Thank you to the members who responded and identified the picture as having been taken at Booth & Phipps Garage in King’s End in about 1961. The identity of one member of the group still remains a mystery. Can you identify him? The employees include (working clockwise from the left of the picture) Pete Roberts, Simon Ivetec, Billy Chiltern, Sid Grimes, Arthur Flitney, Cyril Batts, Reg Howes, Paul Rossler and Hugh Holloway. *The mystery man, still to be identified, is holding a mug of tea, second left on the front row.*

