

# Bicester Local History Society Newsletter (Oct 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 a new venue 'The Clifton Centre' Ashdene Road, Bicester at 7.30 p.m. on the third Monday of the month. The programme for the fourth quarter of 2012 includes:

- James Sadler – Oxford Pastry Cook and First British Aeronaut (Mark Davies) 15<sup>th</sup> October.
- Aspects of Ambrosden (Michael Ocock) 19<sup>th</sup> November
- Bicester & The Supernatural (Pete Chivers) 17<sup>th</sup> December

## Our New Meeting Venue:



We are relocating to a new venue for our monthly meetings from October 2012. Our previous venue at St Edburg's Church Hall was beginning to prove too small to accommodate the growing membership numbers that now belong to the Society. Following a consultation process with the membership and trial meetings held



at possible venues it was decided that **'The Clifton Centre', 23 Ashdene Road, King's End, Bicester OX26 2BH** would be most appropriate location to meet our future needs. The Centre has a large car park adjoining it and is located opposite **'The Centurion' Public House** at the junction of Ashdene Road and Kingsclere Road. We would like to thank St Edburg's Church Hall for the help and support that they have provided during our time with them.

## Get 'Down and Dirty':



A number of our Society members took the opportunity to explore a piece of Bicester's own unique history with the chance to undertake an archaeological dig at 'The Old Priory' in Priory Lane on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July. Thanks to the owner Robert Parkinson for allowing us to explore areas of his garden and to Paul Riccoboni (Archaeologist, John Moore Heritage Services) for leading this 'Community Dig'. Test pits on the site confirmed a previously unexplored building and a yard surface connected to the farm facilities that previously occupied the site. We hope that there will be future opportunities to investigate archaeology at 'The Old Priory'.



### Can you help please?

A number of our members kindly volunteer to take on additional responsibilities and volunteer to help with projects and tasks that aid the organisation of the Society. These can take a variety of forms such as helping organise activities such as walks, researching items of local history or domestic assistance at our monthly meetings. With the relocation to 'The Clifton Centre' we are looking to build up our volunteer base to help with the organisation of the meeting activities.

Can you give a little time to help with serving tea or coffee, helping to set out the hall ready for the meeting or helping to clear up afterwards? The membership has always been very supportive in helping with such tasks but it would aid the Society to know that we have a core of people who will undertake these tasks on a regular basis to help ensure the smooth running of the organisation of the evening. If you can help please contact any members of the Committee and we can build up a list of regular volunteers. Many thanks for your kind help.



### Local History Walks:



This programme of Bicester Local History Society 'Village and Countryside History Walks' reached its conclusion on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> October. The walking groups have explored a number of local villages and the surrounding landscape since the programme started in June with visits to Lower Heyford, Brill, Chesterton and Islip. In a summer characterised with poor weather conditions, the group has been fortunate to experience favourable conditions which made the exploration



more enjoyable. We are grateful to the membership who have helped to organise the walks and to the volunteers that have provided and served refreshments at a number of the venues. The teas following the walk have been an additional highlight of the walk! A positive feature that the walks provided has been an opportunity for individual members to take the chance to liaise with other members for a longer period than is normally possible at the monthly meetings. Over forty of the membership has taken part in the walks this year at the various locations. Thank you to everyone who has supported the walking events. We look forward to next year.



### The end of an era:



After more than twenty five years of service on the Bicester Local History Society Committee, Wendy and Mick Wall have decided it was time to step down this year and take a well-earned rest from their labours. For many years Wendy and Mick have provided the welcoming face to greet members at monthly meetings by organising the raffles and helping with the refreshments. Their unique knowledge of the town's local history, the events and characters associated with the town and their willingness to help with the Society's activities have been greatly valued by all who have worked with them and by the membership as a whole. Thank you Wendy and Mick for all your efforts on behalf of the Society. Wendy and Mick were presented with an Otmoor painting by local artist William North at a recent Committee meeting and life membership of Bicester Local History Society at the Annual General Meeting to mark their contribution to the Society. It will certainly not be the last that we shall be seeing of them.