



Wiltshire Local History Network

Meeting
Wednesday 20 October, 2021, 7.30pm
Online via Zoom

Minutes

Present: Julie Davis (Chair), Naomi Sackett (Archivist, WSHC), Claire Mills, Brian Edwards, Gillian Swanton, Jane Howells, Jean Belt, John Chandler, Julia Hunt, Marion Coupe, Peter Roberts, Rosalind Johnson, Ruth Newman, Stuart Raymond, Terry Bracher, Tony Pratt, Marion Hobbs (17 attendees)

Apologies: Nick Baxter, Anne Trevett, Jane Browning, Craig Gingell (unable to join after the start), Jane Schon, James Holden, Anthony Kent, Wendy Lawrence

1. Actions from previous meeting

Julie contacted Barbara Fuller regarding a list of speakers the WFHS have already compiled. Barbara has had to step down from the WFHS secretary role but Julie will be put in touch with new secretary. Ongoing.

Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre Collection Highlights – feedback response. Julie received some good feedback regarding the collection highlights. WSHC will continue to work on them. If have ideas for topic or particular set of records you think would be useful to cover then let Julie or Naomi know.

2. News from the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre

WSHC were informed of the death of James Thomas an individual member of WLHN and Julie has sent condolences to his wife.

WSHC has unfortunately had to temporarily close to the public on a Thursday. This is due to a number of staffing issues. It is only temporary and hope to re-open on Thursdays again as soon as possible.

[Know Your Place](#) project update – this historic mapping project is managed from WSHC on behalf of Bristol City Council. Archivist, Max Parkin set up an e-volunteering project (still ongoing) producing 'layers' to go on top of map and add additional content. This work has been chosen by The National Archives for publication in their 'Year in Archives 2021' (which will highlight ways organisations have adapted to the last year). Another layer – Wiltshire

Wiltshire & Swindon
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County Council Planning Department photos from 1960s – has just gone live. These are black and white images of good quality. They mostly focus on conurbations and have good coverage. There are also others such as Lacock Abbey, the Pains-Wessex fireworks factory at High Post and military barracks, including Battlesbury Barracks, Warminster home of the Cheshire Regiment at the time. They are a great source for social history.

Archaeology team: we will miss Tom Sunley who worked with the Historic Environment Record for over 10 years and has left WSHC to work for the Somerset Council. He has been replaced with a job share between Jacqui Ramsay, who worked with Tom for number of years, and Carol Lewis, a volunteer here for number of years with a background in heritage. Jacqui and Carol support the technical side of running Know Your Place.

Salisbury Museum News:

Salisbury Museum was successful in getting awarded £3.2million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for their *Past Forward: Salisbury Museum for Future Generations* project.

This £4.4 million project is the culmination of our plans to redevelop the museum, delivering new permanent galleries, a flexible learning and events venue, along with new activities and the staff to run them.

Swindon Museum and Art Gallery: it is worrying to see the news regarding the Museum. We hope they can move forwards in positive way. We may be able to get an update from Darryl at Swindon Library soon.

3. Events at [Wiltshire Museum](#) – Gill Swanton.

Watch out for series of lectures going on at Wiltshire Museum, Devizes both in person and online. The hope for future events is to do hybrid lectures to continue to attract a worldwide audience; to make use of the capacity of the lecture theatre while also reaching more people. WSHC would also like to go forwards with a hybrid approach.

Another event to be aware of: Easton Royal Heritage Group

A message from Wendy Lawrence from Easton Royal Heritage Group - 'A Glimpse into the Past' Saturday 23rd October 2pm-4pm and Sunday 24th October 11am – 4 pm at Easton Royal Village Hall, a display of archive materials which gives a fascinating insight into the history of the village and the people who lived there. They also welcome people telling their stories and bringing material they might wish to add to the group's collection. All are welcome, there is free admission and refreshments available.

They are also excited to announce the launch of their new book: 'A Wiltshire Village – Easton Royal' which will also be for sale over the weekend. If you can't make it to the exhibition but would like to reserve a book or find out more about the village you can visit the website: www.eastonheritage.uk or contact Liz Johnson on 01672 810289.

Stock of local history publications at Wiltshire Libraries:

Julie asked for any recommendations of local history books for WSHC to add to the local studies library at WSHC and across Wiltshire Libraries. The smaller publications are harder to find out about. Any information regarding publications is welcome - please let Julie know at julie.davis@wiltshire.gov.uk

4. Local History Walks - Claire Dimond Mills

Claire is a local historian mostly based in Box. She leads local history walks around the area and has a new walk focusing on the darker side of Box. Claire also works with local primary schools (currently Box and Colerne) running workshops using local history sources and taking the children out on local history walks so they can learn what life used to be like in their local area.

The format works well and has received positive feedback and could be replicated in other villages. In order to provide a more cost-effective offer for schools and make use of local knowledge and enthusiasm, Claire would like anyone who is interested in delivering a joint event in other villages with a primary school to get in touch with her. Learning about local history is a major part of the curriculum. It is a great way to engage people and get them really enthusiastic about their local history. www.clairedimondmills.co.uk

Julie asked if the walks are also available in paper form. Claire confirmed that these are only in person guided walks. Self-guided walks are available on the Corsham Walking Festival website: [Heritage Trails – Corsham Walking Festival – 11th to 13th June 2021](#)

5. Any Other Business: Information share for those attending

Marion Coupe – highlighted the publication 'Village Soldiers of Netheravon, Haxton and Fittleton and Enford, 2018. It includes a piece about the soldiers who left to fight in WW1 including photos and information such as where they lived. The book is linked to the website <https://netheravonspast.co.uk/> where some information can also be found. The book is available in WSHC local studies library under AAK.949.

Marion also drew attention to the British Agricultural History Society and the Online Library of Rural and Agricultural Literature (LIBRAL) gateway which publish a number of books online.

Tony Pratt - involved with BAHS. They would be interested in any agricultural publications. He has submitted a wartime book of farm craft publication for people who were in the land army to be made available through LIBRAL. Members of BAHS can put you in touch if you have any publications to loan for copying. <https://www.bahs.org.uk/>

John Chandler – Victoria County History update: 3 volumes on the go currently. Mark Forrest - Mere Vol 19 is nearly finished. Chippenham parish and town for vol 20 is close to completion. There has been major success with the Bremhill part of that volume which involved a community project alongside the VCH. This volume should be published just before Christmas. A tandem VCH article on Bremhill is being produced by Louise Ryland Epton. There is also work on Christian Malford. Rosalind Johnson is working on Whiteparish and Landford.

Thank you to Julie and Terry for displaying Hobnob books at WSHC. Dawn at Swindon library has a display of Swindon Books and merchandise (including a bag with Swindon Library ticket from 1976). There are a few Hobnob book launches imminent including *Projected Passion: The History of Cinema in Salisbury* by Frogg Moody and Richard Nash, and the newly published *Mr and Mrs Lockwood Kipling: from the Punjab to Tisbury* by Christina Richard and *Bishopstone with Little Hinton Parish: its Archaeology and History* by Mogs Boon and Bernard Phillips. Moggs Boon saw a proof copy of this but sadly died before getting the final book.

Peter Roberts – Redlynch Historical Society reported that Carolyn Birch, the previous chairman died at end of August. Peter and Annette Jack have taken over responsibility currently. RHS have produced 3 self-guided walks to local area with historical points of

interest on them, and bi-annual Redlynch review. Two new books have been published by Peter Roberts and Georgina Babey *Secret Forest: A History and Memories of Franchises Lodge* and *Secret Marriage: The Riddle of the Hamptworth Morrisons*. Copies of the book have gone to Salisbury Library and WSHC. Julie confirmed she has catalogued it today and will purchase further copies, saying it was brilliantly produced. Hamptworth estate material has also recently come into the archives at WSHC.

Ruth Newman – showed a copy of the book and said it was a delightful and well written book. Peter Roberts noted that he does the research and writes a first draft and Georgina Babey does the editing and tidying to make it readable.

Julia Hunt – the Aldbourne Heritage group works closely with the village school including walks around the village with the children. Julia is no longer involved but has a close working relationship with the school. The group also runs walks especially for Band of Brothers who were based in Aldbourne for their final preparations before heading to Europe. The group run walks to show American visitors where they were billeted.

Marion from Purton Historical Society – they have been working on a records and recollections books (putting lots of hard work into updating it) and it will be published in New Year.

Terry Bracher – nominations for the Alan Ball awards for local history publications now open for items published between July 2019 and December 2021. It is open to local history organisations and local history group, individuals etc including self published. John Chandler is on the judging panel, and it is convened by Terry as CILIP national chair of Local Studies Group but it is an impartial judging. The award is not just open for hard copy publications, but also e-publications and there is a new award for best community publication. Terry urged groups to submit. More information is available here: [Nominations open for Alan Ball Awards – CILIP Local Studies Group \(wordpress.com\)](#) and submissions can be made here: [Local Studies Publication & E-publication Awards – CILIP Local Studies Group \(wordpress.com\)](#)

There have also been recent local history events, October is Black History Month. There was a recent virtual South West Black History Month conference, which saw Wiltshire Council work closely with a variety of partners to host speakers including David Olusoga, June Sarpong, Anton Ferdinand and Rt Hon Stuart Lawrence. It reached a worldwide audience.. David Olusoga was particularly interesting. [Thousands join virtual local Black History Month conference - Wiltshire Council](#)

Terry also requested feedback about recording meetings. Do people like the idea? The recording can then be put on website for people to access. Cameras can be turned off, so faces are not visible. Please let Naomi or Julie know (naomi.sackett@wiltshire.gov.uk or julie.davis@wiltshire.gov.uk) if you would rather meetings were not recorded.

Ruth Newman – small Laverstock and Ford history group have got a website up and running and it is growing. Both John Chandler and Ruth have now retired from the Sarum Chronicle, the latest edition of which has just been published.

Brian Edwards – has just written a 5000 word paper on moonrakers which will be in next Regional Historian – it is a spin off from Ways of Seeing Wiltshire exhibition Brian curated at Wiltshire Museum recently. There will also be a couple of other spin off articles not ready yet. The focus is art, illustrations and paintings, waterscapes of moonrakers but does cover general background and history as well.

Stuart Raymond – Has sent back for proofs of his latest Pen and Sword publication on local history sources, which will be released sometime in the spring. The idea came from reading

WB Stevens book Sources on Local History about 50 years ago which taught the trade of local history but has never been updated. Stuart Raymond's book aims should do that. Julie agreed there was a gap in publications on local history and many people have no idea where to start with it.

Stuart also highlighted that Postscript books are currently selling VCH volumes at £14.50 (Stuart recently bought Cornwall but that at the time of the meeting there were one or two from Wiltshire available). It was agreed that while the VCH is available online at [British History Online](#) it is also nice to use the physical copies. Tony Pratt mentioned Abebooks also having copies.

A comment sent following the distribution of the minutes from Dr Jane Howells to highlight resources for the study of local history:

The latest edition of Kate Tiller's 'English Local History – An introduction' was published by Boydell & Brewer just last year. A completely new edition of David Dymond's excellent 'Researching & Writing History : a Guide for Local Historians' (Carnegie) came out in 2016. Just on sources, there is 'Sources for Local Historians,' by Paul Carter and Kate Thompson, Phillimore 2005. And that is only 3 suggestions.

BALH online activities continue to contribute the latest ideas and information on a wide range of relevant topics. www.balh.org.uk/events

Message from Jane Schon: Would like to remind everyone about the Wiltshire Museum's Eric Ravilious exhibition and that she is still working out how to reopen the Archive & Library safely. It remains only Jane working there but if people want to send in their enquiries I can see if I can answer them. The collections are online.

6. Suggested date of next meeting

3 months will bring us to **January 2022** – the next meeting will be online but after that perhaps we can consider a joint meeting both online and at Devizes library. We will confirm a date for the online meeting in January nearer the time and send out a request for any agenda items.