



Wiltshire Local History Network

Meeting
10 February 2021, 7.30pm
Online via Microsoft Teams

Minutes

Present: Julie Davis (Chair), Ruth Butler (Heritage Education Officer, WSHC and Sarum Chronicle representative), John Chandler (Hob Nob Press), James Holden (representing Victoria County History Trust), David Dawson (Wiltshire Museum), Stuart Raymond (book reviews editor for Wiltshire Archaeological and natural History Magazine, also researching Avebury), Tony Pratt (PhD candidate researching agrarian history at Winchester), Anthony Kent (Tisbury Local History Society), Anne Trevitt (Bemerton Local History Society), Nick Baxter (Marlborough Local History Society), Jane Howells, Ruth Newman (Laverstock and Ford History Group), Gillian Swanton, Jamie Wright, Craig Gingell (Bremhill Local History Group), Jean Belt (Purton Historical Society), Michael Hickman, Graham Grist (23 attendees in total).

1. Julie gave a brief overview of the functions on Microsoft Teams

2. **Actions from previous meeting**

Moulton project: this has begun – WSHC Community History Advisor Tom has begun the appraisal process, working with the WSHC Conservation Team as a lot of the material is fragile. He has reviewed over 250 items so far.

Archives South West Newspaper digitisation project – a mid-project report was brought out in December by KevinJBolton Consultancy. This work is ongoing.

Women's Life Writing Project – Adam Matthew Digital – WSHC is close to signing the project contract, in the last stages of putting a list together of archive material that can be digitised, if depositors are in agreement.

3. **Update from the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre. Presenter: Julie Davis**

JISC/JSTOR Open Communities project – Wiltshire material
JSTOR's Open Community Collections initiative: JSTOR want to move into primary sources, enabling organisations to showcase their special collections by making them freely available on a platform that researchers, faculty, and students already know and use. The material will be fully searchable and will come up in Google searches too. Julie thought it would be a great way to raise the profile of WSHC's less used collections, plus WSHC holds the copyright which makes the material ideal. WSHC is the first county archive to have approached JISC/JSTOR – it's mostly higher education institutions involved at present. They are very excited about WSHC taking part in the pilot.

The aim is to get over 200 images uploaded by the end of March but Julie advised making the most of the material this year – it is a trial for JSTOR and if it's successful they think JSTOR might move it to their paywall or try to charge WSHC for the space.

A couple of items which will be appearing – one of Julie's favourites, a 1938 telegram stopping the intended evacuation of 'refugees' to the county (the Munich agreement was signed). It is little known that Wiltshire was to become an official reception area in 1938 (copyright WSHC).

Julie's next thoughts will be to look at copyright free Local Studies material; she's keen to make more of WSHC's Stonehenge/Avebury collection...

Know Your Place website – new layer

The Wilkinson postcard project is complete with over 250 images added to a brand-new layer. Interesting to note the geographical coverage which wasn't possible before.

You can access the layer at [Know Your Place - Wiltshire \(bristol.gov.uk\)](http://bristol.gov.uk/your-place-wiltshire)

A step-by-step guide introducing and explain the site is available here [Know Your Place: Historic Maps \(wshc.org.uk\)](http://wshc.org.uk/your-place)

Next up to be added to the site are C18 and C19 prints from our print collection and WSHC is currently looking for more volunteers. You will need a computer, an internet connection and a keen eye for detail. If you would like to take part email WSHC.Volunteers@wiltshire.gov.uk

Wiltshire Historic Atlas project – Julie and Tony have had some interest from groups and individuals to be kept up to date with progress, but at present no interest from anyone who might like to practically contribute. John

Chandler notes that Gloucestershire continue to plan for an atlas to mark the upcoming centenary of the Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society. They are looking into the possibility of crowdsourcing to get the funds to employ experts to complete the work. John suggested that Rose Wallis, a lecturer at the University at the West of England might be able to help. She is assisting Gloucestershire but also has Wiltshire connections. John agreed to contact her when appropriate; he knows she has a high workload at present.

4. Update from Wiltshire Victoria County History. Presenters: James Holden

James sent Chris' apologies as he was unable to attend. Another piece has just been completed for the Chippenham VCH volume, and a contract has been finalised for research work to be done on Christian Malford. A well-qualified volunteer has begun working on Kington St. Michael, an added bonus! They are now at the point where they can start looking at the end of the Chippenham project; by the end of next year they will be in sight of completion. The lost income from last year (£8,000) has really hindered progress for this year. The Alderbury and Frustfield volume continues with work by Rosalind Johnson. Funding has been gained for 3 years for the new Mere volume, funded by the University of London. A researcher is already working on Mere town which is the largest piece of work to complete for the volume – they are cautiously optimistic about progress. James wanted to say thank you to all those local history groups who have donated so far, their contribution is most welcome. The VCH Wiltshire team would appreciate any other suggestions on ways they can work to raise money. If anyone would like to donate, they can do so quickly and easily via the new VCH Wiltshire website <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/4542#!/DonationDetails> Feel free to share the link. The VCH Wiltshire website can be found at <https://www.wiltshirehistory.org/>

5. Salisbury Heritage trails app. Presenter: Ruth Butler

After the Novichok attack in 2018, a response and recovery team was set up at Wiltshire Council to look at economic recovery, including tourism. There was an interest in looking at ways people could be encouraged to spend longer in the city centre. Terry Bracher and Ruth Butler from the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre were brought on board to look at creating a culture and heritage app to do just this. After a tender process, they began working with Bristol based CALVIUM (who they had worked with before on the Lacock Unlocked project). The aim was to keep the app simple, with themed trails including medieval heritage and a 'horrible histories' styled trail. Salisbury Civic Society gave the inspiration for 'Look Up Salisbury'. The app was launched at the end of November, but it was low key; with the lockdowns it wasn't felt appropriate to promote an app which encouraged multiple people visiting the same areas of Salisbury.

The app is available on iPhone and Android; search for 'Salisbury Trails'. It is free and doesn't include any advertising. There are lots of images and interesting text. You can follow individual trails on a map or just discover things as you wander around the city centre. 3 further trails are planned; Ruth will be working with BID, Salisbury City Council and other partners for this, and will be linking in with the new 'Experience Salisbury' website. Two of the trails will be arts and culture focussed, looking at public art and literary sources. There is the possibility of a historic hostelrys theme linking to the sites of now extant public houses. Other projects are hoped to feed in, such as the Milford Street Bridge Project, Salisbury Cathedral and the 'Her Salisbury Story' project. The aim is very much to be all embracing. So far the app has had 818 downloads from across the world. You can access it here for Android

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.calvium.scwt&hl=en_GB&gl=US and for iPhones <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/salisbury-trails/id1528355551>

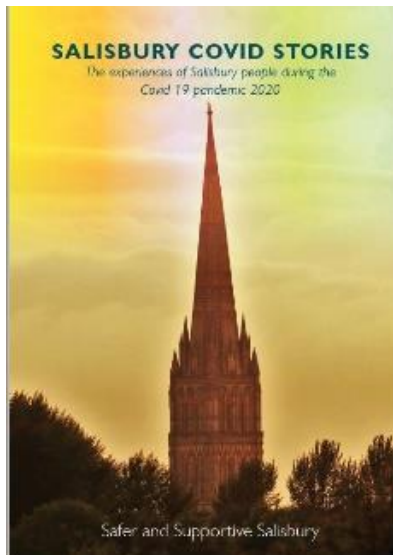
Anthony Kent noted that there was not currently much on the app relating to the arts; Ruth said this was being addressed in the next trails. Julie reminded Ruth about the extensive Creative Wiltshire database at the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre, and the public art project data which was completed as part of the Creative Wiltshire project. She is happy for the data to be made use of if it proves useful.

Michael Hickman suggested places of worship as a theme, particularly Tent Methodist chapels; Salisbury hosts an example. Ruth noted that the locations on the app need to be in and around the city centre, but there was the opportunity to put individual buildings on the site, and to provide links to external organisations and information too.

6. Any other Business – a chance for members to discuss their work or ask questions of the group

On behalf of Terry Bracher and the WSHC team, Julie congratulated Anne Trevett on her recent BEM which was well deserved.

Anne Trevett (Bemerton LHS): The Salisbury COVID Stories booklet is still available. It was published as a response to all the community work happening in Salisbury due to the C-19 pandemic. Julie noted that it was a brilliant publication and well worth taking a look at; interesting and informative, a great example for other groups who are thinking of undertaking similar work. You can get a copy via anneinbemerton@gmail.com



Pewsey Local History Research Group and the Pewsey u3a Local History Group:

Julie read out the statement which had been sent in advance by Wendy Lawrence. Continuing to work on talks that might be presented at a future 'live' meeting Pewsey Local History Research Group which is usually open to the public. She also highlights that Liz Johnson who represents Easton Royal Heritage Group, continues to carry out research into the village and its inhabitants. She has also presented her talk 'A Divine Experience - The Secret Life of Florence Nightingale' to a group in Wilton via Zoom. This followed the publication of her book.

David Dawson (Wiltshire Museum): enquiries on their website have been high, as has been interest in their online events. Highlighting 100 objects from Wiltshire's museums has proved extremely popular (<https://museumsinwiltshire.org.uk/objects>), available via the new website which has been developed in partnership <https://museumsinwiltshire.org.uk/>. The County's Museum's Officer Heather Perry (based at WSHC) has been working on a new Facebook group for Wiltshire museums. Wiltshire Museum have tidied up their online Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazines (many have been digitised). A number of attendees remarked how useful they were finding the online magazines. They are freely accessible via [WANHM - Wiltshire Museum](#) and further electronic versions are planned.

John Chandler (Hob Nob Press): Hob Nob is continuing its work publishing works by local historians in the county. The latest is Pam Slocombe's 'Whaddon and the Longs'; a review will appear in the next edition of the Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History magazine. It is currently selling well. Future publications will include a work on the VAD hospital in Chippenham in conjunction with Chippenham Museum and a publication about Rudyard Kipling's parents in Tisbury.

General note: It was noted at the meeting that Zooms would be a much better platform for WLHN meetings; it is easier to use and people are more familiar with it. Unfortunately, Wiltshire Council deem Zoom a security issue, hence

why Julie is currently using Teams. She will check again with Wiltshire Council to ensure this remains the case, but there is also the issue of the 40 minute time restriction on Zoom (Julie is not sure if there is a work around to ensure we don't have to log out and back in again) – any suggestions welcome.

7. Suggested date of next meeting

Julie asked if a 3 or 4 monthly meeting was preferable. The feedback was that people had enjoyed the meeting and would like it to go ahead every three months.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 19 May, 7.30pm. Online via Teams but possibly at Devizes Library too (tbc)