



Wiltshire Local History Network

Meeting
26 June 2019, 7-8pm
Devizes Library, Sheep Street, Devizes SN10 1DL

Minutes

Chaired by Julie Davis, County Local Studies Librarian, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre julie.davis@wiltshire.gov.uk (JD)

Contributions from:

Terry Bracher, Heritage Services Manager, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, terry.bracher@wiltshire.gov.uk (TB)

Darryl Moody, Local Studies Librarian, Swindon Central Library
localstudies@swindon.gov.uk (DM)

1. Introduction & aims of the Network

JD introduced a few aims of the new Wiltshire Local History Network:

- to share knowledge
- to provide connection across the large county of Wiltshire
- to engage and meet with other local history groups
- a single point of contact for all

Wiltshire Local History Forum had been wound up due to declining numbers of members, fewer attendees at events and lack of committee members.

JD welcomes feedback about the new Network

2. Local History Month 2019

An update on this year's Local History Month in Wiltshire libraries which took place in May. Local History Month is a national event run by the Institute of Historical Research. Each large library had a display on the theme of 'a street in time' using details from the census, tithe maps, directories and copies of photographs and documents from the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre. If 5% of visitors to libraries looked at the exhibitions the exhibitions will have reached over 9,800 people.

JD worked with other South West County Local Studies Librarians to create a social media buzz around Local History Month which was successful in increasing awareness.

The next Local History Month is May 2020. JD is interested in expanding the event; if anyone would like to use the month as a way of showcasing their work on local history through their local library she would be happy to hear from them.

Each library has a Local Studies Champion. JD to put a list out either to the mailing list or online. **Action JD**

3. New Salisbury Library/Salisbury 2020 & Historic High Street Action Zone

JD updated on the move of Salisbury Library to a new building, with a smaller library area of 900 sqm. JD is working to ensure the integrity of the local studies stock and that it is not weeded too heavily or lost.

A public meeting on the application was held and rejected due to the look and height of the building. It is meant to be a temporary move.

TB updated on the Historic High Street Action Zone for Salisbury. Heritage Action Zones are a scheme developed by Historic England to achieve designated status and gain access to expertise, focus groups, and funding opportunities. There are currently 18 Heritage Action Zones nationally; this year Swindon and Gosport were successful.

High Street Action Zone is a new opportunity with a narrower focus and which also brings investment and support to redevelop historic town centres. Wiltshire Council have chosen to focus on Salisbury bid in for a Round 1 application bid.

If successful, community engagement with ideas and delivery will be important in developing activities and spaces.

TB welcomes ideas or comments and can email a draft master plan about the physical aspects of the project. More input is needed for the engagement side.

Contact has been made with various local groups so far including, Fisherton and Bemerton History groups, the Civic Society, Milford St Bridge project, Economic Development department, Wessex Archaeology. Salisbury Local History Group expressed an interest in consultation.

Ruth Butler (Heritage Education Officer) is in contact with the Blue Badge Guides regarding new trail leaflets.

JD updated on Salisbury 2020 project. Salisbury Cathedral is celebrating the anniversary of the move from Old Sarum to its current location and has been liaising with other organisations to find out if they would like to join the celebration. Salisbury Library are planning an exhibition with the Young Gallery on the theme of 'movement', focusing on technology and industry. There are plans to apply for a National Lottery Heritage Fund bid in partnership with Wessex Archaeology. If anyone would like to get involved or find out more, please contact JD.

4. Swindon Heritage Action Zone

DM summarized the Swindon Heritage Action Zone plan to see heritage as an asset for the town and promote economic growth. It is hoped to improve the 'branding' particularly of the 1840-1860 new Swindon area, including signposting.

DM also talked about the benefits of the successful Swindon and District Local History Network. Council members (and other parties) come to meetings to consult with and update the Network group.

Physically getting together has helped make things happen including running a successful heritage magazine for 5 years. The mailing list provides a good communication tool.

5. VCH update

David Moss, Chairman of the Wiltshire Victoria County History Trust gave an update on progress.

Victoria County History began nationally in 1899 to document this history of every parish. Wiltshire group formed in 1950s and has so far published 18 volumes. All but the first two are freely available online at British History Online.

Two volumes are in production: 19 – Mere and 20 – Chippenham. A volume takes approximately 7 years to complete. There are 5 volumes in total still to complete for Wiltshire.

Currently trying to raise funds for volume 21 – Alderbury.

If you would like to get involved either in fundraising or in other ways please contact David on dmooss2013@hotmail.co.uk

If you are interested in finding out more about the production of the Chippenham volume visit the MyChippenham website <https://www.mychippenham.org.uk/>

6. AOB: Attendees are free to tell the group about their work or questions/problems they may be facing in the local history field if they wish to do so.
Posters/publicity/information will be welcome.

Attendees introduced themselves and who they represent:

Alan and Carol Payne: Box heritage. They have funding for 2000 heritage leaflets which will be distributed free and are trying to set up a heritage walk.

Claire Dimond Mills: Researcher for Box People and Places. Interested in local and family history. Recently started business as genealogist.

Pam Kimber: Pewsey and Devizes. Researched family in Melksham. Involved with Pewsey U3A local history group.

Marti Hilliard: Laverstock. Parish Councillor – involved with neighbourhood plan to celebrate heritage assets. Salisbury Civic Society; Promoting Our Heritage events.

Sean Tye: Devizes. Architect, and interest in buildings.

Jane Howells: Salisbury history. Editor of Sarum Chronicle

Ruth Newman: Salisbury history. Sarum Chronicle. Recently published book on History of Laverstock.

Patsy Hehir: member of the Wiltshire Family History Society, Kennet and Avon Canal.

Nick Baxter: Marlborough Local History Society. Published book, Great West Way. Recently 'Marlborough at War with the King', Friends of Coleridge Museum, Calne Heritage Quarter Group.

Brian Edwards, Visiting Research Fellow, The Regional History Centre, University of the West of England. 40 papers and articles in print. Interest in historiography and how people engage with heritage.

Barbara Fuller: General Secretary for Wiltshire Family History Society. Secretary of Devizes branch of WFHS. Also involved with local history. Published book on the Devizes Union Workhouse. Collaborated with late Lorna Haycock.

Marlene Lewis: Devizes U3A local history group.

Marek Lewcun: Wessex Archaeology. Interest in clay tobacco pipes – contact him on mareklewcun@yahoo.co.uk if you find any.

Sally Hendry: Chair of Westbury Heritage Society. Westbury Workhouse. Westbury Heritage Centre. Walks and talks. Hope for Network to be able to share what different groups do, notifications of grants and opportunities for funding, share advice, spare equipment, information on research etc.

Robert Wall: Friends of Down Cemetery Trowbridge (Grade II listed cemetery). In process of mapping location of graves onto computer. Needs help reading the burial book. Volunteers welcome.

Diane Harris: White Horse Trade Council. Industrial history, canal history and people. Study days and books.

David Dawson: Wiltshire Museum. Education activities, Saturday club for young children. Wiltshire Museum publish Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine journal. Conferences, lectures and talks.

Kay and Paul Bowyer: transcribe for Wiltshire Family History Society. Publishing war memorial names 'Urchfont 17'.

Craig Gingell: Bremhill Local History Group. Researching villages and the name of Gingell.

Stuart Raymond: published numerous handbooks and manuals on family history. Recently published 'Stourton before Stourhead' and working on History of Avebury (without the stones). Volunteer with Wiltshire Museum, book review editor for WAM. Please send copies of local history publications to him for review.

John Bennett: Trustee Calne Heritage Centre. Cataloguing the collections to be able to make better use of them.

Kate Skillman: Warminster U3A group. Hoping Network might help with exchanging speakers, lists etc.

Debbie Shipp: Malmesbury History Society, promotes local history, publications, talks, current geophysics search to find Anglo-saxon Church

Barry Furse: Warminster U3A. Involved with trips and tours.

Gordon Cree: Warminster U3A

Liz Johnson: chairman of Easton Royal Heritage Group. Enjoyed being a member of the old Wiltshire Local History Forum; particularly liked the magazine. Would also be interested in details of speakers.

Wendy Lawrence: Secretary of Pewsey Vale Local History Research Group, Salisbury, Pewsey U3A group – programme coordinator, trips and talks. Pewsey Heritage Centre – exhibition of old photographs. Wiltshire Online Parish Clerks.

Brian Johnson: Alderbury Village Local History Research Group. Previously put on displays for the Wiltshire Local History Forum meetings. Publications, research into the history of village during the Second World War. Interested in finding out more about the Auxiliary site in Wilton which moved from Alderbury during WWI. JD can help provide information on the Wilton site. **Action: JD to contact Brian with the information.**

John Belt: Purton Historical Society, Swindon and District Local History Network member.

Louise Dandy: Winchester City Council, head of historic environment, urban design, community engagement and regeneration projects. Current project with Historic England, Winchester Future 50.

Jo Chandler: Family history in Burbage area.

Jean Belt: Purton Historical Society. Village museum above library since 1990. Finds the Swindon Network useful to know what is happening in the area.

Steve Bridge: individual research interest. Policing in Wiltshire. Trying to ensure Constabulary artefacts and documents are preserved appropriately. Other interests: freemasonry in Wiltshire; Railway works. Happy to help others on these topics.

Geoff Gillham: Published 'Farm of the Monks'. Long family of clothiers. Interested in any portraits of Long family.

Neil Butters: Author 'Historic Transport Map of Wiltshire' (1993)
Chair of Swindon Tram 13 Trust - whose aim is to restore Swindon's/Wiltshire's last electric tramcar. (It has been offered a home in the to-be-rebuilt Corn Exchange.)
Former Thamesdown and Swindon Borough Councillor (St Margaret and Lawns wards)
Now Joint Cabinet Member for Transport for Bath & North East Somerset Council - but live just half a mile from Wiltshire's Limply Stoke.

JD read out some email replies for those who were not able to attend the meeting: Chris and Judy Rouse: Maintain a non-profit railway index. Primary research construction and history of 19th century railways in England; GWR, Midland and LSWR lines. Give presentations to local societies.

Other AOB:

Discussion about possible usefulness of Facebook page (consensus probably not as not accessible for everyone), website for events or lists of members/brief introduction of all groups, digital newsletter to update on news and events from Local Groups. TB proposed that the website could be a page on the current Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre

website. JD proposed that if a combined listing of events was to be published, groups would need to be proactive in submitting them as impractically time consuming to search them out.

TB informed that the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre has been successful in achieving a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to catalogue the Moulton archive relating to the rubber industry in West Wiltshire. Volunteers welcome to help with indexing.

Discussion of the fact the Network might help in identifying gaps in project work or approaches, such as oral history. JD highlighted the Celebrating Age project on Corsham.

Proposal to create a different logo for WLHN. Brian Edwards to create a new logo for consideration.

Query about possibility of full list of local history publications. JD mentioned Wiltshire List which publishes the new acquisitions into the Wiltshire Local Studies collection. It is distributed in the WSHC quarterly newsletter and is available on the WSHC website: <http://www.wshc.eu/newsletter.html> Wiltshire Library Catalogue also provides useful catalogue for local history publications held in Wiltshire Libraries.

JD suggested September for the next meeting. David Dawson offered Wiltshire Museum as a possible location.

Date of next Meeting: Wednesday 25th September, Devizes Library, 7-8pm.