

NOTES OF THE STONELEIGH HISTORY SOCIETY HELD ON 27 NOVEMBER 2012

Apologies: Anthony Bianco, Shirley Ball, Liz Sykes, June Burr, Pete James

Sheila Woolf welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Matters arising since the last meeting:

Lisa Reay gave a verbal report on her recent visit to the Warwickshire Local History Society meeting about publishing. 70 people had attended, representing numerous organisations. Tim Padfield from National Archive had spoken. Amongst other things, he drew societies' attention to the fact that copyright belonged to the person who had produced any piece of work, not the society to which they belonged. A great deal of material of all types relating to the WW2 years had disappeared. In general discussion there was exchange of information such as putting information on fellow societies' websites, raising money for publications (some argued that such work was a 'community asset' and as such should qualify for funding from public bodies and charities). It was hoped that there could be another similar meeting next year; the audience were asked to submit suggestions for items to be covered.

Sheila referred to the forthcoming visit to the restored chapel at Compton Verney. She was receiving an increasing number of family history queries arising from the SHS section on the village website; answering these queries was proving time-consuming but showed the level of interest in local/family history. Attention was drawn to various publications on the display table - Elizabethan Fayre leaflets, Cordelia Leigh Scrapbook and Diaries, Fliers for Nat Alcock's latest book, and 'Local Aspects of the Great War' by Chris Holland- Sheila's co-author.

David Brooks then gave a fascinating talk about his researches so far in to Land Use in Stoneleigh from Domesday onwards. It was noted that agriculture is an industry with a constant level of uncertainty. Thus the records show crop failures/famine, bubonic plague/dramatic population drop (therefore far fewer workers), cattle plague, the Peasants' Revolt, Enclosures/major social upheaval and reduced labour due to various wars and civil unrest. Estate records show the variety of crops (wheat, barley, beans, turnips, potatoes, hay) as well as varied livestock and birds. However, timber was the most important crop - oak (the main crop), ash, beech, birch, blackthorn, hazel, chestnut, scots pine and sycamore. Oak was grown commercially and provided the timber for many local houses.

Next Meeting:

There will be a **Social Evening** on Tuesday 18 December at 7.30 in Stoneleigh Village Club. A few nibbles will be provided. Membership renewals can be taken on this occasion although there will be another opportunity at the meeting on 26 February when it is hoped that Nora Blagburn will talk about Stoneleigh Close from its beginnings (with photographs provided by Will). Please come along and chat about what you are enjoying (or not!) at SHS meetings.