

**NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STONELEIGH HISTORY SOCIETY HELD ON 24
FEBRUARY 2015 IN STONLEIGH VILLAGE HALL**

Apologies: Sheila Skinner and Jane Taylor

Welcome and Announcements: Sheila Woolf welcomed everyone to the meeting, the first 'official' one of the year although there had been an informal gathering in the Village Club in January which had been so successful that another was scheduled for June 30 as well as at the September meeting so that members could discuss their various IT investigations, especially on family history.

Thanks to Rachel Gill for having organised refreshments at meetings to date. As she was now the President of Stoneleigh WI she could no longer do this but Shirley Ball had kindly offered to organise a rota.

Members were reminded that subscriptions were now due. It would be assumed that anyone not having renewed by the AGM no longer wished to join and would be removed from the mailing list.

Dates for Diaries:

Various Warwick Local History Society meetings were scheduled, details on the noticeboard, including their 50th Anniversary events on 19 September (N.B. Originally invitations for this were restricted to individual rather than affiliate members of the WLHS but since the meeting this had been extended to members of other societies. A note had been sent to all members asking them to contact Sheila if they were interested).

Village events: help would be needed from members to assist on 18 July (Duck Race), 10-13 September (Heritage Weekend and Harvest Festival) and 19 September (Food, Beer and Craft Market).

Arbury Hall visit date had had to be changed to 14 April. Sheila was handling arrangements for this but another member of the Society would be sought to arrange any future visits (see below).

The AGM was scheduled for 31 March. Jan Cooper, the chair of Kenilworth History Society would speak on Cistercians. The terms of office of Committee members did not end this year so there would be no elections until 2016. However, help from members would be required to assist with specific tasks throughout the year.

Henry Parkes celebrations. Work was ongoing for an exhibition about Sir Henry Parkes to be ready for the 27 May meeting and subsequently displayed in the Leigh Chapel. Discussions were in progress with Coventry City Council over arrangements for the birthdate (27 May) and plans were in hand for the plaque unveiling during morning service in Stoneleigh on 5 July, with a reception afterwards. The July event would be by invitations only (apart from members of the congregations and SHS).

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Pete James then gave a fascinating account of the history of the Kenilworth comb-makers. One of his ancestors had moved from Kendal to Kenilworth where it was an important industry in the early part of the 19th century, 1820-1838 being the peak of the industry after which many comb makers moved to Sheffield where improved processes had been developed. Factories were in New Row, Castle End and Albion Row and at one stage there were 140 comb makers in residence. The Worshipful Company of Horners survived to this day but was now primarily involved with polymer manufacture.

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Lisa Reay then outlined the long history of the Worrall Family in Stoneleigh (Chestnut Cottage). Her interest had been sparked when preparing material for the World War one display as five members from the same family had fought and returned home safely. The family had provided many photographs and memorabilia which were on display and several of them were able to attend the meeting.