

MINUTES OF THE AGM OF STONELEIGH HISTORY SOCIETY HELD ON 22 MARCH 2016

Welcome: Sheila Woolf welcomed 34 SHS members who had rejoined, together with two guests.

Apologies: Jane Taylor, Gill Watson and Paul Smith.

Minutes of the 2015 AGM: These were accepted as a correct record.

Matters arising: Sheila reported that there had been no offers of help with activities, including organising visits.

Chairman's Report: Sheila highlighted sections of her full report which had been circulated to members earlier.

- i) Committee elections would be held in 2017. Members were requested to consider assisting the Society in this way.
- ii) Warwickshire Library had contacted Sheila wanting to buy copies of all SHS publications for all their branch libraries.
- iii) Preparing the report had highlighted the fact that the Society had had another very busy year, not least regarding celebrations of Sir Henry Parkes' bicentenary.
- iv) SHS membership now stood at 42 with 5 honorary members.

David Vaughan proposed the acceptance of an excellent report. This was seconded by Anthony Bianco.

Treasurer's Report and Accounts: Lisa Reay presented her report and accounts for the previous year; these had been circulated to members before the meeting. Of particular note was the profit of £634 from the sale in late 2014 of the 2015 Stoneleigh Calendar which had funded Parkes' celebration activities. Successful bids had been made for funds from the Warwickshire Community Forum and an additional display board and a re-conditioned laptop had been obtained as a result. Thanks to Patrick Sawdon for auditing the accounts.

Lisa was thanked for all her work.

Additional announcements:

- i) The April meeting would be held in the Church. The initial findings of the Churchyard Project would be announced and the display launched.
- ii) On 7 May there would be a joint SHS-church concert in aid of the church Fabric Fund.
- iii) This was a concert by 'Immanuel's Ground' which would present a concert of music and words from the time of George 111, as seen through the eyes of some of the then residents of Stoneleigh. Tickets were on sale, £10, from Sheila or the church. SHS members' support for this event were encouraged.
- iv) The 28 June meeting would be a viewing of the Abbey Barn Museum and a talk about old Kenilworth, given by Jan Cooper of the Kenilworth Historical

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Society. More details later. A signup sheet was available at the meeting as numbers were limited.

- v) Given the success of the 2015 calendar, one was being planned for 2017. Members were asked to send suitable photographs to Sheila.
- vi) Copies of questionnaires from Warwickshire Woodlands Trust had been circulated to members recently but no replies had been submitted. Caroline Rann would be available during refreshments in order to elicit members' views.

AOB: Thanks to all those on the refreshments rota, co-ordinated by Shirley Ball.

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Sheila then introduced Amanda Williams from Warwick Records Office who gave a fascinating illustrated talk on '*Crime and Punishment: an overview of the justice system in Warwickshire*'.

The origins of legal systems from Anglo-Saxon times onwards were explained, including the development of different types of court. Warwickshire Assizes was one of the courts outside London and although many records have been lost, several remain - 'Calendars of Prisoners', 'Order Books', 'Numerical Ledgers' and 'Case Documents', and these provide a glimpse of the types of the types of non-criminal (e.g. eavesdropping) as well as criminal cases which were presented to the various courts. Some later prisoners' records have photographs. 'Manorial/parish constables' were responsible for apprehending people and administering punishments which were often public and very humiliating. Transportation was used, with sentencing often being for c7 years but inevitably few people could afford to make their way back from Australia.