

Forest of Dean Local History Society

Annual General Meeting held at The West Dean Centre, Bream on 3rd October 2015

1. Apologies received from Alan Watkins, Chris Parsons, John and Mary Theophilus, Ian and Anne Foulds, Jennifer Lang, Virginia Morgan, David Mullin
2. Minutes of AGM 2014 had been emailed to members recently and hard copies were available at the meeting for those who wished to view them. The minutes were agreed.
3. Matters arising: The Chairman reported that discussions with Dean Archaeology Group re a potential merger were ongoing.
4. Chairman's report, Simon Moore:
The Chairman reported on another full and busy year. He described the diversity of our indoor talks and outdoor visits and the range of other work that committee members had in hand. He thanked all the committee for their hard work throughout the year. He encouraged members to get further involved with the Society, and commended the next New Regard to potential purchasers. Full text at Annex A.
5. Treasurer's report, Cecile Hunt:
 - The Society's accounts have been approved by the Independent Examiner.
 - membership numbers remained steady but for a further year the basic operating costs of the Society (hall hire, speakers' fees, insurance etc) were not being covered by membership subscriptions so an increase was likely to be recommended by the committee next year.
GiftAid claims to HMRC had been delayed and were not included in this year's report, but would be added in the following year.
 - Hall hire costs included rent for premises owned in Lydney by the Sea Cadets which houses the Society's store and library, as well as being a meeting place for the committee and for other events/activities by the Society.

- Expenditure on events and outings were up, due to the cost of the coach trip in June, which was under-subscribed. Lecture fees were down due to the number of Trustees and other speakers this year not requiring fees.
 - The sales of New Regard last year reflected normal trading, although down on the previous year which was an extraordinary one with the Cinderford special edition.
 - The establishment of an e-shop on the website had proved financially very worthwhile with gross sales of £780.
 - The Society was in a healthy position financially and as the committee would like to see more members doing research, they have started to think about how the Society might be able to support this through some means of funding.
6. The Scott Garrett Award for the best talk was presented by Vice-President Ian Pope to Cherry Lewis for her talk on *David Mushet & his Contribution to "The Map That Changed The World"*.
 7. The Cyril Hart Award for the best article in New Regard 29 was awarded to Ben Lennon for his article *The distribution and origin of meends in the Forest of Dean*. Ben had conveyed his appreciation for the award and his apologies for his absence.
 8. Election of Chairman and Treasurer:
The meeting re-elected Simon Moore as Chairman (proposer Liz Berry, seconder Nigel Cross).
The meeting re-elected Cecile Hunt as Treasurer (proposer Chris Sullivan, seconder Dave Berry)
 9. Election of Officers
David Edwards was elected as Secretary and the rest of the committee was re-elected.
 10. Valerie Mitchell was confirmed as Independent Examiner of the Society's accounts.
 11. Any Other Business
 - a. Mary Sullivan informed the meeting about the GLHA Day on 24 October which this year has as its theme: Immigration and Emigration, to, from and within Gloucestershire. The Society's

display will focus on the New Zealand Trust set up by the first Viscount Bledisloe following his term as Governor there in the early 20th century. If anyone had further information to add to what had already been discovered, please let Mary know.

- b. The workshops for the Archaeology project which is part of the Forester's Forest programme have now been set for 24 Oct, 15 Nov and 18 Nov.

12. The AGM was followed by a talk by Cecile Hunt and Averil Kear on "Ironworks in the Forest of Dean".

Chairman's Report

Annex A

This has been another busy year for the Society, we have enjoyed a full and varied programme of talks, visits and excursions. Following last year's AGM we have pondered over the destructive forces of a Tsunami on the Severn, looked at the fascinating Geology that created the Forest of Dean, we have had an insight into the workhouse system in the Forest, lived on the edge, followed the background and consequences of a map that shows a simple geological section through the Forest, explored popular memories and customs, learnt something of Roman Gloucester, the Greyndour Family of Newland, freemining at Hopewell colliery, explored the business of Burials at the Arnos Vale Cemetery, Bristol's floating harbour, the delights of Ruardean, the Gloucester to Hereford Canal, Mitcheldean, Huntley and Kempley Churches, the disgraceful Forest Eyres and finally some recent archaeology by DAG. Thank you to Virginia for putting together another good programme of talks. And there is yet more to come....after this AGM we have a talk by Averil and Cecile on Ironworks in the Forest of Dean.....all for £10!

Your Committee have also been busy, at the beginning of the year Cecile, Sue and Keith did some work with BBC radio Gloucester recording some soundbites about the Forest and WW1; Cecile and Keith have put together a Lottery Bid to get funding to develop further and publish our research into the way that the Forest was affected by WW1; Mary and I have been involved with the Forester's Forest HLF project, for which we, the Local History Society, are a key player in the unearthing and recording the story of the Forest's heritage. Keith Walker was honoured with an award for the quality of our Newsletter which he so admirably edits. Ron Beard has continued to liaise with the Coal Authority over recording the various mine shafts that they open up and made safe; a small group of us are in the process of getting a marker stone erected at New Fancy Colliery, at the site of Shaft no.2. In addition to the project work we have committee members who do sterling work in the background. Sue Gordon-Smith continues to ensure that our publications, especially New Regard, are out there and available, and she now has the help of David Harris who supports our website's e-shop - a really useful facility which is well used, I'm sure

Cecile will be telling about the additional funds it is generating later.
We are now on twitter!

I would like to thank all of the committee and other members who regularly help with the running of and work of the Society. However, I would especially like to thank, on your behalf, a few people especially, firstly Cheryl, with whom most of you will have regular contact, she has been an exceptional Secretary to the Society and has agreed to take over as membership secretary, I would like to welcome David Edwards, and thank him for stepping forward and agreeing to take on the Secretary role.....he will receive lots of help from Cheryl and the rest of the committee. I would like to thank Mary as my Vice Chair for her support and counsel; and I would like to especially thank Cecile, on your behalf, Cecile is truly the 'go-to' person in this organisation for knowledge, advise and help, always willing to get involved and take on the organisation of an event or display. I know that Cecile was disappointed by the take up of places on this year's Coach Trip to Bristol, but she should not be, as for those of us who went it was well planned, well researched and well organised and a very enjoyable day out. Cecile spends a lot of time planning and organising these events, so I would firstly like to thank her for the commitment she shows and secondly urge you all to go on them, they are always informative and well planned.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this is your society, over the 67 years since its formation it has grown from strength to strength, so a Thank you to you, for your continuing to support its work; and please consider carefully what you can do to help, we are always looking for members to stand on the committee, carry out research, write articles for the newsletter and New Regard, and help with producing and manning displays and events.

Finally, I am delighted to inform you that this year's edition of the New Regard is available, and hope that you enjoy this year's selection of articles. The cover price has been increased to £8, but the member's price has been held - again - at £6, making this a true benefit of membership. I would like to thank Ian Standing, David Harris and all those involved in this publication; the New Regard continues to be a widely respected publication, so thank you to all those who contribute to it.