

KLHS CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR AGM 9/11/17

Once again it is time for my Chairman's report after an interesting and productive year where busy people have stepped forward to support the Society and to keep it going into 2017/18. Viv, as our President, is invaluable with his knowledge of Kingston past and present. Alan Coleman-Smith is our Treasurer, Website Manager and Membership Secretary while Rae Musk has stepped into the roll of Secretary; Ann resigned at the beginning of the year. Carol Beard has taken on the Archives and Margaret Kelly is helping me with the Events programme. I think it is fair to say that with this support and dedication that we will be able to keep going for another year, but we do need more help in all areas, especially with the Archives; Michael Jarvis is only able to give limited support owing to work commitment. Through our website, restored by Alan, to include links with KEG and the Village website, we get enquiries from people in search of their long lost relatives. We have decided that our present stock of publications need replenishing and updating thus we hope to be getting them produced locally.

Unfortunately membership numbers are down so please encourage your friends and neighbours to support your local society otherwise we will be forced to put the Society into "cold storage" once again. I'm prepared to carry on as you Chairman until somebody steps forward to take over from me but I hope it won't be too long before that happens.

"Preserving Kingston's Past" is an exciting project and there is so much more to do. It would be a shame if it didn't continue as we have a whole load of equipment which needs to be used before it becomes out of date.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

At our AGM last year members were welcomed to the meeting with a glass or two of wine and light refreshments, this was followed by a fascinating talk by Brian Alloway entitled "Our Daily Lead" covering the abuse & health effects of lead poisoning going back to the Egyptian era and beyond. In November we visited Lady Astor's House, overlooking Plymouth Hoe, where we were greeted by a member of the household who escorted us around the building with its amazing portraits & memorabilia of the first woman member of Parliament; we were even treated to morning refreshments! Our Christmas Social was held at The Dolphin where Craig and his team did us proud with an extensive menu of festive fare with crackers and all the trimmings. In January the ever popular Roger Barrett returned to give an illustrated talk and film made of the Salcombe Lifeboat Disaster. Our next fascinating talk was given by Tom Greeves, an Historian from Tavistock; here we learnt about the Three Hares legend and Tom transported us back beyond the so called "Tinnars legend" into China and the far East for its origins. Devon has the largest number of Pubs in England with the Three Hares sign! Then in March Jeanne Curtis had a magnificent display of different kinds of lace on show for us to behold. We heard about the origins of lace making and how much it had contributed to fashion down the ages. Our next event was a trip to Totnes Museum where we were given an introductory talk by the Curator before looking around this amazing Elizabethan Merchant's house with its many rooms full of exhibitions and displays. One of the most interesting rooms was the exhibition dedicated to Charles Babbage, the grandfather of modern day computers; we then went for lunch at the Steam Packet overlooking the River Dart. In May Rae invited a member of the NHS first responder team to come and talk to us about the history of the Ambulance Service in Devon, an extremely interesting and informative talk. Finally, Graham Phillips President of the Hope Cove Lifeboat, talked at length about how many fishermen had been saved in Bigbury Bay over the years by the crew also how the lifeboat had ended up becoming independent of the RNLI with massive support by local people and Holiday makers. Then Viv gave him a donation from the many quizzes he had organised in The Dolphin in support of the organisation.

Thank you for suggestions you have made for speakers and visits last year. Please continue to do so and to support our events programme which we hope you will find varied and interesting.

Jennie Stanley

