

## KINGSTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY NEWS FOR MAY 2015

Once again the History Society was entertained by a member of the Freeman family at our meeting in Kingston Reading Room on Thursday, March 25th when Merv Freeman came to talk to a packed audience about the history of the Kingston Fire Station. Our small rural village has had a fire brigade since 1949 when a parish councillor, Bill Royle felt that he should be able to do something in the 20 minutes it took for the closest fire appliance to arrive so he approached the Chief Fire Officer, through the parish council, with his request to use the fire hydrants to tackle any outbreak, eventually this led to the Chief agreeing to equip & train fire fighters in the village. Merv illustrated his talk with amusing anecdotes, photos & Newspaper cuttings from his extensive archives also showing pictures of several thatch roof fires; gorse fires on Dartmoor; a blaze at a local beach complex & a car which had gone through a bedroom window in Bigbury. Over the years the Brigade received more suitable engines lovingly cared for by a dedicated group of Kingston firemen until in 1998 a Mercedes 4X4 vehicle was obtained, which only just fitted into their converted station, & this is the engine used to the present day. Kingston firemen continue to train every Tuesday evening but sadly, Merv, like his father Viv before him, has now retired after many years of voluntary service. There was an interesting photographic display including past & present fire crew; Kingston Fire Brigade celebrating its 60th birthday; a collage of photos; an old Christmas card & the very interesting Log Book. The evening concluded with questions from the audience & refreshments provided by the committee. Our outings this year, will be a visit to The Cookworthy Museum on Thursday, April 23rd 2pm, £1.50 pp entry (or £2.50 pp if you wish to have tea & cakes) the second will be a trip to Lady Astor's House in Plymouth on Thursday, May 28th 2pm, £5.25pp booking essential with *Margaret Cocks*, The Limes or Tel: 01548 810765. After our summer break the next meeting will be the AGM on October 22nd at 8pm in the Reading Room when there will be a chance for you to elect new/old members of the committee. All details of our programme are on our website [kingstonlocalhistory.co.uk](http://kingstonlocalhistory.co.uk) or Kingston Parish website [kingstonparishcouncil.co.uk](http://kingstonparishcouncil.co.uk) A list of our Publications can be obtained from *Joyce Masters* 01548 810340 :-[jayceem@talktalk.net](mailto:jayceem@talktalk.net) for any other information about the Society please contact Chairman *Jennie Stanley* 01548 810819 or [stanz@stanz.plus.com](mailto:stanz@stanz.plus.com)