

## Bidford & District History Society

### Chairman's Report: 2015/16

18<sup>th</sup> November 2016

2015/16 was our 10<sup>th</sup> year following the Society's launch in September 2006. It is very gratifying to report that our membership has, throughout those 10 years, been over 90 every year and in most years over 100. We remain the largest group in the village and in 2015/16 we reached a membership of 126. We are already approaching 100 for the current year and, if previous years are anything to go by, should add to that number during the remainder of the programme.

Whilst she has already been thanked at the start of this programme year, it would be remiss of me not to give special recognition in this report to Wendy Shaddick without whom there would quite simply be no Bidford and District History Society. It was her brainchild which brought the society into being and her enthusiasm and membership on the committee over the past 10 years have been a source of guidance, experience and wisdom which will be sorely missed. However, Wendy will continue remain active as she has just taken up Chairmanship of our Research Group.

Nonetheless, our continued success is also in no small way the result of a hard working committee whose tireless work and enthusiasm has ensured that we do not rest on our laurels and I would like to thank all those who have been committee members over the past 10 years for their valuable contributions which have ensured our continuing success.

This year's programme is, as we always try to have, a varied assortment of topics ranging from the Zulu War last month to tonight's subject of Bess of Hardwick in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. During 2016 we have commemorated both the Easter Rising with Bob Marshall's talk and the centenary of the Battle of the Somme in the summer when Dr Spencer Jones talked us through this tragic event. Hugh Davies explained the intricacies of the Enigma Code and how it was broken and this was followed by a fascinating visit to Bletchley Park in July. Perhaps the most unusual evening of the last programme was Stewart Wardrop's talk on Pigeons in War illustrated with some live racing pigeons!

We have continued to be active on the publishing front as we printed and distributed over 2,000 leaflets detailing a History Trail around Bidford. Some

villagers were kind enough to contact us to say how much they had enjoyed using it and the B & Bs tell us that it is very popular with their guests. The Research Group continues to thrive and is working on several projects, including Roger Leese's fascinating work on evacuees in Bidford during World War II. The next big publication will be Bob Marshall's sequel to 'We Will Remember Them' which is about the World War I soldiers from Bidford who survived. Their stories are also fascinating and Bob has continued to find a surprising number of soldiers from the village who did return home as well as some more names which should be added to the village's War Memorial! The Research Group is open to anyone who would like to be involved in historical research. Please speak to the Chairman, Wendy, or myself if you want to explore how you could be involved.

On the subject of research, we should also give recognition to another stalwart of the Society who has just stepped down from being the inaugural Chairman of the Research Group for its first 7 or so years, namely, Roger Leese. Roger was the driving force behind the Society's move from being an organisation which hosted talks to one which now captures the area's history in research and written work. Indeed, its first book, '*Yesterday's Children*,' owes much to his impetus and enthusiasm as he took a fledgling team through its first publication. Fortunately, Roger has agreed to remain part of the Research Group to provide valuable continuity and experience.

I am very grateful to the present committee for the work they are doing and would like to thank Mary Alexander-Head, our new Treasurer, and Jenny Ganderton, our new Membership Secretary, for joining us. However, at the end of this programme year, we will sadly be saying goodbye to Judy Smith, our indefatigable Secretary, and to Bob Marshall, who co-shares the hospitality and trip organisation with Helen Smith. Suitable recognition will be given to them in due course but, meanwhile, I would appeal for anyone who is interested in joining the committee to ensure the Society's success continuing into its second decade to speak to me or any member of the committee. To paraphrase the words of Lord Kitchener: "Your Society needs You!"

In conclusion, I would also like to thank all of you for your loyal support over the years. I hope you continue to support us and enjoy the programmes which we have to offer.

Mark Shaddick

# BIDFORD-ON-AVON & DISTRICT HISTORY SOCIETY

## INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2015 – 2016 (TO: 31/08/16)

		<u>2014/15</u>
	£	£
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>		
SUBSCRIPTIONS & VISITORS	2062.70	1774.50
SUMMER TRIP	1081.00	1325.00
OTHER (BANK INTEREST, BOOK SALES, etc)	18.05	280.05
SUB-TOTAL	<u>3161.75</u>	<u>3379.55</u>
<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		
SPEAKERS & SPEAKERS' EXPENSES	454.10	589.85
HALL HIRE	192.50	259.00
DRINK & FOOD COSTS	53.75	27.30
SUMMER TRIP	915.00	1316.50
DONATIONS	100.00	250.00
OTHER:		
LAPTOP	407.99	0.00
2016/17 PUBLICITY LEAFLET	260.00	245.00
WEBSITE & DOMAIN RENEWAL	238.80	253.19
OTHER	230.34	431.24
SUB-TOTAL	<u>2852.48</u>	<u>3372.08</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	<u>309.27</u>	<u>7.47</u>

## **Income**

**I hope you will see this financial summary as an indication of our continuing success as a group of people interested in history.**

**Our main income each year is member subscriptions. This supports the main running costs of the society. Last year membership increased from 110 to 126 people. This can be seen in the increase in the income figure at the top of your sheet. This figure includes casual visitors and we continue to encourage visitors to join our society.**

**Given the importance of this income stream I am pleased that so many of you (91) took advantage of the option to renew your membership at a discount during the summer.**

**There is also an item for the enjoyable outing to Bletchley Park last summer and we were able to stay well within the budget.**

## **Expenditure**

**The cost of the 10 talks during last year is represented by the cost of speakers, the hire of the hall and refreshments. Two speakers waived their fee and the donations they requested we make on their behalf are shown further down the column.**

**Over the years we have purchased items of equipment needed to effectively support the talks. This year we added a laptop to have greater confidence that equipment will work effectively.**

**Those of you who look at the website regularly may note that there is more local history information appearing on it. So we are getting more value from website. We have feedback that this is an important source of finding new members.**

**There is then a figure that captures 'other' items and this includes our insurance and membership of the Warwickshire Local History Society.**

**At the end of last year we had a surplus of just over £300. This provides us with a financial cushion going into the current year, although looking forward into 2016 - 2017 it appears our income will cover our costs.**

## **Reserves**

**Our reserves total just over £11,500. This represents the net proceeds from the sale of two books and our savings account. Members will know of the plans to publish a book about the survivors of WW1 and these reserves will be used to fund the cost of that publication.**