

## Libbett's well

We are grateful to Dr Christine Bennetts of Church Street for letting us know that



Libbett's Well, which is on Chris's land at the rear of her house, ran totally dry a month or so ago. The impact was also seen a few doors away, which also has the stream running through the back garden. No-one can recall this happening before. Chris reported the incident to various authorities, including the Environment Agency who took a keen interest in it. We also expressed our concern to the authorities. Discussions have been had and a number of likely causes are being investigated.

## Sandford Group visit Fursdon House

Jim King

Ten members and friends of the Sandford Heritage Group enjoyed a sunny afternoon at Fursdon House on 13 July. They were welcomed by David and Catriona Fursdon and given a conducted tour of the house, after which, they were able to walk around the gardens and take in the stunning views of the Exe valley. The afternoon concluded with a cream tea. The visit was organised by Richard and Renate Johnson.



## Chairman's chat

This will be my final contribution to our newsletter as your chairman, a post from which I will be standing down at the AGM. We have come a long way since we came into existence in 1984 with the aim of providing Crediton with a museum. Thirty years on we have a flourishing society, a museum, a research facility and an archive, together with a supportive membership managed by a hardworking committee. We hope to provide you, the members, and the wider community, with an appreciation of our past and a look forward to the future. Today's events are tomorrow's history and it is important that this is not forgotten. This is **your** society so, if you have topics you would like explored or discussed, or you would like to contribute in any way, please let us know. Circulated with the AGM papers is a list of tasks to be completed, several of which can be carried out by members not on the committee but all of which are necessary if we are to continue to operate at our present comprehensive level.

Thank you all for your support.

George J. Palin  
Society Chairman.

## Our Corporate Friends

Please don't forget to support the local firms whose logos appear in our literature - see below. Without them we would not have a museum. Our income is insufficient to cover the expenses.

Crediton Museum & Heritage Centre



Supported by:



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# Crediton Area History & Museum Society



Members and Friends Newsletter

August 2014

## Family History fun!

David Nation

One Saturday morning stint at the museum produced several interesting cases. One man wanted to find out more about his father's Worl War 1 record. We traced a fair bit about the family that the customer hadn't been aware of and then discovered a photo of his war medals that had been sold at auction last year for £2,200! He had been a founder member of the tank regiment, a contemporary of Lawrence of Arabia and awarded the BEM.

A woman from Newton St Cyres had paid for some time on Ancestry and got stuck. Reluctant to take out a subscription, she came to us. We found the missing link and she left re-enthused. Her grandfather had been a local police constable in North Devon.



Another local man learned much more about his family in an hour and was so pleased he booked in another session to continue the work.

## AGM

Members will find enclosed with this newsletter the papers for our AGM on **Monday 8th September** at the Boniface Centre. Please do your best to attend and hear about the progress we are making and our plans for the future!

## South Zeal guided walk

George Palin

We enjoyed a very informative visit to the 'village' of South Zeal, near Okehampton in May.



There has been a settlement at South Zeal since before Roman times, but in the mid-thirteenth century the site was designated a 'New Town', one of many established to take account of increasing population. The town's site was important, as it was on the main road through Devon to Cornwall. The new towns provided not only accommodation but facilities for trade. The properties were on burgage plots and resident craftsmen or tradesmen paid a rent for the right to live and work there. Others were tied to the land as serfs working for the local lord of the Manor. Some of these "new towns" survived and flourished but South Zeal did not. Today it is very much a community whose residents work away. But it still retains the original layout from the mid thirteenth century including the burgage plots on which the properties are situated.

After this splendid guide by their local history groups we retired to the Oxenham Arms (see photo) for refreshments and the landlord showed us around the mediaeval building. A large granite pillar in one of the lower rooms is a feature reputed to be many thousands of years old. If you hold your hand away from it you can feel heat being emitted from the stone. A fascinating building with a long and colourful history.

My thanks, as usual, to Judy Tucker for arranging the visit.



## Silk Embroidered Postcards

Sandra Cooper

In our current exhibition "Echoes of the Great War" there are a number of examples of silk postcards which were bought as souvenirs by soldiers serving on the Western Front, two of which are shown here. They were hugely popular and it is estimated some 10 million of these postcards were made.

Novelty postcards crafted from card and silk first appeared around 1898, originating from France and Switzerland. Prior to the war convents around Belgium and northern France were used to embroidering church vestments and articles for sale to visitors. With the demand from soldiers for souvenirs the nuns organised refugee workers and local women to embroider these attractive but affordable items.

Identical designs were embroidered with coloured silk onto a starched strip of silk organza. Once embroidered they were sent to finishing factories for mass cutting and mounting onto cards. An embossed frame was secured over the top of each card and then trimmed.



They became very popular with soldiers billeted in foreign towns and sent home to convey their strong feelings of love, patriotism and for special occasions. There were three main design groups: sentimental, patriotic, and military. The cards may have had a panel design, sometimes with a ribbon attached; a pocket design with a card or silk hanky inserted; or a panel design with photos of notable persons amongst flags.



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

All commencing 7.30 pm, at the Boniface Centre, unless otherwise shown.

**Thursday 28 August**, Sandford Heritage Group meeting, Dowrich House.

**Sunday 7 September** (2pm-5pm) Dowrich Mill Open Day in aid of St Swithun's Church Path Funds.

**Monday 8 September (7pm)** AGM and 'CAHMS - the next 30 years'.

**Thursday 18 September** - 'World War 1 impact on Newton St Cyres' - Roger and Jean Wilkins. Parish Hall, Newton St Cyres.

**Monday 22 September** 'Wartime Food; Changes and Influences' - Dr Paul Cleave. Bow Village Hall

**Monday 6 October** 'From Crediton to Charlemagne' (Boniface Link Association) - Dr Levi Roach, Margaret Harris and Judi Binks.

**Sunday 12 October (2-4pm)** 'Old Views of Crediton' (largely taken from the Charles Luxton collection). Donations to Church Roof Fund.

**Monday 13 October** 'General Buller's Other Campaigns' - Michael Pentreath

**Thursday 16 October** 'The history of Eastholme' - Peter Kaye, Parish Hall, Newton St Cyres.

**Saturday 25 October** Social Evening - Bow History Group (contact Geoff on 82383 for details)

**Saturday 25 October** - 'Devon's 50 Best Churches' - Dr Todd Gray. Admission £6 (in aid of Church Roof Fund).

**Monday 27 October** 'Geology' - Dr Richard Scrivenor, former District Geologist. Admission £6 (in aid of Church Roof Fund).

**Monday 10 November** 'Impact of WW1 on Farming and Women in Devon' - Judi Binks

**Thursday 13 November** 'The Monmouth rebellion' - Roger Mortimer. Parish Hall, Newton St Cyres.

**Monday 24 November** - Bow History Group AGM, Bow Village Hall.

**Monday 8 December** 30<sup>th</sup> Birthday & Christmas Party (details will be in the museum or contact Sandra Cooper, 776502)

**Monday 12 January** 'History of the Ownership and Governance of Crediton Parish Church' - Robin Langhorne

## Downes archive

Each week a group of members is working on our archive at Downes (in the museum over the cold winter months!) to better organise the storage and cataloguing of our collection. Apart from the practical benefits of this in that it helps researchers and others to locate relevant material, our helpers find learning more about what we hold quite fascinating. If you can spare a few hours most weeks to help, please let us know because this is a huge job!

## 'Echoes of the Great War'

- Newton St Cyres display now in place

Since we opened in April, the **Parish Corner** visual display has featured Shobrooke material, mostly prepared by Len Darling. Now Jean Wilkins has made available another splendid display, this time featuring the experiences of the people of Newton St. Cyres during World War One.



## Sandford School initiative

Sandford Heritage Group have done a useful piece of work with children from Sandford School. Richard Johnson and Jim King taking a group of children on a Heritage Tour of Sandford Village, describing how it would have been 100 years ago (picture below).

This sort of work is so important and we are pleased that several local primary schools are visiting our 'Echoes of the Great War' exhibition at the museum.

## Town Trail leaflet

In connection with the 2009 Cathedral celebrations, Bill Jerman and others produced an excellent leaflet with a walking tour of the town. The history of the town features strongly so we stock it at the museum. Recently we discovered that there are none left so we have spent some time redrafting it. We are hopeful that a grant from our County Councillors will cover the cost of printing and the new edition will be out soon.

## Richard Stephens' 'yomp' to the Great War cemeteries

Richard Stephens, assistant organist at Crediton Parish Church, is 'yomping' his way to Ypres, Belgium, in aid of the church roof appeal. He is visiting war graves and laying poppies on the graves of local soldiers. Richard was involved in the planning of our 'Echoes of the Great War' exhibition and a sponsorship form is in the museum and will be at our AGM.

Please contribute as generously as you can to help maintain the fabric of our great church.

