

NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STONELEIGH HISTORY SOCIETY HELD ON 27 FEBRUARY 2018

Present: members of the SHS and guests

Apologies: Shirley Ball, June Burr, Terence McKee, Peter Thompson, Avril Newey, Ken Wallis

Welcome: Sheila Woolf welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for braving such inclement weather. There were several announcements:

1. Heritage Lottery funding had been sought by Dr Maureen Harris (through the Friends of Warwickshire County Record Office, the Dugdale Society and Warwick County Record Office) to transcribe a series of parliamentary accounts of losses sustained in the county during the Civil War, 1642-46. Intensive training will be given. Volunteers are needed for about 15 Saturdays over the next 12-18 months, probably starting in May. Information available from Dr Harris on 02476 543814 or email: meh@maureeneharris.co.uk. **Information sheet below**
2. Members were asked to pay for their tickets for the visit to Merevale Hall on 24 April. A condition of booking turned out that public liability insurance was required for every group that visited so this had been obtained through BALHS (British Association of Local History Societies).
3. Thanks to changes to data protection legislation, all organisations are required to obtain the written permission of their members to share data by email, phone or post. We had copied the form used by Warwick Local History Society and members were asked to collect a form from Lisa and return them by the end of the meeting. Copies would also be sent out to members with notes from the meeting. The SHS membership form would be adapted to incorporate this permission.
4. The AGM would be held on March 27th. A reminder and papers would be sent out nearer the time. The talk would be by Professor Beat Kumin on "Parish Life in pre-modern England"

Talk - The widespread impact of researches by SHS members

The original plan had been to talk about a Mourning Brooch but the preparation of this led to reflections on the ways in which SHS had built up a body of research since it was formed in 2011. Although SHS is not exclusively a family history society many enquiries are received from people wanting to know more about their family connections with Stoneleigh. Most such requests come to the SHS website and to the ancestry website that Lisa set up. Usually we received profuse thanks, and we have had occasional donations too (notably the Mourning Brooch – see later).

We have been able to tie together various strands of local history research undertaken by different SHS members and have begun to create a picture of this community as it used to exist. For example, in **only** the first **few** months since our inception **in 2011** Shirley Ball **had** shared her father's diaries, Pam created a huge database of the censuses between 1841 and 1911, Lisa began a history of the Birmingham Road houses and Philip started his research on the residents of the almshouses. We had bought a CD of the parish registers, which includes the 1985 monumental inscriptions and Lisa was already considering photographing and documenting all the graves. Roger Gilbert was helping to increase our knowledge of Sir Henry Parkes and the history of village properties, and Eileen Burman

was sharing her story of the Stoneleigh stitchers. Anthony was looking at old maps of the area and the estate and Sheila has just received permission to write about Cordelia Leigh. And we were already thinking about creating the first of several exhibitions – on the blacksmiths of the village.

Much more has been achieved in subsequent years and visitors are frequently astonished when they discover what resources are available to them, resources that are the result of a lot of hard work! It is this hard work, and the sources identified, that are now being used to assist others.

Sheila then gave some details of some queries received, and the many materials produced by or discovered by SHS members. Answering these queries takes a lot of time but there is considerable satisfaction in being able to draw on our research and realising how much of it is inter-connected.

Family examples given in detail were Mayo Family, Adcock, Prime, Palfrey, and Burbury. **Any member wanting to know more about these should contact Sheila.**

Finally - Sarah Goode. A query had been received from a lady in Surrey about Sarah Goode's children. Using various resources, Sheila had been able to discover a great deal of information as a result of which the enquirer had been able to trace the line from one of Sarah's sons to her father's second wife. By way of thanks she donated Sarah Goode's Mourning Brooch to the SHS – 'It belongs where Sarah lived and died. I am not a blood relation and it is time to find a home for it'.

This brooch proved to be extremely valuable and has been insured. Sylvesters' valuer commented that 'it is the best specimen of its kind she has ever seen'. The question of what happens to it next remains to be decided – the Warwick Museum have declined it as a permanent loan **but suggested we contribute a page to their Our Warwickshire website.**

Sheila's fascinating talk was received enthusiastically, and many questions were asked.

Huge thanks to her for putting together the talk for our benefit – and for those SHS members who had undertaken the research which made it possible to answer so many queries in such detail.

Thanks also to Maggie Moorhouse and Margaret Wallis for the refreshments.

MSW/2/3/18

PROJECT DESCRIPTION FOR RECRUITMENT

More soldiers and civilians were killed through war, famine and disease during the English Civil Wars (1642-1651) than in the First World War in proportion to the population (3.6% against about 2%) and in arguably more traumatic circumstances, yet the impact of the Civil Wars has received little attention. This project seeks to reclaim the hidden heritage of ordinary people in the parishes of the war-torn 'frontier' county of Warwickshire by engaging volunteers in the transcription and interpretation of an important set of documents which cover nearly 75% of the 'old' county's 'constabularies' (roughly, the parish). The 'Loss Accounts' (1646/7) record losses by the parish and named individuals, in money and goods given to the Parliamentarian army through onerous taxation, loans, free quarter [board and lodging] and plunder as its troops continually marched through the county. They are an invaluable source for exploring how people

made sense of this "war without an enemy" and how they suffered through the impact of continuous warfare.

The Project Manager, Dr Maureen Harris, has been working for the past year with the Dugdale Society, the 'Friends of Warwickshire County Record Office' and staff at WCRO, to set up the project with Heritage Lottery funding to train volunteers from several heritage, parish and civic societies, universities and U3A groups etc across Warwickshire to transcribe their local 'Accounts' which she will edit. They will eventually be formatted on a publicly searchable WCRO website with an accompanying Dugdale Society printed volume for which she will provide a detailed interpretative chapter, calendar of all the 'Accounts' and a detailed index of people and places.

There is an opportunity for 1 or 2 volunteers from societies for which 'Loss Accounts' survive and who fulfil the following criteria to take part. They should have:

- **the ability to receive and send information digitally to the Project Manager**
- **no, or little, previous experience of visiting record offices**
- **no, or little, previous experience of using original records**
- **no, or little, previous experience of reading C17th handwriting**
- **a strong desire to learn more about the impact of the Civil Wars on ordinary people and in localities close to where they live**
- **time to spend attending training workshops and working on the 'Accounts' at home**

The volunteers will be trained in seventeenth-century palaeography and supported personal transcription and interpretation of the 'Accounts' at home for their own or adjacent parishes and asked to work with small 'buddy' groups from their 'home' institutions so their knowledge can be shared with others. The volunteers will be given the opportunity to put the 'Loss Accounts' into context by means of approximately monthly supportive meetings starting in May 2018 and continuing for 12 to 18 months, consisting of workshops, lectures, visits to record offices and centres for civil war study, discussion and the provision of much background material in the form of document copies and transcriptions. They will also be encouraged to use other archive sources at record offices to discover more about the people and places mentioned in their 'Accounts' and to share their knowledge with their 'home' institutions. At the end of the project, and after training in presentation, they will assist with the production of displays of what they have learned for the general public at local libraries/schools and at a public 'launch'.

The Project Manager will be assisted by 4 or 5 members of the 'Friends of the Warwickshire County Record Office' who have skills to help volunteers with some aspects of the training, particularly using original records to research the named individuals in the 'Loss Accounts', but who themselves want to transcribe some of the 'Accounts' and learn more about the impact of the civil wars on ordinary people in Warwickshire.

If you would like the opportunity to be involved as a main volunteer, please contact Maureen Harris on email: meh@maureeneharris.co.uk or phone 02476 543814 for more information