

EASTON ROYAL HERITAGE GROUP
Chairman's Report : April 2018

Our eleventh year of existence was again a busy one and we started the year with 36 members.

At our AGM in April we were entertained by Richard Giles with his entertaining talk about Pewsey during the austerity of the 1940s and 50s. Richard is a great supporter of our Group and the Pewsey Heritage Centre. Luckily for us, he is constantly working on his next presentation and hopefully his fund of local knowledge will continue.

Our display of heritage archive materials over the weekend of 29th/30th April was a great success. We had a great many visitors who enjoyed browsing the displays and also eating the delicious cakes kindly provided by our members. I went on BBC Wiltshire with a live interview to publicise the event and we also had an article about us in the Wiltshire Gazette complete with photo. I think most people who came were amazed by both the quantity and quality of our archives and hopefully found out things about the village they did not know before. We will probably repeat this event every few years.

We were lucky to choose one of the hottest days of the year – 21st June – for our stroll through the Savernake Forest with Roger Day explaining how it was occupied by troops handling munition stores during the last war.

Our next event was also on a lovely day – Beating the Bounds on August Bank Holiday. Some 24 walkers ended up at the Bruce Arms for a well earned light lunch and a few drinks.

In October we welcomed Terry Bracher from the Wiltshire History Centre who recounted many stories during his talk entitled 'Horrible and Unusual Wiltshire History'.

In December during our seasonal get together with mulled wine and mince pies, we welcomed Sonny Hamid who gave us a very interesting and fact filled talk about the colourful history of London's Brick Lane.

In February our friend Richard Giles returned with an extensive tour of the times when most villages in the Pewsey Vale had their own school many of which closed and are now private houses. We are very lucky that our own village school has managed to survive many ups and downs to become the thriving school it is today.

I hope you will have had a chance to read the village history now in place on the wall of Easton House.

So now for future events.

We have added an extra meeting to our programme on 23rd May when we will welcome Bill Nimmo Scott to tell us a little about life on submarines.

Our annual trip will this year be to Wulfhall Manor at Burbage when historian Graham Bathe will be taking us round what remains of the Tudor mansion – made famous by Hilary Mantel as the home of Jane Seymour, There will be a small charge for this evening which will be split between costs of the archeological survey being carried out and also restoration of a historic wildflower garden in the grounds.

Then on August Bank Holiday Monday you will have chance to clear out your attics and join us at a Car Boot Sale on the Recreation Ground. Proceeds from the day will be donated to the Prospect Hospice and Heritage Group.

Thanks to all of you who have suggested speakers and events, please keep the ideas coming.

A big thank-you to the Committee – Ian, Carole, Ray, Paul and Maggie – for all their hard work during the year.

Finally, of course our grateful thanks to all of you for continuing to support us – as I always say, it would be pointless without you.

Many thanks.