



# NEWSLETTER

2014, Issue 2

April 2014

**Welcome to New Members**

Mr K Strugnell

Mrs I Goring

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**Chairman's Notes**

The exceptional floods that have affected much of the Borough since Christmas are now receding, although the spring in Ewell village that has taken over half of the road by the Dog gate is still there. This very high level of water in Bourne Hall lake has occasioned many to remark they've never seen it so high. However, this is the lowest point in Ewell where the springs feed the start of the Hogsmill.



One such spring which is historically associated with a property in Spring Street, known variously as Catswell or Katewell, is running water under the sham bridge, something I've never seen before but at the end of the arch, under the drive, there is a pipe leading in the direction of Spring House so presumably it has happened before. Extremes of weather conditions are not new, I recall the drying out of Bourne Hall lake in 1992 when pundits then said "you'll never see water in the lake again"!

**Lecture Diary**

- May 7th Egyptian Archaeology by Ann Musgrove
- June 4th Coombe Conduit House, Kingston by David Kennedy
- July 2nd Memorial Landscapes in Archaeology—Stonehenge & the WW1 battlefields by Scott McCracken
- August 6th Member's evening

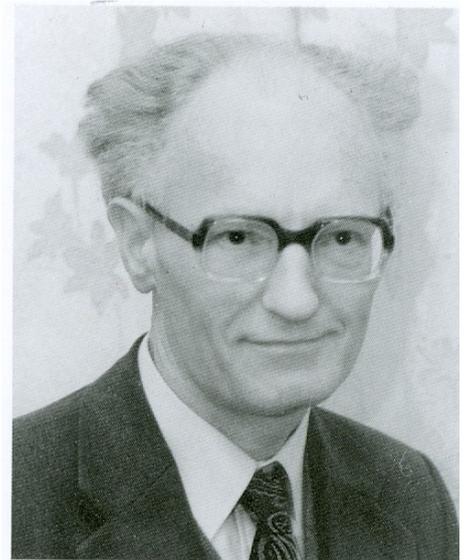
Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at St. Mary's Church Hall, London Road, Ewell KT17 2BB

Doors open 7.45 for 8pm start. Members free, visitors £4, includes refreshments

## Charles Abdy - Obituary

compiled by **Jeremy Harte**

We are sorry to record the death, on 11<sup>th</sup> January, of Charles Abdy, for many years a mainstay of this Society. Charles was born in 1925 in Essex, and worked as a chartered Electrical Engineer. He became a designer of transformers and other high-voltage equipment, winning the Butcher Memorial Award of the British Standards Society with a paper on International Standardisation. Charles married Barbara in 1956, and they moved to Ewell in 1982.



When Charles joined the Nonsuch Antiquarian Society, as it was then, he soon became projectionist at the monthly meetings. It was not long before he decided that he would like to participate by writing and giving talks. Over the next 25 years he wrote local histories including *A History of Ewell*, *Ewell Past* and *Epsom Past*, and went on to publish nineteen booklets with the Society. These covered topics from the lost village of Cuddington to the Pre-Raphaelite artists, with stories of such local heroes and villains as vicars and tax collectors. All were meticulously researched and recorded, as you would expect from an engineer. In his study of *The Glyns of Ewell*, and his gazetteer of Romano-British sites in the village, Charles created monographs which have been indispensable to researchers ever since. Between 1987 and 2012 he gave more than 30 illustrated talks covering every aspect of Surrey history and drawing on his holidays abroad. His enthusiasm was unbounded and he shared what he enjoyed with other people.

In his zeal to take the perfect photograph, he set out every weekend to discover the churches, gardens, mills and villages of Surrey. Barbara says that in every area he had a determination to find a tower and then go up it. Among the first that they climbed was the tower of Old St. Mary's – a dangerous business, as the steps were slippery with pigeon droppings and dead birds. In one of his endeavours to get interesting shots, Charles decided that he and Barbara should go up in a hot air balloon. It took off from Elstead Mill, and at first all went well – the trip was exhilarating and they managed to get good shots of the River Wey and the Hogs Back. It was the landing which ended ignominiously. The basket turned upside down in a field of cows and as they crawled out, they were confronted by a farmer with a gun. They made it in record time to the Land Rover which had been sent to rescue them.

Charles was Secretary of the Society for more than ten years, and edited the newsletter from 1995 onwards. He contributed a stream of notes on historical matters from medicinal wells to markets as they came to his attention; Charles was above all a communicator, and wanted other people to share his enthusiasm for the things that he had found. In 1996 he organised a concert of the long-forgotten music of Margaret Glyn, just so that we could hear what it sounded like. The concert, held at St. Mary's, was a great success – a source of pride to Charles, who was also a regular worshipper at the church.

Following an accident in 2003, Charles endured many years of ill-health, but still kept up his work for the Society. Even when he was too ill to get around, Charles was still using his photographic skills to study the trees of St. Mary's churchyard. When he couldn't sleep at night, he would turn on the television and watched reruns of his favourite character, James Bond. One of his final newsletter contributions was a tongue-in-cheek appreciation of James Bond, Archaeologist.

## January Meeting – Archaeology in Malta: Mainly Prehistory – Richard Watson

Geologically Malta is part of Africa, but with water locked up in the ice, sea levels were low in the Ice Age and access from the north, from Sicily was easy. A visit to the cave at Ghar Dalam, thoroughly excavated between 1892 and 1938 shows this. The lower levels are filled with the bones of invading animals, pygmy hippopotamuses being a feature. In the top level are the bones of domestic animals indicating the presence of Neolithic man who also came from Sicily. Very soon, culturally, these people moved away from their Sicilian roots. About 4,100 BC they evolved the hypogeum burial system, basically underground buildings, dwelling places for the dead. The most significant can be seen at Hal-Saflieni near Tarxien. Inside it there are spiral designs in red ochre imported from Sicily (no bodies found) and a corbelled roof, significance of this later. The hypogeum is huge and was created by stone tools and antler picks.

Between 3,500 and 2,500 BC the people created the other significant building style, large free-standing temple structures, which may be the oldest in the world. The basic Maltese temple has an entrance created by large uprights and a substantial lintel, and along the frontage, stone benches most likely used for people to sit on, waiting for whatever was to come. Going through the entrance you find side chambers, apsidal in design, and the more sophisticated the temple, the more there are. Main sites are Hagar Qim and nearby Mnajdra, Tarxien and Ggantija on Gozo. There are about 30 temple sites in various conditions, and they evolved locally, with no influence from any other place.

Some of the details of these temples include spiral designs, and there are holes around entrances that imply the presence of doors, screens or barriers. There is a large ritual or storage bowl at Tarxien with pitted designs and there are uprights and an altar with the same. There is a hole in the ground, possibly a well, possibly for libations. There is the bottom half of a large statue of what you can only call a fat lady, with bulging legs and a skirt. It might not be female, but it resembles small statuettes found in Malta, which are definitely ladies, and include the sleeping lady from Hal-Saflieni who is lying on a couch and may be dead. Many statuettes have no heads, they were detachable and may have been wooden.

A model of a temple has been found and a graffiti of a temple on a megalith at Mnajdra. There is surviving red wall plaster at Ggantija which is not waterproof. The top of the walls at Mnajdra looks as if they are at the base of a corbelled roof. The hypogeum at Hal-Saflieni has a corbelled roof. All this is evidence that the temples probably had roofs. Not all the temples had astronomical significance but at Mnajdra the rising sun shines through a doorway at the equinoxes, and sometimes you find graffiti of crescents and stars. All the temples went out of use about 2,500 BC and the Bronze Age was evidently a troubled period needing defensive structures.



The Phoenicians came to Malta and were displaced by the Romans. There are plenty of Roman sites, but the Maltese do not seem to make much of them for visitors. The main site is the town house in Rabat which has high quality mosaics and statues, and demonstrates a prosperous life style. There are also catacombs in the area where people were buried from Roman times and contained significant Christian burials.

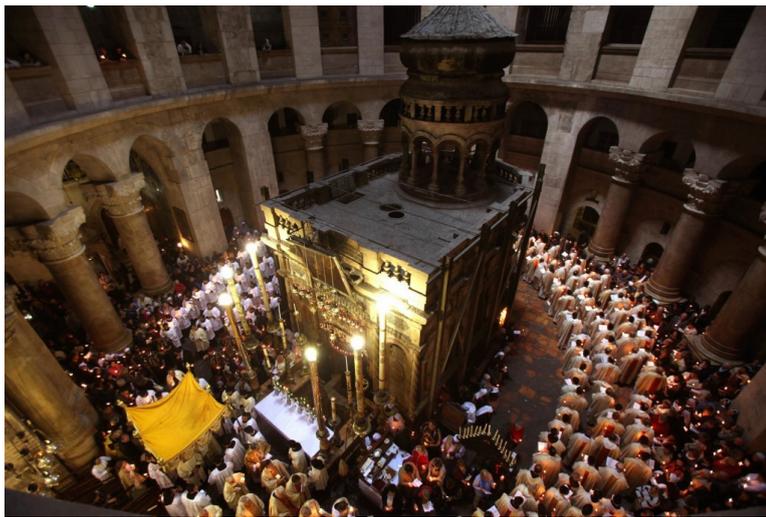
There is a lot of history in Malta and a lot more to be discussed, but Richard had necessarily to place a limit on his exploration of Malta and the content of his New Year talk.

**Isobel Cross**

## February Meeting – Pilgrimages to the Holy Land – Rev. John Baxter

In his retirement John Baxter leads people on pilgrimages, mainly to the Holy Land, and mainly in Israel. We started at the Sea of Galilee, at Capernaum and proceeded through holy places whose names are familiar, basically a travelogue with a religious dimension, with many photographs of buildings and views.

At Capernaum a church is built over the house 'said to be' where Simon Peter lived. In what follows there is a lot of use for the phrase 'said to be' and I am not going to repeat it. There are churches and convents built on most of these sites, such as the site of the Sermon on the Mount and the Basilica of the Annunciation where Mary lived in Nazareth. There is the Wedding Church at Cana where John Baxter encourages pilgrims to renew their wedding vows.



The focus of such a pilgrimage is, of course, Jerusalem, with all its associations with Calvary, like the Mount of Olives where the trees are not 'said to be' 2000 years old, they really are. You cannot go to Jerusalem without being aware of politics or even involved. To start with there is a 16 foot concrete security wall around it. It has stopped bombings. On the other hand Palestinian Christians have a difficult time with problems with both Jews and Muslims. For example, getting to services at St George's

Cathedral is sometimes blocked. John Baxter takes pilgrims to the Arabic services there as a gesture of support. We saw pictures of the Holy Sepulchre Church where Christian denominations argue about their shared space,

A view of Jerusalem includes the Muslim Al Aqsa Mosque and the golden Dome of the Rock, built on the site of the Jewish Temple Mount. A Christian can go up to Al Aqsa but not into it. At the Dome of the Rock, where Mohammed ascended into Heaven, only Muslim men are allowed inside. (More than fifty years ago I was privileged to go into the mosque, which is beautiful, and into the Dome of the Rock where I saw the rock through which Mohammed ascended. Things were easier then).

Away from Jerusalem we saw the Qumran caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found, Masada, where the Jews defied the Romans to the death, and the Dead Sea which is disappearing because the water from the Jordan is used so much. In Bethlehem, the Church of the Nativity is, John Baxter says, dirty but beautiful, and there also the Christians argue over it. Bethlehem is in Palestinian territory and there it is easy to take the Palestinian side in the political situation, but it must be said that Jewish families need security too. There was a picture of the Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem where they also remember the Gentiles who died helping the Jews. Both sides have a history and there is no reconciliation yet in the Holy Land. It is all very sad.

**Isobel Cross**

## After the AGM – 25 Years of Archaeology in London – Jon Cotton

Isobel Cross

This was a quick, shortish talk, dense with information. There is no space to record it all. Jon said that since 1989 there has been a lot of archaeological activity in the London area and the Thames basin, and many interesting discoveries have been made from all historical periods.

In Prehistory there were people here when Britain was still joined to Europe and Prehistoric finds are expected and made. For example the construction of Terminal 5 uncovered a two-and-a-half mile long cursus which is a major piece of engineering, and also a Bronze Age field system, which is very large and shows the evolution of family owned plots from land held in common in the Neolithic. At Hayes the gap in a penannular ditch round a middle Bronze Age barrow contained burials. Radio carbon dating is so good now we know they contained several generations over more than 200 years.

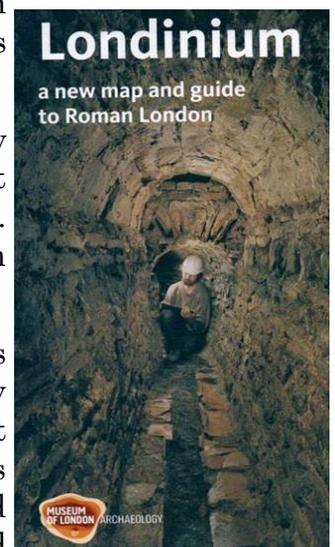
In London itself there was no pre-Roman town, but there was plenty of settlement. At Woolwich there was a massive ditch of hill fort dimensions. There must have been prehistoric people on the City site. Artefacts turn up on Roman sites. They thought stone axes came from the god Jupiter and would protect them from lightning.

Finds in the Walbrook valley indicate that Roman London was founded for military purposes. Cornhill may have been a military post, military ditches being found between it and the Walbrook. Not all finds are military. The new Bloomberg Place development has uncovered a massive timber structure which may indicate a mill and millrace on the Walbrook. Finds here include a tiny amber bead shaped like a gladiator's helmet and a large semi-circular leather object depicting a gladiator fighting a sea beast – part of some furniture?

The middle Saxon settlement is now thought to be West of Londinium. Finds like combs, a garnet and gold brooch, a runic inscription 'Tatberht', a Saxon name, occur in Covent Garden and Trafalgar Square. Late Saxon and medieval London returned to the City. There are pointed leather shoes from the waterfront and Thomas Beckett pilgrim badges – he was a Londoner, popular with London pilgrims. A mass grave, once thought to be of plague victims, now seems to date from the famine of the 1250s, brought about by a far away volcanic eruption.

From later times there is plenty of theatrical archaeology. Also, there is evidence of inn clearances – clearing up after social events - disposing of ceramics, bottles and clay pipes in brick lined pits. (It happened elsewhere, including in Epsom). There is one at Paternoster Square. This was in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when gentlemen's clubs were popular. Tiles with naughty pictures have been found, and at Paternoster Square a blue and white ceramic phallus.

There is, of course, plenty of opportunity for further research and fieldwork.



## EPSOM'S EAST END: OCCASIONAL PAPER 4 1973

Ian West



This Paper is now included on the EEHAS web site. It was compiled by Mabel Dexter based on Norman Nail's letters to Epsom & Ewell Borough Council and was published by the Society in 1973. It is a useful record of the buildings, in this part of Epsom, which existed in 1972 a good number of which are now demolished. As Norman stated, by 1972 many properties in East Street had already been lost as had the trade sign on No 33. This sign took the form of a gas lantern with a chimney sweeps brush on the top with a painted sign over the door for "Tester and Tuck, chimney sweeps". The business had operated from here from the 1880s until just prior to 1972.

As in 1972 the Council were proposing to put "closing orders" on 33 – 37 East Street and Garden Cottages which were situated at the rear, steps were taken to get a Building Preservation Notice on 33 – 37 prior to the revision of the Statutory List of Buildings (revised in 1974). An order was issued by the DOE and delivered to the Town Hall by hand one Thursday evening. To enforce the Notice all the Council had to do was to pin a copy onto the buildings referred to in the Notice.

When driving along East Street on the Saturday afternoon I was horrified to see that 33 – 37 were demolished almost to the level of the first floor. I stopped to photograph the partly demolished buildings and spoke to the contractor who said that he was on a bonus to get the site cleared by Monday morning, the order for the contract having been placed the day before. On the Monday I rang the Town Hall to be told that they had been too busy to put the Notice up on the Friday but the demolition was still legal! A cynical person may think that although nobody had time to put the Notice on the buildings someone found the time to ring the owners about the pending Preservation Notice. Garden Cottages, 1 – 20 were dated 1867 and shortly after construction a slightly larger house had been added adjacent to No 1 at the East Street end of the terrace which became known as "0".

The site of 33 – 37 East Street and 0 – 20 Garden



### From the Sussex Agricultural Express 13 June 1857

Irene Baker has sent us a further snippet from this Sussex Newspaper regarding the fire that destroyed the forerunner of the current Rubbing House pub on the Downs in 1857.

#### *EPSOM FIRE*

*The tavern known as the "Old Rubbing House" situated on the Downs, near the Grand Stand, was, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> inst., entirely destroyed by fire. The flames were first observed to issue from that point of the premises near the kitchen chimney, about 20 mins after 10pm; and from the difficulty of providing water, the whole building was quickly involved. No personal injury was sustained; but very little, if any, of the property in the house was saved. This tavern has long been a place of resort by the gypsies. The late occupier, however, was resolved on discouraging their visits, and it is said that he was frequently threatened in consequence; but as the origin of the fire is entirely unknown, it would perhaps be unfair to build an unfavourable surmise on so slight a ground.*

### Tour of the Watts Gallery

I have arranged a group tour of Watts Gallery, Down Lane, Compton. Guildford, Surrey, GU3 1DQ, Tel. 01483-810235, on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> May. We will be met at 10.30 am by Rosanna Lawton (Tel, 01483-813589) and we will have coffee/tea and biscuits in the Old Kiln, before a one hour tour of the Gallery, followed by a one hour tour of the Chapel. Please note there is a steep path between the Gallery and the Chapel. Afterwards, you may buy lunch in the café, or bring a picnic and have it in the grounds, before leaving at your leisure. The cost will be £17.50 per person (£15 for the tours, £2.50 for the coffee) and will require your own transport.

Please send this form and your cheque payable to EEHAS to me, Isobel Cross, by Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April at 62 Middle Lane, Epsom. Surrey, KT17 1DP, Tel. 01372-722074,  
e-mail [info@epsomewellhistory.org.uk](mailto:info@epsomewellhistory.org.uk)

I/we would like to go to Watts Gallery on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2014.

Name(s)

Can offer a lift

Would need a lift

Address

phone no.

e-mail

Cheque enclosed for £.....No tickets will be issued.

*Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society*

*Founded 1960 Registered Charity No.259221*

**To contact any of the Committee please e-mail [info@epsomewellhistory.org.uk](mailto:info@epsomewellhistory.org.uk)**

**President:** Jon Cotton MA, FSA

**Chairman:** Steve Nelson (020) 8393 7233

**Secretary:** Nikki Cowlard, 1 Norman Avenue, Epsom KT17 3AB (01372) 745432

**Treasurer:** Lou Hays

**Archaeology Officer:** Frank Pemberton

**Conservation Officer:** Nikki Cowlard (see details above)

**Membership Secretary:** Doreen Tilbury

**Newsletter Editor:** **VACANT**

If you are interested in this post please contact the Secretary.

**Please send copy for the next newsletter to the Secretary by 19 May 2014**

**Visit our website**

**[www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk](http://www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk)**

**Gift Aid**

If you pay tax EEHAS, as a charity, can claim Gift Aid on your subscription or donations, at no cost to yourself. In order for us to do this you need to sign a Gift Aid Declaration and send it to Lou Hays, our Treasurer. Forms will be available at meetings and can also be found on the Society website on the Membership page.

You can see a colour copy of this newsletter on the Society website from mid-April  
**[www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk](http://www.epsomewellhistory.org.uk)**

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 8p.m. on 5th March 2014

### at St. Mary's Church Hall, Ewell

<b>Present:</b>	President	Jonathan Cotton
	Vice-President/	
	Chairman	Stephen Nelson
	Secretary	Nikki Cowlard

A total of 38 members signed the attendance book.

The meeting was chaired by the President who opened the proceedings and welcomed members.

#### 1. Apologies for absence: Lou Hays.

A minute's silence was held for Dr. Frank Greenaway (Vice President) and Charles Abdy, a longstanding Committee member, both of whom had died since the last AGM.

#### 2. Minutes of the AGM held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2013

The minutes had been circulated with the April 2013 newsletter and were accepted unanimously.

#### 3. Matters arising from the Minutes not otherwise covered in the agenda

None noted.

#### 4. Annual report for 2013

The report had been circulated with the February 2014 Newsletter. The President, Jon Cotton highlighted a number of points in the annual report relating to anticipated activities/actions in the coming year:

##### 4.1. Archaeology

The 2013 season had gone well and had been very informative; many EEHAS members were involved. The next season of Church Meadow will take place between 2<sup>nd</sup>. 20<sup>th</sup> July and volunteers are welcome. There will be an Open Day in conjunction with Ewell Village Day on 12<sup>th</sup> July so members will have the chance to visit the site. This may or may not be the last season but post-excavation work will continue for several years, and will involve EEHAS members. Other projects will be considered when time allows.

##### 4.2 Archaeological Monitoring

The Society will be keeping a close eye on the proposed development at NESCoT which is an area of High Archaeological Potential, a likely buried historical landscape such as found at Hatch Furlong. We also want to ensure that relevant information is added to the Heritage Environment Register re. archaeology and finds, so that appropriate planning decisions can be made.

##### 4.3. Archaeology (Reports)

Work is continuing on previous excavations to bring them to publication. David Hartley had done much work on drawing together details from Bourne Hall and Carpenter's Bakery sites. Whilst work had stalled due to the amount of pottery to be catalogued, the intention is to ensure the archive is ordered and to publish some form of general report. Frank Pemberton's report on SMM 1974-75 is currently going through the referee process, and he is preparing the 1977 excavation for publication, following two years of pottery processing and small finds cataloguing. He hopes to publish the 2003 Churchyard excavation in a couple of years time, and in the meantime continues to support the Church Meadow excavation. The report of the Hatch Furlong excavations, 2006-9, is also outstanding.

##### 4.4. Publicity

We are very keen to have a Publicity Officer, the post having been vacant for several years. Isobel Cross commented that the post of Newsletter Editor and Publicity Officer could be combined. Jeremy Harte has offered a board in the Museum which can be used to post regular updates from the newsletter and other news/ issues. This will keep the public informed and raise the profile of EEHAS.

##### 4.5. Website

The aim is to keep developing the website, and if one has been on it recently some changes in layout will have been seen. Sheila Ross has kindly typed up items of local history interest from pre-2013 newsletters to go online via the website. Newsletters from 2013 onwards can be downloaded from the website. The webmaster hopes to add a page on current issues such as planning applications, watching briefs etc when time permits.

##### 4.6. Newsletter

We are still lacking a newsletter editor but Steve Nelson stated to the meeting that he is happy to continue producing the newsletter for the moment. He was thanked for the high quality of the newsletters.

#### 4.7. Publications

The committee is planning a strategy for future publications, looking at the style of publication we want, who will print it, the size of print runs, and funding. Members were encouraged to carry out local research and present papers for publication.

#### 4.8. Thanks

Jon thanked: Fran Taylor who had successfully taken on the role of Lecture Co-ordinator; Chris and Gay Harris who organised a very popular trip to Faversham; Peggy Gill who organised the refreshments rota.

The Report was adopted unanimously, being proposed by Rosemary Burleigh and seconded by Norman Hale.

#### 5. Treasurer's report

5.1. Lou Hays was unable to attend the meeting due to ill health and her report to the meeting was presented by Nikki Cowlard. Lou thanked Chris and Gay Harris for their organisation of the trip to Faversham and for their clear and concise accounting of expenses. Members were encouraged to apply for Gift Aid on their subscriptions and the forms were available at the back of the hall. She reported that the Christmas party had made a small profit and that members had enjoyed Isobel Cross' quizzes and Jeremy Harte's Mummers' play were very well received. Rod Clarke was thanked for auditing the EEHAS accounts. Lou then stated that she would be retiring as Treasurer in July when Jane Pedler had agreed to take over. She was thanked, in her absence, for her successful period in office.

5.2. Steve Nelson commented that although nothing had been spent on equipment over the last year the Society could expect the expense of a digital projector bulb at some point, which may cost about £400.

5.3. Nikki Cowlard clarified that although the Church Meadow Project is an independent project, its accounts were attached to EEHAS for purely practical reasons and benefited from auditing in the same way.

The adoption of the Treasurer's report was agreed, proposed by Chris Harris and seconded by Margaret Clemens.

#### 6. Election of Officers

The following were proposed by Isobel Cross, seconded by Jeff Cousins, and elected en bloc:

<b>President</b>	Jonathan Cotton
<b>Vice-Presidents</b>	Peggy Bedwell, Eve Myatt-Price, Stephen Nelson
<b>Chairman</b>	Stephen Nelson
<b>Secretary</b>	Nikki Cowlard
<b>Treasurer</b>	Lou Hays

The meeting agreed unanimously to re-elect Lou Hays as Treasurer until Jane Pedler was able to take over the role. Jane Pedler would then have the members' consent to act as Treasurer until the AGM in March 2015.

The Committee Members, Rosemary Burleigh, Isobel Cross, Fran Taylor and Ian West, were re-elected, proposed by Jayne Hayland and seconded by Eve Myatt-Price.

The independent examiner, Rod Clarke was elected after being proposed by Rosemary Burleigh and seconded by Martin Upward.

#### 7. Post of Newsletter Editor

Steve Nelson has agreed to carry on producing the newsletters.

#### 8. Open Forum

8.1. Elizabeth Bennett raised the issue of the heritage plaque on Rectory barn which cannot be read from the road. Nikki Cowlard had contacted Jane and Rob Pedler, who were not averse to a plaque being placed on the boundary wall. A cast plaque would cost about £200 but Jeremy Harte suggested a cheaper alternative in the form of a laminated sleeve with artwork fitting within a permanent holder which the Museum would be willing to fund. This would have to be agreed by Mr. and Mrs. Pedler.

8.2. Martin Upward commented that the Stoneleigh firm that supplied the digital projector had mentioned that there was an indicator as to when the bulb was due to fail; he would follow this up.

#### 9. Any other business

Jeremy Harte informed the meeting that the Ibis bookshop in Banstead, which has been in business since 1930s, is sadly due to close. It is the last opportunity for members to visit the shop.

#### 10. Close of Meeting - the President closed the meeting at 8.37 p.m.