



Moretonhampstead History Society

Newsletter

June 2010

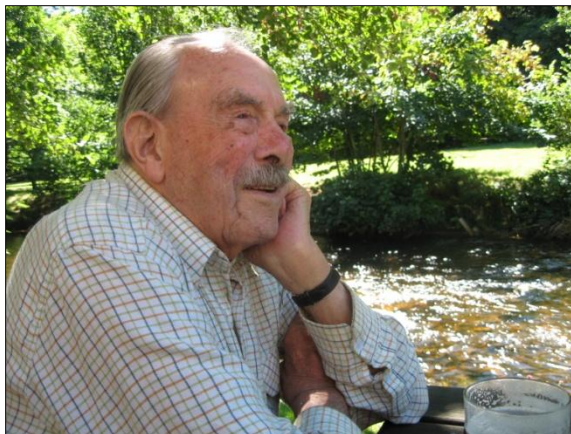
Visit to Ugbrooke House in June:

On the afternoon of the **16th June** we have our first outing of the year! A visit to Ugbrooke House near Chudleigh. A report on this visit will appear in the July Newsletter. We may still have some places, please contact Wendy Coombes on 277580.

May Meeting:

This meeting was held on 19th May in the Stable Bar of The Union Inn – 35 members attended. We welcomed back Derek Gore from Exeter University's Archaeology Department. Derek spoke to us about the Vikings in Devon, and most of us had not realised that the Vikings had been so active in this part of the world. The word 'Viking' seems to have been a shorthand term for tribes from a number of Scandinavian countries and Derek theorised that most of the early invasions were probably from Norway, with later invasions coming from Denmark and tribes that had settled in Ireland. The Vikings recorded little of their own history and most of what we know was written by Saxon monks whose accounts might be biased. These chronicles recorded events that touched the powerful – the Crown or the Church – and it is probable that many more raids took place. The first recorded raid in the south west was in 836 AD at Carhampton, near Minehead, but Derek believes that small incursions were taking place along the north Devon and Cornwall coasts up to forty years earlier. Raids in the south west dwindled over time, partly because of the tactics of Alfred, King of Wessex. The Vikings were excellent ship builders and could move hundreds of troops across the North Sea in good order. They preferred to sail up rivers to fortified towns, take them and house their troops over the winter, some then moving on and others settling. Exeter was held for a short time in 1003, and it is likely that St Olave's Church in Fore Street, dedicated to St Olaf, was founded in 1057 by the mother of King Harold. Vikings gained the reputation of being violent and treacherous, but it is clear that some built their own settlements and lived peaceably with their Saxon neighbours. **Wendy Coombes**

Jack Bond:



I'm sure many of you will recall the wonderful tale of Butcher Dommitt, as recounted by Jack Bond in the November 2009 edition of the Newsletter. (if not, you can find it on the website) Jack celebrated his 101st birthday on the 13th March this year! Jack was born in Dunsford in 1909, so was five at the outbreak of the First World War in 1914! It was that same year that he, with his parents, first moved into the house in which he still lives. He has remarkable memory for dates and detail. I recently visited Jack at his home and recorded over 2 hours of stories about his life, including his earliest memories as a small boy living the village of Dunsford. The tapes I made, on a rather ancient dictaphone!, have now, with the help of Ian Mortimer, been put

on to two CDs. These CDs will become part of our History Society Archive. It is also my intention to edit these CDs in due course and hopefully print extracts from them in later Newsletters. You may recall that I made an appeal last month for someone to volunteer to type up these audio CD's to form a written record, thereby making the information more accessible. No one has volunteered to date, but I would still love to hear from someone willing to take this on.

Visit to Exeter Cathedral:

Tour of the roof space and Dog Whippers Room.

This will take place on Wednesday, **30th June, 2010 at 10.30 am**

Following Mark Cottle's talk on the medieval construction of Exeter Cathedral, we have arranged a tour of the roof space and dog whippers' room. The tour will take about two hours, with extra time for those who want to see the dog whippers' room. The maximum number for the group will be twelve people, with six people allowed into the dog whippers' room at a time.

The cost is £9.00 per person, £7.50 for those over 60, with a reduction of £2.50 for those who hold a cathedral admission card.

The Visits Office advise us that:

It is not possible to join the group late because the door is locked behind the group. Similarly it is not possible to leave the group before the end of the tour.

The tour would be unsuitable for anyone who has a heart complaint or breathing difficulties, or a fear of confined spaces, darkness, heights or flying birds.

Please wear flat shoes and old clothes. There are hundreds of steps and it is very dusty.

Bring a camera. The views can be wonderful and the interior spaces are fascinating.

Please use the enclosed booking form to secure your place on this unique trip –first come first served.

July Visit:

Kelly Mine

On the afternoon of the **16th July** we shall be visiting Kelly Mine, which produced Micaceous Haematite used in the production of anti-corrosion paints until 1951. The Kelly Preservation Society was formed in 1984 to restore and preserve this important industrial monument. The visit will start at 2pm, and will take 1½ to 2 hours. The terrain will be fine for most people but there are slopes and some of the ground is a bit uneven. We will need to car share as there is very limited parking either outside the mine or on the corner by Slade farm. The trip will be limited to a maximum of 20. There will be no charge, but donations will be welcomed. Names for this trip will be collected at the beginning of July. Telephone or email Wendy Coombes, her details can be found on the back of your 2010 History Society programme.

August: No meeting or visit this month.

New logo:

I expect many of you will have by now had a look at the new and very much improved History Society website. The logo chosen for this site some time ago was a representation of the Alms Houses at the end of Cross Street. In the interests of uniformity, I shall soon redesign the top of this Newsletter to incorporate the logo used on the website. So the Sparrowhawk will depart from these pages, I'm sure everyone knows why it was used.

Visits Postscript:

Three very interesting visits have been arranged during June & July, especially for History Society Members. If you want to go on any of these, act fast as places may be limited.