

NAILSEA AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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At the time of writing, the Tesco Store has been roofed over and the wall foundations are in. It is amazing that it will be up and running this Summer.

Some residents have expressed concern that the building is so near the road. This however should come as no surprise since its exact location was shown on drawings displayed in the Library and discussed at the public meetings. Its height was reduced, but unfortunately we have still lost the distant view of Wraxall Church from the High Street.

From a historical viewpoint we are gaining two glazed ceramic tile panels, each approximately 2 x 1 metres, illustrating the glassworks and its various manufacturing processes. The panels have been designed and produced by Ned Heywood of the Workshop Gallery in Chepstow. Extensive research went into the design and personally I am most impressed with the end result. Fragments of glass excavated from the site will be fused into the panels, together with metallic lustres to produce an exciting sheen.

Trevor Bowen

Local History Forum

On Saturday 17 November 2001, Peter Wright and I went to a meeting of the Local History Forum, held at W.S.M. Museum. The meeting was well-attended by representatives of other North Somerset Local History and Family

History Societies. We were welcomed by Nick Goff, the Museum Manager and were asked to introduce ourselves, saying which particular society each of us represented.

Elaine Mellor gave news of the Libraries' involvement in providing access to the 1901 Census. Local libraries would have the census on fiche for their own areas as in the past, but there would be Internet access to the full records for a fee. This could be paid by credit card, or vouchers may be sold. (Update: Vouchers are now on sale for £10 or £5)

The Museum would be opening from Monday to Saturday. Sadly, Sharon Poole was no longer working there on Social History and Nick Goff was answering some enquiries in the meantime.

Vince Russett is now the Archaeology Officer, with responsibility for Sites and Monuments Records. An Urban Records Officer was to be appointed, and also a new Assistant Conservation Officer. Vince said that the keeping of Sites and Monuments Records should become mandatory for Local Authorities. A S.M.R. of the Defences of Britain had just been completed. We were given copies of "For The Record", Issue No. 1 of a newsletter from Somerset Archive and Record Service. This covered many fascinating news items, for example the discovery at Petworth House of the

cartulary of Athelney Abbey containing a previously unknown Anglo-Saxon charter relating to Ilton and other material concerning medieval Somerset. This will be on show at a special exhibition in Taunton in the Spring. A project funded by the Lottery, called Access to Somerset Archives, aims to make archival information available on the Internet. This should take about 3 years.

The Somerset Archive and Record Service Web Site is:

www.somerset.gov.uk/archives

Following this exchange of news and information, we were escorted on guided tours of "Behind the Scenes at the Museum". We were allowed to see interesting examples of exhibits - ancient bicycles, clothing, domestic equipment, toys and many other items, kept in conditions of as near perfect temperature and humidity as possible, bearing in mind that people had to be able to work among them. The specially designed shelving and racks allowed safe and compact storage while still giving easy access. I was astonished to catch sight of a newly delivered acquisition - a BBC model B computer! I have one at home, not in use but still in good working order. Cataloguing, we were told, is a major task, not to mention the possibility of Internet access. Nick Goff explained that, although acquired items were immediately recorded, there was a large backlog in actual cataloguing. It is a demanding and time-consuming task.

Later, over cups of tea, we reflected on what had been a most enjoyable and instructive experience.

Betty Brooks

Museum Re-named

On Monday 25th March, Peter Wright and I attended the re-naming of the Museum at Weston-super-Mare. Formerly known as 'The Time Machine', it is now called 'The North Somerset Museum'. The Chairman of the North Somerset Council welcomed the invited guests, who had already enjoyed coffee and biscuits and the entertainment of a musical trio. He introduced the guest of honour, Professor Mick Aston, well known to viewers of Channel 4's Time Team. Professor Aston was an unmistakable figure, obligingly dressed in his familiar blue jeans and multi-coloured striped pullover. He said how pleased he was that the name of the museum was reverting to what he considered to be a more suitable title and he also pointed out to everyone present how fortunate the people of Weston and the surrounding area were to have such an excellent museum in their locality. Following the cutting of a specially baked and decorated cake, Professor Aston mingled with the guests and officials. He was in great demand, but Peter and I did manage, with perseverance, to get a few words with him.

Betty Brooks

Community Award

On behalf of the Society, may I congratulate our "past President" Mrs. Judith Codrington on being presented with the Nailsea Town Council Community Award for "long and exceptional service to the Community". Judith was a founder member of the Society and its Chairman until 1985 when she became President until October 1996. We greatly value her enthusiastic leadership and support over the past 26 or so years.

Archives

Long before the Library closure, many of the Society archives and artefacts were transferred to either Weston or to the Somerset Record Office for safe keeping, generally on permanent loan.

Our photographic collection, compiled over the years by David Cains and augmented from time to time by Peter Wright or donations, was moved to the Scotch Horn Centre where it is under lock and key. North Somerset Library Service holds a near duplicate set for public viewing.

However, we do have some 40 ring binders of plastic multi-punched pockets containing (mostly) photocopies of letters, documents, articles and assorted local history materials. Over the past months members of the Committee have been devising a means of recording these on a computerised retrieval system.

Now we need your help. At our September meeting we will have available several of these binders, and we would like members to take them home and to index them.

Recording can be made in handwriting on a pro-forma, or on a computer using a suggested spread sheet. If we are able to spread the load the work will soon be done and I assure you of some interesting reading.

Guided Walks

We are gathering a small team of members who are willing to lead/assist with guided walks around Nailsea. Several volunteers have already come forward. If you would like to be involved, please let me know (854972). Also we would like to know of anyone able to give an occasional talk to other organisations on behalf of the Society.

Trevor Bowen

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

OF

NAILSEA & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

This will be held on Monday 14th October 2002, 7.30 pm at Nailsea School. Nominations for the Officers and Committee, proposals or other items for the Agenda must be submitted in writing to the Secretary at least 28 days prior to the Meeting. NB/ We are in need of a permanent Secretary to replace Mike Phillis who is fulfilling this position on a temporary basis - volunteers please.