

# NAILSEA AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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### LOOKING AHEAD

Few of our members seek the opportunity to see behind the scenes of the Society by volunteering to serve on the Committee. By opting out as it were, they see only what is currently on the programme card or book stall.

The Committee, however, is already planning for 2004. Our Programme Secretary, Mike Phyllis, is even now contacting speakers, for the best get booked early. I have seen his "wish list" and if most are available at the right price, next years programme promises to be one of the best.

Running throughout May of next year we have the national Local History "Week". Although we have yet to discuss it in detail, our contribution will be a one day LH exhibition, a slide talk on a popular subject, and a Saturday morning in the precinct to promote both events. We may also arrange one or more guided walks.

In January the Committee set out a series of objectives for 2003.

1) publicity to attract younger members who might be interested in taking part in projects or research. 2) four new publications. 3) a replacement Nailsea tea towel. 4) summer guided walks 5) a meeting in Backwell.

The Backwell meeting has been realised, with Mike Phyllis and several of our members there co-ordinating the event on Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> May, 7.30 pm at Backwell Village Hall (cross roads). The speaker will be Anne Bowring and the topic "Tyntesfield - Saved for the Nation".

Already the first of the projected four books, "Nailsea and the Great War" by Peter Wright, is nearing completion, but publication may be delayed by the demands of producing Pennant on time and single handed. Unless assistance with this is forthcoming, the future of our Journal will need to be considered.

## RECORDING OUR TOWN

Not known about in January is a video on historical Nailsea, to be released in late Autumn of this year. This is being produced by 1<sup>st</sup> Take Video in conjunction with our Society. A sub-committee comprising Peter Wright, Patrick Feakins, David Cains and myself has drawn up a synopsis for the 75/90 minute video. Filming will take place during the middle weeks of June and preparatory work by the team includes sourcing non-copyright photographs, cine film (any offers?) and artifacts; identifying people willing and available to speak “on camera”; and selecting preferred view points and am/pm filming. The Society has no financial commitment but is promised revenue from direct and retail sales.

## POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE

Ongoing is the work of the Middle Engine Pit Sub-Committee comprising representatives of the Avon Industrial Buildings Trust (including Adam MacKenzie and myself) Nailsea Town Council, North Somerset Council (the owners) and English Heritage. Undergrowth clearance and tree surgery has been carried out over two Saturdays by several volunteers from our Society and the Wildlife Trust (Nailsea Group). The Sub-Committee will be advertising shortly for a part time (three year appointment) Project

Officer to obtain “matching funding” for the English Heritage Grant, and to oversee the eventual work on site. Again we shall be looking for one or two volunteers to assist with emergency repairs to the masonry (names to me please).

On the less positive side was our withdrawal of the fortnightly “Local History Information Service” in Nailsea Library. Peter Wright undertook the brunt of the work, but sadly few members of the public appear to use the Library on Friday evenings when our presence was requested.

Also on the negative side is the lack of action by North Somerset Parks Department in repairing the damaged horse whim on Scotch Horn, and uncovering the buried shaft (both resulting from the construction of TESCO and the children’s playground).

On a personal note, we must commiserate with Cllr. Phil Barclay, Chairman of Nailsea Town Council and Local History Deputy Chairman, over the wanton and premeditated damage to the play area with which he has been so closely involved. What chance has the proposed work of art (to be paid for by TESCO) of surviving in the Millennium Park? Surely this should be located in the Scotch Horn Centre.

Trevor Bowen