

**MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING
OF
THE ELSENHAM HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Wednesday 10th February 2010
In The Memorial Hall**

1. Those Present

Paul Salvidge	Heather Salvidge (HS)	Dennis Haslam	Gordon Barker (GB)
Vic Dowsett	Ray Franklin (RF)	Eileen Kay	Kevin Wood
Jean Beeston	David Verlander (DV)	Lillian Adams	Margaret Shaw(MS)
Chris Bush (CB)			

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

ACTION

This being the first meeting there were no previous minutes to consider

3. Meeting Chairman

Ray Franklin as our recorder for **The Recorders of Uttlesford History (RUH)** was asked to act as interim chairman of this meeting until the election of officers could be completed.

4. Draft Society Constitution

RF asked those present to consider the copies which had been circulated and to raise any questions or points of detail and to indicate whether the constitution was suitable for adoption.

The following points were discussed:

- It was not considered essential to formally affiliate the Society with any umbrella groups but RF said he would notify **RUH** of the society's formation. The Committee would have to consider whether to join **The Recorders of Uttlesford History (RUH)**
- It was agreed that the suggested quorum of 3 would be appropriate for the time being.

RF

CTTE

The Constitution was adopted by a unanimous vote.

5. Election of Officers

The following committee was elected by a vote of those present

Chairman:	Gordon Barker
Deputy Chairman:	Ray Franklin
Secretary:	Chris Bush
Treasurer:	Paul Salvidge
Committee Position 1:	Heather Salvidge
Committee Position 2:	David Verlander
Committee Position 3:	Vacant
Committee Position 4:	Vacant

GB asked **RF** to take the remainder of the meeting on his behalf

6. Sources of Information/Study Areas

There was discussion of the various sources of information which might be used:

- Personal reminiscences – everyone should write down their memories of village life and bring them to the next meeting. **RF** would use the next “Rays Reflections” in the Village Magazine to request participation in this form of information gathering ALL
RF
- Historic Maps or photographs would be another valuable resource. **DV** said he had a number of useful maps and some aerial photography which he would bring to the next meeting. DV
- **RF** had visited the **Essex Records Office** in Chelmsford and had found the staff there very helpful.
- Interest Groups – if members had particular interests then working sub groups could be formed to allow members to work on their own subjects and to present their findings to the main group. Everyone was asked to think about this and to bring proposals to the next meeting. ALL
 - Agriculture was suggested as a study area. **GB** said that he knew that the Essex Records Office had a very useful map showing field boundaries and names. It was also suggested that details of the various orchards, which existed in the village, should be researched.
 - The Church would be another valuable study area. It was recognised that **GB** would have a lot of detail in this area but there was doubtless much more work that could be done.

Regarding the church **RF** said that he had been in touch with the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS), an arts based educational charity, which amongst other projects, is recording details of the Country’s old churches. When they learnt that St Marys Elsenham is coming up to its 900th anniversary they have undertaken to record, photograph and detail the church. The results would be written up in the form of three bound volumes, one would be presented to the church, one would be held by NADFAS and the third thought to be lodged with the British Museum.

When a Church Record is completed of an Anglican Church in England, five copies are lodged with:

- the church
- the local County Records Office (or the Diocesan authorities)
- [Council for the Care of Churches](#)
- [Victoria and Albert Museum](#)
- [National Monuments Record Centre](#)

Comparable arrangements are made for Records of churches of other denominations and of churches elsewhere in the UK.”

Information on NADFAS can be found at www.nadfas.org.uk

- The Primary School was a particularly important area of study, firstly as the History Society is committed to involving all age groups in the community in the history of their village and secondly that school is approaching its 150th anniversary in 2013.
- There was discussion as to whether there was a “lost” part of the village beyond the drive to Elsenham Hall and along the road towards Fullers End. **HS** said she suspected that this could be the case and **GB** said that there was some evidence to support this theory. Again aerial photography might help to locate possible sites.
- It was suggested that the Poor Law Records would be an area for research.
- The Wells Charity could be investigated and detailed.
- **GB** said that he suspected that some village records which had escaped the Essex Records Office might exist in Oxford.
- **GB** said that the location of “**Netherhall**” or “**New Hall**” the fore-runner **Elsenham Hall** had not been exactly identified, he had a theory that it might have been around Gaunts End.
- It was suggested that some early work should be done on the exact parish boundaries and how these had changed over the years. Since there had been a number of significant changes this would set the foundations for other research.
- It was believed that Stewart Pimblett had details of the location of significant aerial photography. **RF** would be asked to check with Stewart on this point. **DV** said that he had some aerial material.

RF

- **DV** raised the proposals which had existed, prior to the construction of the railway, and which would have resulted in a canal passing through the village. He felt that the papers relating to these proposals would provide valuable information.

7. Equipment and Supplies

RF reported the **RUH** had identified that there was a source of funding for essential supplies and a proposal could be put to the **National Lottery Heritage Fund**. **RF** has compiled a proposal for £3,500 for essential equipment and discussions to date seemed optimistic.

MS said that such proposal needed to be carefully assembled and needed to follow a particular format, an unsuccessful proposal would set back further consideration of the bid. For example a key objective was the involvement of the village school as an educational benefit.

It was agreed that the proposal must take into account all of the local expertise which was available to give the bid the best possible chance of success.

CTTE

- It was suggested that members produce details of any material and books which they would be prepared to allow the society to use for reference purposes.
- **RF** said that access to specialist equipment was available through **RUH**, e.g. A3 copying.

ALL

8. Subscription

It was agreed that the annual subscription to the society for the first year would be £5 per person.

9. Open Forum

There needed to be investigation of how to set up a good Society Web Site. **PS** had a few examples of some he felt to be good practice and these would be circulated to members for consideration.

PS/CB

The Society should also work on an information leaflet.

CTTE

Thought must be given on how to involve the younger age groups in the village

ALL

A list of Guest Speakers could be assembled. **RF** suggested Roger Taylor who had recently written a book about his career as a train driver, including material on Elsenham.

CTTE

GB suggested the possibility of setting up a village museum. He had a number of articles that he would be prepared to loan. Various locations were considered including the Chapel in the High Street

ALL

but this would need considerable work and parking would be difficult. This required further thought,

Possible meeting places for future meetings were considered. A key consideration was that they must be accessible to all which ruled out some locations. Suggestions included the Memorial Hall, The Crown – the new proprietors of which were keen to promote village activities – the Cricket Pavilion.

10. Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed for:

Wednesday 10th March at 8 p.m. in the Memorial Hall