

ELSENHAM VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY

MINUTES OF MEETING 5th MARCH 2014

MEMORIAL HALL ELSENHAM

Those Present:

Ray Franklin Chairman	Paul Salvidge	Chris Bush
Heather Salvidge	Mike Rea	David Verlander
Valerie Austin	Tim Snow	Margaret Rea
Jean Beeston	Peter Clear	Sue Johnson
Christine Hall	Colin Smith	Vic Dowsett
Keith Merrifield	Moyra Jackson	Ian Jackson
Jean Platt	Kevin Wood	Margaret Shaw
Roger Clark	Phyllis Clark	Trevor Hackett
Do Hackett		

Apologies:

Brian Tulley	Janet Tulley	Caryl Benner
Gordon Fulton	Ruth Fulton	John Segar
Avril Braidwood	Pam Merrifield	

Secretary's Note: This is version two of the minutes. My apologies to our speaker Mr Derek Winter for managing to get his name wrong not once but twice. I have also corrected the date of the meeting.

1. The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed those present as well as Mr Derek Winter, our guest speaker for the evening.

2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting 6th November 2013**

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

4. Annual General Meeting

The Secretary opened the Annual General Meeting.

I. Invitations were extended for nominations for the posts of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary. There being no nominations for Secretary or Treasurer, the incumbents agreed to serve for another year

II. Invitations were extended to fill the vacant committee post.

Chris Bush proposed Jean Beeston for the vacancy and Jean Platt seconded the nomination.

Following a vote by those members present, Jean Beeston was duly elected to the Committee

III. The Chairman gave a brief review of the Society's activities over the past year.

IV. The Treasurer presented the Society accounts for the last year. A copy of the accounts will be sent to members with these minutes.

The Chairman noted that at the last parish Council Meeting, a sum of money was approved to replace the doors and frames of the Memorial Chapel with new hardwood items. The money would also cover the cost of a new bell frame and any necessary repairs to the roof and gutter as well as repairs to the drains taking away rainwater from the gutters.

There being no other matters raised by the membership present the Annual General Meeting segment was closed and business reverted to the main agenda.

5. Guest Speaker Mr Derek Winter

The Chairman introduced Derek Winter who gave a very interesting and amusing account of the history and some of the notable events in the life of Stansted Airport. Having started as a USAF base during WW2 the runway was extended in the early fifties to some two miles long making it capable of accepting the biggest and heaviest aircraft then flying. As it was to turn out, this extension made the airfield highly suitable for civil aviation and so London Stansted Airport was born.

Originally joining as an Accounts Clerk, Derek found this a bit boring so when the opportunity arrived, he transferred to the then

fledgling Public Relations department. One of the first jobs was to commission a film extolling the virtues of Stansted as the third London airport. When considering what else could be done to put the airport on the map, it was thought that getting the space shuttle to land there would be number one. Coincidentally at this time, NASA were wanting to publicise the space programme so after a great deal of planning, on June 5th 1983 the Space Shuttle Endeavour landed at Stansted on the back of a specially modified Jumbo Jet. It nearly didn't happen as a storm front was moving in and NASA nearly cancelled the landing not because of risk to the shuttle but because they couldn't afford to lose the 747 transport which was the only one of its kind. It was estimated that some 200,000 people came to Stansted to see the Shuttle.

Concorde was diverted to Stansted on several occasions, quite often causing lots of complaints because of the noise. It wasn't unusual however, that when complainants found out that it was Concorde making the noise, the complaint changed to why didn't you tell us?". On one notable occasion, Concorde made a round trip from Stansted carrying the winners of a Post office postcode competition.

On a more sombre note, there have been four hijacked aircraft land at Stansted, the first in 1974 which at the time the airport was barely equipped to deal with. It was however safely settled and since then Stansted has put in place procedures to deal with these unfortunate occurrences.

Following his PR work Derek moved to personnel and gave some examples of the trials and tribulations of hiring staff.

6. Open Forum and Any Other Business

6.1 Website

The website continues to gain attention and as of this afternoon, we have had 975 visits since Christmas which is very good. We continue to add new content and are in the process of getting other local societies to link to us.

The Secretary placed on record the thanks of the Committee and Members to Chris Bush who has taken the lead on getting the site set up and is now our Webmaster.

6.2 "In Memoriam"

It was noted that proof reading of the book provisionally entitled "In Memoriam" to be published by the War Memorial team is ongoing. Progress is such however that publication, on time, is expected in

August and members are invited to pre-order copies either through the website or by contacting the Secretary.

6.3 Local Talks

On Monday 10th March, the Saffron Walden Museum Society will be presenting “Zeppelins over Essex”, a talk given by Martyn Lockwood and featuring contemporary photographs of the Zeppelin raids over Essex in 1916.

6.4 Visits

In response to a query from the floor, the Secretary said that he would endeavour to arrange some visits for the Summer. The Police Museum at Chelmsford and The Secret Nuclear Bunker at Kelvedon Hatch were put forward as possible destinations.

6.5 Local Roads

Roger Clark asked what Station Road had been called before the coming of the railway and if there had been a road there at all.

Heather Salvidge said that the road had been extant but unnamed, it forming part of the then main Cambridge – London road. Originally it would have gone straight across into Robin Hood Road and continued to Stansted and Bishops Stortford. When the railway was built, the road was diverted onto its current course via Stansted Road. It was further noted that what was left of the old road was further diverted when the runway was extended at Stansted airport in the early fifties.

David Verlander offered to check his collection of old maps for more information.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday June 11th at 8pm when Ms Sarah Doig will give a talk entitled “There’s No Such Thing as a Good Tax”, a look at taxation from Mediaeval times to the present day.

ENDS