

ELSENHAM VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY

MINUTES OF MEETING 4th MARCH 2015

MEMORIAL HALL ELSENHAM

Those Present:

Ray Franklin Chairman	Paul Salvidge	David Verlander
Heather Salvidge	Mike Rea	Sue Johnson
Carol Wylde	Tim Snow	Margaret Rea
Jean Beeston	Ian Beeston	Colin Smith
Christine Hall	Janet Tulley	Vic Dowsett
John Segar	Moyra Jackson	Ian Jackson
Jean Platt	Kevin Wood	Dorothy Dorman
Roger Clark	Phyllis Clark	Trevor Hackett
Do Hackett	Teri Williams	Peter Clear
Therese Clear	John Beeston	Sue Beeston
Tony Eatson	Gloria Eatson	Andy Elliott
Frances Elliott	Campbell Dunn	Lynda Dunn

Apologies:

Chris Bush	Avril Braidwood	Margaret Shaw
Valerie Austin	Brian Tulley	Martin Robinson

Secretary's note: Chris Bush continues to recover from his accident but not as fast as he would like. He is able to get out with the help of friends and will be seeing the physios shortly and hopes to have more news then. He has asked me to thank everyone for their good wishes.

Unfortunately too, Avril Braidwood has suffered a fall and badly damaged her shoulder. We wish her a speedy recovery.

1. The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed those present and Dr Richard Nunn, our guest speaker for the evening.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting 12th November 2014

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 these posts, the incumbents agreed to serve for another year

- II. Invitations were extended for nominations of Committee members.

There being no nominations, the existing members will serve for another year.

- 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 in due course.

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 Dr Richard Nunn

The Chairman introduced Dr Nunn who proceeded to talk about his early days in general practice starting in Dunmow in 1972. He illustrated his talk with several anecdotes including the dispensing of "Aqua Papis" (sic), a concoction of water and red dye that cured many ills. This, said Dr Nunn, was an early introduction to the power of placebos. Another tale concerned a senior partner who would leave his car unlocked on the main road outside the surgery. Being called out one night he was aware after some miles that there was a courting couple on the back seat who had climbed in the car for a bit of privacy. As it was an emergency he was unable to go back so they had to accompany him to the patient's house. Having dealt with the emergency he was invited to stay for a cup of tea, he accepted only on the condition that his new "friends" could have one too.

Contrasting conditions then, he said there were no computers, all note taking was by hand and appointments were recorded in a handwritten diary. Oil lamps were kept topped up in case of power cuts that occurred frequently and the emphasis was very much on curative medicine rather than the preventative of today. Heart attacks for example were treated at home by prescribing aspirin and bed rest!

Branch surgeries were held in outlying villages and medicines were often left on a bench outside the treatment room for the patients to collect. Night visits were the norm but very tiring as the Doctor would typically be on the go from Friday morning to Monday evening non-stop.

One day he had to clear an outhouse behind the surgery where he found old books and instruments dating from an earlier age. There was an early 18th century book "Aristotle's Medicine" that gave a fascinating glimpse at the practice of medicine in these times and "Savours Compendium of Domestic Maladies" from the 1820s gave treatments for the common diseases of the time, many of which weren't dissimilar to today's treatments.

Prior to the twentieth century, doctors reputations were not very good. Moliere for example lost his son to Antimony poisoning and, blaming the doctors of the time, often took a dig at them in his plays as, in later years did Hilaire Belloc. As a result of this there was a rise in so called quack medicine and the snake-oil salesmen selling dubious remedies for the ailments of the day. There was a lot of money to be made from these quack cures and some people made a great deal of money from them. There were of course good doctors around for example Edward Jenner, who in 1796 scraped the pus from the blisters of a cowmaid suffering from cowpox and injected it into an eight year old boy. Six weeks later, Dr Jenner exposed the boy to smallpox on a number of occasions but failed to infect him. Thus was born inoculation but one can only imagine the size of lawsuit if that was tried today.

Prior to the formation of the National Health Service in 1948, patients had to pay for treatment and despite private health insurance becoming available in 1911, many were treated for free because they just did not have the money to pay.

Finally Dr Nunn spoke about some of the equipment that was used prior to 1972 such as the Chloroform Giving Set used to administer anaesthetic. Very dangerous by today's standards and having used it once, Dr Nunn vowed never to use it again. Another item was the Allergen Test Solutions used to test for particular allergies. These were used regularly in surgeries but it wasn't unknown for a patient to have a severe reaction to the test and today such tests are only administered at a specialist clinic.

The talk concluded with a question and answer session and members being invite to inspect the display of instruments.

6. Open Forum and Any Other Business

The Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group are presenting an evening talk on Tuesday 10th March at the Ickleton Village Hall (CB10 1SH) entitled The Pattern Beneath the Plough, when Professor Tom Williamson will show how to interpret the past from the clues which surround us on our farms and in our countryside today. Start time is 6.30pm for 7pm and booking is required on 01223 841507.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday June 10th at 8pm when Mr Tony Kirby will give a talk entitled “Tides of Fortune”, a look at the rise and fall of the East Coast seaside resorts – with an Essex twist.

ENDS

Chairman's Report 2015

Our Meetings have continued over the past 12 months. Mike, our Secretary has been able to maintain the high standard of speakers. I am aware of the all the work required. Thanks Mike. Attendance has been good and the membership now stands at 63. That is an increase over of 300% since our first meeting five years ago.

Our largest project to date was the production and publication of "For the Duration (Elsenham in conflict.)" I feel I must thank again all those involved in the production of this excellent book.

We have been involved with The Essex Archaeological Society on the "Bovis" site in Hall road. Also cooperating with English Heritage (Sir Walter Gilbey's Cottages) in and around Park Road and "The Recorders for Uttlesford History."

We continue to have an input regarding The Chapel of Rest which stands in Elsenham Cemetery. We have plans in that direction.

More recordings of Local people have been, the latest being Cliff Bishop. His reminiscences and a transcript have been placed on our Web Site. At this point I would like to thank Chris Bush who despite his accident last November continues his work updating and adding to the Site.

Our President, Gordon Barker has an ongoing interest in the society and he is kept informed of our efforts.

The Society continues to flourish its financial position is wonderful much due to the work of our Treasurer Paul Salvidge. Thanks Paul. I know he will be pleased when I remind you that your subscriptions are due!

Yes "The Elsenham village History Society" goes from strength to strength. Thanks to all I have mentioned and all other members of the committee.

Elsenham Village History Society

Formed: 2010



Annual General Meeting 4 March 2015

- Review of The Year 2014

- Our membership now stands at 64, a another pleasing increase for the year. This is our twenty-first meeting and marks our fifth Birthday so Many Happy Returns to us!
 - Speakers -
 - March – Derek Winter gave a talk on Stansted Airport – It's History and Notable Happenings
 - June – Sarah Doig presented “There's No Such Thing As A Fair Tax” - a review of taxation through the ages
 - September - Tony Kirby presented “Railways in the Essex Landscape” - a brief look at how the coming of the railways changed the nature of the landscape and the towns it served
 - November – The War Memorial Team presented “For The Duration” – the story of the book and those remembered within it's pages
- We have held four committee meetings
- To mark the anniversary of the start of the First World War, the Memorial Team published their book, “For the Duration – Elsenham in Conflict” which tells the story of all those commemorated on the Memorial plus a few more whose names do not yet appear thereon.
- The Society has nominated representatives to work with the Parish Council Memorial Committee to plan how the names on the memorial may be refreshed and the additional names added
- The Society had an input into the planning of the Works that this year has seen the completion of the restoration of the fabric of the Memorial Chapel Building
- The Society's Web site is now a year old and is proving to be a popular destination for those interested in our local history. The material available in its pages continues to grow making this a valuable resource
- We have renewed our membership of the Recorders of Uttlesford History

- In June we had a stall and display at the village fete
- We have continued to collect photographs of the village
- The sound recording of reminiscences of village residents continues as does transcription to make these available to a wider audience
- Work continues to progress on the directory of village place names and their origins
- Work continues to be carried out to record the story of Broom Farm and its demise

Mike Rea
Secretary