

Chairman's Report to AGM January 2023

The past year has been a very active one for the History Club and it is notable that fledgeling groups in other villages are starting to pick our brains about setting up something very similar.

It is clear our website is a good advertisement for an active group such as ours and is the portal through which we regularly receive enquiries from distant places concerning a myriad of topics related to the village. We also make good use of the North Marston and Granborough Community Facebook Group which now acts as a village magazine and has a membership approaching 1,000. To help people to access the page, especially those not familiar or confident using Face Book, I will soon be running a brief workshop entitled "Face Book for Waverers".

In the first full programme of talks since the Covid closure we have heard about a host of things from The Great Train Robbery to Doodlebugs with local Work-Houses thrown in for good measure. Our list of talks for 2023 has been circulated, the first of which, "Tragic Titanic", will be held on 21st March. This popular topic is likely to attract a large audience

The theme for our calendar for 2022 Christmas sales was the late Queen's 70-year reign and featured pictures from the week-end of activity commemorating her Platinum Jubilee, including the Royal Scarecrows, Bangers and Bubbles and the High Street party.

The Heritage Trail was enlarged during 2022 and now incorporates 13 Viewpoints. The Club is planning to enhance this further by producing Landmark Plaques for properties mentioned in the Heritage Trail Map Book, subject to householder consent. The Heritage Trail has been used extensively by visiting groups such as University of the Third Age groups, local Beavers, Brownies, Cubs, Scouts and village schoolchildren and we anticipate this is set to continue. An event staged at the Memorial Hall in the summer focused on local archaeology and the History Club was a key player in its planning and execution, with the Heritage Trail a very popular focal point.

Towards the end of 2022 the Club was fortunate to receive a £500 grant from the Winslow and Neighbouring Villages Community Board to commission the creation of High Definition digital copies of some of the most frail and unique of North Marston documents in the form of deeds, some going back centuries, many on velum or parchment. In keeping with our strap-line, this really is ***safeguarding the future of the past.***

As ever, I would like publicly to acknowledge the tremendous work of the Club's Executive Committee who work tirelessly behind the scenes to keep the show on the road. I also thank you, members of the club, for constantly proving that an idea to form a village History Club in 2010 proved to be something that was appreciated then and continues to be so.

John Spargo

January 2023