

The Friends of the Cardall Collection

NEWSLETTER

No 19: Autumn / Winter 2016



Chairman's Update

In many respects 2016 has been a very good year for us. Firstly, it's our 10th anniversary year – yes, it's over ten years since we first met in Southam Library to discuss setting up a group to take over the management of the Cardall Collection.

The Collection was started by Jack Cardall in the 1940s, and later expanded by his widow, Rene. In 2006 a constitution was drawn up for what became the "Friends of the Cardall Collection". The primary objective of taking the Collection into public ownership was to find it a permanent home in the town, so that it could be preserved and made accessible to the public. Ten years on, and we have certainly made great steps towards achieving those aims.

In June of this year we held a 10th Anniversary Party. Jacky Graham, Jack's daughter, assisted by Bev Cardall, hosted the party (see picture). A large number of members attended and a great afternoon was had with lovely food, a special cake, and much reminiscing.



2016 has been a good year from a financial perspective. Although our expenses increased, we were successful in our application for financial



support from CEMEX / The Rugby Group Benevolent Fund. The grants were most gratefully received and are to help with our premises costs and to finance the Summer exhibition about the local cement industry. The picture shows Ian Southcott of Cemex with some of our Committee members.

Our 2016 exhibitions "Keep the Home Fires Burning" and "Cementing Relations in Southam" proved very popular both with local people and visitors from afar. For example, in September a lady from North Carolina visited us to read about where some of her relations had spent their working lives. We have had over 600 visitors to the two exhibitions and they have left many delightful comments in the visitor's book. We are very fortunate to have a number of dedicated volunteers to develop these exhibitions and also to provide support for visitors during opening hours. We have also been able to take subsets of exhibitions to external events - extracts from "Keep the Home Fires Burning" were exhibited in both Stockton and Leamington – something which we hope to do more of in future.



We have developed connections with other heritage groups this year, not least of which is the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway. They are in the process of restoring one of the Southam quarry locomotives, "Jurassic" (pictured), and they hope to have it running in Skegness from next August.

**2017 Heritage Calendar:
Available now !**

These lovely calendars featuring 13 photos relating to Southam's heritage are now on sale at just £5 a copy. You can pick up your copy from

Southam Heritage Collection (incorporating the Cardall Collection and the Alan Griffin photographic archive) comprises artefacts, documents, photographs and memorabilia associated with Southam and its surrounding villages. The County Museum Service inspectors agree that it is an important record of the life and times of our historic market town. The Collection needs a permanent home in Southam where it can be displayed, used and appreciated by the general public, local history societies, schools, reminiscence groups and researchers.

Southam Post Office, Rockingham's, Southam Office Supplies or Southam Carpets, at the Tuesday mini-market in Craven Lane Hall, or direct from us at Vivian House on Tuesday mornings between 10am and 12 noon. We can also arrange to post calendars to UK addresses for an additional £1.50 to cover post and packaging.

The Calendar printing costs are financed entirely by local businesses sponsoring each page. For this we are extremely grateful as it means that all proceeds from Calendar sales can be used to help us with our work.

Annual General Meeting

The 2016 AGM was held in the Congregational Church lounge on the evening of Tuesday September 27th. A copy of the Chairman's report plus the audited accounts is available on our website www.southamheritage.org

Fourteen members were present with a similar number of apologies. There were no new nominations for the Management Committee, so the Committee was re-elected en bloc. At the end of the meeting we had drinks and snacks and a fascinating short video was shown featuring retired quarry worker, Alan Holden.

Moving Premises?

Despite the building being finished over a year ago, the Library open, and most of the apartments occupied, we are still no nearer to discovering whether it will ever be possible for us to rent community space in Tithe Place. Apparently Stratford District Council have still not finalised the lease of the community rooms from Orbit.

We have been in touch regularly with both the Town and District Councils to try to get some indication of what is happening, and what the costs of the new premises might be, but so far we have drawn a blank.



The only information we have been given by SDC is that the legal costs alone are likely to be £1,500. Our current extension of the lease at

Vivian House runs out on 31st December, and in the absence of any information from Stratford District Council, we will shortly be applying to extend it again – incurring yet more legal costs. SDC are fully aware of this, and we have told them that we need to know what is happening by the middle of November. At the time of writing, we have had no response and sadly, the community rooms remain empty.

Next Year's Exhibitions

2017 is the Centenary of The Grange in Coventry Road being turned into a VAD hospital for wounded WW1 soldiers. We have been developing useful contacts for new material which we hope to use in our Spring 2017 exhibition, provisionally titled **"Caring for the Wounded"**. We also plan to mark the centenary of Southam's VAD hospital, further details to follow.



At the time of writing another of Southam's public houses is on the market for sale – the former "Hunter's Bar", "Breeze Bar", "The Courtyard", "The Three Choices", "The Bee's Wing Vaults" – depending on which generation you belong to! To showcase Southam's long tradition of thriving public houses, next year's Summer exhibition **"A Pint of Ale"** will celebrate the remaining pubs and remember the passing of dozens of others.

With its rich history of markets, traditional town centre events, and with drovers and coaches passing through, Southam's public houses have always been a mainstay of life for its traders and visitors as well as for its residents. It is this heritage that we want to focus on. Perhaps you encountered the ghost in the Olde Mint? Or do you remember how people used to come into Southam from Leamington in the 1960s, because Southam pubs closed half an hour later than they did in Leamington?



Recently a huge bottle dump was unearthed in Stowe Drive and some of them were given to us – so we will certainly have a large number of bottles to display! If anyone has special knowledge of, or

would like to do some research on old bottles, types and manufacture, then do let us know, and you can assist us with this part of the exhibition.

If you have anything you would like to contribute to this exhibition about Southam's Pubs, now is the time to dig it out and get in touch. Whether it is a pub sign, a poster, a photograph, a named mug, or just an anecdote, the exhibition organiser Linda Doyle will be interested to hear from you.

You can contact Linda on Linda@allhistoric.co.uk
Southamheritage@hotmail.com
or telephone 01926 814214

Cementing Relations with the 2nd Southam Cubs

As our summer exhibition "Cementing Relations in Southam" drew to a close, we had two evening visits from the 2nd Southam Cubs. We were a little apprehensive as on previous visits they had been split into two small groups with half in the exhibition and half in St James' Church. This time, however, we took the bull (well cubs) by the horns and had a group of 20 small boys in the exhibition all at the same time!

We need not have worried, because although they were a wildly enthusiastic noisy bunch they were very well behaved and enjoyable to work with on both evenings.

We started with quiet and calm as they were introduced to the cement works through a short video of Bishops Itchington school children of their age talking to an elderly retired worker, who had worked in the quarries since he left school at 14 years of age. This was followed with talking about the geology and fossils and they each entered the competition to name the ichthyosaurus model displayed in the exhibition, which they could win.



We followed this with a quiz that allowed them to work in pairs around the room and find answers. From then on the room was one happy, chatty, room full of little persons asking questions, finding answers and discussing (in amazingly adult ways) photographs and artefacts between themselves! In fact, they were so clever that they found a wrong answer in the quiz, which we left there for

the second group later in the week to find as well. So they were rather pleased with themselves.

Some of the Cubs had brought family names of people who had worked in the quarries in earlier years and afterwards we sent information and references about them to their Cub leader. At least one lad brought his mum and three other children in to show them where he had visited. So we can safely say that we made an excellent impression on them and will welcome them again next year - perhaps we can get the Brownies to come along as well.

"Our Warwickshire"

The *Our Warwickshire* project is run by Heritage and Culture Warwickshire and has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The aim is that Warwickshire museums, archives, local history groups and website visitors will collaborate to record and share their stories about Warwickshire.

Another part of the *Our Warwickshire* project is the redevelopment of the Market Hall Museum in Warwick to become a high quality, participative visitor attraction. This website complements the physical enhancements to the Market Hall and allows people all over the county to celebrate and share Warwickshire's heritage by uploading digital heritage content, sharing their knowledge, and participating in events.

The *Our Warwickshire* team joined us in Tithe Place recently to encourage older Southam residents to write down their memories, however simple, small or large they may be. We had a number of people participate and some students from Southam College came to provide one-to-one assistance in getting those memories recorded.

Linda did a short presentation about the research and memories she had done on the cottage her grandparents lived in and afterwards with Bernard they both chatted to everyone, including the Southam students.

We made some excellent contacts with people new to recording local history, and at least one of the students will be helping us in our 2017 exhibitions. As well as



putting stories on to the *Our Warwickshire* site, we also have a section on our own website www.southamheritage.org for Southam memories and research, and there is a facility for people to add comments onto already published articles on the *Southam History* page.

Here are the website links for more information:

<http://www.southamheritage.org/>

<http://www.ourwarwickshire.org.uk/index.php>

Getting Involved

A group like ourselves is always looking to expand our membership and we welcome new members whatever the level of contribution they make. Some are happy to help by just making a regular financial contribution via their membership subscription or our 200 Club. Others like to become more actively involved in some aspect of our work. Both types of contribution are much valued and appreciated.

As Southam's population grows we hope to grow too. We would therefore ask anyone who reads this newsletter to think about whether they personally could help or perhaps they could mention the Collection and its work to their friends, colleagues or neighbours. We would very much like to talk to anyone who has an interest in local history or even thinks they would like to know more about what is involved. We are very happy to talk to you on a no-obligation basis.

One specific area we are looking for some help with right now is someone to take the minutes at our Management meetings. At present we are a very small Committee and our Secretary, Linda is heavily involved with exhibition and research work. To be relieved of the Minute-taking task would free up some of her time for other tasks.

Meetings are held approximately every 6 weeks and the role would involve nothing more than taking the notes at the meetings and typing them up – about 2 or 3 hours work every 6 weeks. Of course you would also have the opportunity to learn all about what we are doing and why! Could you help? Why not just come to a meeting and see what goes on – no prior commitment necessary or expected. Please telephone Linda on 01926 814214 or Bernard on 01926 613503 if you would like to find out more.

Contributions

The Management committee relies heavily on volunteers and donations from many other sources. Val Brodie and Chris Jerome continue to receive material for their Centenary Archive project. Chris Holding who stewards the exhibitions also helps spread the word by engaging with her neighbours when they make interesting finds in their back gardens!

Paul Catterall (of Catteralls Coaches) called in during the Summer with a fantastic model cement lorry to loan to the "Cementing Relations" exhibition as well as a unique calendar poster. Numerous other people (far too many to mention

here) loaned or gave items during the course of both 2016 exhibitions. We are very grateful to them all. Do you have any stories, pictures or items we might be interested in? We are always happy to take digital copies of interesting historical documents and photos for inclusion in the Collection. Please give us a call if you think you might have something to add to our archives.

Members' Visit to Badby

On the evening of 26th July, a small band of members went to Badby, just over the border in Northamptonshire. We had been invited to a heritage evening hosted by Ken and Helen Morris. Helen has been a stalwart of the Friends, Trustee and Committee member for many years, and moved from Southam to Badby two and a half years ago. Their new home is a beautiful thatched Listed cottage, parts of which date from the 14th Century. We had a delightful evening, being given a tour of the building and a talk about its history. Until 2005 the cottage had been Northamptonshire's only Youth Hostel, in fact the only thatched Hostel in the UK.



Summer History Talks

This summer for the first time we experimented with a couple of history talks in Tithe Place. The first talk in June complemented our "Cementing Relations in Southam" exhibition and was by John Frearson. John is the Cemex archivist and helped us to curate the exhibition. This was an interesting and informative evening talk about the local cement industry and was attended by about 30 visitors, some coming from quite a distance.

Unfortunately due to difficulties accessing Tithe Place in the evening it is unlikely that we will be holding further evening talks there. However a meeting held in the same room during the daytime proved to be far easier.

The daytime talk was Bernard's "Shaping of Southam" talk. This talk has been heard by many groups from the surrounding area already, but had still not been heard by many people in the town. This talk was held on a Thursday morning in Tithe Place, which provided an excellent venue for approximately 30 visitors.

Prior to the talk, visitors were able to buy a drink in the café and bring it in, or if they preferred, to have coffee together in the café afterwards. This proved to be ideal, with some people even staying for lunch.

A small entry of £2 per person was charged to cover room hire costs and as these talks are proving to be popular, we will be including more talks in next year's diary.

Warwickshire Local History Society 'Walk & Talk'

On 11th June we hosted a daytime visit by members of the Warwickshire Local History Society. Our popular Walk and Talk events usually take place in the Summer months, and are available for any group interested in getting to know Southam better. The walk takes in most of the prominent town centre heritage features, it lasts about an hour, and is followed by refreshments. This was a large group of about 30 history enthusiasts, so we hired the activity room in Tithe Place for our end of walk refreshments. It was a rewarding morning, and our visitors enjoyed strolling around the town in two groups with their guides, Bernard and Linda.



History Rambles 2017

Working in partnership with Southam Ramblers, we took part in a very successful and enjoyable heritage walk around the village of Wormleighton and its nearby canal towpath on 3rd August.

The walk was approximately 4 miles with beautiful old buildings and scenery to enjoy, and featured several 'stops' to learn more about the history of the village and its surroundings. About 25 people did the walk, and in 2017 we are planning another heritage walk around Ladbroke as part of the Ramblers regular walks programme. This will be on Wednesday July 12th, and if you would like to come along, please let us know.

Southam Town Trail & Holy Well Walk leaflets

These popular leaflets were originally produced as part of the Holy Well renovation project in 2000. They have been enjoyed by many visitors to the town as well as local residents, and are currently being updated by the Southam Civic Ideas Forum group (which includes three members of our Committee). The new versions of these leaflets will be available in Spring 2017. They include a map and guide, and describe many of the heritage features in the town and along the walk around the Stoneythorpe estate via the Holy Well.

Southam Local History Fair & Valuation Day

An exciting new venture is currently in the planning stage, with a provisional date of either 13th or 20th May 2017. We have recently been in talks with the PCC of Southam St James Church to explore the possibility of using the Church building for a History Fair and Antiques / Collectables Valuation day. Linda has already been in touch with several local history groups and a valuation company who are all keen to take part. More details to follow soon.

Colin Haywood

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of one of our long-standing members, Colin Haywood in September. Colin lived in Pendicke Street and was an enthusiastic volunteer spending many happy hours at the Old Labour Exchange and Vivian House helping to document the Collection. He was a keen Rambler and Bowls Club member, and particularly enjoyed our heritage social evenings. He will be sadly missed.

Some Dates for Your Diary

Saturday Nov 5th 2016: John Turner Festival of Arts Crafts & Hobbies, Southam College

Tuesday 3rd Jan 2017: Spring Exhibition opens

Saturday 13th or 20th May: Local History Fair in partnership with St James Church

Monday 29th May 2017: Summer Exhibition: 'A Pint of Ale' opens (on Carnival Day)

Wednesday 12th July: Heritage Ramble around, Ladbroke, with Southam Ramblers

Thursday 20th July: 'Shakespeare in Southam' a talk complementing the summer exhibition and based on the Craven Arms Inn

Southam Heritage Collection

Vivian House, 21 Market Hill, Southam, CV47 0HE

www.southamheritage.org email: southamheritage@hotmail.com



General Information & Contacts:

The Collection belongs to the people of Southam. It is managed by Trustees and a Committee elected by the Friends of the Cardall Collection. Membership of the Friends is open to anyone with an interest in the history of Southam and the surrounding area. If you would like to find out how you can support our work, please telephone either the Chairman, Bernard on 01926 613503 or Secretary Linda on 01926 814214. Alternatively, you can email us on:

southamheritage@hotmail.com or message us via our Facebook page "Southam Heritage Collection". (If you are a Facebook user, please 'Like' and Share our page to help spread the word about Southam and its heritage.)

Opening Times at the Basement, Vivian House, Market Hill:

We are open on Tuesday mornings between 10am and 12 noon. When our exhibitions are on, we also open on Saturday mornings. We can open at other times by arrangement. Please note access to the Vivian House basement is via stairs, so may be difficult for those with restricted mobility. If you would like to arrange a private visit, please contact Bernard on 01926 613503.

Volunteering, Membership, Donations:

If you would like to join the Friends please contact us and we will send you an application form. The form includes a Gift Aid Declaration that taxpayers are asked to sign to enable us to reclaim the tax you have paid on your subscription or donation. Membership is renewable on 1st October each year. Donations are welcome at any time! Cheques should be made payable to 'Friends of the Cardall Collection'. You can also donate online at mydonate.bt.com

Southam "Walk and Talk":

A short guided tour of Southam on level footpaths to see some of its most interesting buildings, and hear something about their history, followed by an opportunity for tea and chat at a town centre venue. Available for groups of up to a maximum of 20 people, the Walk and Talk lasts in total about 2 hours and costs £5 per person. Contact: Linda on 01926 814214.

Presentations, Talks, Exhibitions:

We can attend one of your group meetings or visit your premises and give a presentation and talk about aspects of Southam's history tailored to your interests. Contact Bernard on 01926 613503 or Linda on 01926 814214 to discuss your requirements. (A fee will be charged by agreement.) If you have any artefacts, documents or photographs that you would be prepared to loan for one of our forthcoming exhibitions (see Newsletter for details), we would love to hear from you.

Events & Festivals:

If you would like us to have a stall at your event or festival please contact Jenny on 01926 814643

200 Club:

Tickets cost just £5 per annum, and your number is entered into a monthly draw. The prize is £10 each month, increasing substantially in November and May depending on the number of tickets sold. All proceeds go towards supporting the work of the Friends. Enquiries to Jenny on 01926 814643

Copies of Photographs:

We have a growing archive of photographs of Old Southam and surrounding area. Copies are available to purchase. All enquiries to Bernard on 01926 613503