

Southam Heritage Collection

(formerly The Cardall Collection)

NEWSLETTER

No 25: Spring / Summer 2020



Chairman's Update

What a difference a few weeks can make! Back in January we'd just had our highly successful Christmas Exhibition and received a terrific response to our Christmas Raffle. We had a great new exhibition in place, 'Southam Bobbies', featuring 100 years of policing in Southam, from the days when the first Police Station was set up in Oxford Street. For this exhibition we had taken a big step forward by working with a professional graphic designer, Richard Marshall-Hardy from Harbury. Richard volunteered his design skills to produce the posters for the new exhibition, and we had also received great support from members of the Warwickshire Constabulary History Society.

Then in March a completely new disease suddenly spread westwards from China. We, along with the rest of the country, found ourselves overtaken by the impact of the measures being put in place to try to counter its potentially lethal effects.

Like everyone else we had virtually no time to plan any mitigation, and our Exhibition Room was closed, along with the Café and Library at Tithe Place. Linda was able to position some of the exhibition posters in our Project Room window so that they could still be viewed while we were closed. However, official rules to stay at home and avoid unnecessary journeys would undoubtedly limit the numbers of passers-by.

Now, after two months in 'lockdown' we still don't know when we will be able to re-open the museum, or what extra measures will be required to protect our volunteers and the public. However, we are positive that we will eventually be able to continue our activities, especially with the support we receive from the public, our members, local businesses and the Town Council.

Fortunately, our finances are currently in a reasonable state. We have received a number of grants recently for 'capital' expenditure associated with specific projects, and have also received some very welcome business donations towards running costs.

The biggest expense we have, of course, is the £5,100 per annum that we have to pay to Stratford District Council for renting the two rooms in Tithe Place. We have asked for the rent to be waived whilst we are unable to access our rooms, and are hopeful that Stratford District Council will look favourably on our request.

We do rely on the sales of merchandise, donations and other fund-raising initiatives, such as the 200 Club, talks, organised walks and coffee mornings to help pay the rent. Obviously income from many of those sources is no longer coming in, but we remain hopeful that the museum will survive and thrive. You can find out about ways you can support us through this difficult time later in this newsletter.

Keep safe everyone, and we hope to see you soon.

Jacky Graham (née Cardall)

We were all extremely saddened to learn of the death of Jacky Graham in April.



Jacky was the only daughter of Jack Cardall, (founder of the Cardall Collection), and had been undergoing treatment for cancer for some time. Unfortunately she slipped whilst reaching out to pick up her phone and suffered a fractured hip. She had emergency surgery and although the operation was a success, she never entirely recovered.

Southam Heritage Collection (incorporating the Cardall Collection and 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.

Jacky died peacefully at her beloved Beech Loft, which she and her late husband Ken had transformed into a beautiful home in the grounds of Beech Hurst where she had grown up.

In the photograph above, Jacky holds a WW1 nursing certificate from one of her great aunts. Jacky was a passionate supporter of the Collection, and had been involved with so many different groups in Southam throughout her life. She was one of the nicest persons one could ever expect to meet with her charming, smiling demeanour and willingness to help, no matter what the request. She will be greatly missed.

'Southam Bobbies' Exhibition

For our opening exhibition of 2020 we worked with the Warwickshire Constabulary History Society (WCHS) and produced an interesting display based on the timeline of one hundred years of Southam Police Inspectors from 1840 to 1940. Marton Museum also loaned us a few items once owned by one of Marton's Victorian constables, and, with the police artefacts collected by Jack Cardall, we had plenty to interest in our three illuminated display cases.

Bernard put together an informative video of how the police force evolved, that we will use as the basis of a talk in the future. Volunteer Richard Marshall-Hardy kindly designed the set of twelve display boards for us, which we had professionally printed. Our first exhibition of 2020 went public from 14th January.

During the children's February half term week, Richard Woodcock and Terry Gardner from WCHS, dressed up as old-fashioned police constables, interacted with the visiting children and provided them with small prizes if they completed a quiz. This made for an enjoyable and lively half term in the Exhibition Room.

Sadly, after being open for little more than 2½ months of its planned 5-month run, we had to close the Exhibition when Tithe Place shut its doors to the public because of the Covid-19 coronavirus.

We don't yet know when we can re-open. Many people who wanted to, did not have the chance to see the exhibition. However, the display boards are so well done that we will be able to bring them out again in the future, at Tithe Place and perhaps at other venues.

If you are passing, please note, a selection of the display boards is currently available to view in our High Street-facing windows opposite the Tithe Place access ramp. These windows are a small blessing, and should we have to keep the exhibition room closed for many more months, we can

continue to keep them filled with displays visible from the outside of the building.

Atrium Window Displays

Since the start of the New Year we have been replacing our internal atrium window displays each month with a range of topical information boards. We are always happy to hear if anyone wishes to have a particular subject featured. In normal times, these small displays are very well positioned for the general public to see on their way into the Tithe Place café or the Library.



Atrium window with Long Itchington History Society photographs.

In March we received a grant from the Heart of England Co-op's Helping Hearts Awards to purchase two new display boards that are better suited to the layout of the atrium windows.

In the week we closed for 'lockdown' we had put together a display about the historical background of the wooden hut in Craven Lane – known to many as 'The Welfare Hut'. This display was timed to coincide with the receipt of a generous donation from the Craven Lane Hall Committee. The display will remain in place for all to see when Tithe Place reopens.

2021 Calendar

We have started work on designing our popular Heritage calendar for 2021. It will feature another set of fascinating photographs from the Collection, and we plan to have it ready for sale in the early Autumn.

Several of our loyal supporters from the local business community have already agreed to sponsor a page of the calendar, despite the trading difficulties and economic pressures they will be under this year.

We do hope that many of you will buy a copy when it becomes available, and will also continue to support our local businesses.

200 Club

The current 200 Club lottery draws to a close at the end of May, with the final bonus prize draw of £50. The new 200 Club lottery will be launched from 1st June, so now is the time to buy your tickets!

Last year was the first time we actually sold all 200 tickets, and we are very much hoping that our current supporters will renew their subscription for another year. However, if demand is higher, we will extend the number of tickets available so that everyone who wants to take part can have a chance to win that monthly cash prize.

The ticket price remains the same at just £5 per annum, and you can buy as many tickets as you like. You can buy tickets at any time, and your numbers will be entered into every draw from the date of purchase up to the final draw in May 2021. The first draw of the new 'season' takes place at the end of June, so we would encourage you to buy your tickets now so that you will have your numbers entered into all 12 draws.

If you would like to renew your 200 Club membership, or would like to buy new tickets, please visit our website, where there is a link on the home page to the Application Form and 200 Club rules. Alternatively, please email us or contact the promoter, Treasurer Pam McConnell on 01926 814923.

Good Luck, and thank you for supporting us.

Flying Fields Estate Memorial

A huge new housing estate of over 500 dwellings is currently under construction on the right hand side of Daventry Road just outside Southam. The estate is named 'Flying Fields' after Southam's former airfield on which it is being built.



In November last year we were asked to attend the unveiling of a memorial at Flying Fields to those who had served at the RAF Station which had been there during WW2 and earlier.

The airfield was used primarily as a training base with trainee pilots being ferried in from a wide area

for basic flying training. It then served as a base for preparations for the D-Day landings.

Rowan Parker, Trustee and Committee member, remembers his WW2 childhood in Southam, well before doing his National Service in the Army in the late 1940s. He was asked to read part of the service during the unveiling of this striking memorial. The memorial sculpture is visible just inside the entrance to the new housing estate and features a 'plane taking off and a runway motif.

Cardall's Corner

At the time of writing, the District Advertiser Magazine that kindly features an article on a heritage theme for us each month, is not being printed. However we are still producing a monthly Cardall's Corner and these fascinating articles and many others are available to read on our Website.

In April we published an article by Linda Doyle about the VE Day 'Victory' Bell. The May article was all about the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918 – very topical. If you do not have internet access and would like a printed copy of these latest articles, please do let us know. We are hoping to produce a series of booklets comprised of past Cardall's Corner articles later this year.

If you would like to contribute an article related to Southam's history that might be of interest to the general public, please get in touch. New authors are always welcome!

What Happens Next?

Like everyone else, we are waiting for the time when Covid-19 ceases to be a major problem, and 'normal' life can be resumed – albeit with 'measures' in place to protect us all from the virus.

Our 2020 Summer Exhibition was to have been all about Southam in the Post-WW2 era. Planning was well under way and we had also begun compiling a series of articles written by local people about what life was like for Southam and its residents during the War years. This was to have coincided with the 75th Anniversary of the end of the War but obviously, like many other events, it will have to be postponed until next year.

Our Christmas exhibition will once again feature the stories behind the photographs that appear in next year's Heritage Calendar. If we are able to re-open this Summer, we will resume the Southam Bobbies exhibition. If not, we will continue to use the exterior windows for displays.

All the best to you all!



General Information:

Southam Heritage Collection belongs to the people of Southam. It incorporates the Cardall Collection, the Alan Griffin photographic archive and other items donated by local people. It is managed by Trustees and a Committee. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in the history of Southam and the surrounding area. If you would like to talk about how you can support our work, please telephone either the Chairman, Bernard on 01926 613503 or Secretary Linda on 01926 814214 or call in to see us when we are open. 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' our page and share our posts to help spread the word.)

Exhibition Opening Times at Tithe Place, High Street, Southam:

Our exhibition room is in the main atrium of Tithe Place, High Street opposite the Library entrance. We are normally open on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday mornings between 10am and 12 noon. We can open at other times by arrangement. If you would like to arrange a private or group visit outside normal opening times, please contact Bernard on 01926 613503

Volunteering, Membership, Donations:

If you would like to become a member of the group please contact us and we will send you an application form. Once a member, you could then let us know if you are able to volunteer any time or skills, but please note, volunteering is not compulsory. The application form includes a Gift Aid Declaration that taxpayers are asked to sign to enable us to reclaim the tax 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 'Southam Heritage Collection' or paid direct to our Lloyds Account Sort Code: 30 99 13 Account No: 31344868. Please also nominate SHC as your chosen charity when buying online through Smile Amazon, and we will receive a small donation from Amazon (at no cost to you) every time you shop.

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 donation will be requested, by agreement.)

If you have any artefacts, documents or photographs that you would be prepared to loan for one of our forthcoming exhibitions we would love to hear from you.

200 Club:

Our 200 Club lottery runs from June to May each year. Tickets cost just £5 per annum and you can join at any time. Your numbers are entered into a monthly draw. The cash prize is £10 each month, increasing substantially in November and May depending on the number of tickets sold. All proceeds go to help with our running costs. Enquiries to our Treasurer, Pam on 01926 814923

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

***Thank you for reading this Newsletter.
Please feel free to pass it on to your friends, relatives and colleagues.***