

Southam Heritage Collection

(formerly The Cardall Collection)

NEWSLETTER

No 29: Summer 2022



Chairman's Update

Summer is fast approaching, and we may be past the longest day by the time you read this, which means we are a bit late updating you on activities and progress at the Heritage Collection, so my apologies for that.

We are still not seeing the same number of visitors as we did before the pandemic, but we are by no means the only organisation experiencing a drop in numbers. It is as if people have forgotten the habit of going out to non-essential places so activity in our Exhibition Room has been quiet on some days, but hopefully activity will return as time goes by.



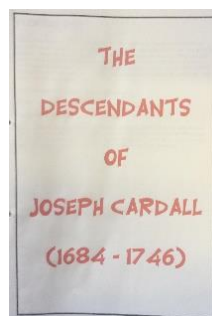
One thing that has increased though is contact from sources further afield. Back in October we obtained a card payment device allowing the purchase of our books and calendars

from across the country and in some cases from overseas. This was used extensively over Christmas and continues at a low but steady pace generating revenue we would not otherwise receive.

Authors researching history relating to Southam have been asking for assistance which we have been happy to provide. At least two of these books will be published later this year, one hopefully in time for the Southam Book Festival which will be at the Graham Adams Centre on Sunday October 16th 11am – 4 pm.

We've also had contact from overseas via the web and in person – In the middle of May for instance, a lady who was born in Southam but who now lives in the US dropped in to take a look and purchased several items. Another lady and her grandson also visited from the US and we were able to tell her where her father lived as a child and where to visit to walk in his footsteps.

We also had one of the sons of the late John Cardall, who now lives in Dorset, drop in to view



the Exhibition and our Cardall Family History records as they travelled north for a trip to Scotland. They had stopped overnight with Robert Cardall's family.

Work on creating an electronic record of the Collection is progressing rapidly thanks to the efforts of Sue and Jim Taylor plus Mick Smart. As a result we now have over 90% of catalogued items available in digital form. We have probably photographed and digitised over 1,000 items since the last Newsletter, but there are many more still to be done. This work makes it much easier for us to respond to requests for information and also helps preserve items in the Collection by eliminating handling and physical contact.

Finally thank you all for your tremendous support and remember we are always grateful for any thoughts or ideas you may have on what we are doing or might do in the future – don't hesitate to contact us.

Window Displays

Linda has been doing a first-class job keeping our two windows regularly updated with new displays – they currently feature the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in keeping with the rest of the town. In addition, we have provided a second Jubilee display for one of the two windows at Southam Office Supplies on Market Hill, so don't forget to look when you go past.



A lady who worked on the archaeology at Flying Fields has set us up a window display on the Roman archaeology found on the site and that will soon be going up in the atrium window. She will follow this up later in the year with the Medieval archaeology found on the site.

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.

We will be doing a window display in the big front window to support the Southam Open Gardens over the weekend of July 16th – 17th 11 am – 5 pm, when we will be open as well. We will feature the 1914 Flower Show Cup and while there, do have a look at the lovely new planter in front of the Library, designed to be part of the Holy Well and Southam Millennium Stories sculpture - the latter is away at the moment in Kent being restored. The plaques on the planter commemorate the Queen's 70th Jubilee and 30 years of French Twinning with Marolles-en-Hurepoix, all organised and paid for by the Twinning Association and SCIF.



Photo taken over the Jubilee weekend with the French visitors.

'Sisters' School' Exhibition

The first exhibition of this year came about because the family of Mary Rock who wrote the book "The Sisters' School", gave us permission to reprint it.

This simple exhibition has been visited by many past pupils of St Mary's School, as well as several ladies who lived at the Convent around the WW2 period. We've been given some lovely memories for our archives of their time with the Sisters and consequently we've learnt a lot more about living there. If you know anyone who could contribute their own memories of the Convent, please do ask them - notes are fine as we can put them together into a story or add them with others.

Meanwhile, thanks must go to one of our newer volunteers, Roland Raffell, who has spent the last few months deepening the research on the Sisters, the Convent and the school, and has put together a very comprehensive set of notes for our archives.

Future Exhibitions

This summer's exhibition will be a Timeline of Southam History. We have 20 posters featuring prominent dates associated with Southam's history and once it has finished, selected posters will

remain up in the Exhibition Room for outside visitors and new people to the town to see alongside our specialist exhibitions. Hence broadening the interest in local history.

We have already got next year's summer 2023 exhibition in hand. One of Southam's retired doctors from the Stowe Drive Practice, Dr Alastair Robson, has been researching Henry Lilley Smith, who set up the Eye and Ear Hospital in the 19th century in the building which is now the Warwick House wedding venue (once the Stoneythorpe Hotel). Next year is the 200th Anniversary of the Southam Dispensary on this site. Dr Robson's hard back book is due to be published at the end of October and Linda has already read the draft and can recommend it as an excellent read.

So next summer's exhibition will be based on Henry Lilley Smith. One exhibition cabinet will be used to display a selection of rather gruesome medical instruments which belonged to Dr Smorfitt, that have been donated to the Collection on permanent loan by Dr John Shenkman, a colleague of Dr Robson. So come and take a look, but do be prepared to shudder!

Dr Smorfitt is remembered by many older residents of the town, though his notoriety was not so much as a doctor but as a breeder of race horses!

A Question for You !

We occasionally get supporters bringing items into Tithe Place to see if we are interested in adding them to the Collection. Obviously, we have limited space so we cannot accept everything, especially physical objects although paper items like photographs are more easily accommodated.



A few weeks ago, a small bag was left outside the Exhibition room with two photographs – one of these is shown here and we would love to know some more about it. It appears to be a photo of graduates from St John's College Cambridge in

1918 – all bar one of the men (and they are all men) are dressed in formal attire with the other dressed in Army uniform. If you know anything about this photo like who some of the men are and its relevance to Southam, we would dearly love to know. Please drop us an email to southamheritage@hotmail.com or call in to the Exhibition room when we are open.

2023 Calendar

Despite the last two years being so difficult for us, we still managed to print and sell our historical calendar in sufficient numbers to raise a third of our rent in Tithe Place. So it is with delight we will be offering a historical calendar for 2023 that is once again sponsored each month by 12 different Southam businesses. So do keep your eyes open for it come the autumn, when as usual it will be used as the basis for the end of year Christmas Exhibition and if you can, support these businesses in return..

We have one available month left to sponsor if anyone knows of an interested local business or person. We only ask for a minimum sponsorship of £50.

200 Club

We have welcomed a new volunteer, Sue Nason, who will be taking over the running of our very successful 200 Club from Pam with effect from this year – the year starts in June so if you haven't bought a ticket, or renewed your tickets, there is still time to do so – details can be found on our web site or drop in to the Exhibition Room on a Tue, Thur, Fri or Saturday morning between 10 and 12. There is a special email for the 200 Club direct contact with Sue at: SHC200Club@hotmail.com

History Clubs and Talks

Rowan Parker, assisted by Linda, has started a monthly morning local history club with the Tithe Place residents based on the history of Southam and this seems to be much appreciated – in no small way due to Rowan's encyclopaedic knowledge of the Town over the past 90 years. It is held on the first Thursday morning of the month, and if anyone else would like to chat to the residents with their memories of old Southam, please let Linda know.

In the past we have tried doing evening or daytime history talks, but with the difficulty of finding a suitable room and the expense of providing such talks, it hasn't been viable. However, if anyone

does want to listen to local history talks, we have teamed up with the Long Itchington History Group as the nearest on our doorstep. They meet on the second Wednesday at 7.30 pm in the Long Itchington Community Room at the Primary School. SHC members and friends are welcome and they are 'pay-on-the-door', £3 per meeting. Tea and biscuits are provided afterwards and are usually finished around 9 o'clock. They start their new program in September on Wednesday 14th with the talk "Southam Bobbies" by Linda Doyle, followed on October 12th by Tim Clark talking about St Mary's Church, Warwick between 12th -18th C.

As time has gone on, Bernard and Linda have found the request for history talks has returned and our guided town walks started again just after Easter. We will be doing the Heritage Open Days (HODs) guided town walks for free on September 16th and 17th, booking is preferred but not required.

So if anyone wants a history talk for a group they belong to, then please contact either of us. Normally there is a minimum charge of £35 for a talk (depending on the size and type of group), but Linda has also been doing some regular more informal style meetings with smaller groups of less than a dozen and the charge for these is much less. For instance, she has been doing 'audio talks' for the visually impaired and will be putting together some 'handling boxes'. If something similar should interest any other groups, then have a chat with Linda. She is happy to do such informal meetings in anyone's house as well.

Student and Volunteer Work

Later in the Summer, Bernard and Linda hope to welcome an A Level student from Southam College for a week's work experience – we have worked out a plan for the week and if successful we hope to be able to make similar offers in future years.

We would also like to offer the Saturday morning Exhibition Room experience (10 – 12 noon) to history students over the age of 16 years, should anyone know an interested person. At all times they will be in the Exhibition Room in public view and will be interacting with visitors and other volunteers there.

Future Events

Southam in Bloom July 16th – 17th 11am – 4pm.
Coffee Morning Friday August 12th 10am – 12pm at St James' Church.
"Southam Bobbies" talk Wednesday Sept 14th 7.30pm at Long Itchington Community Centre.
HODs Guided Town Walks September 16th – 17th at 10am, 11am and 12 pm from the church.
Southam Book Festival Oct 16th 11am – 4pm.



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 for free on Tuesday, Thursday, 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

Membership, Volunteering, Donations:

If you would like to become a member please contact us and we will send you an application form or you can download it from our web site www.southamheritage.org 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 payable to 'Southam Heritage Collection' or paid direct to our Lloyds Account Sort Code: 30 99 13 Account No: 31344868. 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.

Smile Amazon:

Please nominate Southam Heritage Collection 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.

SumUp:

Historical publications can be bought from our Exhibition Room in Tithe Place or from our 'On-Line Shoppe' via your debit/credit card and SumUp. <https://shc.sumup.link>

Southam Guided Walks:

Please contact Linda on 01926 814214 for guided town walks to suit your group. Or join the free Heritage Open Day walks usually presented annually in September.

Presentations and Talks:

We can attend your meetings with an illustrated talk about Southam's history tailored to your interests, or for small groups a more informal presentation. A donation will be requested depending on the size of your group. Contact Bernard on 01926 613503 or Linda on 01926 814214 to discuss your requirements.

200 Club:

Our 200 Club lottery runs from June to May annually. Tickets cost just £5 per annum and you can join at any time. Application forms are available on our web site or from Tithe Place. Your numbers are entered into a monthly draw. The cash prize is £10 each month, increasing substantially for November and May. Enquiries to Pam 01926 814923 or Sue on SHC200Club@hotmail.com

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

www.southamheritage.org

southamheritage@hotmail.com

Thank you for reading this Newsletter.

Please feel free to pass it on to your friends, relatives and colleagues.