

Southam Heritage Collection

Tithe Place, High St, Southam 01926 613503 Registered Charity No 1173033



NEWSLETTER

No 31: Spring / Summer 2023

Chairman's Update

Although 2022 is long over it is probably fair to let you know that from a Collection viewpoint 2022 was a pretty successful year. It wasn't without the usual set of problems but equally all things considered I think it can be seen as a significant success and I would like to express my considerable thanks to all our volunteers for their efforts in contributing to this success. Our volunteers make the Collection. Without them nothing would be possible. We are lucky to have a significant group of hard working and enthusiastic people giving their time and skills. Thank you all for your time, skills and effort.

One of the big successes at the end of 2022 was the sale of Christmas raffle tickets, partly due to the selling skills of volunteers in the Exhibition Room and partly due to the generosity of Tesco's who provided much of the first prize hamper which was significantly larger than previous years. Ticket sales numbers were fantastic.

The start of a New Year is nearly always something of an anti-climax after the excitement of the run-up to Christmas and the New Year celebrations but this year the problems were compounded by the closure of the Tithe Place Café in January. This produced a covid-like reduction in the number of people coming into Tithe Place which was not something we had expected. Now at the time of writing (end April) we still have a closed café, however we are hopefully optimistic that things are about to change significantly for the better and that by the end of May the café will be open once more under the management of a much more dynamic and entrepreneurial organisation. Keep your fingers crossed.

The cafe was not the only problem at Tithe Place. We also had major issues with the heating, but fortunately not quite so bad as some of the residents experienced. For some reason the underfloor heating went into shutdown and some residents and the Library were without heating during some of the coldest periods of the year. Fortunately, we are not reliant on the underfloor heating except in that it keeps the corridor outside

the Exhibition room and the public toilets at a reasonable temperature. Major repairs have now been made to the heating system including replacing all the valves for the public areas of Tithe Place, which are situated in our Exhibition Room, and it appears that things are back to normal now.

In addition to the major Spring Exhibition featuring the Southam Workhouse (see later for more details) we also have two displays in our interior Atrium windows and our exterior window on High Street. The later features 4 large posters describing the impact of the English Civil War on the residents of Warwickshire including Southam.



If you get an opportunity take a look at these posters asap – there is a lot of information on them visible outside of our normal opening hours and they are on loan from another organisation so when they come down at the end of May we will not have access to it any more.

Spring Exhibitions until end of May

Southam Workhouse

The exhibition in Tithe Place on the Southam Workhouse, which was located on the site of Southam Primary School in Welsh Road, has been

Southam Heritage Collection (incorporating the Cardall Collection and Alan Griffin photographic archive) is registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales (Number 1173033) comprising artefacts, documents, photographs and memorabilia associated with Southam and its surrounding villages. The Collection is housed at Tithe Place in the centre of Southam, where it can be displayed, used and appreciated by residents, visitors, local history societies, schools, reminiscence groups and researchers.

well received and will close at the end of May. Research by our volunteers has been extensive and one, Roland Raffell, has been visiting Warwick Record Office on a regular basis for more information using old Southam records held there. This has resulted in a fascinating book which is now being finalised ready for publication.

Linda has also done a couple of informal talks on the subject to Southam and district groups, which have been well received raising funds towards keeping the rooms in Tithe Place open for us.

English Civil War Loss Accounts

Linda, along with some other local historians, was privileged to be involved in a Dugdale and Warwick Record Office Project researching the Warwickshire Loss Accounts from the 17thc Civil War period held in the National Archives, and we have had 4 in-depth and very interesting posters up in our High Street window, available to read 24/7, depicting what the Loss Accounts are and what was found in them. This exhibition is supported with items in one of our display cabinets in the Exhibition Room, and will also remain open until the end of May. Don't forget, if you have young children there is an excellent £1 children's magazine available from us, as well as the comprehensive "Battle of Southam" book, also used by the Southam College students and teachers recently.

Summer Exhibition from June

Medical Matters

This exhibition, replacing the early 2023 exhibitions, will start at the beginning of June and is based on Dr Alastair Robson's excellent book on Dr Henry Lilley Smith and Southam's Eye and Ear Hospital, which was in Warwick House, once the Stoneythorpe Hotel, on Warwick Road.

Henry Lilley Smith was a medical practitioner in Southam and perhaps more importantly a prominent social reformer who engaged with his local and national counterparts to bring about dramatic improvements in the health care of the majority of the population. It can be argued that his continual belabouring of the need for reform of health care was a contributing factor in the development of ideas leading to the formation of the National Health Service.

Our display cabinets will contain items from Dr Smorfitt's medical bag, which is in our possession, and will be well worth a look. Plus, there will be some **Show & Tell** mornings hosted by Dr John Shenkman and Dr Robson, so look out for posters in our Tithe Place Exhibition Room door saying when these will occur. We also hope to have Dr John Wilmott give us a history talk on Warwickshire

Dispensaries that came into being due to Lilley Smith. If there is enough interest, we may try out a members-only talk in our Project Room with Dr Robson and Linda. Please contact Linda if you would be interested in participating.

200 Club Renewals

Our 200 Club is a key source of revenue for the Collection and while providing us with a significant proportion of the funds we need to keep the Collection going, it also provides participants with an opportunity to win double the price of their ticket each month and £50 every 6 months. Sue Nason is very kindly handling the administration of the 200 Club and she will be contacting members during May to seek renewals of their tickets.

200 Club Winners 2022 - 23



E Jamieson No. 157

A Cragg No. 64

M Jones No. 49

M Hyland No. 248

P Jackson No. 51

A Keanes No. 137

K Morris No. 96

C Barney No. 193

M Adams No. 221

P Miller No. 111

For a chance to win, and support Southam's Heritage Collection, email SHC200Club@hotmail.com or visit our web site www.southamheritage.org

Tickets £5 per year, 12 chances, starting in June, but its never too late!



The last draw for the 2022/3 year will take place at the end of May so renewals will soon be due to participate in the 2023/4 series. Tickets cost £5 for 12 draws commencing in June 2023. Some of our supporters have bought tickets as a small present for their grandchildren either as a reward for some special achievement or perhaps as part of a birthday gift if the timing is appropriate.

Sue would very much appreciate it if you could set up a standing order to pay your subscription automatically each year since it would minimise her workload and also ensure you did not miss out on your opportunity to win.

If you have any questions, you can contact Sue at the email address above or via the application form also available from the web site address above.

Christmas Hamper Raffle

Thank you to all the local Southam traders who provided or sponsored prizes for our end of year annual Hamper Raffle. Winner of the 2022 1st Prize Hamper, mainly sponsored by Tesco, was one of our long-standing members, Mike Hill.

We also had sponsored by other town centre businesses, a fruit and vegetable hamper (Shane from Thursday Market), a cosmetic hamper and a further 7 prizes.

1 st	Christmas hamper	M Hill
2 nd	Fruit & Veg hamper	Mr Burford
3 rd	Carl's Cafe Tea for 2	P Myhill
4 th	Solas Home	M Adams
5 th	Goodwin & Sons item	J Truder
6 th	Bottle liqueur	S Trotman
7 th	Open cards pack	B Round
8 th	Cosmetics hamper	J Knapp
9 th	Children's Artist pack	C Lowe
10 th	Family History	Paula

We raised over £400 from the raffle, and look forward to doing another one at the end of this year.

AGM & Committee Changes

The Annual General Meeting took place on Tuesday October 4th in the Congregational Church Room on Wood Street.

The current Committee members agreed to stand again and were returned unopposed, but Pam McConnell, Committee member of the Friends of the Cardall Collection, first as Secretary then as Treasurer, has stepped down from the Committee after nearly 17 years, but is continuing to offer support as a member and volunteer. **So we are still looking** for someone to take on the Treasurer's position, or possibly one of the other committee positions if that person takes over the Treasurer role.

If anyone wishes to know more, please have a chat with Pam or call into Tithe Place and have a chat with other committee members, or attend our next Management Committee meeting which will be held on Tuesday June 7th at 14:00 in the Project Room in Tithe Place. Please could you let Linda know via our normal email address if you would like to attend and then she can make sure you are informed if the date and/or time changes.

The **2023 AGM** will be on **Tuesday October 3rd**, 7.30 pm, in the Congregational Church Room on Wood Street.

Timeline Book

This comprehensive book is still being written by several SHC members, with a view to being able to get it printed later this year.

The Timeline Exhibition posters are now all in place permanently around the higher wall of the Exhibition Room, a position great for new and old visitors to Southam to get an idea of what areas of history there are behind the town's 2,000 years of existence!

Money Matters

The Financial Year end was on 31st August 2022 and the accounts were once again prepared pro bono (no charge) by Grineaux Accountants on Market Hill, for which we are very grateful.

Merchandise sales are now making up 25% of income. Hence, due to the support of members of the Collection and the town, we have managed to get through the many months of Covid closures and financial difficulties, to come into 2023 in good financial health.

Southam Stories Sculpture

Southam Civic Ideas Forum (SCIF), headed by a very small but active committee with Len Gale as Chairman, have at long last organised the return and reconstruction of the refurbished wooden Southam Stories Sculpture, that until autumn last year, had stood in the Tithe Place grounds in front of the Library. Sadly, weather had taken its toll, and the five feet, legs and wood in general, had deteriorated so badly it had to be taken down and moved back to the sculpture, who spent the winter with it in his workshop cleaning and refurbishing it all.



Hence at the end of March, he was in the position of being able to supervise the replacement of the Sculpture back in the Tithe Place grounds, but this time on a new base provided by Terry Grey, on Park Lane instead. You can now come and see it in all its glory, and if you've forgotten what was behind it all, we have colour books available in our Exhibition Room (£5) telling what's behind the stories or you can use the QR code in our window and on our web



site or Facebook, linking to an e-book which you can download and read for free.

Window Displays

Making full use of our Atrium and High Street windows, means we can provide 2 exhibitions and mini-displays at any one time.

Hence since January, in our large High Street window, we have mounted a comprehensive window display featuring the recent work done on the 17th C Civil War Loss Accounts. The pull-up posters used, have been provided by the group who organised the research with a Heritage Lottery Grant, at no cost to us, but providing us with a very comprehensive exhibition of quality and interest.

This has been so successful, we will look to see if any other museums or groups are able to loan us any other pull-up posters for display on a similar basis.

We have had some excellent mini-displays in our Atrium window as well in the last few years, and this window is open to any group or person, who would like to provide a mini-display. Linda can help anyone interested in doing something, simply get in touch with her with your idea. It is easy to do, so don't be afraid to ask her!

The Atrium window is an ideal medium for advertising anything historical - in the past year we have displayed Jubilee Stories, new history books, archaeology from HS2 and new housing estates, family history and various Club anniversaries.

The TV in that window is also being used to good effect with short videos and moving pictures, and it is noticeable how many people (young and old) stop and watch the TV. The present video taken 10 years ago of the Battle of Southam is being followed by many as they look for familiar faces, places, and events from that weekend.

Dr Robson's book on HL Smith

Many of you will remember Dr Alastair Robson, from Southam Surgery and who is now retired. At our request, after he had researched and wrote a fascinating book all about the Hatton Asylum near Warwick, he has spent the last three years researching Southam's very own special historical doctor, Henry Lilley Smith, and we now have his book available on our website and in our exhibition room (£12). However, I bet once you start reading about Dr Smith, you will not want to stop, the subject and book is so interesting.



As with all our members, if you don't wish to purchase a book, we have copies for members which you can read when visiting our Project Room, or it is available from Southam Library. You can also purchase and order the book online via <https://shc.sumup.link> or using this QR code.



Ladbroke Treasure Trail

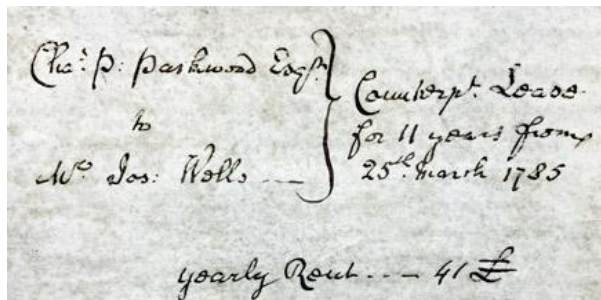
This is a historical trail around the village of Ladbroke. One booklet provides the clues and information for a family or group of friends (children/adult) to take an unusual walk round the village. There is no treasure to win, but it is a good 2 or 3 hours entertainment, especially for youngsters. It costs £5 per book, of which £1 goes to a Southam School and the £4 is split between the Southam and Ladbroke Heritage charity groups. Ideal for a summer holiday day out with a picnic, or finish at the Bell Inn for a drink, lunch or dinner.

Ongoing Projects

The Exhibition Room is the Heritage Collection's window in that it is there that most people become aware of the work done by our volunteers. Indeed, we have four volunteers who attend for one or two mornings each week to interface with members of the public, explain about the current exhibitions and act as our salespeople for those who want to buy booklets, cards and other items we have on sale. In addition, there are at least two other people who attend on an as-required basis when perhaps our regular stewards have an appointment elsewhere or maybe on holiday. We are very grateful to all these colleagues for their ongoing support. Sadly, at the time of writing two of our stewards are actually in hospital suffering from various, what we hope are, minor problems. We wish them a speedy recovery and can't wait to see them back in action.

Behind the scenes there is much more ongoing activity which may or may not be visible to the general public. For instance, we still have a significant number of items which need cataloguing and recording either through photographs or scanning. There are four people currently working on these projects and they typically come into the Project Room at Tithe Place, on one or two mornings each week, where we have the necessary computers and equipment to perform these tasks. Some physical items like scythes can pose interesting challenges just because of their sheer size, whilst others may require a significant amount of time to work through just what the document, and it usually is a document, is actually

describing. For instance, we have quite a large collection of Deeds relating to some of Southam's more interesting and older buildings. The picture below is an example of one such document. It is the title section of a document dated March 25th 1785 and describes the terms and conditions of a lease of property from a Charles P Packwood to a W Jos. Wells for 11 years for the sum of £41 per year.



The remainder of the document describes in very 'flowery' and probably legally correct language the details of the agreement. The parchment (and such documents are normally written on parchment), is approximately 3 feet by 2 feet in size and is usually one of a group.

We are trying to 'translate' these documents into easily readable English and then to piece together the history of whatever building or piece of land is involved. We have boxes of such deeds for places like the Black Dog Inn, the Flying Field estate, the Rookery and quite a few others and we have two people working in this area.

If you have any particular skills in reading or interpreting old English legal texts, or Wills, we would be very interested to speak with you and see if you could help our researchers, even if only on an occasional basis.

Wanted

- In our atrium window, we are also able to display for sale on our behalf, any donated historical article, so do speak to us.
- Tombola prizes for this summer and autumn please. Leave us anything at Tithe Place.
- We have a number of people volunteering as stewards in our Exhibition Room but we are still short of people to cover Saturday mornings from 10 – 12:00 either on a weekly basis or perhaps a regular every other week or monthly even. If you might be interested, please call in and we would be delighted to show and discuss with you what is involved.

2023/24 Diary

May 1st Monday Southam Lions May Day Event at the Bowling Green 1 pm – 4 pm. We have a tombola that afternoon.

May 6th Saturday. From 10 am. **Tithe Place Charity Day.** (Library open until 12.30 pm)

May 27th Family Fun Day. 1 pm Recreation Ground.

June 1st 200 Club. Remember new year due to start. £5 per ticket for 12 months.

June 7th Wednesday 2 pm Project Room in Tithe Place. Southam Heritage Collection Committee Meeting. Members welcome to attend. However, please let us know, rather than just turn up, but if just turning up works for you we would rather see you than not at all.

June 24 / 25th Weekend Harbury Sealed Knot Civil War Event.

July 15th Southam in Bloom Planter Competition on Tithe Place grounds.

August 11th Friday Coffee Morning 10 - 12 pm St James Church. Cakes, tombola and competition.

September 8th – 10th Friday/weekend Heritage Open Days (HODs) Town Walks. (Booking required).

October 3rd Tuesday AGM Congregational Church Wood Street, 7.30 pm.

October 3rd Tuesday Christmas and Calendar Exhibition opens. Hamper Raffle.

October 8th Sunday Southam Book Festival. Graham Adams Centre. 10.30 – 4 pm.

December 22nd Friday. Hamper Raffle Draw. 11 am.

December 23rd – January 16th 2024. Closed. Re-Opens Tuesday January 16th - New Exhibition.

HELP

Finally at the risk of boring readers I would like to stress that we do desperately need to recruit someone as Treasurer asap. This could be someone who takes on that role, or someone who takes on another Committee role such as Secretary and frees up the Secretary to take over the Treasurer's role. We can provide any necessary training and it really is not that onerous a role.

Many voluntary groups face this problem of recruiting Committee members.

Please mention the opportunity to your friends and encourage them to come into Tithe Place and have a chat with us. No pressure will be placed on anyone who wishes to find out more about what any Committee role entails – we promise.



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 discuss 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 visit our website www.southamheritage.org email us on: southamheritage@hotmail.com or message us via our Facebook page. (If you are a Facebook user, please 'Like' and follow 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 open on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday mornings from 10am to 12 noon. We also have two large exterior windows with heritage displays that are regularly updated.

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 will 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.

Southam "Walk and Talk":

We can organise 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. Normally 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 automatically entered into each monthly draw. The cash prize is £10 each month, increasing to a maximum of £50 in November and May depending on the number of tickets sold. All proceeds go to help with our running costs. Enquiries to our 200 Club Organiser, Sue at shc200club@hotmail.com.

Cards, Books, Photographs and Prints:

We have a growing archive of photographs of Old Southam and surrounding area, and copies are available to purchase. We also sell various other items to raise funds, including greetings cards, calendars, a range of local history and second-hand books and other merchandise. You can now purchase some of these items online via our website, and we do take credit / debit cards as well as cash in our Exhibition Room, or you can go to our SumUp online shop at <https://shc.sumup.link> and purchase via credit/debit card.

Thank you for reading this Newsletter.

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