

Southam Heritage Collection

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



NEWSLETTER

No 32: Autumn / Winter 2023

Chairman's Update

2023 is rapidly drawing to a close, and my goodness, how quickly the time seems to go when one has a shedload of work to do. There's been no slowdown in activities at the Heritage Collection during this year despite the ongoing closure of Tithe Place café and the subsequent loss of people visiting the location. We have undoubtedly suffered from a funding perspective given there is less reason for people to come into the building and see what we have to offer, including many new cards, several new books and miscellaneous items in our window displays. Having said that, overall our finances are in good shape, so we are looking forward to the café opening again in the near future and this time we hope it will remain open. Currently the whole area is being redecorated.

If you are looking for Christmas presents there is our 2024 Calendar, our usual selection of books – including Alastair Robson's new book on Dr Henry Lilley Smith, founder of the Dispensary and the Eye and Ear Hospital, all available in Tithe Place or online via the website <https://shc.sumup.link>.

One thing I must do, especially at this time of the year, is to thank our volunteers for their time and energy throughout the year. Without their work we just couldn't do all the things we are doing.

Val Brown has joined us as a new volunteer focussing on translating some of our increasingly large number of legal documents relating to buildings and land in Southam. Val is diligently going through these documents deciphering the writing, which initially looks very artistic, but is often difficult to interpret, not to mention understanding the legal terminology used. We hope to have these documents scanned together with easily readable texts all catalogued and indexed eventually but the process will take some time.

Sadly we have lost one very valuable volunteers in the form of Peter Rollins who has suffered some severe health problems which have left him incapacitated and unable to continue in the significant role he played in our Exhibition Room.

We are very grateful for all his work and support and we wish him all the very best for the future.

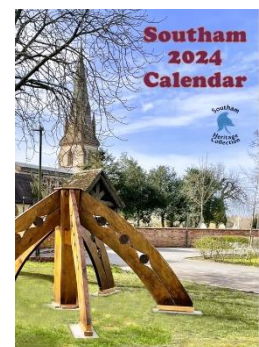
We are continuing to use our High Street external window to display posters we think would be of interest to residents and visitors, especially at times when we are not open, so please take a look when you pass. At present we have the Eye and Ear Hospital and Henry Lilley Smith posters on display along with all the local history books we have for sale.



Exhibitions now and 2024

2024 Calendar

The current exhibition focusses on the photos used in our 2024 Calendar, as does the video on display in the Atrium window. This exhibition will be in place till just after the New Year and the video can be viewed even when we are closed. In addition, we still have some of the slightly gruesome items from the "Medical Matters" Exhibition on display in the show cases.



To try and draw people into Tithe Place during November we have had the WW1 Southam Soldiers paper files available to look at, along with ones from Ladbroke, Long Itchington and Stockton.

During December the Fairground Rocking Horse will be out for children under 4 years to ride.

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.

We end the year on Friday December 22nd with the Raffle Draw at 11 am.

We are then closed over Christmas, reopening on Tuesday January 16th. However our window exhibitions will be available all the time.

Southam Clubs and Societies

Towards the end of January we will have our first 2024 exhibition featuring some of the many clubs and societies which have been and still are providing support for a wide range of activities in the town. We have quite a range of documents, photos and even items used by these groups, some of whom provided key support services for residents.

While we certainly have enough material for the exhibition we are always interested in more and if you have relatives who took part in clubs in previous times we would be interested to hear from you.

Roads and Transport in Southam

Our current thinking for the second half of 2024 is for an exhibition focussing on Roads and Transport in Southam. We have a range of maps, photographs, letters and research focussing on this area, which will make an interesting exhibition. However, if you think you may have articles and items which could be useful we would love to see them.

Trustees and Committee

The Heritage Collection is a registered Charity in England and Wales and as such is required to comply with the laws laid down by the Charity Commission. One of the requirements is that we have a number of Trustees who take the responsibility for setting the direction of the Collection and then providing overall supervision. Although this sounds quite an onerous task in practice it really isn't. Trustees meet about twice each year to review the performance of the Collection, review any new regulations laid down by the Charity Commission and set the direction for the Collection,

We have lost a committee member and a trustee in 2023. Helen Morris has left Southam and Peter Rollins, as mentioned earlier, is now incapacitated. Hence we need to recruit 2 or 3 new people to fill these roles. If you think you would be interested, please contact us to find out more about the role, and perhaps you could also mention the opportunity to your friends in case they would be interested.

200 Club Update

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 despite having had the misfortune to trip over the kerb in Coventry Street and break her hip. She is ploughing on after her hip replacement and has mastered the art of walking with crutches very well! We wish her a speedy recovery.

The first £50 prize draw for the 2023/4 year will take place shortly at the end of November so there may still be time to purchase a ticket depending on when you read this. Some of our supporters have bought tickets as a small present for their grandchildren either as a reward for some special achievement, birthday gift, or even a Christmas present.

200 Club Winners

2023 - 24



I Bennett No. 196
E Wilson No. 173
G Burford No. 238
C Evans No. 212
G Barratt No. 137



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 it's never too late!

Sue would very much appreciate it if you could set up a standing order to pay 200 Club and membership subscriptions automatically each year, since it would minimise her workload and also ensure you do 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.

AGM & Committee Changes

The Annual General Meeting took place on Tuesday October 3rd in the Congregational Church Room on Wood Street.

The current Committee members agreed to stand again and were returned unopposed, but we have had to let Peter go as he is unable to attend committee meetings.

Last year Pam McConnell stood down as Treasurer but so far we have had no new person volunteer to take on the role, although a number of her tasks are now being done by others, so the role is less

onerous. One possibility maybe for someone to take on the role of Secretary and then Linda could move into the Treasurers role.

If anyone wishes to know more, please call into Tithe Place and have a chat with other committee members, or attend our next Management Committee meeting which will be held on Wednesday January 17th at 14:00 in the Project Room in Tithe Place. Please could you let Linda know via our SHC email address if you would like to attend and then she can make sure you are informed if the date and/or time changes.

Christmas Hamper Raffle

In the run up to Christmas we are once again running our annual Christmas Hamper Raffle. We try to vary which businesses we go to and this year the £40 First prize food hamper has generously been provided by Southam Co-op, who have also covered smaller household and cosmetic hampers, plus 7 other prizes. Tickets are only £1 (£5 a book) each and available from Tithe Place and committee members.



The Bowling Green Pub (with generous support from Mark Connors) has sold tickets for us and for local persons they are available online in books of 5 from our SumUp web site – see <https://shc.sumupstore.com/products>. Prizes can be seen in our atrium window in Tithe Place. The proceeds of the raffle go towards paying some of our rent in Tithe Place, and incidental costs such as insurance.

The draw, by Mayor Cllr Angela John, will take place on Friday December 22nd 11 am in the Exhibition Room - so do join us that morning.

Christmas Cards

Once again we are able to offer cards specific to us and suitable for Christmas. We don't have a new Christmas card from Pam this year as she has provided us with the beautiful and delightful Regency view of the old Manor House - probably too summery for Christmas - but there is still an excellent choice of Pam's artistic cards and some of Margaret Sheriff's are still available.

If you do want something different, we are working with St James Church and have available packs of 3 open cards taken from their stained glass church windows.

Once again we did the Congregational Church Charity Card Sale in November. Despite being well advertised in the Advertiser, Facebook and locally, it was poorly attended this year, and Linda looks a bit lonely in the picture below.



However, talking between ourselves, it is noticeable that fewer people are sending fewer Christmas cards, but not surprising when you consider the cost of postage today. However we did do reasonable sales of both the cards and the 2024 calendars, so it was not wasted time.

Money Matters

The Financial Year end was on 31st August 2023 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 and our venture into cashless payments has opened up new opportunities both for local and distance sales.

As a result the accounts for 2023 showed that we are in good health financially.

St James Church Christmas Tree Festival

St James did the Christmas Tree Festival for the first-time last Christmas, and it was very well received by both Southam Charities and Groups and the general public, so they have provided for it this Christmas in the same way.

We have put up a Christmas Tree and decorated it with the photographs of historic Southam used in our 2024 calendar. Battery lights are used and a collecting box fixed to it for donations.

The church has a leaking roof and the clock no longer works, so they are desperately trying to raise funds to make repairs, so it is good to be able to work together over such things.

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 and as a result we will look to see if any other museums or groups are able to loan us any of their 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 summer video was taken 10 years ago of the Battle of Southam and was being followed by many as they looked for familiar faces, places, and events from that weekend.

Young Volunteers

Last year for the first time we took a Work Experience student from Southam College. It is not the easiest of 'job' to offer from here, as we do not have full time daily work available, but we managed to provide a program for the student.

This year we have had a Photography Student from Stratford College living in Fenny Compton, who with his mother is doing a Work Experience Project with us on photography.

Linda has taken on a Duke of Edinburgh work experience student from Southam College during the winter, to do Saturday mornings in the Exhibition Room, though with his mother, this being a public place and he is under 16 years.

We do work with the Cubs and Brownies and thanks to Nigel Chapman we have had quizzes to offer them and other children. It is harder to work with schools, mainly due to not fitting in with the school curriculum, and since Covid we have not done the Southam College exchange student guided tours round the town centre.

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 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 to read 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, which now all goes fully into our funds. Ideal for a school holiday day out with a picnic, or finish at the Bell Inn for a drink, lunch or dinner, especially in colder weather.

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 five 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 books, 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.

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 five 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 or even large old parchment documents 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 older buildings.

Lately we have had quite a few people come along to look at our photographic collection as part of their work on family history and sometimes this works both ways as they have material which we have not seen previously.

Wanted

- In our atrium window, we are able to display for sale on our behalf, any donated historical article, so do speak to us.
- Tombola prizes for next year please. Tombolas have worked very well for us at Events, so if you are clearing out cupboards and find something new you will not require, then please let us have it for a Tombola. Business named items are acceptable as well.
- 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 noon either on a weekly basis or perhaps a regular fortnightly 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

December 22nd Friday. Hamper Raffle Draw. 11 am by the Mayor of Southam, Cllr Angela John.

December 23rd – January 16th 2024 Closed.

January 16th Re-Opens Tuesday - New Exhibition.

HELP

At the risk of boring readers we would like to stress that we do desperately need to recruit someone as Treasurer. 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 neither role is onerous, honestly.

Many voluntary groups are facing 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.

Finally

Finally we would like to wish all our volunteers, supporters and members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you for all your support over the past 12 months and we look forward to working with you during 2024 to bring an awareness of the fascinating history of Southam to even more people both locally and around the world.

**Merry
Christmas
& HAPPY NEW YEAR**



A few of our publications on Sale.



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.