



Newsletter – January 2014

(www.lbdahs.org.uk)

How we won the war and other news

There is an exciting year ahead for the society with a number of new publications in the pipeline, historic walks planned, as well as more research groups and monthly talks.

Currently a large group is finalising the History of the Second World War in Leighton Buzzard. New research into the role of RAF Leighton Buzzard (later RAF Stanbridge) and the work of 60 Group that developed and ran all the radar in Britain has revealed what a vital part the town took in winning the war for the Allies. Without RAF Leighton Buzzard, known as Q Central, many other secret establishments like Bletchley Park (Station X) would not have been grouped around the town. The History Press is to publish our book in the autumn.

Other publications in progress include the fascinating story of Leighton Buzzard's First World War memorial – a granite monolith unique in Britain.

There is also the story of Henry Finch, a Linslade philanthropist with a colourful history who began life as a publican in London.

Many members have also contributed to our annual journal Transactions, now in preparation and due to be published at the annual meeting in April.

In the summer Stephen Coleman, the sites and monuments officer for Central Bedfordshire Council, an enthusiastic and entertaining speaker has agreed to lead a walk round Kings Wood and the Knolls to explain the meaning and purpose of the many earthworks. This is a follow-up to his March talk on the history of woodlands in the area.

The committee has also considered the idea of organising summer outings, possibly to Claydon House, where one of our members is the archivist to the Verney family. Anyone interested in this idea, or visits to other local places of interest, should contact Bernard Jones, the secretary, or me. Obviously we would need a volunteer to help organise these.

A small team has been working their way through four boxes of local deeds and other documents given to us from the vaults of a local bank. Among items of interest has been documents relating to the now disappeared, but once thriving coaching stop, the Sandhouse Inn, at Heath and Reach on Watling Street. If you have never handled a 300 year old document and would like to help unravel the mysteries around these papers please contact Maureen Brown or check the web-site for the next meeting.

We will of course be continuing with a variety of archaeological activities. Members are involved in a number of active excavation projects and when the weather improves details of those members can join and take part in will be put on the web-site and announced at meetings.

All the best for 2014

Paul Brown, chairman.