



Newsletter – August 2013

(www.lbdahs.org.uk)

Dear Members,

We are about to start our season of monthly meetings with a talk by one of our members Rory Morrissey who has researched and written a book about Oliver Pike, a Leighton resident and pioneer wildlife photographer and film-maker.

Few in Leighton have heard of him but among the famous people who regard Mr. Pike as a big influence in their lives is David Attenborough. We will be showing one of Oliver Pike's short films that inspired a new generation of filmmakers. Rory will be telling us about Oliver Pike's exploits and offering the book for sale for the first time at the meeting priced at £5.

This talk is on September 11. We have a full programme of talks and other activities this winter some of which are shown overleaf. Others will be posted on the website – lbdahs.org – as they are arranged. We have a number of research groups working on various projects including old photos of the town and a book on the Second World War. We are also arranging a meeting for members to look at a large number of local documents given to the society, which were found in the basement of Barclay's Bank. Anyone interested in helping can come along.

We have had a busy summer with archaeological digs at Southcott, Wing and Bedford as well as helping with projects elsewhere. We are gradually building up our expertise and the number of members skilled at digging and recording. They are in demand to help excavators in other parts of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire. You may have seen in the local paper that there is a dig going on at the site of proposed development at Grovebury Farm, Grovebury Road. The paper reported it as the discovery of a Roman vineyard, although we had previously been told that it was a much older bronze age field system. We have been promised a full report when the work is done and we will write an account for Transactions, our annual journal.

Local Schools continue to request talks and activities. Pauline Hey spoke to 70 pupils at Brooklands Middle School on the history of Leighton Buzzard and went to Beadesert Lower School for a talk on the school's history, this being their 200th anniversary. Also at Beadesert Delia Gleave talked to Year 3 pupils about the impact of the second world war on Leighton Buzzard and the children who were evacuated to the town. Sixth Form pupils at Vandyke Upper School were helped by a summary of the town's history and information on how to do research.

Apart from Rory's book mentioned above the society is working on a number of publications. The largest is the second world war book that is currently being edited but needs a lot of photographs. Any member who has any local illustrations from that time which could be included in the book should contact me at the number/email overleaf. We are also to publish a biography of Henry Finch, a local benefactor who lived at the Gables in Linslade and had a fountain erected in his honour that is still in the Linslade recreation ground, which he gave to the town. Another booklet will be an edited dissertation by Hannah Darby about the unique Leighton Buzzard War Memorial. This is a fascinating social history of how Leighton came to have the largest monolith war memorial in the country. We hope to have that published for the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of war. And, of course there is our annual journal Transactions. Anyone wanting to submit articles, large or small, photographs or other features please let us know. It is intended that all members should be able to write or contribute to it if they wish.

Paul Brown, chairman.

Programme 2013-2014

- Sept 6 2013** **Research Group, 2 to 4 pm at 54 Mentmore Road. WW2**
- Sept 11 2013** **Oliver Pike - Pioneer of Wildlife Photography – Book Launch, Film & Talk by Rory Morissey, see details overleaf.**
- Oct 7 2013** **Research Group, 10.30 am to 12.30 pm. Linslade Community Hall, Wyn Jones committee room. Barclays documents.**
- Oct 9 2013** **Milestones and Turnpikes by Michael Knight – Michael is the Milestone Society’s county representative for Bedfordshire.**
- Oct 18 2013** **Research Group, 2 to 4 pm at 54 Mentmore Road. Photographs**
- Oct 21 2013** **Research Group, 10.30 am to 12.30 pm. Linslade Community Hall, Wyn Jones committee room. Barclays documents.**
- Nov 4 2013** **Research Group, 10.30 am to 12.30 pm. Linslade Community Hall, Wyn Jones committee room. Barclays documents.**
- Nov 13 2013** **Bedford History by David Fowler**
- Nov 18** **Research Group, 10.30 am to 12.30 pm. Linslade Community Hall, Wyn Jones committee room. Barclays documents.**
- Nov 22 2013** **Research Group, 2 to 4 pm at 54 Mentmore Road**
- Dec 6 2013** **Research Group, 2 to 4 pm at 54 Mentmore Road**
- Dec 11 2013** **The Great Train Robbery by John Woolley – as a 25 year old PC, John was the first to arrive at Leatherslade farm to see evidence of the robbers’ occupation, including a cellar full of empty mailbags. He continued to be involved over the years as the story unfolded.**
- Jan 8 2014** **Archaeology – Mike Farley, former Buckinghamshire County Archaeologist.**
- Jan 17 2014** **Research Group, 2 to 4 pm at 54 Mentmore Road**
- Feb 12 2014** **“Land Army Girls in Bedfordshire” – Stuart Antrobus, whose interviews with the “girls” and research in Local & National Archives, resulted in the book “We Wouldn’t Have Missed It for the World”**
- Feb 21 2014** **Research Group, 2 to 4 pm at 54 Mentmore Road**
- Mar 12 2014** **Stephen Coleman – Historic Environment Information Officer for Central Beds Council**
- Apr 9 2014** **“The Bounds of Linslade” by Bernard Jones. Description of the walk by Society members on Rogation Day 2013, using Linslade’s Anglo-Saxon Charter. AGM follows.**
- May 14 2014** **Bedford Roman Dig**

All talks are at St Barnabas Church Hall (now known as Linslade Community Hall), Waterloo Road, Linslade. Talks start at 8 pm unless otherwise advised. Everyone welcome. £2 for non-members. Members free.

Paul Brown, chairman (01525 374050) paulbrown5@mac.com, Bernard Jones hon. secretary (01525 376550)