



ROYSTON & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY ANNUAL NEWS SHEET

Preserving Royston's Heritage

2012-2013

Message from the Chairman,

Dear Members, the past year was a busy one for the society having supported and taken part in the Royston 2012 Celebrations .

I am pleased to report that the conservation programme on the Whydale watercolours has now been completed at a cost of over £11,000, met by the society.

On behalf of the society members, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following for their contribution during the past year.

Congratulations to Shirley Thrussell, one of our vice-presidents, awarded a medal at the closing ceremony of the Royston 2012 celebrations for her work on the 1948 Olympic display.

On behalf of the society and its members, I would like to thank the Museum Curator, Carole Kaszak, who has recently retired after many years of dedicated service. During the past year, she oversaw the conservation of the watercolours by our local artist E H Whydale . We also said goodbye to Museum Assistants, Anstey Garrick-Green, who left to spend time with her young family and Stephanie Killingbeck who is now working at the Fusiliers Museum at the Tower of London.

After serving over 15 years as a member of our committee, Phil Sizeland is standing down at the AGM. Her contribution, support and management of our 'Hospitality' over many years, especially organising the arrangements for the buffet at our Annual General Meetings is appreciated by us all.

On a sad note, for those members who have recently joined and those who knew him, a former Chairman and a Trustee of the Royston Museum, Peter King, passed away last year. Many of his friends from the Royston and District History Society attended his funeral last November.

Finally, the committee now has a new team forming the Publications Sub-Committee. The four members are Graham Hayes, Elaine MacManus, Jean Cosslett and your Chairman.

Neville Chuck

From the Museum Curator

2012 was an exciting year for the museum; in addition to the usual programme there was a major exhibition celebrating the 850th anniversary of the founding of Royston Priory, the Diamond Jubilee and London 2012 in support of Royston 2012 - A Year of Celebrations.

This has resulted in a joint project with the History Society recording the reminiscences of the London Olympics from games makers, visitors and TV viewers alike in order to provide a useful archive for future generations. Editing of the recordings is now taking place and it is hoped that there will be a publication of the most fascinating extracts.

The museum was also awarded full accreditation for the second time by the Arts Council (England). This status is a national benchmark which has to be maintained and renewed every few years and is essential for obtaining funding for future projects such as mounting the Royston Tapestry which is nearing completion.

Finally, I would like to thank the History Society for its continued support during my tenure as the Curator of the museum of which, by the time you are reading this newsletter, I will have retired and gone onto new ventures.

Carole Kaszak
Curator, Royston & District Museum & Art
Gallery
March 2013

Royston Cave

Royston Cave opened to the public again on Saturday March 30th after its usual winter closure. The conservation programme is virtually complete and the Cave is in a very good state of repair.

This year we will be showcasing a new commentary read by the newscaster, Richard Whitmore. This commentary aims to give listeners a wider view of the theories about the Cave's origin and use.

The expert report on the Cave produced by Philip Lankester of the Royal Armouries will be available in the spring. One of his conclusions is that the carvings were made after 1350.

The Society has also commissioned a DVD of the cave and this will be available for viewing in the Museum for visitors that are unable to access the Cave and it will also be available for sale.

The DVD also voiced by Richard Whitmore will contain special features by Sylvia Beamon, Tobit Curteis (Conservator) and Peter Houldcroft. The DVD will be launched on the 18th April at the Town Hall.

Watch out for some special events this year on www.roystoncave.co.uk or follow us on twitter.

We hope you will be able to visit us in 2013 – our opening times are 2.30 to 5.00 (last entry 4.30) every Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday from Easter Saturday to the end of September (also Wednesdays in August) – and don't forget this is one of the few places that still gives accompanied children free entry.

Finally, if anyone is interested in doing some paid cave guiding, please contact James Robinson on 01763 243204. All you need is an interest in history and a few spare hours a month.

For further information contact James Robinson on james@robynson.plus.com

Dates for you Diary

6th May - May Fayre

The society will be there with a display and publications for sale.

9th May - Annual General Meeting

Followed by the lecture on Ely's Forgotten Victorian Goal – the house of correction, a presentation by Mike Petty. Our evening concludes with a buffet and drinks prepared by the committee. We look forward to seeing you all.

8th June – Outing to Lavenham and Melford Hall, Suffolk

The Society outing this year is to Lavenham and Melford Hall, Suffolk. For further information on cost and availability contact David Allard, Treasurer. For those who have already booked, we look forward to seeing you on the coach.



Stratford upon Avon 2012

3rd October - Our new season starts with a lecture on Interpreting Ely Cathedral with Lynne Broughton an illustrated presentation

The Royston & District History Society also produces various publications on local history ranging from architecture, folklore, biographies of famous Roystonians and other subjects of local interest. Our next publication will be F John Smith's '*A Royston Miscellany*' giving details about the town's history and events

Useful websites:

Royston and District Museum and Art Gallery

www.roystonmuseum.org.uk

Royston Cave

www.roystoncave.co.uk

Royston & District Local History Society

www.roystonlocalhistory.org.uk