

## **The Swindon Society Newsletter**

**April 2013.**

### **Meeting Wednesday 13th March 2013**

Early March had been very cold and dry, through the month it became colder with heavy snow in many places further north. The old proverb about Candlemas Day, 2nd February has proved right this year, it was a cold, sunny, springlike Day...the rhyme says -

If Candlemas be bright and fair,  
ther'll be two winters in one year,  
If Candlemas be dull with rain

Winters gone, and will not come again.

Now at the last few days of March here we are still in the icy grip of winter....

### **'They never told us they were knocking it down'**

Duncan and Mandy Ball.

The first few slides explained the title, illustrating the speed buildings are demolished, they stand empty and derelict for a long time, then within a few days the site is just a pile of rubble.

Princess Margaret Hospital dominated our skyline and our daily lives for years, then it was gone.....

The police station on Fleming Way another feature in the history of the town was nibbled away day by day as if by a giant caterpillar, the pictures really emphasise the importance of recording these buildings for future generations. It is said that it contained a reinforced, fully equipped bunker when the 'cold' war threatened.

Duncan then gave us an insight into his and Mandy's family history, Mandy was born in Stratton St Margaret and likes to emphasise that as *not* Swindon! Duncan is a direct descendant of Tydeman Brothers, a local builder established in the 19th century their premises occupying the site of the farm where Islington Street car park is now. They built many streets in the town, Tydeman Street in Gorse Hill bears their name, also the Methodist Central Hall in Clarence Street in 1906. and as far away as Weymouth where they built the Post Office.

We saw pictures of the Tydeman family very interesting to me as I worked for the firm for seven years and met and married my late husband Roy who was a carpenter there. Family photo's showed Duncan age 2 and his parents in the Town Gardens and the brothers W.H. and W.E. Tydeman the founders of the firm. I don't know whether Duncan is aware of the fact that his fathers cousin David Barrett was one of four founder members of the Swindon Society 40 years ago and co-wrote the first book on the M&SWJRly in 1981 with Brian Bridgeman and Denis Bird.

The presentation included tombstones, inscriptions and war memorials, images and plaques commemorating air crashes and unusual events. Unusual names they discovered were Seconda, Euphenia and Scolastica, there was a Scolastica Day at Holy Rood in the Lawn Old Town , her tombstone was embedded as a paving stone which I felt was sad as the inscription would wear away. Incidentally many early local school teachers were named Day. There was also a baptism of Comfort Lamb, who turned up later married and living at Purton! The evening was an interesting blend of local buildings and family history. As we stood around drinking our coffee and chatting, very recent slides were showing of buildings going up and coming down. and I heard the title repeated ---"I didn't know that had gone" ...

Many thanks to Duncan and Mandy for a very interesting evening.

## **Congratulations**

If you were at the January meeting, you may remember Andy and Bob telling us of Ivy Sheppard's promotion into the Order of St John, and her forthcoming investiture at the 12th century Priory Church at Clerkenwell, London. The Adver of 25th January carried a nice photograph of Ivy and Fred and a report of the event. In 55 years of service Ivy has coped with thousands of incidents from nosebleeds and splinters to speedway riders shattered legs....and trained hundreds of first aiders, who in their turn have been able to save lives. I feel sure Ivy will find herself curtsying to the Queen in the not too distant future....

Next month will be our AGM. We have had a vacancy on the committee all this year, also made do without an appointed vice chairman, one or the other members of the committee standing in if Kevin couldn't be present. Please consider yourself for nomination, we have a record number of members, 153 and really need a full committee to carry us forward to carry out forthcoming plans and events. Next year will be the centenary of the start of World War 1 for instance, and the schools project looks destined to be popular, Nomination forms are available on the table at this meeting, or ask one of the committee members.

After the official business Paul Williams will give a presentation entitled 'Glass Plate to Images, of William Hooper'

### **Swindon Heritage**

This glossy, all colour magazine is available in a number of town outlets, by subscription and online. For further information contact Mark Sutton on 01793 535281 email [sutton5110@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sutton5110@hotmail.co.uk) and/or Frances Bevan 01793 875416 email [francesbevan@outlook.com](mailto:francesbevan@outlook.com).

### Member's Evening Outing      June 12th 2013

We will spend our evening at the Masonic Hall in the Planks, Old Town. The Masons will soon be celebrating 200 years service in our Town. If you think of them as a Secret Society, come along and see how times have changed. You will have the opportunity to go into the Inner Sanctum of the Lodge and witness how the world of the Masons operates. We will be given a short and brief history of the organisation, and how they operate locally. We will be able to look around and see some of their wealth of archive going back to Sir Daniel Gooch, The Goddard family and the great and good of our Town, over many years.

Tea, Coffee and licensed bar will be available and we will be supplied with a small buffet.

It is planned, and will be weather driven, to take a short tour of Old Town, on the route that we took the children of Lethbridge School. They enjoyed this and so will you. Finding out a bit more about the oldest part of Swindon

Please add your name to the list, or speak to one of the Committee, about what should be a most interesting evening

Any further questions please ask Andy Binks

### **Library News**

The library has a very new member, Daryl Moody and his wife Clarissa had their first baby, Lydia, born on 15th March. We send our very best wishes .

**Saturday 13th April 11.30 - 1.30**

In the cafe area of the Central Library

**Launch of "All for the Empire" new book by Roger Trayhurn and Mark Childs**

There is no charge for this event.

**Dates for Archivist visits.**

An Archivist from the record office will be at the Reference Library in the Central Library Regent Circus 10am till 12 noon to give advice to researchers on Mondays, dates as follows:-

**Monday 22nd April 2013.**

If you have special research or require a particular document a telephone call to the Library would ensure whether it is available when you visit.

Telephone. (01793) 463238 which is the number for both the lending and the reference library.

Also on these dates, the Archivist will be giving talks on research, as follows :-

**Archivists Research Talks.**

**Monday 22nd April 2013.**

"Looking for your ancestors in 19th century Institutions" (prisons , hospitals workhouses schools etc.)

All talks at **1.00 pm.** on these dates. unless otherwise stated. See below for tickets.also...

also

**Wednesday 17th April 2013**

Wiltshire Family History Society 'drop in' session between 2-5pm.

No charge for admission.

**Wednesday 24th April 2013 at 7.15pm**

**Box Tunnel and it's connections with Freemasonry" Dr. Michael Smith.**

**Tickets** £2.50 or £1.50 for Library members. Available from the Swindon Collection Help Point on the Second Floor of the Central Library, or ring 01793 463238 from 2 weeks before.

**Friends of Swindon Railway Museum**

Members of this group have a full and interesting programme for the new session.

Our members would be welcome to attend as visitors.

Programme of Meetings 2013.

**2013.**

Saturday 13th April Great Central, Part 2: Chris Youett.

Details of May meeting will be advised in due course.

All meetings will take place in the Daniel Gooch Lecture Theatre at Steam.

Please Note, the Monday evening meetings will commence at 7.15pm and Saturday afternoon meetings this season will start at the earlier time of 2.0pm to comply with the new Museum opening hours.

Meet at the Steam Museum, Kemble Drive, Swindon.

If you would like to attend these meetings, **please take your Swindon Society Membership card with you.**

**Purton Historical Society.**

Please note, meeting dates vary from month to month.

Mrs. Helen Dixon ,Secretary 01793 770648

Meet monthly at St Mary's Primary School, Purton at 7.30pm.

2013

Thursday 18th April Feral and Racing Pigeons - a world apart.

Stewart Wardrop.

" 16th May An evacuee tells his story. Martin Vandervelde.

" 15th June Summer Coach outing, details from Helen Dixon.

### **The Historical Society of Royal Wootton Bassett.**

'Looking forward to the Past'

Visitors are most welcome, (£2.00); refreshments served before our main event which begins at 7.30. Do come along and join us in an entertaining and informative evening.- Vivien Sumner.

Thursdays 7.30 pm. Civic Centre, Station Road, Royal Wootton Bassett. SN4 7TZ First Floor, upstairs.

Annual membership £10.00. Visitors always welcome : £2.00

Further Information from Vivien Sumner 01666 511195

**2013**

Thursday 14th March Industrial Archaeology in your Garage Shed or Attic - Bill King.

Thursday 11th April The Story of Sudeley Castle,

Winchcombe - Angela Panrucker

A story partly told through flowers.

" 9th May Canals in Wiltshire - John Farrow.

The growth, decline and restoration of

the canal system in Wiltshire.

Visits

Early June The most Noble Order of the Garter Procession at Windsor Castle.

### **Rodbourne Community History Group**

Meets monthly at 7pm at Even Swindon Community Centre, Jennings Street on the last Wednesday of the month. Admission Members £1 Guests £2 (including refreshment).

**2013**

Wednesday 24th April Life in the East End, Martin Collinson.

" 29th May Deacon's Family Jewellery business.

### **Highworth History Society**

All lecture meetings are held in the United Reform Church, High Street, Highworth unless otherwise stated.

Meetings are held at 7.30pm on the last Monday of the month. Membership £10.00 (Renewable in September each year) Visitors £3.00

**2013**

Monday 29th April The Mechanics Institute, Swindon, Daniel Rose.

### **Chiseldon Local History Group**

Meet at Holy Cross Church Room, Butts Road, Chiseldon.

at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated.

Visitors Welcome. small charge.

**2013**

Wednesday April 17th	Making the Cauldrons. Hector Cole,
Blacksmith and Historical	Ironworker.
" May 15th	Memoir of a Railwayman. Roger Trayhurn & Mary Bedells,
	Swindon Family History Society.
" June 19th	TBA.
"	

Chiseldon Museum, The Old Chapel, Butts Road, is open from 11am to 3pm on the first and third Saturday each month from April to October.