

## **April 2025 – Annual General Meeting**

Hi All,

We had another successful Annual General Meeting' (AGM) with a good attendance for an AGM of 44, which was comprised of 38 members and six new members.

We had a number of members who were unable to attend and sent their apologies. Members have until the June meeting to update their membership without having to complete a new membership form...

We followed the same format as last year for collecting subscriptions by making the renewal/enrolment forms available at reception and collecting the subscriptions after the films during refreshments. This again worked well, and we will continue with it for future years.

On the remaining pages of the Newsletter, we have:

**On page two** is the 'Coming Events' section.

Our next meeting is on Monday 12th May 2025 and is 'Hewell Grange: Is the landscape worth the 2\* designation given by English Heritage?' and is given by David Whitehead, Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust.

Also, on page two we have the WW2 event at Forge Mill Needle Museum.

**Page 3** is a report on our AGM WW2 film presentation.

**On pages 4 to 8**

Pages five and six are the officers' reports.

Page seven has the results of the elections.

Page eight has a copy of the accounts.

Next Meeting...

Our next Meeting is on Monday 12th May 2025.

There is more on this presentation on Page 2.

The meeting will be, as always at the Oasis Christian Centre starting at 2.00 pm.

Anthony Green, Society Secretary

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# Next Meeting

Our next meeting is on Monday 12th May 2025 and is 'Hewell Grange: Is the landscape worth the 2\* designation given by English Heritage?' and is given by David Whitehead, Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust.

Hewell Grange was originally a grange for Bordesley Abbey and came to the Windsor family in 1542 at the Dissolution of the Monasteries. It is a Grade I listed building, and the park surrounding the house was landscaped by both Capability Brown and Humphry Repton and is graded II\* on the National Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The lake is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).



The Grange ceased to be a part of the prison service and was put on the market in 2020. As part of the move to sell the site, work was carried out to improve some features and David will give an overview of the garden development over time.



From Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025 from 10.00am to 4.00pm, Forge Mill Needle Museum have their VE DAY 80: FORGE MILL NEEDS YOU! and 1940s WEEKEND events.

*Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> and Friday 9<sup>th</sup>* Forge Mill aim to bring the community together to decorate the site ready for celebrating VE Day 80. Please bring your contributions to the museum by Monday 6 May in order for them to display them between 8 and 11 May.

*Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2025: 10.00am to 4.00pm* is the ever-popular 1940s WEEKEND where you can travel back in time to the 1940s and get a taste of life in World War 2 Britain.

The site will be free to access, as usual, on Thursday 8 and Friday 9 May, but there will be a small charge for our 1940s Weekend on 10 and 11 May. Details can be found at

<https://www.forgemill.org.uk/web/events/>



## '80 years on...' – the end of WW2 May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1945

Originally, with our Annual General Meeting, we had a speaker to complete the one-hour period before the refreshments/membership enrolment. However, the AGM sometimes could be a bit prolonged, which was unfair on the speaker. So, we changed to having a film show, as this had some flexibility.

Over time, this has now become a tradition, and I have tried to create a themed set of videos for the meetings. This year, since the country is remembering the end of World War Two, I thought I would create a film show to mark the occasion.



I produced this using original film, easily found on the internet, such as newsreels and official information films.

In this age of wall-to-wall information, with hundreds of TV and Radio channels, 24-hour news channels, internet channels and an overkill of information available on a mobile phone, it is salutary to reflect that during WW2 the only sources of information were the radio, the cinema, and personal contact.

The films I used would all have been shown in the cinema and were none the worse for that!

I created the video to show a sequence over the period of the war.

It began with the blitz, this was particularly related to London but would have been true of all the major cities, I followed this with some public information films. These covered items such as salvage, economising with fuel and working in essential occupations. This was then followed by a National Savings film called 'Back the Attack' and finishing with the celebrations in London and the King's broadcast on the end of the war in Europe.



The film lasted about 35 minutes and was well received by the meeting.

The original compilation lasted about 45 minutes but had to be cut down for the meeting. However, the original will be shown as our contribution to the Forge Mill Needle Museum VE Day celebration running from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> May.

I have created a DVD, so that it can be shown on a small TV/DVD player.

# Annual General Meeting Report

## Executive Reports

### Chair's Report for 2024

I am pleased to report that during 2024 our membership has remained strong, with just over 60 members.

We ran a full programme of presentations during the year, with a wide range of topics presented and for this I wish to thank our enthusiastic Speaker Organiser, Pat Bushaway.

The topics covered were 'Plants Preserved for Ever' another presentation from Henrietta Lockhart, In March we received a very lively presentation on the English Civil War in Worcestershire, which was very dramatically presented by Max Keen and I am pleased to say that he will provide another lecture this December. The following month was also provided in full costume by Paul Mortimer about Sutton Hoo and King Raedwald, who wore a costume which was a meticulously made facsimile made from fragments from the famous dig. These were followed by 'The History of Death masks and Phrenology', by Louise Robinson and 'All Roads lead to Rome' about roads in Britain by Alan Godfrey. Chris Jackson continued a walk around Redditch, using old postcards, followed in October with a talk by Philip Jarvis on The Redditch Railway. Richard Churchley gave another interesting presentation, this time on Humble Homes and Vernacular Architecture in Britain. The year closed with Tony Green showing his pictures of Redditch in the snow of 1962/3.

I would like to wish a very warm thank you to all our contributors to a successful series of presentations. If anyone would like to make a presentation in the future, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

I would like to pass on my thanks to all the members of the Committee for their valuable contribution to the success of the Society. I particularly want to thank our Secretary, Tony Green, for the huge amount of work he carries out throughout the year. One of the very notable ways he adds to the standing of the Society is through the very readable newsletter he produced throughout the year, with many interesting articles. If anyone would like to provide an article for the newsletter, rather than make a presentation, we would love to talk to you about this. Graham Smith, our Treasurer, keeps us up to date on membership attendance and our financial position throughout the year, which is very helpful in trying to plan for the future. As I mentioned before Pat Bushaway provides us with a great selection of speakers and topics and Richard Watson provides support on the Committee. I would also like to thank Gil Barlow for the work he has carried out in recent years as our Independent Accounts Examiner, as he is stepping down this year.

I hope all our members have enjoyed the work of our Committee and will continue to support the growing strength of the Society.

Elizabeth Simpson Chair, Redditch History Society

## Secretary's Report for 2024

Upon reviewing the reports from our Chair and Secretary prior to the meeting, I realised there was little to add on my part.

So, just a few details...

### **NEWSLETTER**

In 2023, I reduced the Newsletter to ten issues per year to align with our number of meetings, which is now the standard. While I have managed to maintain an eight-page newsletter, I often find myself filling it with my own content to make up the page numbers.

This is not ideal, as I do not want it to become the 'Tony Green' Newsletter, but rather a newsletter for the Society. Therefore, I am exploring ways to include more material from members and supporters, as well as publicity for local history activities.

The newsletter serves as good publicity for the Society. Besides being sent to our mailing list of members, supporters, and local officials, it also reaches all the Societies in the Worcestershire Local History Forum.

I am also hoping to get it featured in the British Association of Local History magazine.

### **WEBSITE**

Visitor numbers to our Website, [www.redditchhistorysociety.org.uk](http://www.redditchhistorysociety.org.uk), reached nine hundred and twenty last month, which is about 50% more than last year!

Europe and North America account for 70% of our traffic, with the remaining 30% coming from the rest of the world.

### **FACEBOOK**

Our Redditch History Society Facebook page has 1,900 followers. While this may not be particularly large in Facebook terms, it is still respectable.

I would like to conclude by expressing my appreciation for the work done by Elizabeth, Graham, and Pat. Without the dedication of such volunteers, who give up their time to ensure the Society functions for its members, it would not exist. Sadly, last year, we lost Sue Tatlow, and in late 2022, Don Vincent. This is inevitable with a Society of our age range.

Therefore, we need some younger volunteers - well, at least younger than me!

Anthony Green,

Society Secretary,  
April 2025

## Treasurer's Report for 2024

The increase in membership subscription from £15.00 per year to £20.00 last April has put the Society on a sound financial footing. Subscriptions are our main source of income. In 2024 we had a total membership of 62 members. 58 members paid the full membership fee raising £1160, and a further three took advantage of our half price membership from October to March.

We had to introduce a family membership which raised a further £18.75.

The visitor rate increased to £4.00 and we had a record breaking 113 visitors bringing in £452. The profit on refreshments raised £90.

We are grateful to Pat Bushaway who organised two book sales which brought in £106.50. We also received £18.00 in donations. Our total income for 2024 was £1882.75.

Our main expenditure for the year, as always, is room hire and speakers. In 2024 we paid the Oasis Centre £73.15 for each session. This includes the hire of the main room and the Reeves Room. For ten sessions this came to £731.50.

The cost of inviting guest speakers continues to go up. Some speakers now charge £75.00. We spent £410.00 on speakers. We are grateful to Society members who present talks as this helps to keep costs down.

Annual subscriptions to the Worcestershire Local History Forum and the British Association for Local History cost a further £100.

In 2024 the Society made a surplus of £641.25. At 31st December our bank balance was £2264.52 and we had £40.72 in petty cash. Total society funds were, therefore, £2305.24.

I am grateful to Gil Barlow for checking and approving the Society accounts. Gil has undertaken this task over the last six years and is now taking a well- earned break.

I am also grateful to Malcolm Acton for helping with refreshments on a regular basis and all members who have helped over the past year.

I am also grateful to Nova Leighton for helping on the reception desk at every meeting.

Graham Smith, Society Treasurer, 11th April 2025

# Election Results

## Election of Officers:

All the current officers and committee members are willing to continue in their current roles and so, election of officers becomes something of a formality. We are grateful that the membership has confidence in our organisation and our direction. However, none of us are getting any younger and there is no barrier to anyone involving themselves in the organisation of the Society.

## Executive Posts

Chairman -Elizabeth Simpson was re-elected unopposed.

Secretary - Anthony Green re-elected unopposed

Treasurer - Graham Smith re-elected unopposed

## Non-executive posts:

Newsletter Editor - Anthony Green re-elected unopposed.

Speaker Organiser – Pat Bushaway re-elected unopposed.

Website Administrator/Social Media - Anthony Green re-elected unopposed.

Refreshments Organiser - Graham Smith re-elected unopposed. Graham, as always, is looking for volunteers to support this activity and there are a number of members who are prepared to help.

## Management Committee

The Management Committee consists of the 3 executive members, Chairman Elizabeth Simpson, Secretary Anthony Green and Treasurer Graham Smith plus non-executive posts, Speaker Organiser Pat Bushaway, and additional elected members .

The current member representative, Richard Watson was willing to continue as a member of the Committee and was formally elected.

This brings the Management Committee to five members.

*(Note that there is no limit to the size of the Management Committee, so if anyone wishes to be involved, please let us know).*

## Accounts Examiner:

Gil Barlow is standing down, and we wish to thank him for his work over the past few years. We are pleased to announce that Malcolm Acton has agreed to take on the position.

There were no additional motions and there was no action brought up in 'Any Other Business'.



**REDDITCH HISTORY SOCIETY**  
**Income and Expenditure Account**  
**For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024**

2023 £	INCOME	2024 £		2023 £	EXPENDITURE	2024 £
810.00	Full Membership (58) @ £20.00	<b>1160.00</b>		652.00	Room hire: £365.75 X 2	<b>731.50</b>
	Family Membership (2023 price)	<b>18.75</b>				
	Half Price Membership: 1 at £7.50 (2023 price)	<b>7.50</b>		245.80	Payment to Speakers	<b>410.00</b>
105.00	3 at £10.00	<b>30.00</b>			<u>SUBSCRIPTIONS:</u>	
	Visitors to meetings (113) at £4.00	<b>452.00</b>		10.00	WLHF	<b>10.00</b>
270.00				90.00	British Association for Local History	<b>90.00</b>
93.00	Refreshments (banked)	<b>90.00</b>				
95.60	Book sales	<b>106.50</b>		(997.80)		<b>(1241.50)</b>
25.00	Donation	<b>18.00</b>				
				400.80	<b>SURPLUS of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>641.25</b>
1398.60		<b>1882.75</b>		1398.60		<b>1882.75</b>

2023 £	Balance Sheet as at 31 <sup>st</sup> December	2024 £	
1222.47	Bank at 1 <sup>st</sup> January	1623.27	<p>I have examined the Account Book, receipts, bank statements and vouchers presented to me by the Treasurer.</p> <p>I confirm that in my opinion these accounts show a true and fair view of the income and expenditure of the Society for the year ended 31 December 2024.</p> <p><u>G. R. T. Beston</u>                      <u>30.01.2025</u></p> <p>Accounts Examiner                      Date</p>
400.80	Deficit/ <u><b>SURPLUS</b></u> end of year	641.25	
1623.27	Balance c/fwd at 31 <sup>st</sup> December	2264.52	
	<b>Represented by:</b>		
1623.27	Bank Account at 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec.	2264.52	
41.18	Plus Petty Cash	40.72	
1664.45	<b>TOTAL SOCIETY FUNDS</b>	2305.24	