

THE A G M & 110th MEETING OF AYNHO HISTORY SOCIETY HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL,
AYNHO ON WEDNESDAY 28th November 2018

Present:- Keith McClellan – Chairman
Peter Cole – Secretary

Keith said that as there was quite a lot of A G M business he proposed to take Andrew Bellamy's Item first so that he could get away. This was agreed.

1) Known facts about the Aynho soldiers who gave their lives in World War One – by Andrew Bellamy.

Andrew said that some people had asked why the War Memorial in the Church was for people who had died from 1914 to 1919 rather than 1918. The Armistice was in 1918, and it more or less stopped the fighting at that time. In fact there were three Armistices in the end running until 1919, as pockets of fighting continued in one or two places until 1919.

He was particularly indebted to Rupert Clark, who had produced detailed reports on all Aynho men who had served and/or died in both World Wars, and other History Society information.

The most interesting thing that he found out as he was researching was how connected they all were. He ignored details of battles and where they were buried, but spoke to local people, and concentrated on the man who had died, what he did, where he went to school, where he worked, etc. Most had been agricultural labourers, and bearing in mind that almost all of them lived in what is now the small conservation area in the centre of the village, they and their families would have known each other well.

Quite a gruesome film was recently shown on T/v illustrating the horrors of war in the early days.

This is what our men went through, rats, dead bodies, gas, etc. They had been to school together, worked together, and most lived close by in Charlton Road as well. And families too: one Aynho widow Minnie Cross lost her husband, her brother-in-law, a relative of his, and her own brother all in a few weeks in 1917. You can imagine what effect this all had on neighbours in that street.

Most Aynho men who died were young men, but Edward Charles Savings was 38 when he either volunteered or was conscripted. He only had one lung, but he passed his medical. Within two months he had died, leaving a wife and eight children, one only two months old. Two descendants of the family live in Aynho.

Edward John Seccull came from a long line of stone masons and builders stretching back to the 1690s. He was a son of Eli and Rhoda Seccull, who were the last of that family to live in Aynho. Two of Eli's cousins were also killed in the war, but that branch of the family had moved away from Aynho.

The very first Aynho man to die had been John Digby Cartwright. He was the son of William Digby Cartwright, one of three successive Cartwright Rectors of Aynho. John went to Sandhurst, and became a 2nd Lieutenant in the 20th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry. Age 20 he was killed in action on 9th August 1915. Being the Rector's son this had an immediate effect on the village.

His younger brother, Nigel Walter Henry Cartwright, went to Sandhurst too, and held the same rank in the same Battalion. Again age only 20 he died on the 21st of September 1917.

Because so many were so young, they didn't have time to leave much behind them.

Quite a few people can just remember the Second World War. 2020 will be 75 years from the end of it. So we could do the same for just 7 Aynho men in that War. It was suggested that Sybil and Edward Bowerman might be able to help with this.

2) Business

Peter said that he had taken over the Accounts as Treasurer on November 13th.

Rupert didn't tell him how much was in the Bank. All he said was that he had paid all the cash into our account.

Peter checked the chequebook and the paying in book and the only cash paid in was £44.50. He saw that the last Bank Account was dated 1st August 2017, so this meant that our account was only just over £100. For weeks he didn't receive a Statement, so after a long time he phoned the Bank and said that hadn't had any Statement. He was told that one had been issued on 1st December, but they kindly agreed to send him a duplicate. He was surprised to find that on the same day that he had paid in the £44.50 in cash, Rupert had also paid in a large sum but it wasn't in our paying in book. So we are now quite well off after all.

Keith thanked everyone who had completed the survey, and most replies were very positive.. The main point that had come out of it was that almost everyone recommended that we should improve the sound quality of speakers. We have a microphone system, which was produced, but it didn't work properly. It will be examined before the next meeting to ensure that it is in order.

One thing that had been omitted from the survey's last item on publicity had been the posters placed around the village that had reminded several people about the meetings.

Some respondents said it would be nice to have a trip, but each had a different one in mind. In any event we have a full programme for next year, so it would have to be an extra day in 2019. The three places suggested were Bletchley Park, Warwick Castle and The Black Country Museum.

The only other item was that several people would like refreshments afterwards, though few would like to help. Peter said that it could be done similarly to the Gardening Club, but that it ought to be self-financing.

So far as the Committee is concerned at the previous A G M Ted had saved the day by volunteering to be Chairman, but one of his other long-term commitments clashed with ours, so Keith took over. It was proposed by Ted Sutton, seconded by William Usher and agreed that Keith should be chairman for 2019.

Keith brought up Northamptonshire Heritage Forum which has a booklet listing 46 places of interest in Northamptonshire, only five of which are south of Northampton, with absolutely nothing south of Towcester. The other 41 are in the city or north of it. The nearest mention to us is Junction 10 of the M40 (which is in Oxfordshire anyway). Keith has approached the Parish Council for support of an application to get Aynho included in this. He has also spoken to James Perkins, as a picture of Aynhoe Park House should be featured. Free history tours of the village by Peter would be mentioned.

Keith also spoke about the up-coming Auction of the Aynho Junction Signal Box sign and Amby Hitchcox explained that she would be bidding, and that crowd funding in the village had already reached over £600. people were invited to add to the donations by speaking to Amby after the meeting.

3) Forthcoming Meetings:-

Wednesday 30th January - New excavations at Farnborough Hall by Steven Wass.

Wednesday 27th February - The History of Privys by Chris Bazeley

Wednesday 27th March - Romantic Decline - Preserving Chastleton House by Ruth Peters