

SASHA (Stockcross and Surroundings History Association)

Chairman's Report for year ended December 2016

Date: 30th January 2017

This year has been very active, despite following one of the most remarkable achievements of the group (the book about Stockcross Church's WWI burials and the associated families). It can sometimes be a strange feeling when an instinct makes one wonder what's been done during a year, and then when the year's activities are listed it becomes obvious the answer is a rather a lot.

We've had several fascinating talks and exhibitions (some hosted by us and others open to our members to attend) by people who clearly know their stuff:

- David Peacock. *Anglo Saxon Berkshire*
- WWI Exhibition in Newbury
- Roman Coins from Boxford, Berkshire and Britannia
- Dr Nick Young. *A Brief History of Thatcham*.
- Manfred Brod. *Lord Craven of Hamstead Marshall and his troubles with the Commonwealth*

We had an exhibition promoting our society at West Berks Museum last summer. This was a busy event that had a notable benefit in that it allowed us to associate with and get to know other local groups doing similar things. This wasn't the only exhibition; we laid on a display for the 'Stockcross Church Celebration', at which the theme was royalty/jubilee.

It is also really beneficial that we have continued to enjoy a strong relationship with important organisations, like Boxford history society and key individuals at West Berkshire Council.

There was a period during which the group (personal opinion) perhaps felt it difficult to decide what to do after the great success of the WWI themed book based on the histories of families associated with the graves in Stockcross Church, but that period is now well and truly over. SASHA has made great strides forward with its main project, *Oral History*. This is a history of the locality as gleaned from interviews with senior members of the village.

The archaeological explorations carried out by the late Janey Hawkins, and televised by the Time Team, have attracted the interest of local archaeologist, Alex Godden. The first rate data collected by Janey will surely become a report on the group's website in the not too distant future.

The website is another area in which the group has progressed: we can now upload articles and data of interest, and have done so with transcriptions of censuses and a detailed log of graves in the churchyard.

On a valedictory note, the Chairman wishes to thank for the whole group for the honour of choosing and allowing him to hold the role for 2016.

May 2017 be even more fruitful than last year!

Jonathan Hawkins

SASHA Chairman - 2016