

# MALDENS AND COOMBE HERITAGE SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 24th JUNE 2015

AT NEW MALDEN BAPTIST CHURCH

Mary, greeted all members (36)

There were apologies for absence from Lynne Finnerty, Pat Farr, John King, Shaan and Tim Everson, Alan Oakley, Beryl Bizodis, and John Durkin.

There was one new member Angy Stagg.

The minutes of the last meeting was taken as read and signed. It will appear on the Society website at a later date.

Mary thanked the church for the use of their meeting place, and for their catering facilities.

Special mention was made of Patrick Dennison who had recently spent some time in hospital and Carol Brearley (Tracy's mother) who had sadly passed away recently.

12 members of the Society had paid a visit and tour of Tiffin Boys School on 28<sup>th</sup> May, kindly arranged by one of our members John King. The tour which took about 1hr 45mins was fascinating and as an old boy it was interesting as to how the school had changed over the years. One particular item of great attention was the wall which runs alongside the school down Queen Elizabeth Road. John told us that not only did it contain Elizabethan bricks but also Wolseyan similar to those used at Hampton Court. A look through the archives ended our visit and we were all given a complimentary pencil as a memento of our tour.

The Society had operated a stall at the Kingston Vale summer fair on 13<sup>th</sup> June. The theme for the fair was pirates which the members fully endorsed by donning eye patches and parrots. We gave a lot of publicity away and sold various items resulting in takings of £17.50. The prime reason for attending this fair was to make residents aware of the existence of the Society and this aim was achieved. Julian received a number of postcards of the area to copy for the archives.

Robin reminded the members that we would also be having stalls at both the Maeldune Fair (27<sup>th</sup> June) and the Craft Fair during Malden Fortnight (11<sup>th</sup> July). Members were invited to visit the stalls and if able to help out manning the gazebo.

Robin asked for volunteers for a project the Society were undertaking in noting and photographing any inscribed benches in the area. Joan and Mary kindly offered to undertake this, and report back at the next meeting. Most benches were erected through the offices of the Council, but as some of these had disappeared in recent years it was felt necessary to record those of the present day. Members were asked to notify Joan/Mary of any in their immediate area.

Our speakers for the evening were Peter Goodchild and Dick Riches talking about Bradbury Wilkinsons which used to stand on the site now occupied by Tesco's in Merton. Peter told us he was born on 5<sup>th</sup> October 1935 at 6 Chilmark Gardens New Malden and attended both Sheephouse Lane School and Beverley, and his first job was at Bradburys. Bradburys main business was engraving for bank notes and passports whilst also producing forged documents for spies during the war.

Peter took us through the various types of plates used during the printing process. Starting with copper, and then curved steel plates, and finally nickel plates. Then came the process of using moulded plastic from original dyes. Both bank notes and stamps were also design at Bradburys, although the process of making bank notes had changed through technology with the use of scanners, with the watermark on a rotar with cut the design.

Peter explained that during the war both sides were counterfeiting currency with the Germans using labour from concentration camps. They managed to complete the watermark process but couldn't match the correct paper. This resulted in the three spies used by the Germans in this country to distribute the notes being caught quickly.

Dick explained that the company originally Bradbury and Evans used to print illustrations in magazines such as Punch, Daily News, The Field and books. Robert Wilmot Wilkinson joined the company which became Bradbury Wilkinson. The factory unit was built in New Malden in 1920/1 and he joined the company in 1947 becoming an apprentice for 4 years. The presses room smelt of ink and there was a lot of dust present. This meant wearing special work clothes as the job was dirty and noisy. At its peak the company was so big it had its own Fire Brigade and Sports Club.

We were told that next year's £5 note will feature Winston Churchill instead of Jane Austen. The use of plastic notes was already happening in countries such as Haiti, Australia and nearer to home on the Isle of Man.

In AOB Mary reminded members that the Christmas Party this year will again be held at the Malden Centre on 12<sup>th</sup> December starting at 7pm. Tickets were available at £7. Robin and Julian reported on their experiences during the recent flood in New Malden when a 30cm pipe had burst flooding the area underneath the railway bridge. Mary mentioned that she remembered this happening before.

A planning application had been presented for New Malden House to be converted into 90 flats with parking on the top two stories of the multi storey car park next door, and the demolition of Barton Green Pavilion was taking place at a cost of £60,000.

The meeting closed with the next planned for Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July