

# MALDENS AND COOMBE HERITAGE SOCIETY

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 29th JULY 2015

### AT NEW MALDEN BAPTIST CHURCH

Mary, greeted all members (39)

There were apologies for absence from Martin Maggs, Anthony and Angela Evans, Judith Caddy, Dick Riches, Alan Oakley, Pete Jackson, Terry Newman, Liz and Don Bavington

There were four potential new members Mary Grisdale, John Osbourne, Keith Powell, and Ashley Sims.

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.

Robin stated there had been five entries for this year's Lloyd Award (compared to three last year). Four from Coombe Boys and one from Richard Challoner on subjects ranging from the History of Medicine, the Manhattan Project and Women's Suffrage. Rochelle kindly offered to be our replacement judge for the competition.

The society had been represented at the Maeldune Fair on Plough Green where we had had a successful day bringing attention to the work done and took a total of £60. We also had a stall as part of the Craft Fair during Malden Fortnight. We met many interested and interesting people on the day giving out literature and selling merchandise including Christmas Cards (the theme was Christmas!). Takings amounted to £87.05 including donations. Thanks were given to Terry, Graeme, Julian, Karen, Joan, and Maureen for their help.

Tim gave a very interesting talk on Malden's medals and paranumismatica. He talked about his own collection and others he knew were produced but he had been unable to obtain. The original Palm Tree Coffee House (on the site of Tudor Williams) issued tokens. On Charter Day in 1936 3,500 commemorative medals were to be produced by Fattorini & Sons, but due to unforeseen circumstances the order was cancelled. We were shown badges connected to Malden Camera Club, New Malden Rotary Club, Malden Vale FC, Malden & Coombe Bowling Club, Holy Cross School, and even a badge from the Malden and Coombe Heritage Society (donated by Robin). He had been unsuccessful in bidding for a badge from The Maldens & District Angling Society which sold on an auction site for £36.

Paul DiBiase (Barry's cousin) then gave a very interesting account of the business and the family over the last one hundred years (see attached). The family had arrived in the UK from a town near Naples in 1894. They originally set up business in Clapham before moving to New Malden in 1915. The grandfather Domenico returned to Italy in the 1930s, leaving sons Frank and Merlin to run the shop.

They became so experienced that they took to teaching and training, and Frank took part in international competition through Europe. Both Frank and Merlin served in the British Army. Frank's daughter Ann joined the business in 1951 and separate shops were opened in Kingston, Surbiton and Esher. Paul became Finance Director in 1961, and Merlin's son Barry joined the New Malden shop. Since 1964 refurbishments of the New Malden shop have been designed by Paul's wife Sue. Frank died in 1989 and Merlin in 1992 while the family continue to run the shop making it a real family business.

Joan reported on the dedicated seats she had discovered in the area, there were 26 in total and she kindly read out the dedication and asked whether anybody knew the person(s) commemorated. John K mentioned that Patrick Daly (bench 14) was a supply teacher and was a very nice man.

Julian reported back on the Heritage Walks which he had organised as part of the Malden Fortnight. These had been very well attended and donations totalling £56.10 had been taken towards Society funds. Three walks had taken place and part of the reason for these was to learn history about the area as well as relating stories and giving publicity about the Society.

In AOB mentioned was made of the Christmas Party on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm. Tickets were £7 each and there would be a raffle, quiz and food provided but if you required alcohol you would have to bring your own bottle. The venue as before would be the Studio at the Malden Centre in Blagdon Road.

John also spoke about the proposed cycleway between New Malden and Raynes Park and how he felt it would affect the environment alongside the route that was submitted.

The meeting closed with the next planned for Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September