

MALDENS AND COOMBE HERITAGE SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 2nd DECEMBER 2015

AT NEW MALDEN BAPTIST CHURCH

Mary, greeted all members (30)

There were apologies for absence from Chris Coke, Shaan and Tim Everson, Keith and Diane Cooper

There were two new members. Judy Caddy and Valerie Perry

The minutes of the previous meeting were signed.

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

Robin made an appeal for temporary storage space for some of the Society's larger items. A section of a garage would do as long as it was secure and water free. We had display boards and a document box etc that were too big to be stored in the committee's homes.

A report was given by Mary regarding the Plough Pond. The committee set up by the resident's association were looking to receive three estimates for the work to be done. It was thought these estimates would be between £65 – 70K. When these estimates were received, the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund would be sent off. It was hoped that another meeting would be called when a representative from the Lottery Fund would attend. Looking further it was hoped that Princess Alexandra would agree to attend the opening ceremony.

Also regarding the Princess, it was hoped that she would agree to become patron of the Heritage Society, and Mary would be writing formally to request her patronage.

Robin mentioned that he had recently visited Kingston Museum shop and noticed the lack of material for sale relating to the Maldens and Coombe. He asked members whether they could suggest anything that they felt could be marketed. Unfortunately, no suggestions were forthcoming.

The Heritage Exhibition held at Chiccos had been a great success and the Society had taken £150 from sales of Christmas cards and copies of photographs. We had also been presented with an old deed box by Mr John Pearson. The box had formerly belonged to the old Malden and Coombe Borough Council.

The sales of Christmas cards and Christmas Party tickets were progressing well. Catering for the party would again be from Marks and Spencer as the quality of the food was so good last year. The quiz was being organised by Mr Wren who was a quizmaster at Woodies Public House.

Those members with outstanding subscriptions were asked to see the treasurer Martin to renew their membership.

Our Speakers were Graeme Hodge (one of our committee members) and Ken Cowdery who together had formed The Royal Borough Of Kingston War Memorials Association. Graeme had been researching the names on the memorials in various parts of the borough for over 15 years and was regarded as the leading authority on his subject. The memorials themselves were described as a silent reminder to the generations that followed.

The association's aims were to help in the upkeep the memorials, and to assist in the act of remembrance, helping to recall the names and lives of those named and to endeavour to educate the public to learn about those commemorated.

The research was ongoing and they were still trying to find some missing stories, but out of the 2200 First World War casualties 2000 had been identified. These had been entered on their website on a roll of honour and this would be updated in a quarterly newsletter. The association had been and would be giving talks at local schools, churches and other organisations. They had also organise workshops and taken part in the Kingston Museum exhibition "Remembering Kingston At War" which was touring the borough and would be at Old Malden Library at the end of January 2015.

On the New Malden Memorial there are men from 96 regiments with the majority being from the East Surreys. These men are buried in 164 cemeteries and although there are 265 names more than a hundred more had been identified. These men were aged between 16 and 59 years old with an average age of 36. 1,092 men served their country and 1 in 3 were killed, and for every one man killed two were wounded. Certainly, a lost generation.

It was a fascinating talk well related by Graeme and Ken and much appreciated by the society. It was suggested that the association might like to affiliate itself with the society and this was agreed by the members.

The meeting closed with the next planned for Wednesday 4th February 2015