



TIMES PAST

The Newsletter of the Kennington History Society
Issue 31 Winter 2022

KENNINGTON HISTORY SOCIETY IN 2022

2022 saw a return to a full programme for the Kennington History Society and we were very pleased to see so many members returning to join us for meetings in person. Talks were held throughout 2022 on subjects including the history of Oxford's Botanic Gardens, the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the life of local antiquary Percy Manning.

We were grateful to receive support from the Kennington Parish Council in 2022, which has gone some way to support the society's financial shortfall in recent years due to Covid. Unfortunately our membership has fallen during the years of Covid so we would like to encourage members to 'bring a friend' in 2023!

Our AGM and Members evening will take place in February. We are keen to welcome new people on to the committee so if you have some time to contribute please do get in touch. The Members evening is also a chance for members of the society to give short presentations on their own interests in history. Slots are first-come, first-served, so if you have an area of interest you'd like to share we would love to hear from you.

We would like to extend special thanks to Jean Holt and Mark Horseman who stepped down from the committee in 2022. Jean and Mark have been involved in the society since it began in 2002, with both becoming committee members and Jean serving as Secretary for a very impressive fifteen years. We are pleased that they will remain as society members. We would also like to thank our members Jo Horseman, Audrey Jones and Maureen Ball who provided us with refreshments after each meeting throughout 2022. This gives us a chance to catch up over a cup of tea after each meeting and is greatly appreciated by all.

There is a fascinating series of talks in place for 2023, with our first meeting to be held on Mon 16th January at 7.45pm in the Methodist Hall, where Richard O. Smith will present on eccentric Oxford. We look forward to seeing you there.

Kennington History Society Committee, December 2022

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

MONDAY 16th JANUARY

The Z - A of Oxford: 1000 Years of History in 26 Letters - an entertaining talk about the city's eccentric Past
by Richard O. Smith

MONDAY 20th FEBRUARY

Annual General Meeting & Members evening

MONDAY 20th MARCH

Rivers & Rowing in and around Oxford
by Rod Andrew

HISTORY SOCIETY WEBSITE

Keep up to date with the latest details of the Society's events via the village website www.kennington-pc.gov.uk and clicking organisations and clubs, then History.

ZOOM LINKS FOR MEETINGS

Members who are unable to attend meetings are invited to join via Zoom link (subject to permission from speakers). Work is ongoing to improve the quality of 'broadcasts'. Should you require a Zoom link please contact the email below.

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

£15 Individual £25 family

Thank you for supporting the Kennington History Society!

GET IN TOUCH

You can contact the History Society by:

- Speaking to us at talks
- Email:
kenningtonoxfordhistorysociety@gmail.com
- Telephone:
Bob Johnstone (Co-Chair): 730209
Brian Andrews (Co-Chair): 321151

IN MEMORIAM

Kennington History Society lost two close friends in 2022 who each played a vital role in supporting the society. **George Ross** was a founder of the History Society in 2002 and served as our Chairman for our first twelve years. As well as being keenly interested in local history he also served for over 25 years as Parish Council Clerk and Ross Court in the village is named for George and his wife Carole. **Malcolm Smith** joined the committee in 2021, when he and his wife Tricia stepped in to take on the planning of our programme of talks. Malcolm worked hard to bring us the interesting range of talks we had in 2022 as well as our exciting programme for 2023. They are both deeply missed.

2022 - the Year in Review

During the lock-down, we held meetings virtually and then hybrid ending in full reality with Ian Giles in December.

17th January	British History of the Computer	Prof Brian Andrews
21st February	Annual General Meeting & Members evening	
21st March	Nineteenth Century Women Travellers & Explorers	Katharine Bradley
25th April	Oxford's 400-year-old Botanic Gardens: Notable keepers, visitors & events.	Mark Davies
16th May	Canal restoration: Benefits to wildlife & environment	Martin Buckland
20th June	A crystal vision of Victorian Britain: The Great Exhibition of 1851.	Simon Wenham
19th September	Tracks to the Trenches	Mike Hurst
17th October	The man who collected Oxfordshire: The antiquary Percy Manning	Mike Heaney
21st November	Yesterday's runways: airfields of Oxfordshire	Bill King
19th December	Christmas Music and Song Through the Ages.	Ian Giles

As can be seen in the above table of events, the range of topics was wide and all were pitched just right and very well received. The meetings were all held in the Methodist Church which provided a convivial warm space where members and speakers were able to catch up and socialize with coffee, tea and biscuits.

For our final event, in December, we were very fortunate to have Ian Giles come to our Christmas meeting in Medieval costume no less!! Ian presented to the Members, a mixture of seasonal Medieval songs - in rich, powerful tones, poetry and live music on his hurdy gurdy and his favourite squeezebox. He invited questions about the historical aspects and provided many very interesting related anecdotes. This gave us a deeper insight into the local origins of the medieval songs and their revival in modern times.

It is worth knowing a little bit about Ian as he is Oxfordshire's foremost guru in the folk music world. He was born/raised in Cowley. Early in his career, he sang with the Walton Wakes, Juxtapose and Folly Bridge with Claire Lloyd & Graham Metcalfe - one of the most outstanding harmony trios in the club & festival scene. He is also a member of the Oxford Waites, lead singer & front-man for Magpie Lane & The Amber Quartet of which they have sell out performances.

There was great interest in his hurdy gurdy as it is such an unusual instrument and many members had a closer look after Ian's performance. Ian provided us with a very uplifting evening as he is a consummate performer! This was the second time that Ian has performed with us and we look forward to seeing him again.

