

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT, 2005

Your Committee have pleasure in submitting the 48th Annual Report and Statement of Accounts, for the year 2005.

The transfer of the complete run of *Cake & Cockhorse* (to the end of Volume 15) to CD-Rom, has been greeted with interest and approval.

Officers and committee members continued unchanged. Membership of the Society remains close to three hundred, most as records members. Attendance at meetings and new membership has been variable, due partly, it is suspected, to the advancing years of some normally regular attenders. Posters (fresh for each meeting) are distributed by Deborah Hayter for display at a wide number of key places.

The year's meetings maintained their accustomed entertaining variety. Nick Allen has now been arranging these since 1995, and we have a full line-up for 2006/07. Reports on most, generally prepared by Brian Little, have appeared in *Cake & Cockhorse*. John Pelling spoke on the transition in building styles over the centuries in Oxfordshire houses, Kate Tiller demonstrated the importance of nonconformity in north Oxfordshire as revealed by the 1851 religious census, and the season ended with a survey of the archaeology of Roman Oxfordshire by Paul Booth. In the autumn, following the start-of-season reception at the Museum, at very short notice Richard Martin, Cotswold woollen weaver, spoke entertainingly on this craft; and Nicholas Cooper gave us a tour and history of Kelmscott Manor, with much on its occupants before and since William Morris. Reports on the excellent talks on Wychwood Forest and Eynsham Abbey appear in this issue.

In April advantage was taken of our long-term member John Gazey's term as Lord Mayor of Coventry to visit the Coventry Council House and adjacent St. Mary's Guildhall. It was a gratifying opportunity to remind us of the historic connection between our two towns, as exemplified by the generous gift by Coventry in 1628 of over £26 to relieve sufferers from Banbury's great fire.

In the summer, a visit to the Oxfordshire Bus and Morris Motors Museum at Long Hanborough proved a popular change from our more usual country house excursions, though the tour of Chicheley Hall, with its associations with Earl Beatty, was again enjoyed by the usual faithful attenders. Once again these were organised with initiative and efficiency by Beryl Hudson.

The A.G.M. was held at Deddington Manor, by kind invitation of Group Captain Denys and Mrs Buffy Heywood. This was the home from 1838 to 1869 of the Reverend William Cotton Risley, whose diaries are being published by the Society.