

# BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## ANNUAL REPORT

Your Committee have pleasure in submitting the 51st Annual Report and Statement of Accounts, for the year 2008.

Following our half-century year the Society has returned to normal activities. However, celebrations have continued, as 2008 was the fourth centenary of the grant of the Second Charter to the Borough by James I in 1608. Our own contribution to the Town Council's packed programme of events was a talk by Jeremy Gibson on Mayors he had 'known (though not necessarily liked) over four centuries', and publication of an up-to-date list of all known Bailiffs and Mayors from 1553 to 2008. The peak point of the year was the Visit of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, as duly described on page 253.

At the Annual General Meeting significant though mainly technical changes were made to the style of membership. Effectively the former 'Ordinary' and 'Records' memberships have been merged, so that all future members will receive all publications. At the same time the subscription has been raised (after many years) to £13.00 p.a. (£15.00 for overseas members). The formal change to our constitution was subsequently ratified at an Extraordinary General Meeting. With its talks, excursions, three issues of *Cake & Cockhorse* and 'records' volumes approximately every eighteen months, members continue to get very good value for money.

Membership of the Committee remains unchanged, but Dr Helen Forde has taken on the Chair from Jeremy Gibson. Meanwhile, membership of the Society remains close to three hundred. Whilst there is a steady flow of new members, this is counteracted by loss through natural circumstances. Nevertheless attendance at meetings has been steady and often near capacity. We are particularly fortunate in the succession of Nick Allen by Deborah Hayter in finding speakers and arranging the lecture meetings, as well as distributing posters for display at key places.

Thus meetings have maintained their accustomed entertaining variety. Reports on most, generally prepared by Brian Little, have appeared in *Cake & Cockhorse*. We opened with Dr Adrienne Rosen's description of Tudor and Stuart life in Chipping Norton, based mainly on probate records studied by a local group; Chris Day gave us a survey of how Oxford's town v gown relationship has developed over the centuries; whilst a large and enthusiastic audience (fortunately in the larger venue of the Methodist Church) showed the power of television, to hear Nick Barratt on 'Who Do You Think You are?'

The autumn season opened with our usual modest reception (organised as always by Fiona Thompson, Margaret Little and friends). This was marked not