

# MINUTES OF MEMBERS MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY ON 13th JANUARY 2022

## PRESENT

Robert Excell (Chair)	Individual Member
David Muston (Vice Chair)	Calverton Records Project
Mike Wittle (Hon. Sec.)	St Mary's Church, Bletchley
Charlotte Hall (Treasurer)	Woughton Heritage Group
Alan Cooper (IT Officer)	New Bradwell Heritage
Neil Loudon (Exec)	Milton Keynes Museum Society
Anna McEvoy (Exec)	Stowe House Preservation Trust
Catherine McIntyre (Exec)	MK City Discovery Centre
Cheryl Butler (Exec)	Deanshanger Village Heritage Society
Jennifer Cooper (Social Media Officer)	New Bradwell Heritage
Brian Giggins	Towcester & District Local History Society & Historic Survey
Lynne Cairns	Heritage MK
Jennifer Cooper	New Bradwell Heritage Group
Barbara Evelyn	Newport Pagnell Historical Society
Peter Barnes	Simpson Historical Society
Aggie Canning	MK Central Library

## APOLOGIES

None

### 1. Welcome

The Chair, Robert, welcomed all to the meeting.

### 2. Minutes of Virtual Members Meeting dated 22nd June 2021

Agreed and noted.

### 3. Matters Arising

None

### 4. MBE for our President Bill Griffiths

Both Robert and Neil expressed their pleasure and congratulations to Bill for the announcement of his up and coming award of an MBE for his contribution to the preservation and heritage work across MK and wider over the years including being the first Chairman of MKHA in 1994 and our current President. Over the years he has been at the centre of the 'Festival of History', MK Museum and a champion for the history of the City.

## **5. MKHA Committee Vacancies**

Cheryl Butler who has been a long time member of MKHA representing Deanshanger Village Heritage Society and Minute Taker and member of the Exec Committee is moving to Lincolnshire in the Spring of 2022.

Mike Wittle, representing St Mary's Church, Bletchley and current Hon Secretary of MKHA is also moving out of the area in the Summer of 2022.

This will leave TWO vacancies on the MKHA Exec Committee. If anyone is willing to join the Exec of MKHA and /or take on the Hon Secretary post please will they contact the Chair, Robert Excell.

## **6. Arch-MK - Outcomes and Next Steps**

### **6.1. Community Foundation sponsored project complete (slide 7)**

- Consultant archivist's final report submitted and accepted
  - 49 archiving recommendations made across 8 groups
  - 60 recommendations/positive outcomes recorded by groups • All groups committed to recognised series cataloguing
  - Remaining recommendations underway

### **Paragraphs 6.2 – 6.9 (Slides 8 – 15)**

**NB: The bullet points in dark face were illustrated and used for presentation and discussion at the meeting.**

### **6.2 Cowper & Newton Museum (slide 8)**

#### **6 recommendations 6 + outcomes**

- Cataloguing over 2,000 items (archive and 3D objects) onto MODES
- Repackaging photographs using Glassine sleeves
- Re-vamping of the lace room
- Repackaging lacing costumes using acid-free tissue paper
- Repackaging rare books using acid-free tissue paper
- Completion of a paper catalogue of documents.

### **6.3 Newport Pagnell Historical Society (slide 9)**

#### **9 recommendations 9 outcomes**

- Purchased museum display cabinets with external funding from the Co-op Local Community Fund
- Repackaged costumes using tissue paper
- Repackaged maps, removed elastic bands, and secured with archival tape

- Re-boxed the Aston Martin memorabilia (3D objects) •Created two Excel catalogues (by room order, and by date order)
- Added locations to the Excel catalogue to assist with object and document retrieval

- Used mending tape for maps
- Purchased an archive box for storing oversize material

#### **6.4 Stoke Goldington Association (slide 10)**

##### **4 recommendations 5 outcomes**

- Repackaging maps and securing with archival tape
- Mending tears in maps using archival fixing tape
- Re-packaging audio-visual material (to be completed in due course when bespoke packaging eventually received) •Cataloguing the collection using Excel spreadsheets, using series
- Installing a glass cabinet for exhibiting material (currently a Remembrance and the British Legion exhibition)

#### **6.5 Woughton Heritage (slide 11)**

##### **7 recommendations 10 outcomes**

- Revisited the cataloguing
- Reviewed handling procedures for archive material •Prioritised the 1728 sale vellum,
- Stored archive documents in cool dry conditions •Repackaged maps in acid-free boxes and folders
- Repackaged postcards in acid-free sleeves •Continued series of exhibitions in September •Planning to have an informal 'memory tea party'
- Looked at copyright in relation to the collection •Liaising with Parks Trust on local heritage boards

Charlotte Hall spoke to her experience of the project and updated members about the project to restore and preserve vellum documents Woughton Heritage own and digitalise them.

#### **6.6. Yardley Gobion History Group (slide 12)**

##### **4 recommendations 9 outcomes**

- Placing non-original archival material in poly pockets & ring binders
- Repackaging /interleaving a fragmented scrapbook with acid- free tissue

- Altering the arrangement of digital photographs on computer
- Re-naming document files to ensure they are clearly identifiable
- Investigating making digital files read-only for security
- Investigating backing up digital contents on a more regular basis
- Continuing to catalogue, but using the Excel database template
- Typing out the 1911 census for Yardley Gobion
- Purchasing a new steel cupboard to use alongside the existing one.

## **6.7 Roade Local History Society (slide 13)**

### **5 recommendations 10+ outcomes**

- Cataloguing the entire archive and object collection.
- Designating a unique archival reference code item or file.
- Sorting the archive collection into relevant 'series', and placing the entire archive in order
- Creating a cataloguing spreadsheet that is kept updated as the collection expands and new acquisitions are acquired
- Setting up plastic (metal-in due course) racking on

which to store the archive

- Storing archive material in bankers' boxes and lever-arch files
- Repackaging 3D objects in acid-free tissue paper and archive quality boxes
- Repacking documents in temporary plastic pockets until acid- free pocket available

## **6.8 New Bradwell Heritage (slide 14)**

### **8 recommendations 8 outcomes**

- Repackaging material in acid-free manuscript folders
- Repackaging photographs in acid-free envelopes
- Re-boxing material in archive boxes
- Repacking maps and plans in acid-free map bags
- Repackaging 3D objects using acid-free paper

- Cataloguing of the photograph collection (now complete)
- Cataloguing other items in the collection (in progress)
- Storing material in cupboards (mainly flat) for easy access and protection

Jennifer & Alan Cooper spoke to their experience of the project.

## **6.9 Bletchley Archaeological & Historical Society (slide 15)**

### **5 recommendations 3 outcomes**

- Re-packaging of two boxes of information files into acid-free archival sleeves
- Listing of photograph files on Excel
- Cataloguing the individual photographs on Excel (work in progress)

## **6.10 ArchMK Conclusion and Next Steps (slides 16 - 19)**

### **6.10.1. General Archiving knowledge gained through project**

- Sharing best practice between groups
- Maintaining knowledge acquired
- Disseminating to younger/diverse audiences
- Avoiding physical/information losses (plan Bs)
- Devising new ways to capture waning memories

### **6.10.2. Preservation knowledge gained through project**

- Set annual budget for archival supplies
- Immediately address damp and light issues
- Knowledge-sharing and 'championing' digital hierarchical structures, file naming, & back-up
- Address limited life span AV material (VHS)
- Investigate further external funding

### **6.10.3. Cataloguing & collection accessibility**

- Keep catalogues up to date (new acquisitions)
- Ensure wider public access
- Add MKHA to TNA 'Discovery' platform
- Devise access methods for local on-site visitors
- Seek external funding for digitisation

#### **6.10.4. Next steps project plan:**

- Anna coordinate and admin
- Consider fortnightly surgeries (LA Hut)?
- Robert prepared to support
- Replay Ellie's recordings for P2P sessions
- Address limited life span AV material (VHS)
- Investigate further internal/external funding
- Encourage each project group to mentor others

A number of additional comments were made around the need to protect the availability of historical items in storage when local knowledge and people were no longer available and the potential loss of archived materials stored in vaults that were not the responsibility of a particular group. It was all too easy for items to be lost in these circumstances. It was agreed that this was an area that needed consideration under next steps.

Lynne Cairns highlighted local suppliers who can provide restored metal storage cabinets. Lynne agreed to provide a digital LINK to members.

**Action: Lynne Cairns and MKHA.**

A brief discussion was had around how the above groups can assist any new groups wishing to undertake similar training on Arch projects. It is hoped to ascertain what groups would like to undertake this training and then arrange training using the Living Archive Hut facilities. **Action: MKHA**

Catherine McIntyre reminded members that Museum staff are available to help and assist members at any time. **Action: Museum and MKHA.**

#### **7. HoD's (slides 20-21)**

##### **Heritage Open Days 9-18 Sept 2022 (slide 21)**

This year the national theme is 'Astounding Inventions' somehow connected with somebody or something in your local area and if that cannot be found, an 'Heroic Failure' would also qualify.

MKHA can support your events with smaller 'easier access' grants for those who have been members for 18 months (see *MKHA website for application form etc*).

## **8. Festival of History (slide 22)**

- This has been rescheduled to the 10/11th June 2023.
- Existing funding has been ring-fenced with more sought. Planning is underway with a meeting in February 2022. Further information to follow.

## **9. Treasurers Report (slide 23)**

£17,086.98 (Treasurers Account)

3,436.01 (Business Bank Account)

£5,315.60 (Savings Account)

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£25,838.59

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Total (as at 06/01/2022)

*NB: these figures include all payments/costs with regards to ArchMKHA project*

## **10. Grants (slides 24-25)**

### **10.1. Recent Grant completions:**

- Buckinghamshire Gardens Trust : recording important gardens - £750
- Roade Local History Society : 'Cutting Remarks' Book publication - £750

### **10.2. Grants project in progress:**

- Bucks Archaeological Society : digitising MKAU monographs - £550

*NB: New grant applications are always encouraged particularly for supporting heritage events - such as HoD's and Festival of History; and Also new 'design and print' grants now available (see slide 25)*

*NNB: MKHA is in process of applying for 2022 grant of £5k.*

**10.3. Design & print grant (slide 25)** - A grant of up to £500 for qualifying members can be applied for. A simplified application form can be found on-line. MKHA has teamed up with PMJ Graphics. The grant includes design & printing costs.

## **11. Members Reports (slides 26-33)**

### **11.1. MKCDC (slides 27-29)**

It was noted that the Archive and Reference Library was open to visitors and enquiries about their collections and that there had been a sharp increase of interest recently.

Three new new collections were available on-line:-

- Margaret Powell
- Bernard Madden
- Brian Cudmore

It was also noted that the Halloween Event tickets sold out with 1 day.

### **11.2. Buckingham Canal Society (slides 31-32)**

A brief update was given on current groundworks associated with the Canal Arm at Cosgrove.

### **11.3. Towcester and District Local History Society (slide 33)**

Brian Giggins gave a brief update highlighting the publication of their new book which was produced jointly along with the Historic Towcester Survey. The book is entitled "Exploring Towcester's Hidden Histories" and is on sale for £10. **Further information can be obtained from Brian.**

***NB: MKHA reminded members that grants can be obtained from MKHA possibly up to 50% towards the costs of printing and publishing local historical books like this and recently in conjunction with Roade. Members can contact MKHA direct for more information.***

## **12. A.o.B**

A recent letter from the Partnerships & Strategy Manger of Bucks Culture was highlighted about the availability of funds for activities to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee in June 2022. Eligible projects can complete an application form for between £750 and £10k. However applications have to be lodged by midday on 14th February 2022 which leave very little time.

Also the Community Foundation are co-ordinating events/grant applications connected with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in MK. Please contact them direct for further information.



Funding options across Bucks and MK will be published in the next MKHA Newsletter. **Action: MKHA**

### **13. Next Members Meeting**

The next members meeting will be on Thursday 24th March 2022 at 7pm (*venue TBC*)...

**MEETING CONCLUDED**