

**HALBERTON HISTORY GROUP**

**BULLETINS 2016**

## HALBERTON HISTORY GROUP (Jan)

We have recently seen the plaque that used to be on the pavilion in the playing field by the school, or the "Rec". The pavilion was demolished after repairs became unviable



An article in the Western Morning News at the time describes what must have been a most eventful day. After speeches thanking Squire Clarke for his generosity Halberton school children took part in a variety of races and the winning team was Nelson led by Muriel Drew. Next was a display of physical training drill by some of the children. Sampford Peverell school children put on a dancing display and Ash Thomas scholars took part in more sports under the charge of Mrs. Nickolls, headmistress and Miss Valentine. The Halberton children were supervised by Mr. Greenslade, headmaster, Miss Visor and Miss Long. Next came a tea in the school and in the evening there was a concert.

Mr. Clarke had bought the land for £100 and paid another £175 for the construction of the pavilion. Swings, a see-saw and sandpit were paid for by public subscription.

The photograph taken in front of the pavilion has the Vicar, Rev. Stephen-Evans seated on the left and Mr. E.V. Twose on the right so we assume in the middle is Squire Clarke. The other men in the picture probably include P.J. Gregory, T. Carter, W. Andrews, L. Hutchings, F.S. Hooper, W.J. Shapland, S. Scorse, G. Dymond, J. Upham and T.W. Chave. Can anyone identify any of them?

It's just possible that some people might be able to remember this day when they were very young and if so the History Group would love to hear from you.

## HALBERTON HISTORY GROUP (Mar)

At our February meeting we looked at some coins found in a local field. By comparing them with some shown on the internet we put rough dates to them which ranged from 1731 to 1919.

We also heard about several farms in the area which were once owned by the singularly named William Hamilton Codrington Nation who seems to have been a bit of an eccentric. It would appear that he never lived in the area as he was born in Exeter and spent most of his adult life in London where he wrote and produced plays which attracted only a handful of people in the audience. He was jilted on the eve of his wedding in about 1860, whereupon he shut up the house which had been furnished ready for him and his bride. Everything remained untouched for 45 years until after his death – an echo of Great Expectations.

We also found out about a fire in 1878 which destroyed the farm known as Millses which used to be between Corner and Whites Cottages, themselves also burnt down in 1929.

The Group's A.G.M. was held in March and officers appointed, details as before.

At our April meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> Peter Nicholls will give a talk on the Redvers family. On 10<sup>th</sup> May the Group will be visiting Fursdon where they will have a conducted tour of the house, a cream tea and time to wander in the garden. The cost will be £12.50 to include tea. Please contact Joy if you would like to come with us, non-members very welcome. This is a most interesting house and the garden should be looking lovely at this time of year. Transport can be arranged.

For the Halberton Festival Weekend we are going to open the Twose Room on the Sunday and continue our displays upstairs in the main Village Hall room. We will be there all afternoon so please come along to see some of our collection of old photographs, etc.

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## HALBERTON HISTORY GROUP (May)

In April member Peter Nicholls gave us a talk on the Redvers family and how they had initially come from Reviere in Normandy (hence the name) with William the Conqueror. He traced the ups and downs of the family fortunes as they fell in and out of favour with the monarchs of the time becoming Earls of Devon in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

In May we enjoyed a very interesting afternoon at Fursdon House. Our guide was local historian, Charles Noon, who shared his extensive knowledge of the Fursdon family and the House, which has undergone many changes, in a most entertaining manner. The present family (David Fursdon is currently Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Devon) can trace their connection with the house, in an unbroken line back to 1259.

We enjoyed a generous cream tea in the coach hall tearoom and then had time to wander in the grounds. It was a lovely spring day and the views across the valleys in front of the house at their best with the leaves on the trees still just having their fresh colour.

Coming up in June we will be visiting the picturesque village of Lustleigh where the local history society will give us a guided tour and show us their archive collection in the Old Vestry House. Also in June we have an extra get together with a visit to Cullompton Church. In July we will be visiting another one of the farms on the fringe of the parish – Lower Ford. We welcome anyone to join us on these visits. Please contact the number below for more information.

We have recently had visitors to the Twose Room from Cumbria and also from Australia. The connection of the later to Halberton is rather circuitous in that her distant relative's 4<sup>th</sup> wife was Anne Martin whose family were at Burn, near Five Bridges and then at Turley in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Anne Martin's first husband was Clement Harwood, surely part of the family after which Harwood House is named.

Their son emigrated to Australia in 1888 where there are descendants hoping to be put in touch with others back in the UK. So, is there anyone who thinks they can claim Anne Martin & Clement Harwood as their ancestors?

## HALBERTON HISTORY GROUP (July)

Our exhibition as part of the May Festival was a great success with many visitors enjoying the displays in the Village Hall. For the first time we took part in the treasure hunt organised by the Methodists with the final questions leading the teams through the displays.

In June we went to Lustleigh, a very picturesque village on the edge of Dartmoor. We were met by members of the Lustleigh History Society who took us on a tour of the village pointing out some of the older buildings. We also saw the May Rock, an enormous bolder on which names of past May Queens are inscribed. The May Day ceremony dates back to 1905 and has taken place every year since then except during WW2. We visited the Church, which has a most impressively carved rood screen, and the Society's archive room in the Old Vestry House. The amount of material collected about the village and available for all to view is most impressive. (The Society was formed in 1978 so has a head start on our own!) All in all a most enjoyable and informative afternoon.

An extra June event was a visit to St. Andrew's Church, Cullompton, hosted by David Pugsley. The wet weather meant we concentrated our attention on the interior where we marveled at the wagon roof and the fan-vaulted Lane aisle with carvings reflecting the source of John Lane's wealth as a cloth merchant. The Golgotha, a massive oak base carved into rocks, skulls and bones, originally fixed above the rood screen, was the object of considerable speculation.

In July some members enjoyed a visit in warm sunshine to 15<sup>th</sup> century Lower Ford Farm. We were welcomed by Mike & Diane Pring who showed us some of the vernacular features of the house and outbuildings. They also produced a collection of old sale particulars relating to the farm & its land, some of which dated back over a hundred years. A delightful cream tea in the garden rounded off a very pleasant afternoon.

For our August meeting on the evening of the 11<sup>th</sup> we will explore the Browns Bridge area to the West of Willand Road and on 8<sup>th</sup> September David Pugsley is coming to give a talk entitled "The Judge who shot the Doctor".

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## HALBERTON HISTORY GROUP (Sept)

For our August gathering our Chairman led us on an exploration of the Browns Bridge area by the old railway track off the Willand Road (known to some of the senior members as Fishers Bridge). We found several older buildings tucked away there and also unusually an air raid shelter from WW2. It brought home the fact that areas such as Halberton were considered in line for bombing as well as the more urban areas. We looked over to the stream which once powered both Town and Nether Mills.

In September we enjoyed a most interesting talk by David Pugsley with the intriguing title of "The Judge who shot the Doctor". He recounted the story of a duel which took place on Haldon Hill in 1833 between a well-respected local doctor, Dr. Hennis, and Sir John Jeffcott. It followed the most minor dispute when Dr. Hennis was alleged to have called John Jeffcott a scoundrel which was considered a terrible slight in those days. It ended with the doctor being shot by the first bullet fired and dying eight days later. At the trial none of those charged with murder, which included the men's seconds, were allowed to give evidence as was the law at the time. So everyone got off. The way Mr. Pugsley explained the background of the protagonists and customs of the times left us informed as well as entertained.

We have recently had a visit from a Spanish family who are descendants of the Halberton Twose family. Their great grandfather, Arthur Twose, went to Spain in about 1877 to "build a machine to make paper". He married a Spanish lady and never came back and now there are about a hundred Twose descendants in Spain. We were told that he was very well respected in Catalonia for his civil engineering work.

We have also been shown a medal of John Hine from Halberton who joined the Devonshire Regiment and was sent to India to take part in the 1897/98 campaign on the North West Frontier. He was shot in the shoulder, badly wounded and sent back to England, becoming a postman in Cullompton. His elder brother Richard enlisted in the Navy on the day of his eighteenth birthday and served for 31 years, finishing out his years at Wallands Cottages opposite the Hickory Inn.

## HALBERTON HISTORY GROUP (Nov)

At our October meeting David Maunder gave us a talk about Berry House, Chevithorne, and its owners, one of whom were the Walrond/Waldron family, important wool merchants and business men in the Tiverton area during the 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. He found that some information in the documents which came with the property had not been recorded anywhere else and from it has been able to fill in some gaps in previous knowledge about those families.

The November meeting, being the last for 2016, was a special evening with a comprehensive talk from Jan Wood of the Devon Heritage Centre, Exeter, on researching the history of farms. She illustrated her talk with examples of the source documents and maps, many of them relating to places in Halberton parish and nearby. We had a record attendance for the evening and the talk was followed by a ploughmen's supper.

The speaker has left us with a copy of her presentation and handouts summarising the sources she covered. These are available in the History Room during our normal opening times or on request – contact details below. We have transcriptions available of some of the items mentioned, such as censuses, trade directories, tithe map and apportionments and everyone is welcome to come and look through these.

Halberton boy made good - Since the last newsletter we have heard from a lady in Texas whose ancestor, Henry Webber, was born at Court Farm in 1784, moved to Wales and became a wealthy newspaper proprietor.

There is no meeting in December and the January meeting will be on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup>.

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