

# The Friends of the Cardall Collection

# NEWSLETTER

## No 16: Spring / Summer 2015



### Chairman's Update

Spring is here and it is time to update you on how things are going at Southam Heritage Collection. 2014 was a very significant year. Not only did we move into Town Centre premises, but we were able to put on our first long-running exhibition (Southam Women in WW1), for which we are indebted to volunteer Val Brodie and the tremendous amount of work she has done. We were also able to run a number of events for specific groups in our new premises.

Being in the Town Centre makes the Collection much more accessible to residents and visitors. Equally, having premises which are in a good state of repair means that we can accommodate small groups for specific events and get-togethers as well as welcoming visitors like local MP and Attorney-General Jeremy Wright.



As a result we have reached out to more people than ever before and have also been asked to contribute to quite a number of events in other towns and villages, thereby bringing Southam and its rich local history to the attention of many more people than has been previously possible.

2015 is going to be an equally exciting year. Not only will we continue with a series of further exhibitions but we hope to be moving yet again, into even more prominent premises in the new Tithe Lodge community rooms.

The room we have been offered is in the main entrance foyer off High Street, and is immediately

opposite the entrance to the new Library. We are still not sure what the costs will be, but we are hoping it will be affordable so that we can make the move later this year.

One issue that we will face with the new premises is the question of limited space. There will be less space in the Tithe Lodge room than we have now, or previously at the Old Labour Exchange. This means we will need some storage elsewhere. However, there are many advantages to having a presence in this prestigious new facility, and we are confident we can overcome our storage problems. *If anyone reading this does have a wealthy friend with Southam connections who might like to provide us with some free storage I would be very interested to hear from them!*

I am pleased to say that during 2014 new volunteers have come along and are actively participating in our work. Also, more and more people are coming forward with historic items that they are prepared to share with us, and in some cases even donate to the Collection.

We have had some success with grant applications for specific projects. Southam Town Council has awarded us a grant to purchase new display cabinets, and Warwickshire County Council, via their Councillor Grant scheme, has agreed to fund the production of a short film and the reprint of Brian Townsend's book 'Southam Through the Centuries'. Many thanks to Councillor Appleton for supporting this project.

With increasing levels of support we are optimistic about the future for Southam Heritage Collection. You can read more about our activities in the following articles. If you think you would like get involved or would just like to chat on a strictly no-obligation basis please feel free to contact me at any time.

### Internet Presence

For some time now we have had a growing Facebook audience who are following our regular postings and 'liking' our updates. Social media is a great way to reach a wider audience and help to spread the word, particularly amongst the internet

*Southam Heritage Collection (incorporating the Cardall Collection) comprises artefacts, documents, photographs and memorabilia associated with Southam and its surrounding villages. The County Museum Service inspectors agree that it is an important record of the life and times of our historic market town. The Collection urgently needs a permanent home in Southam where it can be displayed, used and appreciated by the general public, local history societies, schools, reminiscence groups and researchers.*

generation. We also have a presence on the internet on the "Our Warwickshire" website ([www.ourwarwickshire.org.uk](http://www.ourwarwickshire.org.uk)) West Midlands section, the Community Archives site (listed as: Friends of the Cardall Collection) plus an entry in Google Places so that people can find out where we are located. If you enter "Southam Heritage Collection" into Google you will find many references to entries associated with the Collection.

However one of our aims is to have our own website and some time ago we purchased a suitable domain name. I am pleased to report that we are now actively working on creating a Southam Heritage Collection web site, and we hope to have this up and running by the middle of this year. The intention is that the site will be dynamic with regularly updated content and that it will act as a world-wide advertisement for the Collection.

Two members of our Committee (Linda and Pam) also belong to a Southam First sub-group that is working on a new promotional website for Southam town. Again this Southam website is scheduled to be up and running later this year, and it will feature a Southam Heritage page and links to our new website.

Even our currently limited web presence has generated contact from both North America and Australia – the Australian one even wanted to buy one of our Old Southam calendars!

## 200 Club

Our 200 Club is a terrific way for people to support the Collection without getting directly involved, whilst at the same time running the risk of winning a cash prize!

We have run the club for two years now and it has been very popular as well as providing much needed income. Each month there is a draw for a £10 prize and every 6 months there is a draw for a larger prize, depending on how many tickets have been sold (the larger prize has been £40 for the past two years).

The new 200 Club year starts in June, so now is a very good time to buy a ticket to have a full 12 months' worth of draw entries. Tickets cost just £5 and can be obtained now from Jenny Frith on 01926 814643 or by contacting any Committee member.

## 2016 Heritage Calendar

For the past two years, our pictorial calendar of Old Southam has been another very successful fundraising activity. Our new 2016 Calendar contains another 12 fascinating photographs of

old Southam and district, and is currently in production.

We have been very successful in achieving sponsorship from local businesses to help pay the printing costs. Each page of the calendar will show the logo of that month's sponsor and we are extremely grateful for the goodwill and generosity of our local business people, especially during this period of recession.



As a taster, this picture is featured in January.

We are sure you will be impressed with the final result and help make the 2016 calendar another 'sell out'. The 2016 Heritage Calendar will cost just £5, and will be on sale in local outlets from mid-July. You can also obtain your copy by contacting us direct.

## New Exhibition: Tithes, Taxes & Old Southam

As we walk around town we never know what we are walking over or in whose footsteps we tread. So it was tremendously interesting to see the archaeological foundations that came to light after the demolition of Victor Hodges House and the library, and this has inspired our latest exhibition.

The archaeological team employed by the site developers discovered the foundations of three sides of a substantial stone building aligned east to west, with walls about a metre wide and constructed of local limestone facing with a limestone rubble infill. It is thought the exposed foundations originally belonged to a barn some 40m long by 10m wide and may have been a tithe or great barn associated with the Manor of Southam when it belonged to Coventry Priory.

Very few medieval finds were dug up, which is quite unusual considering the site is alongside the church and near where the original manor once stood, and it all sits in the centre of the town. However, change of use and robbery of the original stone may explain this and the fact that after the dissolution of the monasteries and a new manor house was built (which is now the chemist

shop), the medieval town developed more around Market Hill to the east of the church.

Another find running parallel to the tithe barn foundations was a Roman ditch which contained a Roman coin and pottery shards. Over the years there have been a few Roman finds in and around Southam, but nothing has been extensively researched. The nearest known Roman site is a farmhouse near Ladbroke, but this ditch indicates more unknown Roman activity in closer vicinity to the town.

For our new summer exhibition that opens on Carnival Day, 25<sup>th</sup> May we have been able to borrow an interesting selection of Roman and medieval finds from around Southam for visitors to look at, including a medieval quillon dagger found just south of the town.

The exhibition tells the story of the town centre from Roman times until today and includes some superb aerial photographs of the exposed foundations; details our links with Coventry Priory when the barn would have been used to store their tithes in; explains how Southam people would have been affected by tithes and taxes; uses desk-top research to understand how the town centre developed after the Reformation and brings out of our archives a selection of old photographs of the town including 20<sup>th</sup> century aerial photographs and maps.



## Promotion & PR

One of the important activities we are engaged in is making the wider world aware of the rich local history of Southam. We do this through the exhibitions and events we hold on our premises as well as via travelling exhibitions when we are asked to support other events.

However we also take every opportunity to engage with the local press and local radio – local TV is a bit harder but we're always looking for opportunity. One of the best ways to spread the news about Southam is through talks to local groups in the town and in nearby towns and villages.

Over the past year there has hardly a month gone by without someone from the Collection giving one, two, three or even four talks to groups varying in size from 12 to over 60 people. These talks are valuable fund raising events but they also spread the word and open people's eyes to facts about their local market town which most of them are completely unaware of.

We now have four different talks available covering the History of the Collection, The Shaping of Southam, Bandages and Fresh Air (about the women of Southam and the WW1 VAD Hospital), and WW1 Humour and Sentiment (which focusses on how local soldiers and their relatives coped with the trials and tragedies of WW1). All these talks are illustrated and are available for a small fee depending on the size of the audience.

If you are the speaker secretary for a local organisation why not contact us and have a chat about whether one of our talks could fit into your schedule.

## "Southam Zoo - An Alphabet History"

Helen Morris' booklet about Southam Zoo is now on sale at Vivian House in support of the Southam Heritage Collection – price £4. It contains memories and anecdotes relating to the Zoo and includes photographs and drawings. Some of these are outlines of animals which can be coloured in by young readers or by adults looking for a relaxing pastime.

The Zoo has achieved legendary status amongst Southam residents and the book contains many of the more bizarre anecdotes. One story which didn't make it into the book is one from Robert Cardall who remembers that in the sixties, his taxi service was requested to take two chimps and their keepers to Brooke Bond Headquarters in South Croydon, London to attend an audition.

Robert was in the driver's seat and next to him sat



Mr Clews who held one chimp while the other chimp and its lady keeper sat in the back. The chimps ate apples all the way and spat out the peel onto the floor. When they reached their

destination, Mr Clews left the car to report their arrival, leaving Robert and the chimp side by side in the front seat - not for long though. The chimp suddenly jumped up onto Robert's lap and started turning the driving wheel around, very delighted with the game. Robert looked up to see dozens of laughing office workers watching the impromptu show from nearby windows.

On their way home one of the brake rods came loose under the car and Robert stopped near Marble Arch to investigate. While under the car he saw lots of peoples' feet gathering on all sides and realised that a large crowd of assorted passers-by had collected to watch the chimp through the car windows.

If you have any more Southam Zoo stories, please get in touch, we would be very pleased to hear them.



## Annual General Meeting

Another date for your diary – we have just decided on the date for our AGM this year. It will be on Tuesday September 29<sup>th</sup> in the Congregational Church lounge and we usually start at 7.30pm. As in previous years, the formal business will be followed by drinks, nibbles and a chance to socialise and renew your membership.

## Social Event: Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August

This year our annual social event will be slightly different. We have decided to hold it earlier in the year so that it becomes a Summer event instead of falling quite close to our AGM in the Autumn.

We have booked Southam Cricket Club again, and our speaker this year will be "The Historic Gardener" Michael Brown. Michael is an entertaining and informative speaker and will bring along an array of props and a slide show. The supper this year will be 'buffet style' and we are arranging the room slightly differently so that everyone will have a good view of the speaker.



The event includes a two course supper, an after dinner speaker, and lots of informal socialising! So if you haven't been to one of our social events before, now's your chance. Tickets cost £13.50 per person and will be available soon from Vivian House, or by contacting any Committee member.

## Southam Open Gardens

Those hard-working folk who keep Southam looking Bloomin' lovely every Summer (Southam In Bloom) have invited us to participate in the Southam Open Gardens event again this year.

This biennial event takes place on the weekend of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> July, when over 20 gardens in Southam will be open to the public. The event is well publicised and is usually very well attended, with people travelling to Southam from quite some distance away for a day out in the town. We will still be in our Vivian House premises in July, so will be opening our doors to invite people to find out more about our town and its history, and take a look at our Summer exhibition.

## Vintage & Craft Fair

Another event we have participated in before is the Graham Adams Centre Vintage Fair. This year the event is on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July from 2pm to 5pm. We will have a small display and information point, and stocks of our 2016 heritage calendar will be on sale for fund-raising. Do come along and support this worthwhile event.

## VE Day Service at St James

We were pleased to be asked to support Southam Parish Church's commemorative VE Day Service on Sunday May 10<sup>th</sup>. We put together a small collection of WW2 memorabilia for display in the Church including this photograph of the 1945 celebrations on Market Hill:

## Our Opening Times

If you haven't been to see us yet, please call in – **full details of our current opening times are on the next page.** Current projects include stories and memorabilia about WW1 and WW2, Southam Zoo and the history of the cement works.

# Southam Heritage Collection



## **General Information & Contacts:**

The Collection belongs to the people of Southam. It is managed by Trustees and a Committee of the Friends of the Cardall Collection. Membership of the Friends is open to anyone with an interest in the history of Southam and the surrounding area. If you would like to find out how you can support our work, please telephone either the Chairman, Bernard on 01926 613503 or Secretary Linda on 01926 814214. Alternatively, you can email us on: [cardallcollection@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cardallcollection@hotmail.co.uk) or message us via our Facebook page "Southam Heritage Collection". (If you are a Facebook user, please 'Like' our page to help spread the word about Southam and its heritage.)

## **Opening Times at the Basement, Vivian House, Market Hill:**

We are currently open on Tuesday mornings between 10am and 12 noon, when volunteers are gathering information for the WW1 Centenary Archive. We will be open on Carnival Day (Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May), then from 2nd June we will be extending our opening to both Tuesday and Friday mornings. We are open on Farmer's Market Saturday mornings (2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month) and every Saturday morning during August. We will also be open for the Open Gardens weekend, 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> July. Please note access to the basement is via stairs, so may be difficult for those with mobility problems. If you would like to arrange a private visit outside these times, please contact Bernard on 01926 613503.

## **Volunteering, Membership, Donations:**

If you would like to join the Friends or make a donation, please complete and return the attached form, with your payment. The form includes a Gift Aid Declaration that taxpayers are asked to sign to enable us to reclaim the tax you have paid on your subscription or donation. (Membership is renewable on 1st October each year.) You can also donate online at [mydonate.bt.com](http://mydonate.bt.com)

## **Southam "Walk and Talk":**

A short guided tour of Southam on level footpaths to see some of its most interesting buildings, and hear something about their history, followed by an opportunity for tea and chat at a town centre venue. Available for groups of up to a maximum of 20 people, the Walk and Talk lasts about 2 hours and costs £5 per person. Contact: Linda on 01926 814214.

## **Presentations, Talks, Exhibitions:**

We can attend one of your group meetings or visit your premises and give a presentation and talk about aspects of Southam's history tailored to your interests. Contact Bernard on 01926 613503 or Linda on 01926 814214 to discuss your requirements. (A fee will be charged by agreement.)

## **Events & Festivals:**

If you would like us to have a stall at your event or festival please contact Jenny on 01926 814643

**200 Club:** Tickets cost just £5 per annum, and your number is entered into a monthly draw. Proceeds go towards supporting the work of the Friends. All enquiries to Jenny on 01926 814643

**Copies of Photographs:** All enquiries to Bernard on 01926 613503

*Thank you for reading this Newsletter.  
Please feel free to pass it on to your friends, relations and colleagues.*

# Friends of the Cardall Collection

The Basement, Vivian House, 21 Market Hill, Southam CV47 0HF

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / DONATION FORM / GIFT AID DECLARATION

Full Name: .....  
(please print)

Address: .....

Postcode: .....

Telephone: ..... Email:.....

I would like to become a member of the Friends of the Cardall Collection or renew my annual Membership, and I enclose herewith my subscription.  
(Current annual subs are: £15 for individuals, £20 for a couple, £5 each for the over 70s)  
I would like to donate the following amount to support the objectives of the Friends of the Cardall Collection.

£
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£
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Signed: .....

Date: .....

**Please return this form with your payment to the Treasurer: Pam McConnell, 19 Tattle Bank, Southam CV47 1NU.** Cheques should be made payable to: The Friends of the Cardall Collection. Payments by internet banking to: HSBC Account Sort Code: 40 42 15 Account No: 31436848 Ref: (your name).  
Membership is renewable on 1<sup>st</sup> October each year. Many thanks for your support.  
Please tick this box if you require a receipt:

## GIFT AID DECLARATION



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If you pay Income Tax, the Friends of the Cardall Collection can claim back the tax you have paid on your subscriptions and donations. In order for us to claim this tax back, please complete the following Gift Aid Declaration:

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all qualifying gifts of money

today  in the past 4 years  in the future

Please tick all boxes you wish to apply, and sign the Declaration below.

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 28p of tax on every £1 that I gave up to 5 April 2008 and will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after 6 April 2008.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Please notify the charity or CASC if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

*Note: If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.*