

ALCESTER & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2018

www.alcesterhistory.org.uk



Alcester High Street under snow in January 1962 (ADLHS Collection)

NOVEMBER MEETING

The speaker at our last meeting was a return visit by Sir Andrew Hamilton who spoke to us about **"Stolen Lives"**.

Sir Andrew revealed the stories of just a small number of those brave soldiers who volunteered to join up. The graves of many of these men lie in France and Belgium, but many of the fallen have no grave, but are remembered on some of the large memorials, such as at Thiepval and the Menin Gate. The graves are still tended with care by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Among those soldiers recalled were: **Bruce Bairnsfather** who was well known as an artist and who drew the "Old Bill" cartoons. He lived at Victoria Spa Lodge, Bishopton in Stratford-upon-Avon and served with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment until injured at Ypres. **Basil Hallam** was a famous actor and singer whose character was "Gilbert the Filbert". He joined the Royal Flying Corps and died at the battle of the Somme after falling from a balloon. **Raymond Asquith**, son of the prime minister, Herbert Asquith, a father of three, served with the Grenadier Guards and was killed in 1915 at the Battle of Flers-Courcelette. **Hector Hugh Munro** (whose pen name was "Saki") was a well-known author, who, although over age at 43, refused a commission and joined the army as a trooper. He served in France and was shot by a sniper at the battle of the Ancre. He has no known grave. **Walter Tull** was a professional footballer of mixed race, who became the first coloured officer in the British army. He was killed in action in 1918 at the first battle of Bapaume. **Noel Chavasse** was a doctor who was commissioned in the RAMC and won the VC twice. He died of his wounds at the battle of Passchendaele. Sir Andrew's talk was a poignant reminder of the heroism of so many who took part in the Great War and of their sacrifice.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

We were represented in the parade on Remembrance Day by the chairman, treasurer and president, who laid a wreath on behalf of the Society at the war memorial in Alcester.

PHOTO SURVEY 2018

The results of the photo-survey held in June are now available to be viewed on the Society website: www.alcesterhistory.org.uk

One of those members who contributed some superb photographs, was Malcolm Ranieri, who sadly passed away just a few weeks ago.

2019 CALENDAR

Once again, the Society has produced a calendar full of photographs taken from our archives. These comprise a mixture of images of Alcester and the surrounding villages. The calendar makes a splendid Christmas present and can be purchased for £6 at meetings or from PSW, Classic Clutter or Alcester Heritage Centre. If you are unable to obtain your calendar from these outlets, you can receive your calendar by post by ordering online from our website.

LOCAL PAST

The latest edition of local Past is now on sale. You can read articles on: Studley Brewery, the Peace Celebrations of 1919, the Land & Air Gala 1970, an Alcester doctor in the Franco-Prussian War and memories of Walcote. LP is available from: Classic Clutter, Venue Xpresso, PSW (Alcester & Studley), Hill's Retail (was Ross Motors) and Alcester Heritage Centre; as well as at meetings. The price is still £2.

NEXT MEETING: Our next talk will be on **Wednesday 12th December** the speaker for the evening is **Robin Hill**. His subject is **"My Collection of Collections: A Personal Choice of Objects, People & Places from over 30 Years in Museums"**. This is a return visit by Robin Hill, who is County Museums Officer and curator at the Worcestershire Museum. As is usual at our Christmas meeting you are invited to bring along some party food to share. We are waiving the entrance charge for members and are holding a raffle instead. Meetings are held at St Benedict's RC High School Sixth Form Centre and commence at 8.00pm. All are welcome to attend.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!
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