Shepton Mallet Local History Group

Chairman's Report to the Annual General Meeting 21st November 2013

Firstly, I must thank the committee for their work during the year. We rely on members offering to be on the Committee not only so that the mundane work will be done but, more importantly, new faces on the Committee will come forward with fresh ideas so that we do not stagnate.

As you know, this is my final year in the chair as I strongly hold the view that nobody should hold a job for what seems like forever. Your Committee has been looking at our constitution which was first mooted in 2005. It is a normal constitution which I am hoping will be adopted under Number 6 on the agenda of this AGM. If there are faults in the constitution they will be rectified at the next AGM or, if urgent, at an EGM.

One of the reasons for having a constitution in place is because we need a Heritage Centre. If it arises, funding is far easier for Registered Charities - they have to have a constitution.

During this last year there was a small display in the Heritage tent at Shepton Show which was outstanding and had it been a trade stand, it would have taken first prize in the whole showground. The Post Office window continues to draw interest and will be operational once again in the near future after its facelift.

We have welcomed several new members during the year so that membership is now up in the nineties'. Some of the new members joined purely because we had the opportunity to visit HM Prison Cornhill when it was being closed back in the spring. It is now to be sold by the Ministry of Justice as soon as possible.

For the last four years we have had an outing in a classic bus which proved to be interesting to say the least this year as it started with the bus breaking down at 8.15am. We will only have another outing if there is a good demand from Members. The only reason it nearly breaks even financially is that firstly we do not pay commercial rates for the bus – only a donation, and secondly non-members make up the numbers.