

Introduction

This newsletter is the first for 2024 and produced to coincide with the opening of the museum. We will be producing an autumn newsletter following the closure of the museum and the start of the 2024/25 series of monthly talks.

History Society News

AGM – we held our AGM on Monday 11th March 2024. The following decisions were made: -

- The 2023 Annual Report and Accounts were received and accepted. The annual subscription stays at £15.
- The current committee & trustees were re-elected unanimously. Paula Mitchell volunteered to join the committee.
- The committee is now **Chairman:** Malcolm Storry; **Curator:** Pauline Watkins; **Secretary:** Jan Cliffe; **Treasurer:** John Graves and **committee members/trustees:** Kate Bartholomew, Martin Jarratt, Janis Paxton, Angie Gaydon, Paula Mitchell.
- Agreed to wind up the ‘association’ charity (800336) and transfer assets/liabilities to the new ‘CIO’ charity (1205796).

Council grant – we are delighted that the Chipping Norton Town Council has awarded us ‘core funding’ status with a £3,500 grant per annum for the next two years. This money will be used to pay an element of our running costs and also part fund our plans to make the artefacts held in the museum better understood and more easily accessible to people of the town. We will create interactive displays in the museum and revamp our web site to reach those unable to visit the museum.



History Society Talks – every year between September and May we arrange eight monthly talks on topics of local history. The 2023/24 season has been exceptionally well received and attended.

There are two talks remaining this season:

On 8th April the subject is “The English Civil War in the Cotswolds” by Simon Randall and the final talk on 13th May is “Back Tracks – Detecting the Past” by Colin Clay and Phil Taylor. This last talk will be of especial interest, as it covers the data sources and techniques we are using to build the graphical information system (GIS).

The 2024/25 season of talks begins in September 2024.



Museum News

The museum re-opens for the new season on **Saturday 23rd March**. In preparation for this we are holding a “Volunteers Day” on 21st March at 2:00 pm in the museum. If you’re thinking of volunteering please pop along to the museum or get in touch by contacting either paulinewatkins58@icloud.com or janicemcliffe@gmail.com.

At the start of this year we leased some additional storage space for our exhibits. This frees up space in the museum and, more importantly, provides a better environment in which to store the artefacts.

Window displays have been ongoing through the winter and continue with the recent one on Chipping Norton photographers Frank and Basil Packer.

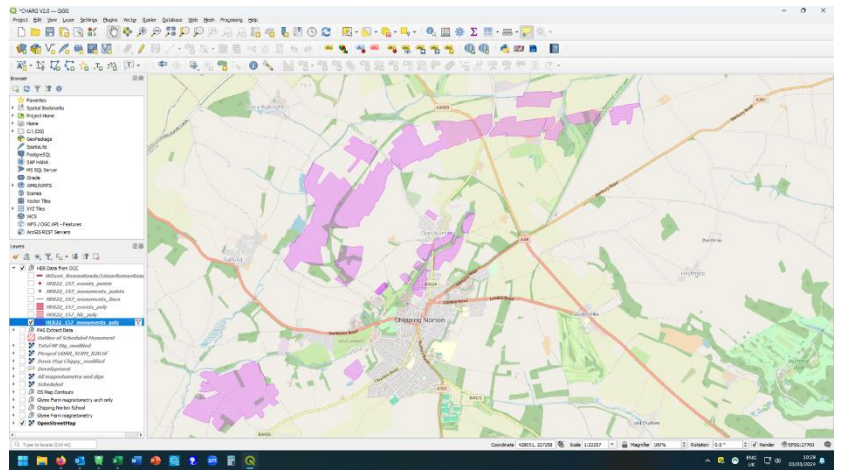


Technology Upgrade and Plans

Many of our activities, planned and on-going, require computing power greater than that available to us on our quite aged computer system – it seems apt that it's in a museum! Therefore, we have invested in a new system. This system will provide us with the computer power and resources we require.

The prime use of the new system will be for the **graphical information system (GIS)**, the management and display of the many photographs that we have digitised and the recently created sound archive of local people interviewed on “Radio Chipping Norton” some years ago.

The development of a graphical information system (GIS) to allow museum visitors to see, for example, the history of the development of Chippy, where artefacts (e.g. Roman coins) were found together with their details held in the British Museum’s “Portable Antiquities Scheme” (PAS). The illustration shows the location of the mediaeval ridge and furrow fields (in pink) identified through aerial photographs.



Further development of the **web site** will complement the museum’s displays and artefacts to bring them to a wider audience in Chippy and further afield.

New Exhibits/Collections/Acquisitions in the Museum

Calling All Football Fans – a special display of the memorabilia of the England and Spurs player Frank Hartley who was born in Shipton-under-Wychwood



“Louisville Slugger” baseball bat - see Bill Williams’ article on the museum’s baseball bat in the March edition of the “Chippy News”



Family History –we are again providing access to the “Ancestry” application for family history research, together with all the local records that we hold.

Photographic archive – we have been scanning and indexing our loose photographs which will be added to the on-line archive readily accessible to view on the computer.

Cashmore collection – the display of items from the “Cashmore” Collection of over 400 objects (mainly Roman) found in and around the area that is now defined as a Scheduled Monument is in the process of enhancement. We have also have had direct access to the PAS database upgraded to enable us to more easily extract data from the PAS. This will allow museum visitors to readily see the finds held in the Cashmore and other collections and read the archaeologist’s description.



Roman Chipping Norton – we are in the process of analysing the magnetometry and excavation reports to allow us to create a series of displays of information on the “Roman Settlement” Scheduled Monument. For example what it is, its importance as a site and its place in the history of Chippy (e.g. its Iron Age roots).

New Museum Publication

Jan Cliffe has another local history book in progress. This is based on a 1921 diary and scrapbook belonging to William Francis Herbert, donated to the museum. Mr Herbert was an extraordinary man: self-educated, a singer, composer and founder of the Church Army Centre School of Music when in his eighties. Jan’s book should be available in the Autumn, to raise funds for the museum.

There are many other local books for sale in the museum, including our last publication “Margaret Bradley’s Inheritance”.



Forthcoming Events

Saturday 18th May 2024 - Oxfordshire Local History Association Study Day

‘OXFORDSHIRE PROTESTS’ is the theme for a morning of illustrated talks, with particular reference to Chipping Norton, to be held in the Town Hall. This will be followed by an afternoon of guided walks around the town and visits to the Museum. Contributors include Simon Draper; Adrienne Rosen; Simon Townley and John Marshall.

For further details and to book a place see <https://olha.org.uk/events/study-days/>

Museum Trustees will be offering refreshments and there will be local books on sale in the Town hall.

Saturday 19th October 2024 – Finds Day

Dr Ed Caswell will again be our resident expert on hand in the museum to identify any objects brought in by visitors. He records any finds of significance in the PAS database, which then allows us to add them to our map of local finds. The picture shows Ed at last year’s event, which attracted over 60 people.

