



Moretonhampstead History Society

Newsletter

January 2008

A Happy New Year to you All

January Meeting:

A post Christmas reminder

Chairman's Address

This meeting will be held, appropriately, in St Andrews Church, at 7.30pm on Wednesday 16th January. The title of Ian Mortimer's address is:

A Time Traveller's Guide to Medieval Moretonhampstead: What to Wear, Eat and Do

Ian's talks are always very well supported, for good reason, hence the change in venue.
This is a 'not to be missed' event!

Non members of the Society are very welcome to join us for a donation of £2 payable at the door.

December Meeting:

Our Annual Christmas Dinner took place in the Stag Suite at the White Hart hotel on Wednesday 11th December at 7.30 pm. There should have been 36 members present, but alas, Wendy Coombes, who organised it all, was unable to attend due to illness, we all hope that you are now much recovered. Wendy will be pleased to know that we all had a great time. A good meal was served by friendly staff, who all worked very hard to ensure that the evening was a success. Our Chairman, Ian Mortimer spoke briefly, after the main course, thanking the Committee for their efforts during the year.

email addresses:

If you now have access to email, but are not on the list, do please let me know so that I can send you Newsletter to you by that means and thereby save on printing costs.

Moretonhampstead 1928:

I have been looking again through the official guide to Moretonhampstead for 1928. It is interesting to note how few of the business advertisements feature a phone number. A few did, and such was the extent of telephony at that time, that most were just two digit numbers; and several are even just one digit! For instance Grays Hotel (The White Horse) was telephone 'Moretonhampstead 4'. The Central Garage was '39'. I suppose most businesses at that time simply did not have a telephone. Now we have to use a minimum of 6 digits, even for a local number. Communications have, however, really developed at a fantastic rate just over the last few years. Many businesses now have both email and a website. We can now look up a hotel on the internet and take a virtual tour of the place, before deciding to stay there! In our own homes we have computing power that is perhaps 100 times the capacity of the computers NASA used to get men to the moon! What, I wonder, would our own

'calculating boy' have made of that!

Picture Puzzle:



I don't expect you to be able to identify this particular location!

Can you, however, tell me what this is the generic local term for such a rock or stone. Do you know how many there are on Dartmoor and how were they formed?

Tea, Coffee and much more!

Your Committee would like to express its sincere thanks to **Eleanor Lockett & June Tozer** , who have very kindly taken responsibility for the provision of tea & coffee at our regular monthly meetings. Last month, before the meeting, we were also offered wine and nibbles! I'm sure many welcome this, it certainly seemed to a very popular alternative, from the number of glasses I saw being quaffed!! Having wine available beforehand made it much more of a social event, for which we are all grateful. We very much hope that the wine & nibbles continue into 2008!

December Picture Puzzle Answer:

Many members knew the answer to this one, I'm pleased to report, for those that didn't: This unusual, if not unique clock face can be seen on the tower of the Church of St Peter just outside the somewhat remote hamlet of Buckland -in- the- Moor. As can clearly be seen the face has the words, "**My Dear Mother**" emblazoned around the circumference, instead of the normal numerals. (fortunately the phrase is twelve letters long !) In 1931, a William Whitley donated the clock along with the three new bells to the church. He commissioned the clock face to act as a memorial to his mother who had died shortly before. The timepiece was made by John Smith and Sons of Derby who were noted for their clocks and chiming bells, having examples of their work in St. Paul's cathedral. The clock today is partially powered by electricity in so much as the weights are lifted back up as opposed to using the original winding. Every quarter of an hour the chimes play "All things bright and beautiful" by means of spring operated hammers hitting the peal of bells. The face was repainted in 2004 and the gold lettering restored to its former glory, thanks to a generous donation.

If you walk around the church you will see that the clock has another face on the opposite side of the tower and yes, in case you were wondering, it too, has these peculiar 'letter' numerals! Another unusual feature of this lovely church is that the vestry is a separate building on the other side of the graveyard.

Anyone can contribute; please send articles to: christopher.pilkington@tesco.net