

Annual report of Sturmer Local History Group Annual Meeting

This is the annual report for the Sturmer Local History Group for 2015/16.

During the last year we concentrated on three areas – church history; Victorians and completing our Magna Carta research.

We attended a tour of churches in North West Essex with John Vigar. The Clavering Study Day was on church history which added to our background knowledge.

Three of us attended a conference on Victorians at Elmswell with the Suffolk Local History Council.

We have continued the Victorian Schoolroom Re-enactments with the schools paying a fee to cover costs. There were 3 in 2015 with Place Farm and Stanley Drapkin School and in May this year we held one for Stanley Drapkin Year 6 pupils. These were supported by volunteers from the Group and help with props from local resident, Paul Sadler.

We completed our research on Magna Carta with a trip to see the postponed talk on the subject by David Starkey who was as provocative as ever.

We attended the annual meeting of Stour Valley Community Archaeology for a talk by Carena Lewis on the finds at Gestingthorpe Manor House site. This was followed up with a group visit to the Roman Villa site and exhibits at Hill Farm. Linda Bevan returned on the following Sunday to join the archaeological dig at the Roman Farmstead site – finding Roman pottery and a pig's tooth in the morning and pot washing in the afternoon with SVCA.

We also attended a day at Hill Farm on aerial photography for archaeology and subsequently visited the CUCAP archive in Cambridge to purchase two photographs of crop marks in Sturmer from the '50s and '70s.

We are continuing to replenish leaflets near the heritage boards particularly by the Nursery, so we are pleased that people are still interested and following the trail. We have a visit from Wickhambrook Local History Group booked in July to walk the trail and have refreshments in the village hall afterwards and RUH are going to visit us in the Spring of 2017 we hope.

We visited the Munnings Art Museum in October.

We have completed the house history for Sturmer Hall and circulated it to all on our email list and put it on our new website (see below). A copy was passed to the Haverhill and District Local History Group. An exhibition of it will be on display at our annual meeting in July and at Sturmer Fayre in September.

We have started a new website on essexinfo.net – see www.essexinfo.net/sturmer-local-history-group

It gives us more room for photos and documents that are currently in the archives or in the Sturmer Village News only.

It is also free to set up and maintain in future years. Once it has more information on it we will discontinue the website – www.sturmerhistory.com

We continue to be members of Haverhill and District Local History Group for their support and local history talks.

We have joined the British Association of Local History Groups as membership gives us Public Liability Insurance for all our activities at a very reasonable rate.

Looking forward - we plan to continue with house histories on Maltings Cottages and Suffolk Edge with the help of local residents, continue building our archive and background knowledge and with trips of interest to the group and to develop our online presence which also includes History Pin photos and You Tube videos and audio recordings.