

Witheridge Family History Society

Newsletter No.7 (published as #4)

March 2016

Hello everyone,

I do hope that things are going well for you. As far as the UK is concerned, we are well into Spring (our clocks even alter to British Summer Time next weekend), and we dare to believe that Winter is over for us. Some areas of the country have had a really tough time with floods, have not heard that any of our members have been effected – do hope not!

This is our last Newsletter for the year and therefore contains mostly details of the forthcoming Witheridge AGM which, as you know (if you have read earlier newsletters!!) is to again be held on May 21st at the SP2 buildings in Salisbury Wiltshire. More about that later in this newsletter.

First of all, some bits of family news (not very much I'm afraid as communication has been sparse over recent months.)

Kim Cook (#01) sent me some worrying news a week or two ago concerning the serious downward turn in the health of JOYCE BROWNE (#06) following a bad fall in February which resulted in a broken hip. However, it was good to receive the following up-date from Kim this week:

"In January, Roy and Kim Cook visited Joyce Browne and were delighted to find her in good form. However, earlier this month Joyce had a bad fall and broke her hip. Although she came through the operation surprisingly well, she developed an infection and became dangerously ill. Amazingly she's now pulled through from that, and is able to get out of bed, with the help of a hoist. Although doctors think it unlikely that Joyce's mobility will improve much, if at all, they feel she'll be better off back in her own flat, once they've been able to install a hospital-standard orthopedic bed with a hoist.

Roy and Kim haven't been able to visit Joyce since her operation, but hope to make the journey very soon. We know Joyce would greatly appreciate letters from old friends" Thank you Kim – We do indeed hope and pray that Joyce will continue to recover well. Do keep us informed. (The under-lining is mine (Beth), and I am giving Joyce's home address in case you want to drop her a line, but this will be removed when the newsletter goes on to our Website.

Alison Smith (#183)

Alison, who is a Committee member, has also had a very rough time, health-wise, this past year. With a great deal of help from her family, Alison's health has significantly improved and we were hopeful that things would have improved sufficiently to enable her and other members of the family to be present at the AGM this year, but this is not possible, due to other illnesses in the family.

News from a very proud father!!

I have been a keen pool and snooker player for a number of years, and as my son Ethan has grown up, he has been bitten by the bug too.

As well as playing for the team I run within our local league, he has been playing for a junior team representing London County for

Ethan playing to Win!!



about 4 years. During the course of the year they play matches against other counties in their region (Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Hampshire and Berkshire), and at the end of the year the top two teams from each of the 8 regions around the country compete in the National Championships, which are held in Great Yarmouth at the beginning of March. For the second year running, the London team qualified in second place in their region.

This year the Championships were held from 4th to 6th March, and London were drawn against a team from Bedfordshire who were known to be quite strong. However, London made short work of them winning 23-13. Next up were Staffordshire, who were dispatched equally ruthlessly, the winning margin being 23-10.

Their semi-final opponents were regional rivals Sussex. Sussex had won the region, beating London twice to do so. Despite the match starting at 8.30am on Sunday morning, the London boys were hungry for revenge. They quickly took a lead that they maintained throughout the match. At one point the margin was 10 frames, and despite a late rally by Sussex, London held on to win 23-17.

London knew the final would be a hard game, as their opponents, Lancashire, had beaten them last year. They were not mistaken, as Lancashire raced into a 5-1 lead. This was the first time London had been behind in any match over the weekend, but the boys were up for a scrap and battled their way back into the match to level at 9-9. The two teams traded frames in a hard fought encounter, and with two frames left to play the score was tied at 21-21. Despite being second favourite in both frames, London managed to win them both to scrape home 23-21 and become National Champions.



Along with several other parents, I made the trip to Great Yarmouth to support Ethan and the team, and we all agreed we would rather have been playing instead of watching, as watching was too stressful!

All in all it was a fantastic weekend and I am extremely proud of Ethan - and the whole team - for such an incredible achievement. - **Jason Cook"**

Ethan with his cup.

You have every right to be extremely proud Jason. We add our congratulations to you Ethan. Very well done indeed. The Crucible is the next step???

Now down to the business of the AGM: First of all, here are the Reports from the Officers of the Society:

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

"This year will see the society's 30th reunion. I remember the very first one in 1987, in West Wickham, Kent, hosted by Roy and Kim Cook (who have attended every one since!!). I was a fresh-faced teenager surprised at how many distant cousins I actually had, hoping that there would be some people of my own age - and there were!

Over the years we have held our reunions in many different places, but with more of a focus towards the South-West of the country, as that is where our common interest has the greatest history.

The Society has had ups and downs over the years, but has managed to weather the storms and keep going. However, we have a new challenge facing us and we need your help. Unfortunately, the majority of the committee have found it necessary to stand down from their positions at the forthcoming AGM - myself included - with health issues being the dominant factor.

Consequently, I am appealing to you to ask if there is anything that you could do to fill the void. It is not necessary to be an expert in any particular field, just that you have the enthusiasm to assist in the running of the society. If two people wish to work together to fulfil one role, then we can accommodate that as well. All offers of help will be gratefully received.

I have enjoyed my time as Chairman, and it has been interesting to read about (and in some cases meet) distant relatives from far flung parts of the globe. With your help, that international bond can be maintained, and the society will have something to celebrate for our 30th anniversary next year.

Jason Cook

SECRETARY'S REPORT

As most of the members of the Society are aware, this will be my last report as both Secretary of the Witheridge Society, and indeed as an active member of the group. It is unfortunate that my resignation comes at the same time as most of the current committee, but I do feel that the time has come for me to concentrate my mind on other matters. I am quietly confident that there are members who can consider taking on the two tasks I have been responsible for – namely the official position as Secretary and the production of the quarterly newsletter which took the place of the Witheridge Times (hopefully the latter will soon be restored). The role of Secretary has been an extremely easy one, mainly just organizing the AGM and keeping records of the very limited correspondence that comes from members and officials.

I must say thank you to the present committee and those members who have provided me with material for the newsletters – I am continuing with my membership of the Society and trust that by doing so I will be able to keep in touch with how everyone is doing.

Beth Neilly

TREASURER'S REPORT

The finances of the WFHS show a balance of £1145.49 as of 19 February 2016. As always our income has come from membership subscriptions. Barbara Finmore, our Membership Secretary, will be making a separate report as to the state of membership.

The main expenditure this last financial year has been secretarial expenses. Our Secretary, Beth Neilly, has been producing the WFHS Newsletter which has replaced the professionally printed Witheridge Times. She

has been given a float to produce and distribute the Newsletter and has then provided receipts to show expenditure. She was also paid for the production and postage of our first 'in-house' Christmas cards, designed by Hannah Shingler, daughter of Catherine Shingler (#246).

We have a new society auditor, Janice Cawsey, who will check the accounts in time for the AGM.

Liz Davey

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

During 2015 a total of 29 families (41 adults) paid their subscriptions.

New members, David (& Julie Geen) were welcomed into the Society at the 2015 AGM in Salisbury.

Velma Metcalf resigned from the position of Witheridge Rep in New Zealand.

Sadly, Lorna Home passed away and condolences were sent to her Son.

Please note that I shall not be continuing in the position of Membership Secretary for the coming year, for personal reasons. I shall resign as of the 31st December, thus giving administration time for any late membership fees for 2016. At the time of appointment, AGM in 2013, I did say that it was for one year only, well, how time flies!

Barbara Finemore

RESEARCH CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

At the May 2015 AGM, two projects were proposed for me to work on. One was a Yearbook for the current year, to be produced late in 2015 or early in 2016. The other was a project to give all members, starting with the most recent, a copy of a 4- or 5-generation pedigree chart showing their Witheridge ancestry. Following the AGM, I immediately started work on the Year Book. However, as some of you will know, a few weeks later I was diagnosed with cancer and had to step back from all my Witheridge commitments. In September I tried to resume my Witheridge work, but further circumstances arose which meant that I had to step back once again.

Although a year book covering the past year is not now possible, I have started preparing pedigree charts for those members for whom I have the necessary information and contact details, and I hope most of these will have been sent out before the 2016 AGM. In the circumstances, I'm unlikely to be able to commit to any Committee work in the forthcoming year, so I will not be standing for re-election at the AGM. However, I will always be willing to help individual members with their research on an ad hoc basis, provided that it's understood that response to enquiries might not be as prompt as I would wish.

Kim Cook.

Worrying reading isn't it? Maybe this is just the jolt the Society needs to enable a different team, and especially the younger Witheridge family members to come to the fore. A good place to start perhaps would be by there being an increased presence at the AGM in Salisbury on 21st May, 2016. A few members did express their regret at not being able to attend last year, so hopefully they will be able to do so this year. At this time I urge you to consider if there is any way at all that you can contribute to the future of the Society, however small or different to what has been done before, and either e-mail me beth.neilly40@gmail.com (I will then pass your interest or queries to Jason); alternatively, you can contact Jason by e-mail to jasonprcook@googlemail.com If you do not have an e-mail address or wish to contact me by snail mail, my

address is 149 Islwyn Road, Wattsville, Nr. Newport, NP11 7QL, South Wales or by landline telephone on 01495 271452, where you can leave a message and I will get back to you.

I will need to send out early in April, a Nominations Form to all members who are not able to attend the AGM – so I am showing below the Nominations Form as it looks without the resigning committee members on it! Let's hope it will look very different when I send out the actual Nomination forms!

If you plan to attend the AGM please get back to me as speedily as possible. When I know who will be present at the AGM I will send out copies of the Agenda and any further details of that weekend. I need to be letting the management of SP2 know who will be attending, and I shall be arranging a meal for the Saturday evening -so numbers please!!

I sent out copies of the 2015 AGM Minutes in June last year, so hopefully you will be able to refer to them. There is also a copy of those Minutes on our website under Members' Section.

So finally, here are the details as they stand: AGM is on Saturday 21st May 2016, in the SP2 building, St. Paul's Church, Salisbury Wiltshire. The day will commence at 11 a.m. with a Committee Meeting, followed by a light lunch and then the AGM is due to begin at 1.30 p.m. The business event will conclude at 4.30 p.m. and this will be followed by a Reunion Meal. Sunday events will be decided upon when/by those staying overnight in Salisbury.

By the way, don't forget that if you do not renew your membership by the time of the AGM you will not be eligible to vote. Get in touch with Barbara if you haven't yet done so.

I look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Until then - take care.

Beth (Neilly)
Member #253
Secretary – WFHS.

P.S. I have deliberately held off sending this newsletter out before now because I was expecting to receive some sad news from Australia -which has now reached me. You may recall that in the June 2015 newsletter I told you that **ALLAN WITHERIDGE, (#165)** husband of Judith Witheridge (formerly our Australian representatives) had been very poorly. Unfortunately, Allan never really got back to full health after that time, and he passed away at 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday 29th March. Some of you will, I am sure, have already heard this very sad news, and messages of sympathy and love will have been received by Judith and the whole of the large Witheridge community in Australia. Allan's funeral will be held on Monday 4th April. Rest in peace Allan – thank you for all the love you have given and all you have achieved.

P.P.S. Following on from my earlier reference to **JOYCE BROWNE (#06)** Kim has kindly kept us up-dated on how Joyce is. We were delighted to hear earlier in the week that there seemed to be a great improvement in Joyce's health so much so that she was able to return home. It was therefore very disappointing to hear from Kim today (Wednesday) that Joyce had not been out of the hospital very long before she suffered a stroke and is therefore once more back in hospital. We are still hopeful that this is only a temporary setback and that the necessary treatment will be effective. Kim will, I am sure, keep us advised.

NOMINATIONS FORM

Position	At 20 th March - Held by	Nomination.
Chairperson	Jason Cook	POSITION VACANT ??
Vice Chair	Chris. Davey	Chris. Davey
Secretary	Beth Neilly	POSITION VACANT ??
Treasurer	Elizabeth Davey	Elizabeth Davey
Membership Secretary	Barbara Finemore	Barbara Finemore (until 31 st Dec.2016)
Research Co-Ordinator	Kim Cook	POSITION VACANT ??
Committee Member	Roy Cook	POSITION VACANT ??
Committee Member	Alison Smith	Alison Smith
Committee Member	Pamela Glynn	Pamela Glynn
Newsletter	Beth Neilly	VACANT. ??
Website Administrator	Bill Dwyne	Bill Dwyne
Australia Representative	Jennifer Woolcott	Jennifer Woolcott
America/Canada Representative	POSITION VACANT	VACANT ?
New Zealand Representative	POSITION VACANT	VACANT ?

As Jason has said in his report, **any** help you can give, whether as a Committee member or as a volunteer willing to assist the Society, will be most appreciated. Helping out doesn't mean you are committed forever.