



LANGTON MATRAVERS LOCAL HISTORY AND  
PRESERVATION SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2016

## Reg Saville

Members of the Society who live away from Langton may not know that Reg fell at home and broke a hip earlier this year. Following an operation in Poole Hospital and convalescence in Swanage Cottage Hospital he returned home and has since made excellent progress.

His familiar figure is now seen on a daily basis out and about in the village but, prior to enjoying his 94<sup>th</sup> birthday at the end of June, he decided that he can no longer give as much time and energy to the Society and the Museum as once was the case.

Consequently, at the AGM held in April, he tendered his resignation as Curator of The Purbeck Stone Museum and Langton Matravers Museum and as Archivist of the Langton Matravers Local History and Preservation Society.

Since its early beginnings in 1968 in what was once Mrs Studley's old dairy shop opposite the King's Arms the Parish Museum, now in The Coach House behind the Church, has become a very highly-regarded local attraction which receives extremely warm comments from visitors from far and wide. Back in 1968 Reg was greatly assisted by Jim Bradford who provided many of the artefacts on display, but the Society's collection of artefacts, memorabilia, documents and photographs has now grown to more than thirty-thousand, all of which have been meticulously catalogued and stored by Reg with expertise which has been highly praised by Dorset County Museum.

He will be a difficult act to follow for his knowledge of the village is without parallel. We are delighted therefore that he has agreed to maintain close contact with the Society as its President, and we hope that for years to come he will continue to write books, give talks, and prepare family trees in the interests of all those who enjoy living in or near Langton Matravers or who have links with the village that they do not wish to lose.

It is probable that without Reg Saville neither the Society nor the Museum would have existed for so many years and we therefore owe him a huge debt of gratitude. Thank you, Reg.

## The Museum [Part One]

The future of the Museum is assured!



**The Museum is situated in St George's Close immediately behind the Church and it really is well worth a visit!**

**The custodians would love to welcome you and admission is free to members of the Society.**

**If you haven't been in lately, now is your chance before it closes for the winter months on 30 September!**

The Management Committee of LMLHPS is in the final stages of reaching an agreement with the Parochial Church Council who are owners of The Coach House, and this will be signed before the current lease expires on 30 September.

We are extremely grateful that the PCC has demonstrated its firm support for the Museum in a number of ways, with a firmly expressed clear wish that this important village amenity should continue to exist.

For a while last winter there were many people suggesting that the Museum was under threat and faced closure unless it could find alternative premises but that was 'village gossip' which has been proved wrong.

The PCC has told us that in effect The Coach House will be ours for as long as we need it, and it is ours for an affordable rent which we are able and happy to pay, subject to the continued support of members and visitors.

So, our thanks are due to the Church, and all we need now to do is to try to ensure that as many visitors as possible find their way to a fascinating place which tells the story of the village's stone industry and contains a wealth of local items, the oldest of which are examples of the bronze age axes found at Putlake Farm by a coach driver with a metal detector in 2008. It is amazing to think that these axes were forged some 2700 years ago, even before Jim Bradford's ancestors farmed the land, since which time they have travelled less than half a mile to become a prestigious exhibit in our museum. If you haven't yet seen them for yourself do drop in before 30 September.

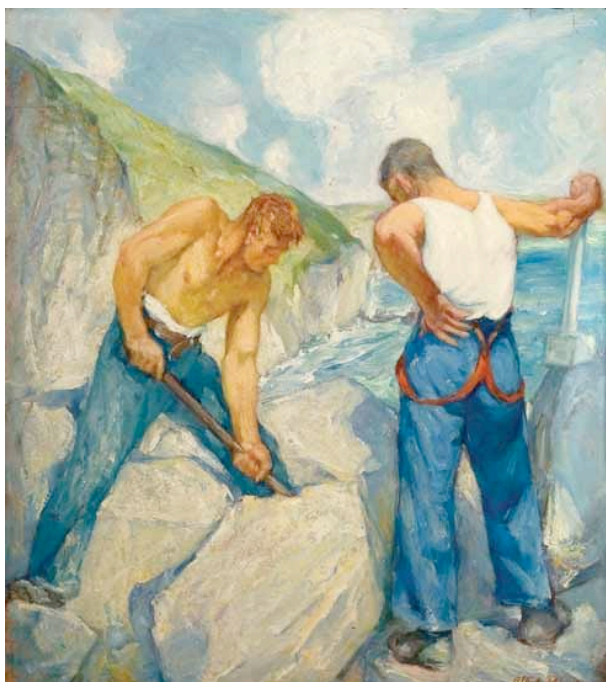
## The Museum [Part Two]

It has to be said that in spite of our best efforts the Museum tends not to receive the numbers of visitors it deserves, even from members and Langton residents, and our voluntary custodians often find themselves twiddling their fingers rather than describing the workings of a donkey-powered capstan.

But in financial terms it is having a successful season and that, strangely, is because back in April we abolished admission charges and asked for donations instead.

No longer, therefore, do we hear the grumble that museums should be free. Instead, such is the generosity of most of our visitors, by 6 August 2016 with eight weeks still to go till we close, our income was 50% higher than at the same time last year. Donations ranged from 'Oh dear. I haven't brought any money with me' to several of £20!

## The Museum [Part Three]



**Alfred Palmer [1877-1951]**

**One of the museum's most important exhibits is this picture of Purbeck Quarrymen at Seacombe, one of a series painted in the 1940s to reflect the artist's love of the local area when he retired to a house in Church Hill in Swanage, having a daughter, Francesca, who lived in Langton Matravers.**

**Palmer was a renowned artist who travelled widely and exhibited throughout the world... and his 'local' paintings were, as he said,**

***'A furious attempt to get some life into things'***

**Visit the Museum and judge for yourself whether or not he was successful in this!**

## A brief word from the Treasurer

The current financial year is likely to be better than many in recent years.

This is in part because of the increased income from the Museum mentioned above but it also reflects the generosity of gifts and sponsorship.

Last year we received sponsorship from Corbens Estate Agents and Suttle Stone Quarries.

This year we have already received a gift of £200 from an anonymous member of the Society who had heard that the museum projector needed to be replaced. This was followed by a further donation of £250 from Suttle Stone Quarries and another of £250 from the management company of Holiday Property Bond who run Langton House.

Do please get in touch with the treasurer if you have any ideas about additional sources who may be approached for sponsorship because, better though this year may be, we still tend to be on a financial knife-edge!

## The LMLHPS Committee

It may be of interest for you to know the names of those who try to keep the Society and Museum moving forward!

The list of names below gives a clear indication that something needs to be put right at next year's AGM! It won't take much effort to work out what is meant!

<b>Chairman</b>	David Selman	[and Treasurer and Membership Secretary]		<b>01929 421481</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	Rosemary Stevens			<b>01929 422218</b>
<b>Members</b>	Pam Bradford	Jim Bradford	Daryle Pearson	<b>[Archivist and Museum]</b>
	Keith Coombes	Colin Garner	Jasmine Cattle	<b>[Custodians]</b>
<b>President</b>	Reg Saville [ex officio]			

If anyone is interested in becoming a member of the committee then do please get in touch because, to some extent, it is a question of the more the merrier!

There are members of the society who are not on the committee but to whom, nevertheless, we owe a real vote of thanks. One of them is Philip Wyatt who prints all the books that are sold by LMLHPS; another is Hazel Dorrington who, as well as being a custodian, is Cleaner in Chief alongside Pam Bradford; then third is Alan Jefferis who is our Number One Technician without whom the Village Hall talks would not be such a great success; and finally Judy and Ashley Cook who seem to enjoy running raffles!

But...above all...the Museum would not be able to open were it not for our wonderful band of custodians who are without exception worthy of our real appreciation. So our thanks to you all!

However we do need more custodians who are able to commit to just two hours a week. No experience is necessary: just a willingness to turn up, meet and greet, be friendly, and try to persuade visitors to leave a donation.

Please give it some thought for next year... Information Meeting on Thursday 11 March 2017 [11am].

## Membership

The Society has a total of 133 subscribing members, a good number of whom live in places as far away as Lancashire, Essex, and Cornwall but still retain a keen interest in 'their' village. Of that 133, a majority of 89 pay for family membership [£7.50] and 44 pay £5 for single membership.

It is very gratifying that many members add a substantial donation to their subscription each year and this helps the Society to balance its books. So far in this Membership Year we have received £745 in direct subscriptions with a further £965 added as donations. A tremendous situation. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

However...and there is nearly always a 'but'! Sadly, in spite of reminders, 18 subscriptions have not been renewed this year and in some cases this is for the second or third year in a row! Is that **really** because those [ex?]-members are no longer interested in the village or the Society, or is it because they just forgot to renew?

To the 'Forgetful Eighteen'...no more hassle from the Membership Secretary after 'today'!

This really is the very last communication you will receive from the LMLHPS if you decide to opt out by not paying your membership subscription...but do please return the enclosed form so that the record can be updated.

The Membership Year begins on **1 September 2016** when all subscriptions become due. Those of you who seem to want to let your membership lapse will find a **Form in Red** [what a cliché] enclosed with this Newsletter [rather than one in black if you're up to date!] and provided you return that very soon to the Membership Secretary [with an appropriate cheque] you will continue to receive all the wide range of privileges bestowed by membership of the LMLHPS. If that **red form** is not received by **30 September 2016** then with regret you will hear nothing more from the Society. Mind you, it would be really great if **everyone** [including those with a **black** form] renews by that same date!

## Life Membership [a new category]

We have decided to offer members a chance to forget about renewing on an annual basis by offering a new category of **Membership for Life**.

This means that for a single payment of £100 members can enjoy being part of LMLHPS for as long into the future as they or the Society exist. Do, please, consider this as a means of helping us stay afloat, and your generosity with this new scheme will be much appreciated.

The £100 will cover life membership for single members and families...and may be of particular interest to those who have in the past asked to pay by Standing Order [something the Treasurer has tended to oppose because it removes the ad hoc casual facility for additional donations to be added easily to the subscription!].

## Programme of Meetings in the Autumn and Spring

Please put the following dates in your diary...and be sure to come! Only £2.50 for members; otherwise £3.50.

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are held in the Village Hall and begin at 7.30pm.

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Thursday 15 September</b>    | <b>Reg Saville</b><br><b>Langton Matravers in the Early Middle Ages</b>   |
| <b>Thursday 20 October</b>      | <b>John Patrick</b><br><b>Local Graves, Graveyards, and Maybe a Ghost or Two!</b>   |
| <b>Thursday 17 November</b>     | <b>Joyce Meates</b><br><b>Old Characters of Studland and Goathorn</b>   |
| <b>Wednesday 21 December</b>    | <b>Reg Saville and David Selman</b><br><b>Part 1</b> <b>The Bartlett Family of Langton Matravers [or 'How Reg became the man he now is' because the Bartletts were his maternal grandparents]</b><br><b>Part 2</b> <b>Mulled wine</b><br><b>Part 3</b> <b>Barnes versus Hardy...a Christmas Battle</b><br><b>Part 4</b> <b>A rather special surprise!</b> |
| <b>Thursday 19 January</b>      | <b>David Corben</b><br><b>Tales of Swanage Lifeboat</b><br><i>[The Corben Family has a long association with the local RNLI]</i>  |
| <b>Thursday 23 February</b>     | <b>Phil Judkins</b><br><b>How Langton Won the War</b><br><i>Dr Judkins lives in Yorkshire and is Chairman of The Purbeck Radar Museum Trust. His talk will be a non-technical account of the importance of Langton and Worth to the development of radar during the Second World War.</i>   |
| <b>Thursday 16 March [11am]</b> | <b>Meeting of Museum Custodians for 2017 season</b>   |
| <b>Thursday 23 March</b>        | <b>Andrew Hinsull</b><br><b>Fingerposts...or How Not to get Lost in Unfamiliar Places</b><br><i>An unusual but fascinating topic! Andrew is a member of our Society who lives in Acton...a hamlet where the provision of a greater number of fingerposts would help visitors from Langton find their way more easily!</i>                                 |
| <b>Thursday 27 April</b>        | <b>Annual General Meeting</b>   |

We hope that you will find many things to enjoy in this programme but we are keen to find new speakers for future years. So if anyone would like to 'have a go' or knows of someone else with an interesting tale to tell then please get in touch with the secretary, Rosemary Stevens.

**Our Website...maintained by Philip Wyatt...is well worth a browse!**

[www.langtonia.org.uk](http://www.langtonia.org.uk)

August 2016