

# STANFORD IN THE VALE AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER NUMBER 4 NOVEMBER 2004

### RECENT MEETINGS

Both the September and October meetings were well supported. In September we welcomed Charles Tyzack who gave a fascinating talk about Wychwood Forest, and the way it had declined over the centuries. Then, in October, despite the terrible stormy weather, Jill Chambers battled her way over from Letchworth in Hertfordshire to give us much insight into how rural labourers in Southern England became involved in what have become known as the 'Swing Riots' of 1830-1. Members were very interested in what she had to say concerning events in Berkshire, including the Stanford area.

Unfortunately, the visit to The Oxfordshire Museum Centre at Standlake, advertised for early September, had to be cancelled, due to a nil response. However, it is hoped that this visit can take place in 2005.

As a result of the recent talk given by Phil Morris, on Sources for Local History, and the discussion that followed, several people have signed up to initiate a series of local research projects. If you would like to be involved with one of these projects, talk to the person named below, at our December meeting. There is no set date for the completion of these projects, but it is hoped that progress to date will be reported on next summer. Results will appear either in the form of small booklets published by the Society, or as articles in 'The Stanford Historian' depending on length.

The projects are:

**Photographic Archive** - this is already underway and involves scanning onto disc and cataloguing a large amount of photographic material, loaned by Jasmine Howse. (The original material which was collected by her mother will eventually go to the Berkshire Record Office, but the collection on disc will remain locally, and used to create prints for exhibitions, illustrate other research etc. It is hoped that other local people will loan pictures so they can be included in this archive. Cheryl White, Jim Belcher, Joan Owen, Kisty Creighton.

**Reprint of Revd. Maine's Book** - In the late nineteenth century, the Curate of Stanford Church published a small booklet about the village. Few copies were printed and fewer survive. A project is already underway to produce a facsimile edition, with introduction, of about 200 copies, for sale locally. David Axford.

**Oral History Project** - interviews with some of the older members of the local community so that their memories may be recorded. June Leighfield and Betty Morris.

**Local Census Transcription.** Lawrence Ward.

**The former Stanford Brick Works.** Steve Williams.

**Pubs and Clubs (Licensed) of Stanford in the Vale.** Jim Belcher.

**The History of Stanford in the Vale School.** This has been suggested as very worthwhile project, but a co-ordinator is required.

**Stanford Iron Foundry** - Census records suggest one existed in the mid-nineteenth century. Phil Morris, Steve Williams.

**Stanford Fields, mid-nineteenth century.** Kisty Creighton.

**Programme - December 2004 and January 2005**

The meeting on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December has been advertised as a 'MID-WINTER CELEBRATION' There will be mince pies, and a seasonal punch, plus usual coffee or tea.

Phil has devised a Quiz (bring a pencil) for which the prize for the best result will be the new edition of 'Ancestral Trails'. Members have been invited to bring an item, or picture/photograph

of historical interest that they will either describe, or ask people to try and work out the object's use. Bring a guest. The evening starts at 7.45 p.m.

The January meeting on Tuesday January 11th will feature a guest speaker - details still to be confirmed. Look out for notice in Parish Newsletter.

(N.B. The Society's first A.G.M. will take place during the February Meeting - Tuesday February 10<sup>th</sup>. More information in the next (January) newsletter.

## **TWO OTHER ITEMS:**

*At my talk in early November about 'Sources for Local History Research', I drew attention to the Alan Godfrey copy of the 1893 O.S. 6 inch map of the Vale of White Horse, (Sheet 253), reprinted 2002 at a scale of 1" to the mile. If you would like to order one (£2.10 plus postage) send a stamped addressed envelope for full catalogue to Alan Godfrey Maps, Prospect Business Park, Leadgate, Consett, DH8 7PW or look at the website at: [www.alangodfreymaps.co.uk](http://www.alangodfreymaps.co.uk)*

*I also mentioned a reference to Stanford, in connection with local Anglo Saxon Roads, in John Steane's 'OXFORDSHIRE' (Pimlico County History Guides) 1996.*

*The entry was (pp. 119-120):*

*"...communications of Anglo-Saxon England. Virtually nothing is known until we reach the period in the ninth and tenth centuries from which the oldest English land books (or charters as they are commonly called) date. ...it is clear that there is already a hierarchy of roads in existence. There was the *portstraet*, a road leading to a town or market, a *cyngesferd straet* along which the local militia would move, a *herestraet* or *herepath* suitable for the passage of an army, a *hryegweg* was a ridgeway, or a road which follows the comb of a ridge.*

*John Blair\* has attempted to reconstruct the evidence for trade and communications in the Mercian period and he postulates several north-south routeways crossing the upper Thames well above Oxford. In particular, he sees a road coming south from Burford, crossing the Thames at Radcot, and continuing on to Stanford and Wantage. Another from Bampton, an important place in the eleventh century in his estimation, but thereafter declining, goes south and crosses the Thames, so connecting with the main road running from London via Faringdon westwards and marked on the Gough map."*

*\*Blair W.J. Anglo Saxon Oxfordshire Stroud 1993*

(I was making the point that in starting to research any local history topic, look at already published works, even books with a wider context, to see if there are mentions of the place or topic in which you have an interest).

Phil Morris