

REPORT TO FELPHAM VILLAGE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

THE FELPHAM HISTORY GROUP

Meeting held on 24th September 2024 at St. Mary's small hall.

Those attending, MB, SH, DW, FH, MH, LM, A?, PG, RB, EL.

- 1 Apologies received from LS, JB and VB, A was welcomed to the group as a possible new member
- 2 LM had recently attended a FVCS meeting, feedback focused on the coming talk by Kevin Watson at Felpham Memorial Hall on October 26th. L has also been in contact with David Hewings from RAFA regarding organised events they may be having for the WW2 commemorations. L was also keen to involve students from the local schools in any events we may plan. A social / musical event was discussed possibly including the 1940's vocal group who sang at the Rectory Garden Summer Fete... Maggie Lupton might have details The Memorial Hall has been provisionally booked for May 8th 2025.
- 3 SH reported that all is going to plan and there is to be an "Open Day" on 20th October. Volunteers able to wield a paint brush will be welcome when the need arises.
- 4 EL had been to the Blake's talk at the Felpham Comprehensive School on September 19th and was impressed by the progress the new Board of Trustees had made in restoring and renovating Blakes Cottage and highlighting possible plans for its future.
- 5 The WW1 research on 18 Felpham casualties carried out by the 2015 History Group is on the Group's website and is largely complete. The data of the remainder (22) needs further work before being added to the website. It is considered unlikely that the TFHG will be able to carry this work out due partly to the amount of research involved and partly due to the current group's lack of expertise in this area of research.
Basic details, i.e. name, rank & number and image of the individuals' gravemarker or memorial, of the 32 WW2 casualties, as shown on the plaque in St. Mary's, are also on the website. There are difficulties, as with WW1, that not all records appear to agree, and there are burials in St. Mary's that are not recorded on a memorial nor do they get a mention at the annual Remembrance Memorial Day Service. This should be raised with the incumbent as soon as possible by the Group.
- 6 Much discussion focused on various wartime measures that might be researched such as, rationing food and clothing (coupons), recipes, fashion, currency, evacuation, transport etc.
- 7 An item in the September version of "Felpham in Focus" where the author, Jane Summerville, states in "Platinum Plans" that "after most of St. Mary's stained-glass windows were blown out in World War II". Where was this information found or is it just hearsay? As this view had come to light recently some of the members of the Group had carried out research, in local newspapers of the time and at West Sussex Record Office but were unable to confirm that any of the church windows were blown out. Such an event even within the restriction of news at the time would surely have been broadcast locally and possibly nationally.
There are images and reports online of an American B17 bomber that had crashed in Downview Avenue. The image shows the aircraft intact to a degree, any bombs detonating at the time would no doubt have left little. Was there any damage to local houses?

8 How the group will arrange a system for chairing the meetings and arranging venues during the absence of LS, Not discussed

9 Any Other Matters

Felpham' Fillies MH to confirm details, dates fees etc. with WI Group.

A review of the FVCS calendar since early 2023 when the Group was formed shows no instances when any of the meetings, including the visit to the West Sussex Record Office, have been included. The questions are, why are they not included & how should they be in future?

10 The next group meeting to be held at 11 a.m. on Sunday 27th October at EL's.

EL to act as Chair for that meeting

M Brooks, Chair

The Felpham History Group

14th October 2024