

NEWTON ST CYRES HISTORY GROUP



Our speaker last Thursday, 9th February, was the curator of textiles at Killerton House and the RAAM Museum, Shelley Tobin. Her talk was on the ways in which costume can help to date, reasonably precisely, when an old photograph was taken. Of course, people did, and still do, wear clothes for years after they have been overtaken by new fashions, and also older people tend to wear the fashions of their youth, but even so, people generally wore their 'Sunday best' for a photo, which were a special event, and so a fairly accurate date can be reached, certainly a date before which the photo could not have been taken.

Before photographs, silhouettes were made, using white cloth and a light projection to trace a face or figure, which then could be painted; there was also available a pantograph – a machine which could copy, and size up and down to make likenesses. By the 1860s, cartes de visites, small photos roughly the size of cigarette cards, were popular, and then in the 1870s, larger cabinet photographs became common, often taken in studios with various backgrounds of curtains or painted backdrops.

Through examples of these, Shelley Tobin illustrated the ways in which the fashions of hair, hats, dresses, shirt collars and coats changed throughout the Victorian and Edwardian eras. Different undergarments, for example the bustle and the crinoline, altered the shape of the female figure.

Roger Cashmore had put on together in power point, family photographs submitted by various members of the group, and it was most interesting to look at these personal photos and see how clearly they reflected the fashions we had just seen explained. Lynda Pearce had some local photos of scenes in Exeter, such as a crowd outside the Theatre Royal, a sewing factory, and a railway employees group, and there was speculation as to what the events were and when they had happened. It was a most interesting evening.

Old Buildings

The history group is running a project to record old and abandoned buildings in the parish, of any age and type. Do you know of any such and can you photograph them or ask someone else to do so?

NEXT MEETINGS

March 8th

Our photographic evening in preparation for our display at the REVELS. Bring any objects you have of local interest to the club room at 7.30 where Malcolm Brooks and Roger Cashmore will be ready to photograph them. These may be buttons, coins, medals, broken china, commemoration souvenirs like mugs, shot, cannon balls, all sorts.

March 15th

Meeting with Sandford Heritage Group when Tom Coleman will talk about farm houses. Tom comes with a recommendation. The meeting is at 7.30pm in St Swithuns Church, Sandford. Parking is in their village hall car park nearby. Lifts will be available. Do come and support this event.

April 19th

Colin Hart will come and tell us about his experiences with a metal detector.

May 10th

Phillipe Planel on 'Lost Buildings'

June 9th

NEWTON ST CYRES HISTORY GROUP

A Saturday afternoon outing to Poltimore House and Gardens with tea and cake.

All meetings are on Thursday evenings in the village hall club room and start at 7.30pm.

Everyone is welcome. There is a small charge of £1.50 which includes tea and biscuits.

For further information contact Jean 851337 Isobel 851351