
COLWALL VILLAGE SOCIETY

Annual Review

April 2002

Chairman's Report

One of the Society's first projects reached a successful conclusion this year with the publication of the Colwall Village Design Statement. In June 1998, with a grant from Rural Action, we arranged a public meeting followed by a day workshop on how to produce a Village Design Statement. Since then the process – involving extensive consultation and three drafts of the document – has been carried through by a team led by Nicky Carless. The team has shown great commitment, enthusiasm and perseverance. Many thanks to them all.

Our two open meetings this year were well attended. In September Ruth Richardson's talk 'Field Names are Fascinating' amply proved the point. In January, Dudley Brook held the audience spellbound at the variety and beauty of the flora and fauna to be seen in a selection of slides taken as 'A Naturalist on the Malvern Hills'. The annual village spring clean was held in April, and collected several bags of litter from the roadside verges.

Membership has increased steadily and now stands at 144. The committee welcomed Derek Lewis as Vice Chairman, with a particular interest in local history. During the year Derek Turner withdrew from his role as co-ordinator of history projects, and many thanks are due to him for his enthusiasm and encouragement. I would also like to thank Nicky Carless who is retiring from the committee at the conclusion of the Village Design Statement project for her considerable contribution to the Society since its inception.

The Society now enters its fifth year with several major achievements to its credit, made possible by the support of all its members, and plenty of scope for new activities within our twin aims of protecting and enhancing the Colwall environment and recording its history. The Society is driven by what members are interested in and would enjoy doing, and I am sure we can all look forward to another interesting and enjoyable year.

Susan Bond

The Millennium Room and archive

A number of items have been given to the Society this year and entered in the Accessions Register. The archive storage boxes have been temporarily removed from the library whilst the Millennium Room is being built. One of the main objects of the Millennium Room Trust is to provide a space for the local history archive and plans are now being drawn up for furnishings and fittings to make it available for the opening of the Room in the autumn.

Meanwhile, the digital computer archive has been growing steadily. The Colwall 2000 Domesday project which recorded people and places at the start of the new millennium has now developed into a collection of images of 'Colwall Now and Then'. Graham Cowan and Jim Savage have been scanning old prints and postcards to computer and retaking the views from the same position using a digital camera, for direct comparison. The first results were shown at the Society's last AGM and a second instalment will be given at this year's AGM.

The Domesday 2000 project computer and scanner has been donated to the Millennium Room. We are planning

that it should be able to hold and display these images, as well as texts from the history projects booklets and a searchable archive catalogue.

Susan Bond and Graham Cowan

Parish Pictorial Map

This companion project to 'Colwall through the Millennia' will produce an A1-sized coloured map of the Parish as a Jubilee 2002 souvenir, to be issued free to every Colwall household.

In March, after over a year of waiting for flight availability and good weather, we were able to obtain aerial pictures of the whole of Colwall needed to create the map. Some 180 shots were taken, with overlap, for a complete record. These photos will go into the Society archive.

The job of making the map is now well under way and we hope to get it to the printer in time for proof display as part of our exhibition stand at Fun Day, Monday 3 June 2002. Issue will take place soon thereafter, and a limited number will also be for sale.

David Ward

Colwall Village Design Statement

On the 20 April 2001 Herefordshire Council formally endorsed the Village Design Statement, ensuring that it must be used as material consideration in planning matters.

Once this had been achieved the team sought funding for the document's printing. We received a generous donation from the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), who were particularly impressed with the ideas expressed, as well as finance from Colwall Village Society, Colwall Parish Council and Herefordshire Council. We obtained quotations from printers and chose Quorum of Cheltenham, who were very helpful. A special thanks to David Fisher and Graham Cowan for liaising with the printers.

By the Autumn colour copies of the Design Statement had been printed. These were made available to all Society members, and copies placed in Colwall Library for long term loan. The Design Statement has also been circulated to statutory bodies such as the Parish Council, County Councillors, Herefordshire Council, Officers of the AONB, and the Malvern Hill Conservators. We are now encouraging these bodies to use the document when considering planning matters in Colwall.

This is not the end of the Design Statement; it is recommended that the document should be updated every 3–5 years. This is a living document that must reflect the changing thoughts and ideas of the village.

I believe that Colwall is now in an excellent position to meet the changes of planning law that have been outlined in the recent green paper – Planning: Delivering a Fundamental Change. This states that the community should have a big input into the planning issues of their village, by producing Action Plans and contributing to Local Development Frameworks, which would replace the Unitary Development Plans, and would be reviewed frequently. By producing the Colwall Village Design Statement, the community has formed a basis on which to build.

Nicky Carless

History projects

Much achieved but still much to do was the message from a recent meeting of members engaged on history projects. The shared experiences on research and publication were useful and inspiring.

The history of the racecourse, 'Golf in Colwall', the Purlieu, the Ladies' Club and C.F.A Voysey – architect have all been completed. Near completion are James the builder, and a number of walks around the parish noting places of historical interest. Most will be given a uniform binding and will be extensively illustrated. Copies will be deposited in the society archive, and it was suggested that they should also be held on computer and put on the internet. Help would be needed for this from people who are familiar with computers, different word processing systems and with integrating text and illustrations.

Mary Ritchie is continuing her taped interviews with long standing local residents, and Tom Marsh is extending his research on the history of Upper Colwall (the Hill Village). Already two considerable papers have been deposited in the archive and more are in progress.

Among projects where there is still much to do is that proposed for Evendine. The buildings, the way they have changed over the years and the people who lived in them would make a fascinating study and be the kind of project in which several members could take part. Marion Percy has taken the lead on this topic and would be glad to hear from anyone willing to help with a section of the lane.

There remains a variety of subjects that might be tackled if more people come forward with ideas about topics that have not yet been taken up. The meeting also showed that the society ought to do more to involve the younger members of the community. Details of their lives will be the material for research 100 years hence. Has anyone any ideas how this might be done – an essay competition, perhaps, on getting to school in the year 2002?

Derek Lewis

Colwall Village Society Committee 2001/2002

Chairman: Susan Bond
Vice-Chairman: Derek Lewis
Secretary: Lis Kirkness
Treasurer: Derek Turner
Membership Secretary: Joyce Ingledeu

Committee Members:
Michael Burke
Nicky Carless
Graham Cowan
David Ward