

## ARTICLE FOR DECEMBER'S PUBLICATION

### Report on Milton Abbas Local History Group by Pamela Phillips

There was a packed room for our November meeting with 28 members and two visitors, with two more new members joining us.

The group agreed that we would hold two exhibitions in 2017, the first would be held during the Street Fair, being mainly for visitors to the village and secondly the Reading Rooms has been booked for the weekend of the 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> September to hold another exhibition mainly for the benefit of local residents.

We had a talk from Helier Exon on findings during the excavations for the new drains at the Abbey when graves were discovered to the west of the Abbey. It has always been thought that the only graves were to the south of the Abbey so this is a complete surprise. The foundations of the nave piers were also discovered, showing that the nave was begun but never completed.

Bryan Phillips gave us the second in his series of interesting talks on the history of Milton Abbas. This time he was looking at Milton Abbas in the Domesday Book of 1086. The entry in the book is in abbreviated Latin and shows the landholdings of the Abbot of Middleton, including two watermills and landholdings all over Dorset with some as far as Stockland in Devon. None of us could read the Latin but luckily there is an English translation in the Victoria County History of Dorset from 1968, which we were also shown.

The group were given a short update on the progress of the Old Town Project looking at society in the old town and the traumatic effect of the enforced move of the village in the 1770s. We now have twelve people working on this mammoth task and we have gained advice from Mark Forrest at the Dorset History Centre and Professor Henry French from Exeter University.

The history group would also like to thank Angela Roberts and her mum June Vincent for giving up their time and allowing us to record their oral histories and add to our growing record of village life since the second World War.

We were delighted that James Farnham was unanimously elected as our new Treasurer after Sylvia Isherwood stood down, Sylvia has been carrying out the role since the group began. She has done a brilliant job of keeping our records straight during the past three years and was thanked for all her hard work.

Our next meeting is our Christmas meeting on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30 pm in the Reading Room; when we will be having free mulled wine and mince pies. This meeting is only open to members, or anyone wishing to bring along their £10 and join the History Group on the night.