

SANHS Old Buildings Recording Group (West Somerset and Exmoor) Newsletter

Our first workshop was held at the Tithe Barn in Dunster and was much enjoyed. Participants worked in groups with specialists in different fields. Relevant books and computer access were at hand, together with an exhibition supplied by the Somerset Vernacular Building Group (SVBRG)



Maps and information were supplied by Exmoor National Park and SANHS.



After lunch, people worked in larger groups discussing how different aspects of research and measuring could be brought together.



We were paid a surprise visit by Tim Taylor, producer of Time Team, who happened to be working on a "village dig" the same weekend. Tim gave his encouragement to the new group, which is very much in line with Time Team's ethos of involving the local community.

The workshop was introduced and concluded by SANHS President Jerry Sampson.



Perhaps we could make this a yearly event to interest new people and to review and learn from the year's work.

This one took a lot of organisation and voluntary help. Would people out there be willing to assist with future events?



Many thanks are due to everyone who helped to make this event such a success.

A practical hands-on follow up workshop looked at the fine 17th century stable block at Dunster Castle. SANHS is grateful to Exmoor National Park Authority (ENP), which made the Park Centre available at short notice on a rather cold day in November!



Puzzler
Why were these roof timbers shaped for a curved ceiling in a stable block, which you would think would be purely functional?

Any ideas?

Again specialists were on hand to help people with drawing up their findings.

This seemed to be a good way of working which could be used for survey training sessions.

What do others think?



Our small exhibition was staged at the National Park Centre with the kind support of the Exmoor National Park. We were told that there was a great deal of interest and there were many visitors.

The exhibition is a good way of spreading word about what we are doing and in getting people involved in joining us or in having their buildings recorded.



With continuing support from ENP and with help from a group of those involved, we could stage an exhibition annually recording our progress through the year?

We are currently looking for funding to match the grant from ENP and would like to use this for purchase of exhibition boards, digital projector, laptop and some recording equipment.



What Next?

A group of us in the Historic Buildings Committee will be visiting properties which people would like to have recorded in order to arrange for larger group involvement. Below is a list of locations. We hope to run some surveys on these as training sessions. If you are interested in carrying out documentary research on any of them this could form the basis of another training day. If this applies to you, please contact me at mary_ewing@hotmail.com (01823 400633) to discuss this.

Location of properties to be surveyed on current list

Bishops Lydeard (2)
 North Petherton
 Washford
 Minehead
 Timberscombe
 Dunster (2+)
 Wootton Courtenay
 Roadwater

There are still some bibliographies and lists of relevant books available to borrow from the SANHS library if you are a member. Please let me know if you would like list copies.

In January, I am going to the Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG) conference in Leicester. These conferences are annual, dealing with different aspects of recording old buildings. Their summer conference is in a different county each year and includes visits to many interesting properties. VAG have a really good web-site which includes dendro-dating charts for the whole country. (www.vag.org.uk).

<p>Please note that all surveyors need to be members of either SVBRG or of SANHS in order to be covered by insurance.</p>
--

Members of the Historic Buildings Committee of SANHS are currently looking at volunteer agreements which we hope to make as informal as possible.

For up and coming events, check out the respective web-sites of SANHS and SVBRG.

Good News: Jane Penoyres's book "Traditional Houses of Somerset", currently out of print, is to be republished next year. Watch this space.

Let us know if you have any comments or thoughts on this newsletter or the events so far. Contact mary_ewing@hotmail.com

Don't forget to tell anyone who may be interested in joining the new group or in having a building recorded to get in touch with us.

Happy New Year to you all!