

Inaugural meeting of 'The Long Melford Archaeological and Historical Society.'

(Held at the Primary School, Wednesday 10th September, 1969, at 8pm.)

Forty-three persons attended and they were first addressed by Sir Richard Hyde-Parker and Mr Wickham Partridge, who outlined the aims and objects, and suggested that a committee be formed.

Mr Partridge suggested that the Society would :-

1. Record 'finds' and sites of historic interest.
2. Inform all members of such 'finds' and activities.
3. Promote and stimulate interest of the 'Treasures' of Melford.
4. Arrange talks of interest .
5. Organize 'digs'
6. Arrange visits to exhibitions and places of interest.

He paid reference to the Park End site (near Chapel Green) which will be developed for Housing in the near future, and the possibility of finding Roman material as well as determining the line of the Roman Road, part of which was recently discovered near the 'Bus' Shelter in Station Road. Mr Partridge said he hoped that people might leave items of interest in their Wills -to the Society, so that such items may remain in Long Melford.

A general discussion followed, and it was decided that the Society would confine its activities to Long Melford and not the surrounding areas, but membership would be open to all- upon payment of the entrance fee.

It was then proposed by Mr Chamberlain that "This Society should now be formed". This was seconded by Mr S. Knott.

It was proposed by the Rev. Herbert, that the suggested name for the society should stand. This was carried unanimously. 'The Long Melford Archaeological and Historical Society'.

The amount of money to be charged for subscriptions was then discussed. Sir Richard Hyde-Parker suggested perhaps a guinea for adults and 5/- for students and children. The proposal by Mr S. Knott, that it should be similar to that of the 'Sudbury Historical Research Group' which charged 10/- per year for adults and 5/- for children - was finally accepted after a vote. (This was seconded by Mr S. Younger.)

Mr Partridge proposed that the object of the Society should be "To identify, record, and secure the preservation of objects of Archaeological and Historical interest found in Long Melford and its sites through the Ages". This was seconded by Mrs Howlett and carried by all members. The Rev. Herbert asked if this would include Houses of architectural and Historic interest. This was accepted by all to be included within the scope of the Society.

Age of Members.

Mr Partridge proposed that the minimum age be 13 years, and that the maximum age for paying subscriptions should be at school-leaving age.

An Amendment by Mr S. Knott, seconded by Mr T. Howlett, that "The minimum age-limit be 11 years" was carried by a majority vote.

Mrs K.L.Tomlin suggested an 'Associate Membership' for younger children, and Mr J. Dodge said he hoped that a Junior Section may be formed later.

Formation of Committee.

President. Sir Richard Hyde-Parker. (Proposed by Mr Chamberlain and seconded by Mr S. Knott. Carried by majority vote.)
Chairman. Mr Byford. (Proposed by Rev. Herbert, seconded by Mr Younger. Carried by majority vote.)
Secretary. Mr Howlett. (Proposed by Mr Byford and seconded by Mrs Howlett.)
Mr Tinworth. (Proposed by Mr Partridge, but Mr Tinworth declined to stand for nomination.)
Treasurer. Mrs Partridge. (Proposed by Mr Partridge, seconded by Mr Younger.)

Mr Byford then took the Chair and expressed his thanks.

Mr Tim Craven of Cavendish then asked if the Society could join the C.B.A. (Council for British Archaeology). Mr Byford said that this would probably be arranged in the future, and the President concurred.

It was asked by Mrs Howlett that adequate publicity be given of future meetings by notices. It was agreed that such notices could be displayed in the School and Post Office and other suitable places.

Frequency of Meetings. It was suggested that they be held every 2 months.

Extra Committee Members. Mr Partridge suggested that a few persons be added to the existing committee. It was proposed by Mr Younger that four such persons be appointed. This was seconded by Mr Chamberlain.

The following four persons were then voted to join the Committee.

1. Mr W. Partridge.
2. Miss M. Young.
3. Mr J. Dodds.
4. Mr S. Knott.

Mr Cutting of Glemsford then asked whether persons resident outside Long Melford - whether they would be welcome. It was generally agreed that all such persons who wished to attend would be most welcome to join the Society.

Mr Partridge then introduced Mr Moss, stating that he is an Archaeologist and Tutor of the forthcoming series of lectures on Archaeology at Sudbury, commencing September 17th, at Hardwicke House, Stour Street.

Mr Moss then gave a brief talk about the site at which he is employed, at West Stow, near Bury St. Edmund's. He said that the site is near the River Lark and was occupied in Mesolithic times, circa 7,000 B.C. and also in the Bronze Age and in the Iron Age. Roman Pottery Kilns had also been found. The most important discovery was the Pagan Saxon Village, circa 450A.D to 650A.D. This Saxon village had a social and economic structure with Weaving and Pottery industries. Bone combs (uncommon) had been found on this site. A similar Saxon site was found at Mucking.

Mr Moss suggested that all 'finds' in Long Melford should be marked on a 6" inch O.S. map. The records of excavation should show depth, width, section, etc. He said the forthcoming lectures he was giving would give the aims and measures of Archaeology; there would be colour-slides, examples of pottery, and discussion on prehistoric occupation and on local sites. Volunteers were welcome at the West Stow site, but only if they could stay for two or three days at a time, because it took a lot of time to explain the nature of the work to each individual worker.

Mr Byford then thanked Mr Moss for his address and all the members for attending the inaugural meeting. He formally closed the meeting, asking for the Committee to remain for a few minutes.