

## **BENSON BULLETING REPORT – OCTOBER 2022**

By the time most of you are reading this we will have begun to get used to saying “God Save the King”, an exclamation that most of us have never said before. Although it was obvious that it could not be far away it still came as a shock when it was announced that probably the most loved monarch in the history of the world had died. There is not a “Time” mentioned in Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8 that the late Queen Elizabeth has not lived through and helped her realm to come out stronger. Along with hundreds of thousands – even millions – of other societies and organisations around the world The Bensington Society would like to express our gratitude to our most beloved late Queen Elizabeth for her leadership, her concern for her subjects’ wellbeing and her steadfastness over more than 70 years of often very troubled times. May her soul rest in the peace she so richly deserves.

Now is the “Time” of change. We have a new Sovereign and, even though he is probably better prepared than all that have gone before him, with the world in its current state, he will undoubtedly face many new challenges. So we wish him all success in his new role. He has a wonderful example to follow but I am sure he will forge his own path. “God save the King”.

Now back to the more mundane but still important to members. We have had the first of our autumn meetings and, hopefully, you will have enjoyed meeting again with friends/acquaintances, the usual great salad supper prepared by volunteers, and the talk on apples. I am sorry that I will miss it, as I would have been paying particularly close attention, because apples are the only top fruit of any quantity produced by our numerous fruit trees due to the late frosts (now a distant memory). Unfortunately but not abnormally in these uncertain times, we have had a time change for our autumn holiday so John Tchighianoff will take the meeting.

The next meeting will be on Friday the 28th October, when the talk will be on Swan Upping and will be given by David Barber, MVO, Swan Marker to His Majesty the King. Please remember that you can bring guests for a payment of £5 per person. All we ask is that you let John Tchighianoff know so we can better plan the food.

I promised last month that I would give a report on my meeting with the Council’s Head of Halls in an attempt to break a 35 year deadlock for the provision of a central space to hold the Village History Archive – well, here it is.....

I met with Teresa McTeague (BPC’s Head of Halls) and Nicola Copland (Parish Clerk) on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> at the new Community Hall. I was given a tour of the new Hall when it became clear that there was no suitable space, given its current space provision for an upper (smaller) and a lower hall. We then went to the Parish Hall and revisited the old and new parts. Here there was a possible space but as with all things it depends on priorities. In the public consultation for the proposed Parish Hall extension, people were asked about needs and space usage. When all the votes and suggestions were analysed the top priority, and rightly so, was the need for a better Parish Office - this we now have. Second was for the safe storage of Benson’s History Archive and this we still don’t have. I have sympathy for those having to allocate the minimal space available but the provision of safe storage for the documented history of our Village that villagers see as a significant priority, must surely take precedence when allocating available storage space.

The website for the History Group that shows a small amount of the part of the Archive which they have been able to digitise and catalogue is: - <https://www.bensingtonhistory.org> . The centralisation of the Archive will allow them to catalogue and digitise the rest and put it into cloud storage for all to access as required. I will make a presentation on the above case to the Council in October.

David McGill