

The Friends of the Cardall Collection

NEWSLETTER

No 3: Winter 2007 / Spring 2008

WANTED!

A Home for the Cardall Collection

Most of you will be aware that Mrs Rene Cardall died in June 2007 and as a result her former home will soon be sold. We therefore need to find a new home for the Collection very quickly to ensure that this unique resource is preserved intact for the people of Southam.

For some time the Friends have been discussing the need for new premises with Warwickshire County Council, Stratford District Council, and Southam Town Council. There has been a promise of support, and space within the future redevelopment of the Town Centre. However, the development of the Library and Police Station site has been under discussion for many years, and nothing has yet been decided. We know that a feasibility study is under way to decide whether a redevelopment will actually ever take place, but this work is not likely to be completed before Easter 2008. Even if the go ahead is given, it will be several years before space for a Southam Museum becomes a reality.



This means that we need to find a temporary home for the Cardall Collection. It would need to provide dry and secure storage for the artefacts plus sufficient room for members of the

Friends to work on the Collection, (ie cataloguing, photographing, restoring, researching, preparing a database and website, and preparing for our scheduled exhibitions). We need to do this not only to preserve the Collection and possibly add to it, but also to sustain and increase awareness and interest over the next few years.



For the past few months the Management Committee of the Friends has been talking with our local Councillors and various businesses and private individuals to attempt to locate suitable premises. So far nothing suitable has been identified. However, it has become apparent that we are going to have to pay rent, rates, utility bills and insurance for a temporary home for the Collection for at least 2 to 3 years.

The Collection needs approximately 600 square feet of space (55 square metres). We expect rental & maintenance charges to be £6,000-£10,000 per year - far beyond the means of the Friends Group. Our Membership subscriptions only raise about £150 – £200 per year! We have investigated grants, but even if our applications were successful, most funding bodies will only pay for capital projects. That is, they will fund the purchase of a computer, or a building, but they will not fund ongoing overhead costs such as rent, rates, utility bills etc.

These are the ways you can help us →

**The Cardall Collection is a collection of artefacts and memorabilia associated with Southam and its history. It was started by the late Mr Jack Cardall, and until her recent death, its custodian was Mrs Irene Cardall. Representatives of the County Museum Service have inspected the collection and agree that it is an important record of the life and times of our market town. The Collection urgently needs a permanent home in Southam where it can be displayed to the public, and be used and appreciated by local history societies, reminiscence groups, researchers and schools.*

The Friends of the Cardall Collection

- Can you suggest or provide suitable temporary storage near the centre of Southam?
- Can you make a donation towards the cost of renting & maintaining such premises?
- Would you be willing to become a business or private sponsor of the Collection?
- Can you offer us any legal or fund raising skills, (eg to negotiate rental agreements, set up a trust and look into what is required for the Friends Group to become a registered charity)?

If you as an individual or as a local business have an interest in preserving Southam's heritage, please do consider how you can help the Cardall Collection. Contact any member of the Committee or the Chairman, Bernard Cadogan on 01926 613503 or email cardallcollection@hotmail.co.uk

Time is running out for the Cardall Collection and we need your help urgently!

The Vanishing Inns of Southam

Southam currently boasts several historic Inns – The Olde Mint, The Bull, The Market Tavern (formerly The Crown) and The Bowling Green to name but a few. Other former Inns such as The Red Lion and The Craven Arms have been converted within recent years into private dwellings. However, there is an intriguing collection of old photographs in the Cardall Collection and notes written by Jack Cardall listing many other long forgotten public houses and Inns which have either been demolished or converted to other uses.

For example, did you know that our branch of the HSBC Bank was once The Albion Inn? Vivian House on Market Hill was once The Bull. The private house in Oxford Street known as The Warren was once The King's Head, and Budgens Supermarket is built on the site of The Blue Pig! We have also lost The Buck and Bell from Coventry Street, The Castle Inn from Wood Street, and both The Old Red Lion and The Dun Cow from Daventry Road / Pendicke Street.

You may remember that the building which currently houses the RSPCA shop (opposite The Black Dog) was formerly Olive Goodacre's fashions, but did you know that many years prior to that it was The Coach and Horses Inn and had its own ballroom? We are very fortunate to have these records, and also some of the original Inn signs within the Cardall Collection.

Southam's Soldiers Exhibition

During the weeks leading up to Remembrance Sunday in November 2007, the Friends mounted an Exhibition in Southam Library. The idea for the theme and then creating the exhibition came from Barbara Pink and Mary Thompson. They decided to call the Exhibition "Southam's Soldiers" and to focus on the people of Southam who had participated in conflicts from the Civil War up until World War II. The Library generously allowed the use of space for three show cases of exhibits and also to invite children from all Southam's Primary Schools to view the Exhibition and take part in activities which would bring to life some of the items on display.



In all about 150 children from three schools visited the Exhibition on Nov 5th and 6th 2007 together with their teachers and a number of helpers. Every child took part in one or more of the learning activities and, judging by their reactions, all enjoyed the experience. The photograph above is of Gunner Rowan Parker (more familiar to us as a former Mayor of Southam, and Friends Committee member) explaining the intricacies of parade ground drill to some of the pupils from Southam Primary School. Rowan used a wooden rifle from the Collection to put the children through their paces.

The children took part in exercises to guess the weight of a Civil War canon ball, found at Fields Farm and probably from the Battle of Southam (1642). Some tried drawing cartoon postcards depicting Army life similar to those they were shown from the Collection. Others tried decorating small cushions with pins and beads, just as many soldiers had done in the trenches during the First World War to while away the time before going into battle. In the photograph below, Barbara Pink can be seen showing the children how to decorate their pin cushions, whilst Mary Thompson discusses some of the

The Friends of the Cardall Collection

Collection's First World War cartoons with other children.



Following their visit to our exhibition many children practised their letter-writing skills by imagining they were soldiers in the trenches writing home to their parents.

As well as the school children many local people took the opportunity to browse the exhibits. In total we believe over 1,000 people viewed the Exhibition during the two weeks. After the event Councillor Bob Stevens passed on a description of the exhibition and some photographs to the Head of Libraries at Warwickshire County Council. The Head of Libraries subsequently asked other Libraries in the County if they were engaging with their local communities in a similar way.

We were very pleased with the large response generated by this small exhibition. Barbara has now produced a draft plan for a series of exhibitions and events over the next two years to help make the Collection more accessible to the local community and to engage local people and schools in our activities. She would welcome ideas and offers of a few hours of practical assistance if you have an interest in this area. No great skills are necessary, just enthusiasm for the task and a little bit of your time. Please contact Barbara via cardallcollection@hotmail.co.uk or Bernard Cadogan on 01926 613503.

An Agricultural Theme at the October Harvest Fest

On Saturday October 13th 2007 we staged a small exhibition in the Library Grounds as part of the Darby & Joan Club's Annual Harvest Fest. Taking 'harvest' as our theme, we exhibited a range of agricultural implements and photographs which drew some interesting comments and memories of rural life from the many local people

who viewed them. The Cardall Collection is fortunate to contain several artefacts which remind us of our farming heritage and how we used to produce our food.

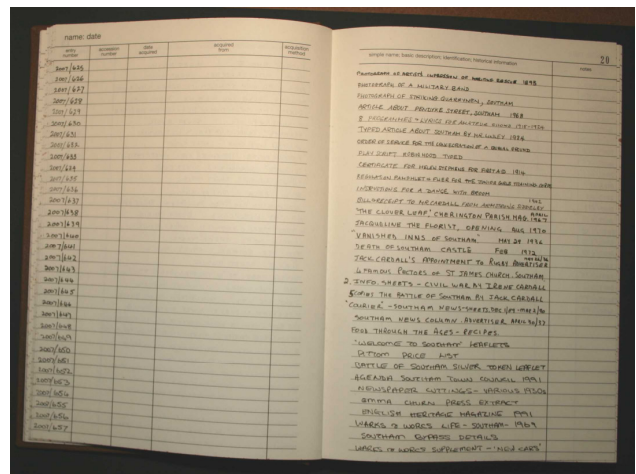


Documenting the Collection How are we doing?

The task of documenting the many items in the Collection has been progressing at a steady pace and we now have more than 750 items marked and catalogued. Entries are made in a Museum standard "Accession Register" which is an expensive, leather bound volume, (see photograph below).

Each item in the museum has to be marked with its "Accession Number" in an indelible but unobtrusive way, and this number is then recorded in the Register with a description of the object. The Register entry has to be made with archival ink to ensure it does not fade over time. Unfortunately we are unable to complete some columns in the Register because we no longer have Mrs Cardall to refer to, (for example 'Date Acquired'). However as new items are added to the Collection in future, we should be able to record more detailed information.

We believe we are about one-third of the way



The Friends of the Cardall Collection

through the process of 'accessioning' all the items in the Collection, but of course we will not know exactly how many items there are until we complete this process. We have recently received some professional help from a qualified museum employee thanks to Glynis Powell from the Warwickshire Community Museums Service. However, there is still much work to be done.

As part of the process we also fill in another register with a more detailed description of each item, its 'category', its condition and where it is stored. We have also started packing some of the artefacts into numbered boxes ready for removal to a new home. This 'first pass' manual inventory process will need to be repeated at a later date to try to capture as much detail as possible on all items, to photograph them and digitally record them on a database. Once we have a proper electronic record of all the artefacts we aim to create a website which will allow remote access to the Collection over the Internet. However, these plans are all for the future. Our immediate priority is to create a simple inventory of the Collection. If you have some spare time on a Tuesday

evening or a Thursday afternoon, why not come along and lend a hand? (Please contact us beforehand so that we can confirm dates and times.)

Joining the Friends

Membership of the Friends group is open to anyone with an interest in preserving this unique collection for the benefit of the Southam community. You pay an annual subscription and membership entitles you to attend general meetings and vote on matters concerning the Collection.

You can also become actively involved in many ways. Find out more by contacting any member of the Committee, or the following:

- Chairman:** Bernard Cadogan (Tel: 01926 613503)
- Treasurer:** Jenny Frith (Tel: 01926 814643)
- Secretary:** Pam McConnell (email: cardallcollection@hotmail.co.uk)

Please consider whether you are able to offer any assistance to the Friends of the Cardall Collection, then complete and return this form

(Delete whichever is not applicable:)

- I promise a donation of £..... to the Friends of the Cardall Collection to help meet the costs of a temporary home for the Collection (*pledges will only be called upon when suitable premises are found*).
- I will donate the above sum: annually for the next 3 years / on a one-off basis
- Please mention my sponsorship in your publicity material.
- I am able to assist you with temporary storage facilities / premises, please contact me to discuss.
- I would like to join the Friends of the Cardall Collection and help with your work, please contact me.
- I can offer you legal and/or technical / IT assistance, please contact me to discuss.

Signed

Name (in capitals please)

Company (if applicable)

Address

Email

Phone

Date

This form may be given to any Committee member, or sent to the Chairman:

Bernard Cadogan, 41 Vicarage Lane, Harbury, Leamington Spa, CV33 9HB

If you would like further information before committing yourself, please telephone Bernard on 01926 613503