



The Early Days of Lillington Local History Society and 'Outside the Box.'

The six original members of the Society, Gladys Gibbs, Tina Gibbs, Gill Rhodes, Chris Rhodes, Gary Timlin and Evelyn Harley, first met in January 2009 in the small community office at the Library, thanks to Community Development Officer, Linda Price. Subsequently we met at The Chain office in Crown Way,



One memory of an early meeting stands out: one dark, rain-sodden winter's evening, as the meeting got underway, the door of The Chain burst open and "the lady in the rain" was blown in from the street. She had come to donate her daughter's Lillington School Project, pieced together from interviews with an elderly resident of Pine Court, whom she visited once a week as a Girl Guide.

The visitor was Margaret Rushton, who we would soon get to know a lot better.

The County Record Office obtained a National Heritage Lottery Grant for a range of projects based on the archives of the Wise and Waller families, who had particularly strong links with Lillington. Leamington and Lillington people will know of Wathen Road (named after Sir Wathen Waller), Waller Street, and Wise Street, south of the river, but may not be aware how influential both families were in the development of the town.

One project was named 'Outside the Box', incorporating the idea of having the documents out of their boxes and available for consultation by the wider community, and 'thinking outside the box' – about ways of raising awareness and drawing in potential users. Despite its small size and lack of experience as a local history society, Lillington LHS was invited to take part.



Members of the Society carried out the research and wrote the explanatory text for a pop-up display banner showing Lillington's connections to both families. The Society supported events at the Record Office at the end of the main project in 2009, including a living history exhibition in Warwick where Evelyn Harley (left) and Gladys Gibbs (right) staffed our stall.

It was a challenging start, but we acquitted ourselves well, and have not looked back.

From those early days, LLHS has grown to a membership of around forty, and now holds meetings in the Free Church Hall on Cubbington Road. We have our own website, www.lillingtonhistory.org.uk, and publish and distribute a free Newsletter three times a year. We also work with local Primary Schools, deliver reminiscence sessions to Care Homes and presentations to other Societies and support local community ventures.

Gary Timlin (2017)



Reproduced here are photos taken by Gary Timlin at the 'Outside the Box' event at the Record Office on 21st June, 2009, including the costumed enactors who represented members of the Wise and Waller families.

(Left) Nurse & soldiers of the Crimean War where Lieutenant George Waller b1837 – d1892 served.

(Below) Henry Wise, Royal Gardener, b1653 - d1738.

(Centre left) Anna Jarrett, a 19th century lady b1803 - d 1868; Rev Ernest Waller, a country curate b1807 - d 1845.

