

Statement to Hemyock Parish Council on 1st June 2016

You will have read the report for the 2016 Annual Parish Meeting which is on your website.

There is a lot of interest in the Hemyock History and Archiving Association at present which is a welcome change since I have felt a bit on my own organising things over the last 9 years. We now have a committee of 9 to take the organisation forward. We have digitised 4,713 historical images and documents stored in a database catalogued by community, family name and activity. We have a responsibility across the Blackdowns to other communities and councils and have a main PC and a backup PC both with the full database. We also have plenty of other equipment and, of course, the web site. The value stated by independent computer companies for these assets is over £8,000 however we only show £6,000 in our accounts. We also have £3,639.92 cash. Councillor Rosamond has said that organisations with reserves are less likely to receive funding. We must therefore conserve our assets. We have never received a penny from any council. The computers use XP and Windows 7, thought not the latest operating systems, perfectly OK at present and we could upgrade the XP to Windows 7 for less than £200.

After working on Concorde at Filton, I spent a lifetime in the computer business supporting many customers throughout the UK and overseas. We made sure that our customers got the best results from their computer systems. Many consultants simply recommend replacing systems with the latest technology but as many of us know that approach eats money and can cause huge conversion problems.

Open Days that we ran at the Healthy Living Centre displaying the archive are labour intensive and time consuming. Our ambition during our 10th year of operation is to create a photobook of main images/documents to present to the Council. We may be able to do this for other Councils as well.

The WW1 project was very successful thanks to Councillors Tim and Penny and the others. All books have gone but we have a quote for a reprint. I enjoyed it so much that I have started another book - nothing to do with Hemyock, the Blackdowns or the SW so will have less time for the History Group. Several people have become involved recently and I have no doubt that this new group will ensure a very active 10th year.

We have received an offer from new people this week to take over the responsibility for organising the speakers for our meetings and join a planning review of the technology we have for the archive and web site to suggest a way forward.