

The Friends of Historic Essex

Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2022

AGM papers

Papers by e-mail: members registered to receive e-mails will have received the Agenda, booking form and Chairman's report by e-mail.

Papers by post: members who have asked for postal mail will have received the Agenda, booking form and Chairman's report by post.

For all AGM papers, plus the 2021 AGM minutes, see: <https://friendsofhistoricessex.org/news/>

The Year's Activities

The committee has met three times at the Essex Record Office, with some members attending in person and others via Microsoft Teams. I would like to thank all the committee members for their continuing commitment and hard work for the charity. Current paid-up membership has gradually declined, and now stands at just 122 individual members and 36 institutions and councils, although renewals of subscriptions continue to arrive. The committee have therefore identified an urgent need for publicity to attract new members. We have an active Twitter account (594 followers), and now an Instagram account (51 followers), both set up by our Hon. Membership Secretary, Janice Gooch.

FHE continues to be in a good financial situation, assisted by lower activity due to the pandemic and some generous donations by members. We have continued to make grants for the acquisition of documents (see below). The £2,000 capital deriving from the winding up of the Essex Journal committee remains ring-fenced for future important document acquisitions. The committee look forward to a return to more normal circumstances in 2022-23 with an increase in events at ERO. We intend that FHE will support and contribute to these, and thus also help to raise our own profile.

Our publication *Printed Maps of Essex* continues to sell well, at the ERO and other outlets and through the efforts of the author, Peter Walker. Our Autumn 2021 newsletter was delayed, but finally distributed early in 2022. That for Spring 2022 is imminent. My thanks to Neil Wiffen for the newsletter's excellent layout and production. More short articles or reviews of books by members would be most welcome, especially on topics or projects that involve ERO sources or facilities.

University of Essex placements 2021 and 2022

In 2021 FHE supported two placements (Aaron Archer and Adam Campbell-Drew), both successfully completed. In June 2021 a new 3-year agreement was signed by FHE, ERO and the University of Essex formalising one placement of £750 for each year 2022 to 2024. The 2022 placement starts on 4 May, held by Callum Newton. He will be working with the Essex Sound and Video Archive on the Essex Folk Movement Oral History Project recordings, creating time-coded summaries and notes on sensitivities. Blog posts reflecting on the interviews in relation to music in ERO's broader folk collection will also be created.

Supporting the acquisition of documents

Much excitement was caused in 2021/22 by the possibility of acquiring another Walker map for the ERO collection. FHE was prepared to dig deep to ensure that this was enabled, but the ERO was able to secure a large grant from the Friends of the National Libraries sufficient to secure the map. A report is included in the Spring 2022 newsletter. Otherwise, our acquisitions over the year were fairly interesting if modest; a volume of receipts of Rookwood Hall, Abbess Roding, 1884-1899. (ERO, A15639); a collection of 50 OS survey maps that filled gaps in the ERO collection; the fishing diary of Frederick Wykeham Chancellor, 1892-1905 (ERO, A15412; D/DU 3318/1) and a log book of Ulting Mixed school 1876-1897 (ERO, A15739). See recent FHE newsletter for images and details of the latter two documents.