



OXFORDSHIRE

RECORD SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT

2023/24

INTRODUCTION

This report covers the period from the AGM in October 2023 to the AGM in November 2024. In that time the Society has seen a change in its core officers; re-written our Constitution; published Volume 77, a second volume on *Medieval Epigraphy*; and launched our new membership drive. We also hosted the first of our “Hidden Archive” visits, visiting the fascinating summer exhibition of Merton College.

The past year has also, sadly, seen the death of Dr Kate Tiller. Kate was a member of the Society for forty years, and latterly a member of the Council and Chair of the Society. Kate was a generous donor to the Society, supporting the second edition of the Historic Atlas as well as the digitisation of our publications (both of which are mentioned later). We recorded our gratitude to Kate at the 2023 AGM by making her a life vice-president of the Society, we are only sorry that she had such little time to enjoy it.

This Report features updates on Society finances; our activities from the past year; and our some information on how these activities support our work going forwards.

A primary piece of work of the Council in the past year has also been to amend our Constitution. The suggested changes are detailed in this report, and include an increase in the accountability of the Council to the wider Society membership; standardises many of our practices; and more closely aligns the Society with guidance from the Charity Commission.

THE COUNCIL

In 2023 the Society's Council was joined by Dr Tom Dobson as membership secretary and in 2024 by Ian Johnson who has taken over from Keith Parry as the Society's treasurer. Other members of the Council are Christopher Fance, Deborah Hayter, Matthew Holford, Lindsay McCormack, Keith Parry, Julian Reid, Adrienne Rosen, Simon Townley and Mike Webb. The Society is seeking a secretary to succeed Arabella St John Parker. If any member is interested in this role, please contact the chair at chair@oxrecsoc.org.

The Council has also taken the decision to discontinue publishing with Boydell and Brewer. Despite the high quality of their production, the cost of publication is beyond the resources of a small society. For future publications we will be seeking an alternative publisher.

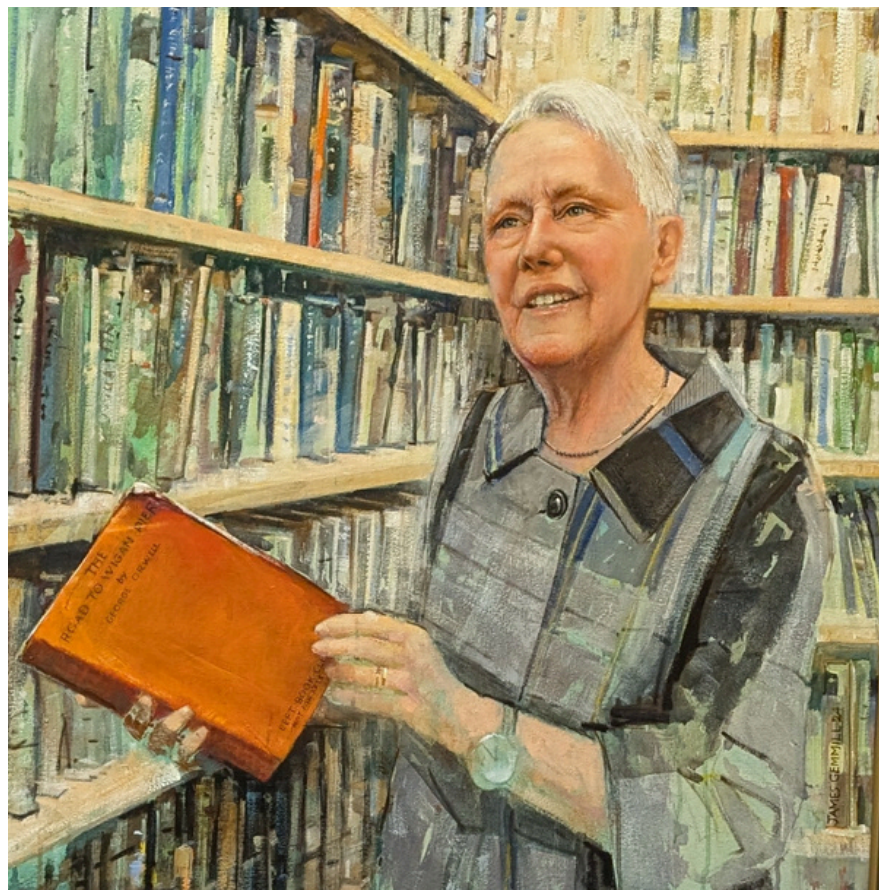
The Society was represented at the OxPast event in Banbury in June 2024 and in the Institute of Historical Research History Day in November 2024.

In 2023/24, the Society Council have organised, or represented the Society, at the following events:

- Hidden Archives Visit: Merton College (June 2024)
- OxPast (June 2024)
- Our first Book Giveaway (September 2024)
- The Celebration of Dr Kate Tiller, Kellogg College (September 2024)



MERTON COLLEGE'S HISTORIC LIBRARY & SUMMER 2024 EXHIBITION



KELLOGG COLLEGE'S PORTRAIT OF DR KATE TILLER, OBE

PUBLICATIONS



2023/24 saw the publication of the Society's 77th Volume. *Medieval Inscriptions: The Epigraphy of the County of Oxfordshire* was edited by Jerome Bertram and Elizabeth Gemmill. A companion volume to Vol. 74, *Medieval Inscriptions the Epigraphy of the City of Oxford* (published in 2020). this volume completes this record of medieval epigraphy found throughout the county. The Society is especially grateful to Dr Elizabeth Gemmill for completing the volume after the death of Fr Jerome Bertram in October 2019.

The Society has also made this volume available to members of The Monumental Brass Society, and The Heraldry Society, at a discounted cost. Together the two volumes are an unrivalled contribution to medieval epigraphy and a fascinating survey of the medieval county.

In addition, reviews were published of Martin Wellings's 2023 volume, *Methodism in Victorian Oxford: The Oxford Wesleyan Local Preachers' Book 1830-1902*, these have been uniformly positive. Especially noteworthy is the review in the *Journal of Religious History, Literature and Culture*, which commented:

“Martin Wellings has opened up new genres of texts that give insight into the working life of circuits. He is to be highly congratulated on the book which is a significant resource for the study of Methodist history.”

The future publications planned by the Society include Bampton Vestry Minutes 1730-1858 (for 2025) and Charlbury's Nineteenth Century British Schools as well as a second edition of the Historic Atlas of Oxfordshire (first published as vol 67 in 2010). The Historic Atlas has been out of print for some time and the updated edition will include revised articles, maps and new contributions.

The Society continues to welcome suggestions for future volumes, which can be submitted to the Society through its online form, available at <https://oxrecsoc.org/contact>.

DIGITISATION

The decision to digitise the first 71 volumes of the Society's publications has been an important event. Earlier this year the Society unveiled its new website which enables members to download all 77 volumes produced by the Society through their unique **Member's Login**. This space also enables members to update their addresses; renew their membership; and to opt for digital membership (especially useful if you're short of book space!).

The new website also has a news section which provides members with access to the regular Family History Federation's Really Useful Bulletin as well as news such as the digitisation of Oxfordshire maps covered by the BBC.

In addition to this, Volumes 1-71 are freely available to all, ensuring that the Society fully meets its aim of advancing "the education of the public in the subject of History, and to facilitate historical research, by the publication, distribution and interpretation of records relating to the history of the County of Oxfordshire".

MEMBERSHIP

In the past twelve months, our membership has grown slightly, and now numbers 159 - 137 of which are in Britain. It is hoped that new marketing material and the offer of additional membership categories will increase visibility of the Society, leading to a further increase of members in the next year. We will also be standardising our subscriptions in 2025, with all individual subscriptions renewing on 01 January. Our new membership categories include the option for 'digital only' membership; the ability to have a 'joint' membership; an 'under-25 or student' membership; and the option to 'gift' membership.

Unfortunately, the Council has been obliged to increase membership rates for the coming year, although this is the first increase in rates since 2018. This also brings our rates in line with other local record societies, many of whom are subsidised by local organisations and/or do not offer an annual volume. New rates can be seen on our website at www.oxrecsoc.org/join.

FINANCE

During the last Financial Year (which ended on 31st December 2023) expenditure exceeded income by £3721 - the result of spending on the printing and mailing costs in connection with volumes 75, 76 and 77. Donations of £11,500 were received for work on the Historic Atlas and £2000 for the project to digitise our records. The total funds of the Society at the end of the period were £30,895 of which those restricted for specific use (the Digitation project and as stated, the Historic Atlas project) were £13,928.

During 2024, £2213 has been spent on the Atlas Project and nearly £1700 on mailing costs. Membership income has held up resulting in a surplus of income over at the end of September of £5,362.

A number of changes have been made to the way finances are managed. These centre on an internet-based accounting system, Xero, which links directly into our different bank accounts and also interfaces with the Society's website, through which now memberships are managed and sales of publications effected. As our main banking facilities, through Barclays, are now internet based we have moved away from cheque payments.

CONSTITUTION

As was mentioned in the introduction to this Report, the Council of the ORS have amended our Constitution, pending the approval of this AGM. Recommended changes include

- the removal of the system whereby the Secretary is not a member of the Council. Instead the Secretary will be, like other officers, a member of the Council and a trustee.
- The removal of the requirement for Council members to stand down after a specified period; this would be problematic for the operation of the current editorial committee.
- The standardisation of membership applications, and the Society year.
- The formalisation of our Annual General Meeting, which includes the reporting of financial matters and the appointment of an independent examiner, and the ability for the Society (Council) to meet virtually when necessary.

The present Constitution, as well as the new (2025) Constitution, have been provided as separate documents for this Meeting.

Oxfordshire Record Society													
Financial accounts for the year to 31st December 2023													
	Notes	2023				2022				Total	Restricted Fund Inc	Total	
		Unrestricted Fund Exp	Unrestricted Fund Inc	Restricted Fund Exp	Restricted Fund Inc	Unrestricted Fund Exp	Unrestricted Fund Inc	Restricted Fund Exp	Restricted Fund Inc				
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Income Statement													
Incoming funds (Bank and Paypal and Scottish Widows interest)													
Subscriptions	231ca	3473				3473					3529		3529
Subscriptions	241ca	668				668							
Subscriptions paypal	Book pp	24				24							
Sales Book sales old atlas	ca	12				12					12		12
Royalty B&B Royalty PRS	2ba		645			645							
Interest received	Capital ca	261				261					109		109
donation digitisation	Capital ca										36		36
donation atlas	Capital ca	1				1					37		37
donation publication	Interest ca				2000							2000	2000
from Scottish Widows	ba		11500			11500							
	ca	1000				1000							
	SW	328				328							
Total incoming funds		5767	14145		19912	14145				3723	2000		5723
Outgoing funds													
Publications 75	ca	5592				5592							
Publications 76	ca	9840				9840							
Publications 77 in part	ca	2604				2604							
B&B mailing and Storage	ca	992				992				141			141
Mailing	3 ca	1770				1770							
Figures for vol 76						0				294			294
Honorary	ca	500				500							
Web hosting	ca	16				16							
AGM	ca	100				100				105			105
Digitisation	ca												
Trustee expenses	ca	4				4					2217		2217
Total outgoing funds		21416	2217		23633	21416				540	-		540

www.oxrecsoc.org

@OxRecSoc - X/Twitter

*The Oxfordshire Record Society is a Registered
Charity in England & Wales: 209808.*