

## **Report of November Meeting**

A warm welcome was extended to several visitors who joined us for this month's meeting. After Mary had shared with us some details of forthcoming events, local and national, she opened the Annual Meeting. Margaret Andrews reminded us in her Secretary's report of our many activities over the year, including our trip to Hartland Abbey, and speakers on subjects such as the Bevan Boys and the Courtenay Family of Powderham. Mary thanked Gordon Dendle for his particular support as auditor this year, and reassured us that we have plenty of money in the kitty! She went on to thank both committee and members for their support during the year, and everyone joined in thanking her for her hard work and inspiration as president. The list of officers for next year was read and approved, when Joy Churchill will be taking over the reins.

Our speaker, Tony Burgess, gave us a breathtaking tour from the headwaters of the Exe, to its mouth, with its fascinating history and that of the local people. Perhaps appropriate to the date, so close to All Hallows, there seemed to be a number of spirits who walked through his stories, even that of a cat who crosses from the Door of the Presenter to the Cathedral Tower. How many of us pass familiar landmarks in the city of Exeter, without really taking in or appreciating what we see. Tony revealed details not only of major historical events such as the slaughter of foreign mercenaries at Fenny Bridges, Woodbury and Crediton, but also of the odd past incidents such as the Tudor house that was moved to get out of the way of road development – hence its name 'The House That Moved'. Stepcoat Lane (or Stripcoat Lane, due to its steep ascent) still shows clearly where pack animals walked in the centre, and people at either side. Gandy Street bears signs of the medieval lane with a central ditch of its past. Hopefully when next we're on a shopping trip, we may look at our surroundings with a more seeing eye.

Joan Cudmore