

## Wychwoods Local History Society Makes History

Few local history societies survive more than a few years before becoming history themselves.

The Wychwoods Local History Society (WLHS) is an exception.

At our February meeting in Beaconsfield Hall, we celebrated our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a glass of wine and special guest speaker, Dr Kate Tiller.

The full history of the WLHS's first twenty one years was written up by Dr Margaret Ware in the 2003 Annual Journal and is now available on the Society's website:

[www.wychwoodshistory.org](http://www.wychwoodshistory.org). Since that inaugural meeting, attended by 80 people in April 1981, a considerable volume of original work has been completed by Society members.

The original aims were *"To foster interest in the local history of the area, to preserve past records, to carry out local surveys, to record all the work carried out and to place copies of such records in the archives of the Society and of suitable libraries"*. Local surveys have included the recording of gravestones in churchyards and field names, a detailed survey of the contents of Shipton Parish Church, transcribing census returns and parish records and many field surveys

designed to uncover ancient pottery shards. Many detailed articles have

resulted. The Society has a large archive of local photographs and documents.

Dr Kate Tiller of the Oxford

University Department for External Studies helped the Society in early days to develop its research capabilities. She

now cites the work of the WLHS to her pupils as an example of what a local history society can accomplish.

Membership has now passed 200. Many of the past and present committee members are

shown on the above photograph.

Four characters of the Wychwoods - *Reuben Rainbow, Richard Hartley, Fanny Rathband* and *Gladys Avery* (still an enthusiastic member of the Society) are depicted on a special porcelain mug, produced to celebrate the anniversary. The Society is always happy to record the memories of older Wychwoods residents or take over old documents, photographs or articles for analysis and safe keeping. Photographs can be quickly scanned and returned if required. We would be particularly interested in the memories of local people who worked in Shipton's till yards or factories.

**Alan Vickers**

