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Dear Nikki Rush,

I am unable to attend the parish meeting on May 12 because of a prior commitment. I can, though, offer reports on two village organisations, The Debenham History Society and The Debenham Society.

Regards,

Lesley

The Debenham History Society

The main news at The Debenham History Society was the retirement of the chairman Ian McKechnie after 13 years in the role. Ian remains on the committee and continues to work on the society's dendrochronology project which is investigating the age of properties in the village centre. The position of chairman has yet to be filled.

The society has enjoyed a good year with increased levels of attendance. Each year our challenge is to arrange two attractive programmes of lectures that will appeal to people from Debenham and beyond. Like other village societies we had been concerned about falling numbers, and so we decided to bring back speakers who had already proved particularly popular. Malcolm Russell returned with a new series on *Opera Through The Ages* in Autumn 2007; and in Spring 2008 Clive Paine talked about *Victorian Debenham*. Clive Paine had also given our 2007 Knowland Memorial lecture, on the sister of Henry V 111. Future lectures will include topics as varied as genealogy and East Anglian painters. Our agm has been arranged for August 27, when the Knowland lecture will be by Philip Aitkens, historic buildings consultant at Crows Hall.

The contact for the Debenham History Society is the secretary Susie Bronniman 01728 861561.

The Debenham Society

It has been a quieter year for the village's civic society because it decided not to take part in the 2007 Heritage Open Days weekend, an educational event that gives free access to properties and to information about them. It had been hugely successful the three previous years, and people were disappointed that it was not held here last year. However, the Debenham Society is organising it again this year, on September 13 and 14.

The Debenham Society's Heritage Open Days organiser is Lesley Grant-Adamson 01728 861601