

Fairford Flyer

Extra No 42

June 2022



FAIRFORD HISTORY



SOCIETY

Jubilee Edition

As part of the Fairford Festival Edwin Cuss will be having his usual photographic display in the Heritage Room at the Community Centre. Owing to the Jubilee celebrations this year, the display will be on **FRIDAY** and **SATURDAY, 3 and 4 June** 10am-4pm. There will also be a Jubilee display and FHS publications for sale.

Jubilee Quiz: The last page of this Flyer contains a short Fairford Jubilee quiz with a small prize! Answers can be emailed to enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk with your name or printed out, posted or left in the FHS letter slot by the FTC Office in the Community Centre or handed in at Edwin's display. The quiz sheet will be also attached to the email. It can also be submitted online from <https://www.fairfordhistory.org.uk/platinum-jubilee-quiz/>

The next FHS meeting is a very short AGM on **June 16 at 7.30pm** in the Community Centre. FHS is flourishing in member numbers, up to the largest number we have ever had, we would really like some new committee members with new ideas to take us forward, perhaps with an interest in IT, to help arrange speakers for meetings, meeting poster design and publicity. The AGM will be followed by a talk by Liz Davenport on 'Woodchester – an unfinished mansion'. Woodchester is set in a beautiful valley and surrounding landscaped estate just south of Stroud. FHS tries as far as possible to keep to talks with local connections, and although this talk may not seem to have one, it does have a tenuous link to Fairford – come and find out what this is.

Coronation Day, 1953

From the Wilts and Glos Standard June 6 1953

Festivities at Fairford

'About three o'clock on the afternoon of coronation day the remarkable sight of eleven men and two ladies including the vicar, Dr M Veale, Miss M Norman, and Miss Inge plunging fully clothed into the ice cold waters of the River Coln provided highly diverting entertainment at Fairford for the crowds lining the banks. Starting from the mill bridge, they raced or otherwise along the bed of the river for about 400 yards to the town bridge and under the arches. Mr W Clark was the winner; Desmond Godding was 2nd and Derek Jones 3rd with Miss Norman a good finisher. Prizes of £5, £3 and £2 were kindly given by Mr T Rymer were awarded.

The religious observance at Fairford began on Monday evening at the Roman Catholic Church of St Thomas of Canterbury, Horcott when Mass was sung by Father F McSweeney in the presence of a large congregation.

Soon after six o'clock on Coronation Day Mr W Godwin and his team of ringers including Mrs W Godwin and Joyce Morse were pealing the bells of St Mary's Church. Later there was a good congregation at a united service conducted by the Rev E Keble, when the preacher was the Rev P A Rose, Congregational Minister. Miss M Norman was at the organ and singing was led by the surplice choir. After a break for televiewers till 1.30pm, the secular celebrations began with a parade of Polish children in the Market Place – 120 altogether. After playing some popular selections Fairford Silver Band – resplendent in their new uniforms – under Bandmaster A J Cook, headed a procession to the cricket field where a programme of sports for both English and Polish children had been arranged by Mr F C Smith, Farmor's School and Mr A Szydzik, Polish School. The sports continued till nearly tea time when 300 youngsters received souvenir mugs and a tea at the gaily decorated Palmer Hall.

At about the same time about 80 elderly residents were received at the Bull Hotel Assembly Rooms by Mrs Richmond and Mr F Watson and partook of a substantial meat tea, the brightly decorated room being kindly lent for the occasion by Mrs Mussenden, the proprietor.

'While the meals were in progress Miss K Winser and the Misses Thornton were touring the flag bedecked Street judging the artistic merits of hundreds of decorated premises and houses. The ultimate awards were 1st Mrs C Godding, the Lodge, Fairford Park; 2nd Mr H Caldicott; 3rd Mrs F Godding.'



1953 River Race downstream



1977 River Race upstream

Silver Jubilee, 1977

From the Wilts and Glos Standard June 10 1977

Fairford itself was a riot of red, white and blue bunting and flags adorning houses and windows in every street. Impressive features of the decorations were some eight giant crowns which the Steering Committee had erected over the main streets.

These provided a colourful background to the opening event on Tuesday which was a grand procession of decorated floats, prams, bicycles, wheelbarrows and many other ingenious forms of transport. Mingling in the parade were a host of residents in fancy costume who danced along to Fairford Park led by Jubilee Queen 12 year-old Ann Funnell, her two attendants and the Fairford Silver Band.

In the Park, the Nicholas Cosgrove Group staged an exciting mock battle, local children enjoyed a picnic with food and drink a plenty thanks to the generosity of Fairford Steam Club which put up some £200 to cater for it, helped by other donations and parents and helpers who provided food. Other entertainments included a pram race, tug o' war and a comic football match.

RIVER RACE

A large crowd gathered along the banks of the River Coln to enjoy the sight of some brave competitors in a running race up the river, and the day was rounded off with music and dancing in the square, and a massive fireworks display again over the River Coln.

Events at Fairford had begun on Saturday with a very popular street market in the High Street, when a variety of handicrafts and produce stalls did a fine trade. The Church was filled both in the morning and for a Festival evensong in the evening.

On Monday an RAF Base team lit a Jubilee beacon on Horcott Hill and this was followed by a very successful disco at Milton Farm.

After a special half term service in the church on Friday, every child from Fairford Primary School numbering some 370 pupils was presented with a Jubilee mug by the School Managers, and prizes of Jubilee Crowns were awarded to 12 pupils who had painted pictures of the Queen to adorn shop windows in Fairford Market Place.

Golden Jubilee 2002

From the Wilts and Glos Standard June 6 2002

STREET PARTY WAS THE HIGHLIGHT

The highlight of Fairford's celebrations saw the market square packed with hundreds of excited children for a giant jubilee street party. With bunting fluttering in the wind, parents and grandparents watched with a delight as youngsters waved flags and tucked into food donated by local businesses.

Town Crier Maurice Jones added flags to his traditional red coat, while Mayor Quentin Tailford went a step further, painting his face red white and blue and wearing a Union Jack cape. Earlier nearly 200 residents in fancy dress paraded around the square.

Mum Nicola Dudes whose daughter Francesca (nine) was Jubilee Festival Queen said "I remember the Silver Jubilee and I'm so glad the children have experienced the same sort of thing."

Later, the crowds were entertained by karaoke singing, Fairford Amateur Dramatic Society and bands.

Another jubilee high point was a community parade which stretched the length of the High Street and ended with a thanksgiving service. Other events were held in the marquee.

Trevor Hing, chairman of the Fairford Festival committee, which arranged the celebrations, said: "All the events have been really well supported, but the street party is what everyone wants to see."



Diamond Jubilee, 2012

2012 June 7 2012

RAIN CAN'T STOP FUN AT ROYAL PARTY

The Queen's historic Diamond Jubilee was celebrated in true British style this week.

A bout of wet and chilly weather brought out the stiff upper lips as people decided to keep calm and carry on regardless with traditional street parties, fun days and fetes.

From parades and music festivals to Coronation re-enactments and picnics, thousands gathered together to mark the occasion.

The weather was kinder on Monday, when beacons were lit across the Cotswolds to mark the anniversary.

Letter from L Hope Wilts and Glos Standard June 21 2012

21 June 2012

High Praise of Celebrations

I would like to thank all those who contributed to last month's celebrations in Fairford. From the very colourful town crier's parade and competition in the market place, run by our very own town crier, Maurice Jones, to the excellent weekend of celebrations held here for the Queen's Jubilee.

The Jubilee Committee of Trevor Hing, Liz Morris and Heather Gorton, along with their helpers, must be congratulated. From the town ball on Friday night to the fun runs and car boot on Sunday, from the colourful parades and spectacular and thrilling flypast by Flt Lt Phillip Bird, not to mention all the hard work involved in catering for the hundreds of children and adults at their various street parties. The music in the market place at night by Steve Crowley and his band kept everyone in the mood for further celebrations when the huge beacon on the Green, with a very large '60' on top and built by the Paton family was lit by a well-deserving Albert, in recognition of all his volunteer work done in the town. It made us proud to be Fairfordians.



Other Jubilees (not including Coronation events)

The jubilee newspaper reports in the Wilts and Glos Standard 1887, 1897 and 1936 are an entertaining read and are very long and detailed. It should be noted that in 1887 dinners and teas were provided for over 800 people. In 1897, 300 dined and there were 450 teas for women and children. In 1936 George V's silver jubilee the events had moved to Morgan Hall where *'bread and butter, cakes sandwiches minerals and beer could be obtained simply for the asking'*.

The newspaper reports get shorter and shorter and by 2012 it was just a general review of the area's events, with pictures but luckily there was the letter from Liz Hope to give us some details.

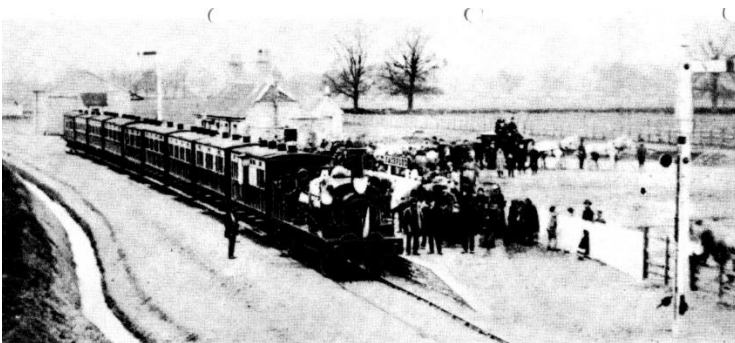
This information has been gathered from Royal Celebrations in Fairford, FHS 2012 and newspaper reports.

Fairford Railway

June 18 2022 marks the 60th anniversary of the closure of the Fairford Branch Railway. The branch from Fairford to Yarnton is just over 21 miles long (34.9428 km to be exact.) It was formed by 2 companies the Witney Railway Company aimed at serving the blanket-making industry in Witney and the East Gloucestershire Railway, which proposed a route from Cheltenham to London shorter than the GWR route from Cheltenham to Gloucester and Stroud connecting to the London-Bristol railway at Swindon. However, various backers withdrew their support and the final axe which caused that plan to be abandoned was that a group of GWR shareholders declared that a banking engine would be needed to get the train up the steep gradients out of Cheltenham (via Andoversford) and so GWR backing was withdrawn.

The Fairford to Witney line branch was opened on 15 January 1873. To mark the occasion the local children were given a ride on the railway to Witney and back and they also got a fine lunch.

Over the years there had been many attempts to fully integrate with other railways - towards Cirencester to link up with the line from Kemble, and also to make a connection with the Midland and South Western Railway line from Andoversford through Cirencester. The heyday of the railway was during the Second World War when the line served the large number of military installations in the area. In peacetime the railway reverted to serving the local communities. In the 1960s the decision was made to close the western end of the branch from Witney through Fairford and the last train was on 18 June 1962



The first train, 15 January 1873 and the last train 18 June 1962

May meeting report

The last FHS meeting on 19 May was 'Show and Tell'. Despite a rather a small attendance those there found the evening interesting. The items brought were:

- Romano-British pottery found near Ampney Brook, where a building or villa had been located and excavated c.1860. The remains were said to be tiles made for the supporting pillars of a hypocaust, one of which retained the imprint of the maker, and members were delighted to have experienced touching a thumbprint that a Roman potter had made - really tactile.
- A volume of Samuel Lysons 'A collection of Gloucestershire antiquities'. This was originally published in monthly parts from 1804 and the member had brought some of the parts but also had had a complete volume which he had had rebound. The illustrations of the antiquities, considering the age of the book, were magnificent in their detail and vivid colour.
- The Bride Book, 1937 bought from a charity shop. This book contained a plethora of information for the new bride, and had been well-used with a hand-written list of the wedding presents, and other annotations. It was not known who the bride was but the fiancé seemed to be a military person as there was a list of items to be taken to India. The hints for new brides, and other articles and advertisements were fascinating.
- A Second World War torch, black with the bulb shaded to be used during the blackout. Also from the War was a certificate of a Pilgrimage tour of Bethlehem, dated August 1944 with a small souvenir item. Bethlehem tours still continued during the War probably taken by both British military and German personnel.
- A sextant, chronometer and navigation compass all in beautiful condition. Working out the ship's location many years before GPS was invented
- Items from a former newsagent and photographs of the inside of the shop as well as favourite items from the shop.
- A First World War 'death penny' of the owner's great uncle and his medals.
- A Coronation child's tea set for two in its original box, obviously not played with, made by Brentleigh pottery in Stoke but was in a box with an Einco Toy Company label.



And from the FHS Archive:-

- To commemorate the fact that it is 60 years in June since the Fairford Railway closed, a paraffin lamp from Fairford Signal box.
- A silk scarf with a map of Germany on one side and France on the other. This was part of the escape kit issued to glider pilots and had flown to any one of the Arnhem, D-Day or Rhine crossing operations in 1944. The pilot was H N Andrews who lived in Burnaby B.C. in 1986.

We hope you are enjoying these online newsletters. If anyone has anything they would like to contribute or have any local history questions please email enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk





PLATINUM JUBILEE QUIZ

Prize £10

Fairford Questions

1. Which coronation is marked by Coronation Street, Fairford?
2. Name another Fairford street mentioning royalty.
3. Which war does Victory Villas commemorate?
4. Which queen visited Fairford on 12th August 1922?
5. Whose wife was she?
6. There is a photograph in The Bull of Arthur, Duke of Connaught visiting Fairford.
Whose son was he?
7. Where can you see a plaque commemorating the Queen's Silver Jubilee celebrations in
Fairford?
8. Which road used to be called Calcot Street?
9. Tinkers Row, Fairford is now called?
10. Which building commemorates the Queen's coronation?
11. What year was Concorde's first flight to Fairford?
12. Which Royal person has visited Fairford to listen to 'Music in Country Churches'?
13. Which 16th Century lady had three husbands and is buried in Fairford Church?
14. What plague was said to have come to Fairford in 1660 and featured in the National Press of
the day?
15. Which 17th Century King imported mulberry trees to encourage the silk trade? (one of which
is planted in Fairford)

Submit entries to Fairford History Society by June 5th: by email

enquiry@Fairfordhistory.org.uk or by hand to the FHS letter slot at the Community Centre by
the FTC Office. In the event of a tie for the winner there will be a draw which will be
announced at the AGM and in the July Newsletter.

Name

Email

Telephone No
