

# Fairford Flyer

## No 65

July 2024

FAIRFORD HISTORY



SOCIETY

### FHS Meetings 2024

All meetings are at 7.30 pm in the Farmor Room, Fairford Community Centre on the third Thursday of the month, (except for January and February 2024)

The FHS has now peaked at 164 members, the highest ever. We have averaged 57 members attending per meeting and have had 26 visitors to our meetings during the year.

**The membership fee remains at £5 for the 2024-25 season and renewal is due in September.** Visitors are always welcome at £3. A full list of meetings will appear in the September issue.

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### FHS Meetings 2024

- 19 September – The Romans at Cirencester by John Burdon
- 17 October - Bill King on a topic to be decided
- 21 November - Colin Moulden - Branch lines of Gloucestershire

... and for your information

**July 19-21** Royal International Air Tattoo

**August 9-11** FairFest

**August 17-18** Fairford Steam Classic and Retro Show

**September 28** Town Crier Competition

**October 12-13** Tercentenary of the Baptist Chapel

### Announcing a brand-new Tomb Trail

The first of this year's Trails will take place on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> July at 2 pm (meet at the War Memorial). More Trails are planned for August and September. The £3 contribution will be shared by St Mary's and FHS.

Contact the Secretary at [enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk) if you wish to attend.

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**Walls correction:** It was stated in the last issue that the holes at the bottom of walls were for drainage but in fact they are for small animals. Also, Chris Peachey forgot to say in his talk that he is not allowed to sell stone from the quarry as he does not have a licence, but he has recently given some stone to someone who has given the Friends of Fairford Church a donation for the Restoration Fund.

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Denise Medley visited the Community Centre recently to see the Edna Jefferies memorial window (by the rear door) which was formerly at Fairford Hospital. Denise was at the ceremony when it was dedicated (1990) and would like to contact anyone who was also there to share memories.

Please contact [enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk) and information will be forwarded.

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### AGM 2024 – 20 June 2024

Chairman's report: This has been another good year in the life of the FHS. Our membership is now 164, the highest number we have ever had and attendance at the meetings is very good. The talks this past year have covered a wide range of topics from both external speakers and Society members. Our finances this year resulted in a very small deficit due to the need to purchase a new laptop but financially we are still in a good position so the annual membership subscription will remain at £5 for the next year. As usual we have supported several events during the year, and we continue to receive requests for information from various people on a wide range of topics. These queries are answered by the Secretary using information held in the

Archives and in our digital resources. We have not produced any new publications this year although several titles have been reprinted as they still sell. Hopefully, we will produce some new publications during the next year. The first Fairford Flyer was produced in 2005 and in January 2025 we will be producing a special edition as it will be the 100<sup>th</sup> Flyer. There have been a few changes of Committee members. Joanna Petty has resigned but is still regularly assisting Alison in the Archive Room which is much appreciated. Jennie Sanford has stepped down as representative of the Town Council and in her place we have Richard Harrison who was a Committee member a few years ago. However, Jennie has volunteered to remain on the Committee in a personal capacity. Finally, a big 'thank you' to the Committee and to all of you who continue to support the Society. Special thanks go to Ann Wightman who puts the meeting notices on various notice boards around the town; and thanks to all those who help put the chairs away at the end of each meeting; and also thanks to my son Nick who helps to put the chairs out before each meeting.

The Committee elected are: - Chairman, Chris Hobson; Vice Chair, Syd Flatman; Secretary: Alison Hobson; Treasurer: Gill Compton; Margaret Bishop, FCC representative; Edwin Cuss; Jennie Sanford; Dave Matthews; Richard Harrison FTC Representative.

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The AGM was followed by a 'cheese and wine' break (cheese and wine were served at the first meeting on 18 June 2004). Edwin Cuss as President gave a short speech as to how he became involved in the Society and we are indebted to him for sharing his vast Fairford knowledge, and Syd Flatman (Vice Chair) explained he was Edwin's 'side kick' and he has tried to absorb all his knowledge; both Eddie and Syd are invaluable to the FHS. John Read then explained the origins of FHS which he helped to set up. In order to have a successful Heritage Lottery Fund bid to raise money to refurbish the Community Centre (which had just been bought from Gloucestershire County Council by the Town Council and Parish Council) a 'heritage input' was required and a Heritage Day was held in 2004 which was very successful. A group of like-minded, interested people got together and a History Society was proposed. A few pictures from that 2004 Heritage Day were shown. Keith Cottam was the first Chair, Brian Routledge, Vice Chair, Geoff Hawkes treasurer and Alison Hobson secretary. Geoff became Chairman in 2008 and Gill Compton treasurer. Chris Hobson took over as Chair in 2022.

A presentation was then given about the work of the FHS over 20 years which included the start, events, oral history, meetings, publications, etc. One person who was not mentioned was Rob Winney who contributed items for the Archive, was always there to answer questions and was the FTC Representative on the committee for some years.



Photo Jennie Sanford

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The following topic has been saved for this issue, you may be surprised when you read it -

### Fairford Elections 1885

1885 was the first election where the majority of adult males could vote, before that it had only been male property owners. Constituencies all now returned a single member to Parliament, Fairford was then in the Cirencester constituency and the candidates were: Arthur Brend Winterbotham, Liberal and John Edward Dorington, Conservative. Both candidates visited Fairford several times and gave speeches prior to the election. Irish Home Rule was a major issue.

Here follows a report from the **North Wilts Herald 4 December 1885** of what happened on Election Day in Fairford. Election fever reached a pitch!

“The polling on Tuesday passed off quietly enough, and nothing throughout the day gave rise to the most distant apprehension that the usual quiet of our town would be unduly disturbed. Of course there were the usual party cries, and perhaps in one or two instances parties suffered their zeal to overcome their discretion. Particularly was this the case with the Maisey Hampton contingent of Mr Dorington’s supporters. However, they did nothing to merit the volleys of stones and mud they were subjected to by the other party as they left the town. Mr Winterbotham arrived on the scene at one o’clock, and met with a hearty reception from his supporters, who in the streets, at least, appeared as half a dozen to one. He paid a short visit to his committee room, and also to the polling booths, and attempted vainly, amidst a very babel of cheers and howls, to make a short address from his carriage, but failing to make himself heard he drove briskly away. It was just at this juncture that the Meysey Hampton contingent received the attentions we have spoken of. From this time up to the close of the poll all was peaceable and orderly. It should have been mentioned before that all through the day much annoyance and inconvenience was occasioned by a fife and drum band who paraded the streets creating a hideous apology for music and flaunting a yellow [Liberal] flag. However, their performances were good humouredly borne with, until from their long continuance in one particular spot, the police suggested a ‘move on’.

Shortly after eight pm the aspect of things changed as by magic. What appeared to be an organised gang supplemented by a mob of youths and boys made a determined attack on the Bull Hotel, where some of the Conservative Committee had taken refuge, bursting in the panels of the doors and breaking the windows. Stones now began to be used indiscriminately and two large panes of Dr Hitchman’s were broken, [Laverton House] and all his windows were in jeopardy, when fortunately Mr Painter, to whom all praise for his interference – shouted that the doctor was ‘for Winterbotham’ which changed the aspect of things so far as his house was concerned, and the howling mob following the cry of an apparent leader, made off as by one consent up Milton Street to Mr Coles’, dealing destruction as they went to the windows of the known supporters of Mr Dorington, and in their mad haste also doing damage to windows of the supporters of Mr Winterbotham. Mr Coles’ windows were mercilessly attacked. They, unchecked by any opposition’ for the police were powerless’, made their way by the mill to Mr Wakefield’s at the Bank where again windows were smashed wholesale. Thence down Park Street to Mr Alexander Iles, where several large panes were broken as they passed, then on to Mr Wilmot’s, where the crash of broken glass and the rattling of the stones against the house was frightful and the damage done very extensive. Thence in mad haste to Mr Elwes, Morgan Hall then to Mr Cornwall’s [Keble House] and to the vicarage [The Hyperion] where with concentrated fury and with the wildest yells, in an incredibly short time nearly every window was smashed; Mr Hitchman Iles just opposite suffering simultaneously. Their malice not yet appeased, Mr White’s house and offices received the next visitation, where also many windows were broken, as also at the Conservative Committee rooms, the police station and many others.

The fright occasioned to the inmates of several houses, in many cases to ladies, may be easily imagined and in more than one instance the escape from serious injury from the violence with which the stones were thrown was little short of miraculous. We forgot to say that at the Retreat Mr Iles had some valuable glass broken in his surgery window. Space fails to tell of other occurrences in the Market Place where a mob set on a man named Wheeler who was severely handled besides being treated to a ducking in the river. The police may be

said to have done their best but had no chance whatever of quelling the mob, and caused the public houses to be closed. Soon after 10 o'clock, with almost the same rapidity with which it arose, the tumult subsided, and the town resumed its wonted quietness..."

After the results were later declared 40 special constables had been drafted in, but no further trouble occurred. There were repercussions to this several 'names were taken' and a special Petty Sessions Court was held with five prison sentences handed out. There was an outcry and a petition was sent to the Home Secretary to try and free them. The damage claims amounted to £27 16s 9d, this was paid by the Gloucestershire County Treasurer but then later charged to Fairford Parish.

The result of the election in the Cirencester constituency was Winterbotham 4,782 (Liberal); Dorington 4,037 (Conservative). The Liberals led by William Gladstone won the most seats but not an overall majority, and divisions within the Liberals over Irish Home Rule led to a Liberal split and another general election was held the following year. Mr Winterbotham was the only candidate then and was duly elected.

The men who were imprisoned with hard labour for one or two months were: William Brindle; George Hope; William James Keylock; and John Stafford, all of Fairford, and Thomas Edwards of Lechlade.

## Newspaper Cuttings

### **WGS 3 September 1887**

Cricket: Fairford v Ampney Crucis – This match was played at Fairford on 25<sup>th</sup> August in beautiful weather. Fairford won the toss, and proceeded to the wickets at 12 o'clock, Seef and Kinch opening the home team's innings. Fairford were all out for the respectable total of 170. Grace, Woodward, Kinch and Seef batting well for their respective scores. Ampney Crucis scored 92 for nine wickets, but the visitors delayed the game so much during the last half hour, that on appeal to the umpire the game was decided in the home team's favour on the ground that the two minutes allowed for each batsman had expired, The last two or three of the visitors took at least five minutes each to get their pads on. Allen and Hall batted well for their scores. Victory rested with the home team 87 runs,

### **WGS 10 September 1887**

Cricket: Fairford v Ampney Crucis

To the Editor

Dear Sir – Will you kindly allow me to state that the ungenerous and uncricket-like assertions in the heading to the Ampney Crucis v Fairford match against some of our players in your last issue were positively untrue. I am certain that no Fairford man wrote them, and I know for certain that several of the Fairford cricketers are sorry they were sent for insertion in your paper. The game was drawn greatly in favour of Fairford, but time which no man can beat, saved us the match. I refrain from making any further remarks, and believe me  
Yours faithfully CR Woodman, Capt ACCC

### **North Wilts Herald 25 November 1887**

Lucky – The wife of Mr George Baldwin received a few mornings ago, a cheque for £15, (about £1,200 today) being the second prize offered by Messrs Johnson, Johnson and Co, tea merchants of London. The competition was open to all purchasers of their tea, and the problem was to guess the number of pounds of tea on which they paid custom duty in a given time. The prizes were £20, £15, £10 and £5, respectively, given to the nearest guessers of the actual number.