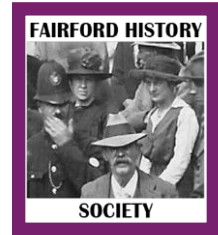


Fairford Flyer

No 78 October 2025



Membership

Membership fees were due in September and remain at £5. You can pay at a **meeting or by bank transfer, Lloyds Bank, sort code 30-92-06 A/C Fairford History Society No 02170130. Important - we are very sorry but this year we cannot accept cheques as the bank now charges for each cheque paid in.** You can also leave the subscription at the Community Centre in the FHS post slot by the FTC office door. Thank you to all who have paid already, we have 113 members as of 1 October.

FHS Meetings 2025-26

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 which are at 2.30pm)

2025-26 Programme

16 October Fairford Memories through audio and film from the Archive. **Due to the US Government shutdown, the USAF has cancelled all off-base engagements so the Lockheed U-2 talk has been cancelled.**

20 November Titanic Effort! – R.M.S. *Carpathia*'s dash to save a stricken liner amongst the frozen ice flows of the North Atlantic by Paul Barnett. Fairford's link with the Titanic was that the Countess of Rothes, Mrs McFie, lived in Fairford in the 1950s.

2026

15 January at 2.30 pm Gloucestershire men at the Battle of Waterloo by Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter, KCVO, OBE, DL

19 February 2.30 pm Fairford in Close up by Edwin Cuss

19 March 'On two wheels – the fascinating story of the bicycle by Bill King

16 April Brief History of Tetbury by Jane Haines

21 May Misericords by Miles Dodd

18 June Gloucestershire Follies by Jonathan Holt

Other events

24 October 7.30pm Fairford at War by Chris Hobson, Chris is a guest speaker at this Royal British Legion event at Fairford Community Centre. Entrance £5

Cirencester History Festival 24 October – 2 November 2025

FHS News

Please ensure you visit the sign-in desk when attending a meeting. We don't only tick your names off to get subscriptions and count meeting numbers, it is also a health and safety requirement that we have a list of members attending the meeting.

Thank you to all who helped put the chairs away at the last meeting. It is really appreciated.

September meeting Fairford Folks – from 3000 BCE to 20th century and beyond

Chris gave a well-researched and detailed coverage of 5000 years of Fairford's history, giving examples of events which have affected the population during each century (e.g. the Black Death and the Industrial Revolution) and also included noteworthy people who had lived each century. He showed that the population of Fairford has always been fluid and consisted of a good proportion of those not born locally. Chris concluded by saying that there is a concern that the growth in population over the recent years has not been supported by

a growth in the infrastructure of the town. The rest of the newsletter this month relates to articles and newspaper clippings related to this talk.

In Fairford Flyer No 3 July 2006

Roman cemetery found near Fairford

Early in May, Oxford Archaeology announced the exciting discovery of a Roman cemetery near Fairford, a "very significant" find which attracted regional and national press coverage. In preparation for the excavation of yet another gravel quarry, the first graves complete with skeletons started to turn up. By mid-May over 100 skeletons had been discovered together with evidence of farm buildings. Dr Alex Smith, Oxford Archaeology's project manager said: "Large Roman cemeteries like this are usually only found around towns or substantial settlements, but no such site has been found here yet. We believe that a small Roman farm lies immediately to the west, and it may be that the cemetery acted as a communal burial ground for the local rural population. We hope that further work will reveal more of how people lived and died in this region, around 1600 years ago."



The graves appear to have been segregated so that children were buried in one area and adults in another. It has been reported that at least one skeleton was found with the skull placed between the feet. This was not an uncommon funerary practice in Roman times but could also indicate that the unfortunate individual was executed. The dig is set to continue throughout the summer although it will be some time before the finds can be conserved and analysed.

On June 23rd a small group of FHS members were able to visit the site and were shown around by Ken Walsh of Oxford Archaeology. The site shows evidence of Bronze Age, Roman and Anglo-Saxon activity. Ditch boundaries, post holes and Anglo-Saxon grub huts were clearly visible.

FHS members were able to inspect a few of the finds including a silver needle, a weaving tool and some knives found with the burials and a large amount of pottery.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

Stamford Mercury 12 April 1733 advertisement

Cure for the DEAF

By Mr Duckett of Fairford in Gloucestershire, an approv'd Operator for the Hearing, and a licensed Surgeon for 36 Years; who by the Blessing of God hath found out Medicines that cure all Sorts of Deafness or Noise in the Head or Ears, if curable, tho' of 20 or 30 Years Continuance, as will be testify'd by Hundreds of People who have been cured thereby, several of whom have been deaf from their Cradles. He cures Persons of all Ages, and performs the same at the House or Lodgings of such persons as desire it, without Pain or Confinement, or Hindrance of Business; and hath liv'd at Fairford upwards of 56 Years; He will tell you at first Sight whether curable or not; and answers all Letters (if Post paid) as soon as they come to hand; he answers no other letters. NB These are the most famous Medicines for the Hearing that were ever yet found out.

Note also the names of Persons of Quality cured by Mr Duckett of Deafness are always concealed. He hath had the Honour to be sent for to several Persons of Distinction in most Parts of the Kingdom. He goes to none except sent for.

The said Mr Duckett is now at the Angel Inn in Peterborough, and will be there till Monday next; from whence he goes to the King's Head in Elton, and stays there the 16th and 17th; and on Wednesday in the Evening he will be at the Queen's Head in Thrapston, and stays there until Friday Morning Eight of the Clock; from whence he goes to Wellingborough to the Swan Inn; and from thence to the Hind in Northampton at all which Places he may advise withal.



Oxford Journal 15 December 1787

Extract of a Letter from Fairford, dated Dec 13

Early Yesterday Morning a most dreadful Fire broke out in the House of Farmer Giles, at Kempsford, near this Place, which entirely consumed the same, with all it contained, and Part of an adjoining one; but by the strenuous Exertions of a vast Concourse of People, brought there from all Parts by the prodigious Body of Light, it was prevented proceeding any farther, though there were many thatched Buildings very near. This Accident was occasioned by the Carelessness of the Farmer's Wife, who was up for the Purpose of Washing, sending a girl up Stairs into a room where there was a quantity of Straw into which she dropped her Candle, and catching it up again, Immediately ran down, but Fear prevented her from giving any Alarm; Some children, however, asleep in the same Room were fortunately waked by the glare of Light, and screamed out loud enough to bring up their Mother, who happily arrived Time enough to save their Lives, but nothing else, it being too late to prevent its Fury. The School House, supported by Lord Colrairie, in which a Number of poor Children, though nearly contiguous, received no Damage. It would be Ingratitude not to Notice of the Activity and Exertions of Mr G Phillips, of the Bull Inn at this place, by whose laudable Example many were excited to assist in subduing the Flames.

Star (London) 15 January 1831

Isaac Boulton, Christopher Ponting, John Mitchell, Robert Cowley, Charles Ferris, Edward Keylock, William James, John Lewis, Richard Adams, Charles Harvey and Thomas Mitchell, were indicted for feloniously destroying a threshing machine, the property of J Savory of Fairford on 26th Nov last. Most of the prisoners received very favourable character from J R Barker, Esq. after which the Chairman submitted the case to the Jury, telling them that, in his opinion, the case had been clearly made out, and he knew not how to separate any one of the prisoners from the rest. The Jury returned a verdict of guilty against all the prisoners.

John Mitchell, Robert Cowley were both tried in the last indictment, Wm May, J Carver, Geo Hignell were indicted for feloniously destroying four threshing machines, the property of R Rose at Fairford on 26th November last. Cowley and May pleaded guilty. Verdict guilty but recommended to mercy.

Christopher Ponting, James Carver, John Draper, Charles Gillett and William Sparrow were indicted for riotously assembling with divers other persons at Fairford on 26th November last and unlawfully destroying a chaff-cutting machine, value £3, the property of Joseph Jenkins, A verdict of guilty was returned against all prisoners.

Note: Isaac Boulton sentenced to transportation but given a free pardon 12 July 1831, Christopher Ponting transported but was back in Fairford by 1841, John Mitchell was transported and died in Australia in 1879, Robert Cowley was transported and died in Australia c.1888,

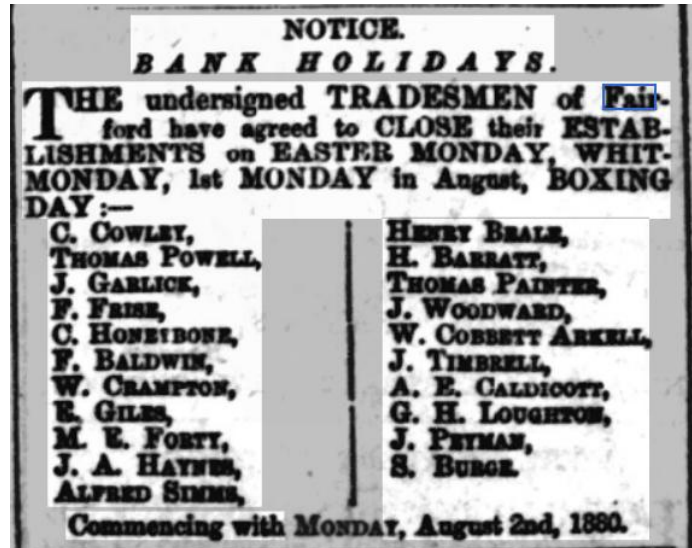
Imprisonment: Charles Ferris, 2 years, John Lewis, 6 months, Charles Harvey, 9 months

Discharged on their own recognizance were Edward Keylock, Richard Adams, Thomas Mitchell, James Carver, John Draper, Charles Gillett, William Sparrow, Wm May, and Geo Hignell.

Oxford Chronicle and Reading Gazette 2 May 1874

To Parents and Guardians WANTED at once 25 miles from Oxford by rail, an ACTIVE YOUTH as an APPRENTICE to the Plumbing, Painting and Glazing trade. A thorough knowledge of Writing and Graining will be imparted. - Apply to J Peyman, decorator, Fairford. Gloucestershire

North Wilts Herald 24 July 1880



Faringdon Advertiser and Vale of the White Horse Gazette 8 May 1892

DEATH OF AN OLD TOWNSMAN – Fairford has just lost its eldest inhabitant in the person of Mr Samuel Vines who died on Sunday, the 15th inst, at the good old age of 96 years. Had he lived until August he would have been 97 having been born in August 1795. The deceased had formerly carried on a successful business as an ironmonger in Fairford from however he retired as long ago as 1839 soon after the decease of his wife which occurred in 1837, so the decease has been a widower 55 years. For many years the deceased had suffered from a complaint, which whilst not affecting his general activity, necessitated an almost close confinement to his home and garden. Previously to this he was an active participator in all local events of importance and was known as a genial and social gentleman and neighbour. Deceased never lost his interest in public matters and was always well posted up on current topics of the day and even welcomed any friend who might drop in for a quiet talk over passing events. His faculties remained to the last almost unimpaired, and his excellent memory enabled him often times to interest those who had the pleasure of listening as he referred to the stirring events which transpired at the season of his early manhood. Waterloo was well within his recollection. Deceased was of a most kindly and benevolent disposition, and ever ready to aid with his sympathy and liberality all cases of need that were brought to his notice. His end was probably hastened by his having, notwithstanding the utmost care, taken a severe cold during the recent inclement weather, which, with his advanced age, rendered medical skill unavailable. Deceased never had a family.

Standard-Times 14 November 1986

Mary Rose lecture: Dr Margaret Rule research director of the Mary Rose Trust came to Fairford on Thursday to visit the parish church and to speak on 'The Tudor warship Mary Rose – a window to the past'.

On the Church she inspected the Lygon Tomb of 1560 and noted in Window 10 that St James is shown wearing boots very similar to one found on the Mary Rose. The boots and the window glass would have been made within 50 years of each other.

In the lecture Dr Rule covered the building of the ship in 1509 and the rebuilding in 1536. The ship sailed as far as the Baltic but sank off Spithead in 1545. In 1971 the ship was discovered in mud off Portsmouth. Guns and other artefacts were brought to the surface and the ship was raised from the seabed in 1982. This well illustrated lecture raised £400 for the Friends of Fairford Church as well as a donation to the Mary Rose Trust.