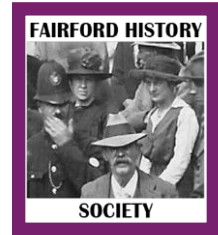


Fairford Flyer

No 79 November 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 134 members as of 1 November.

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

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, a survivor of the Titanic disaster, lived in Fairford during the 1950s.

There is no meeting in December

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

FHS News

Please ensure that you visit the sign-in desk when attending a meeting. We don't only tick your names off to get subscriptions and to count meeting numbers; it is also a Health and Safety requirement that we have a list of members attending the meeting. Again, thank you to all who helped put the chairs away at the last meeting. It is really appreciated.

October meeting - Fairford memories through audio and film from the Archive

Our Secretary Alison Hobson compiled and presented a programme of video and audio clips from the FHS Archive. This was a replacement for the planned talk about the U-2 operations at Fairford after the USAF cancelled at short notice.

The programme included film clips of some of the pre-war carnivals; the 1977 Silver Jubilee river race; the 1980s New Year's bed races; and the 1995 bonfire during the commemoration of VE-Day. Many of Fairford's residents of long standing could be recognised in the videos. The audio clips included Jos Barker and the 2005 FHS AGM when members talked about the High Street shops; Peter Yells talking about his family building

form; and Albert Alder talking about his early life in Fairford. As some of these original audio and films were between one and two hours long, Alison chose five-to-ten minute clips to keep the audience entertained.

The audio talks were made from about 2005 when the FHS's audio history group led by the late Geoff Bishop recorded interviews with several Fairford folk. As these interviews provide a unique addition to Fairford's written history, we are looking at the feasibility of restarting the audio history programme. Considering the short amount of time that Alison had to put this programme together the result was a very interesting and entertaining evening.

From Fairford Flyer July 2007

Street lighting comes to Fairford 1852

"At a Meeting of Inspectors present...Resolved that it is expedient to light the town with Gas and that this meeting be adjourned to 27th [Nov] instant when the Inspectors will meet the Shareholders of the Gas Company and endeavour to make arrangement with them for lighting the town with 25 Public Lamps or such other stanchions as may be determined upon.

[Signed] Robert Tovey, Robert Hayward, Charles James Price, Daniel Iles"
and..

From the Fairford Town Council minutes

Electric street lighting came to Fairford from 1972. It had been discussed as early as the mid-1950s but the Parish Council of the time could not afford this as the money would have caused an increase in the precept (i.e. Council Tax).

Ancient Buns - I wonder where they are now?



The two buns illustrated, the larger baked in 1897 and the smaller in 1889 now in the possession of Mr Hedges, were part of a collection of eight collected by a person unknown to mark events of Royal importance as we collected mugs, plates etc. for the same reason.

Their excellent condition in 1940 over so long a periods attracted the attention of Mr Sarson (the vinegar manufacturer) and he took the missing six to Lord Woolton's office at the Ministry of Food. These were chemically analysed, and it was found that they contained Riboflavin; caused no doubt by using Brewer's Yeast.

Riboflavin was not discovered till 1933. The

scientific pages of 'Nature' September 4th 1953 reported on tests carried out on two of these buns, one dated to 1863, the other to 1887. Riboflavin is found in beer and that two or three pints a day would supply all the Riboflavin a person requires for good health. Lack of it produces blindness, lack of growth and skin complaints but as it is found equally in milk, eggs, liver and green vegetables there is no need for an onslaught on beer supplies.

These buns were shown at the February 1965 Women's Institute meeting by Mr Hedges.

Note: Mr Hedges probably wrote this article. My mother used to keep some of her home-made hot cross buns fixed on the wall above a doorway. I never knew why she did this or perhaps have just forgotten! It also explains why in the 1950s we were encouraged to drink Ribena. AH

The 'Buns' article and the following newspaper cuttings come from an album from Fairford Women's Institute recently donated to the FHS Archive. In 1965 they compiled an album about all the activities and events Fairford in that year with photographs, newspaper cuttings and drawings. Although it does not seem long ago to some of us, it is sixty years ago, the information and photographs especially of the houses being built at the time are most interesting.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

These 1965 newspaper cuttings most likely come from the Wilts and Glos Standard.

IN MEMORY OF COLONEL PALMER

The people of Fairford are to make a permanent commemoration of Col Palmer, who did so much for the town and provided many of its recreational facilities.

At the annual parish meeting held on Wednesday last week it was agreed to name one of the town's new housing developments after him.

Sir Thomas Borwick, who made the proposal, said that a road should be named after Col Palmer to commemorate what he had done for Fairford.

The new houses lying on and behind Hatherop Road are to be known as Churchill Place in memory of Sir Winston Churchill.

This did not seem to happen but the town has the Palmer Hall to commemorate Colonel Palmer.

POPULATION OF FAIRFORD TO RISE TO 5,000

Five thousand people may eventually live in Fairford.

In the past few years, the number of houses has soared from 450 to nearly 1,000, and in the future another 500 may be built.

This population explosion is likely to cost Cirencester Rural Council £100,000, it was announced on Monday. The money is needed to pay for extensions to Fairford's £115,000 sewerage scheme which was developed during the 1950s.

Now consultant engineers have discovered that it cannot cope with the town's rapid growth.

Mr John Busby, the council's public health committee chairman said the planning permission had given for 1,250 houses to be built in Fairford, and there may be more in the future.

The extensions would cater for 1,450 homes and could be further adapted in the future if necessary.

The public health committee recommended that extra land adjoined the present disposal works be purchased for the extensions, and proposals put forward by the consulting engineers be carried out.

This was confirmed by councillors.

On Tuesday, Mr Busby told the 'Standard' that the Fairford sewerage scheme was originally mooted in 1947. At the time the town had some 450 homes, and the plant acquired was capable of coping with about 750 "but of course no one envisaged that Fairford would grow like it has done" said Mr Busby.

"It has not only attracted elderly people, but also young families. I agree that there's not much for people to do, but I'm sure this will be explored in the future.

He added "I suppose it is far better for the town to develop as it had done rather than die like so many villages in the area".

It is thought that the Fairford of the future, as seen through the planners' eyes, will be explained on December 14 when a meeting is held in the Palmer Hall to discuss the town's preservation. One of the guest speakers will be Mr Stewart Cypher, the area planning officer.

The meeting mentioned was the inaugural meeting of the Fairford Preservation Trust. It seems that the same problems and concerns are occurring in Fairford some 60 years later.

TRAMP SUPPER AT FAIRFORD

A most successful tramp supper was held at the Eight Bells, Fairford, at the weekend, organised by Mr and Mrs Baker in aid of Fairford Cottage Hospital.

In fact costumes were so authentic that one competitor was refused entry to a bus when making the journey to Fairford and had to walk three miles.

The entries were judged by Dr M H D Veale and the winner of the first prize – a gallon of cider – was Mr Roger Smith, best lady tramp was Mrs F C Hedges.

Afterwards there was a bread and cheese supper and a singsong following which the 'tramps' went in procession to the hospital and handed in £4 4s 4d for the comforts fund.

500 WATCH PRAM RACE AT FAIRFORD

Fairford's annual pram race held on Monday evening proved to be most successful to date. There were 18 entries this year, and there could have been more if a larger number of prams had been found.

The race, now in its fourth year, has a good following and a crowd of some 500 people lined the route to encourage the teams.

The race, for two-man teams and their pram, was organised by Mr Ron Meicken, the licensee of the Carriers Arms, Fairford, who also provided prams to some of the teams who had not brought their own.

Starting from the Carriers Arms, the teams raced to the White Hart then on to The George and The Marlborough, and back to the Carriers Arms for the finish. The competitors had to stop at each public house and drink a pint of beer.

First over the line were Martin Sprackman and Peter Houghton of Marston Hill who were presented with a barrel of beer by Mr Meicken, The prize for the appropriately dressed team was won by Robert Illsley, John Cole and Don Manfields.

SWIMMING POOL FOR SCHOOL

The new swimming pool at Coln House School, Fairford, was officially opened on Thursday last week by Mrs W P Cripps.

The total cost of the pool including the changing rooms is £1,750 and much of the money was raised by the pupils themselves. The money, which took three years to collect, was boosted by a county grant.

The large gathering of parents, staff and pupils were welcomed by the Headmaster of the school, Mr W B Young, who outlined the development of the pool.

He told those present that some of the pupils had even assisted in the early construction work on the pool. Mr Young stressed the importance of children being able to swim and said that every child should be able to swim before leaving school.

Mrs Cripps, who is a school manager, was presented with a bouquet by Jane Stopforth.

The opening ceremony was followed by a demonstration of swimming by some of the pupils together with swimming instruction.



The audience included Rev Edward Keble, Rev D J Wathen and Father Roche