



Fairford Flyer No. 86 June 2026



Membership

Membership fees were due last 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 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 160 paid up subscriptions as of 1 June

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)

2026 Programme

2026

18 June A very brief AGM followed by 'Gloucestershire Follies' by Jonathan Holt. The AGM documents will follow with the meeting reminder.

There are no meetings in July and August.

17 September Anglo Saxon sites in the Cotswolds by Philip Brant Simmons, Collections Engagement Assistant of the Corinium Museum,

15 October River Valleys of the Cotswolds by Alan Pilbeam

19 November Music in Fairford Church by John Read

There is no meeting in December

Next year's programme is being arranged now; if anyone has any suggestions or would like to volunteer to give a talk themselves, please let the Secretary know at enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk

June 6-7 Fairford Festival

Edwin Cuss will have his usual display of photographs in the Heritage Room, Community Centre 10-4 along with an FHS Display. The FHS display topics are 90 years of the Palmer Hall and the Retreat Asylum to Fairford Green. There will also be FHS publications for sale. FHS will also have a display at the Festival cricket field on both days and the topic is community events. Don't miss our P31 submarine 'HMS Pride of Fairford' which will be on display at the RBL tent celebrating 125 years of the Royal Navy Submarine Service. There will also be a churchyard display at the Eco Church event in St Mary's Churchyard on Saturday 12.30-4pm with a Tomb Trail led by Chris Hobson at 2.30pm.

Other events

August 8-10 FairFest Beer and Music Festival in the Walnut Tree Field

August 15-17 Fairford Steam Rally (no FHS presence)

The Chairman would again like to thank all those who help in clearing up the chairs after the meetings, it is very much appreciated.

June Meeting – Misericords by Miles Dodd

Our guest speaker Miles Dodd from Cambridge gave a very interesting talk on misericords. He explained that in the Middle Ages monks were expected to stand in their stalls for services that could last for up to 16 hours so small folding seats were made to give them some relief from what must have been a most trying ordeal. These wooden seats are of great interest because of the carvings on the underside which can only be seen when seats are folded up. These carvings, made from single blocks of oak, were probably made by local carpenters many of whom show superb skill resulting in real works of art. Miles showed many images of misericords which he has taken during his travels in England, Belgium, France and Germany. Fairford's own misericords were shown which portray a fascinating range of subjects, many of which are common to misericords in other parts of the country. Many of the misericords show scenes from everyday life ranging from domestic troubles to kitchen work, from farm animals to fabulous mystical creatures and the Green Man. Perhaps surprisingly the misericords rarely depict religious subjects although the theme of various sins such as theft and gluttony are well represented and some even show images of an overt sexual nature which one might not expect to find in a church!

Images are: Breda Grote Kerk, Our Lady. <https://misericords.co.uk/> A fun 20th century misericord and one from St Mary's, Fairford



Display Boards

With the money raised from the sale of Geoff Hawkes's books, we have purchased two sets of display boards, with carrying cases (which Chris is very pleased about as it will be so much easier to transport). Displays are now mounted on them and they will be used in the FHS display tent in the cricket field during Fairford Festival.





Following the article in April's Flyer on the Fairford Peace Group, just by chance I came across this photo in the 'unknown where and when' file. If you look closely, the book the lady is holding is 'Yes Minister' so this may have been at the Fairford Peace Group picnic in 1985. Does anyone recognise the lady?

NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

CELEBRATION OF THE MARRIAGE OF H.R.H THE PRINCE OF WALES AT FAIRFORD, TENTH MARCH 1863 from the **North Wilts Herald**

The auspicious event was celebrated here in right good old English style. A merry peal of bells at six o'clock gave notice to the inhabitants to be stirring, which they soon were, and engaged in decorating their houses with evergreens and flags. Such a rich display has never before been seen in our quiet little town; everyone seemed bent on doing something, in fact it did not look like Fairford at all. At eleven o'clock the V.W.H. hounds met in the market place, and at half past one the fife and drum band came out, and a procession was formed as follows:- schoolchildren with runners four abreast, other children also with flags, the Band, the Committee of Management headed by J R R Barker, Esq, Members of the Benefit Societies residing in Fairford, and inhabitants generally four abreast.

The procession started from the triumphal arch at the top of the Market Place at half past one o'clock going up High Street, along Calcott Street, round Mount Pleasant, up London Street, halting for a few minutes at the bottom of the Market Place, then up Milton-End, down Mill Lane and back down the High Street

25 June 1887 Wilts and Glos Standard Queen Victoria's golden jubilee

At an early hour the festive morn was heralded in by a merry peal rung out at from the parish church, from the tower of which at eight o'clock floated proudly the St George's ensign, which was present by Col Archer, now hoisted for the first time, and the hearty cheers of a goodly company of the parishioners who gathered to witness the ceremony. By eleven o'clock the quaint and quiet market town showed good evidence that the place was 'en fete'. Again the bells rang out their merry peal and headed by the Kempsford Band, 'all sorts and conditions of men' made for the parish church, in which a united service was conducted by the esteemed vicar Rev. Canon Loxley assisted by the Rev. Canon St John (vicar of Kempsford), and Rev. J Storr (curate at Whelford). The form of prayer for the Jubilee Thanksgiving was used, the National Anthem being sung at the beginning and the Old Hundredth Psalm at the close. In each case the accompanying of the alternate verse by the full band produced a thrilling effect. There could not have been one person present who was not touched with emotion during this simple and solemn service....

Through the kindness of Mr Raymond Barker and Lady Katherine Raymond Barker the beautiful park of which Fairfordians are justly proud was placed at the service of holiday makers. A well constructed and tastefully-decorated archway spanned the main entrance to the grounds....

26 June 1897 Wilts and Glos Standard Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee

... The proceedings during the whole day passed off in the happiest possible manner; thanks to the perfect unanimity of feeling in the parish and the excellent arrangements made by the committee. In the matter of street and house decoration, the town surpassed itself, nearly everybody contributing more or less their share to add to the general effect. Illuminations were also numerous. Great excitement was created by the Rev. R H

Wilmot's motor tricycle, which by happy coincidence came to hand in time to add another feature of interest to the day, and may be taken as the latest development of progress made during her Majesty's reign in the matter of locomotion. Mr Wilmot rode the machine through the admiring crowds, having it under excellent control.

28 June 1902 Wilts and Glos Standard Coronation of Edward VII cancelled due to illness

The painful news of the King's illness efficiently beclouded the joyful anticipations so generally entertained here for a becoming celebration of the Coronation. Changes in the programme were necessitated, and were arranged for by a meeting of the committee held on receipt of the sad news on Tuesday...

As no unfavourable report of the King's condition was received, the bonfire and firework display took place as arranged. The huge pile of combustible matter was lighted at 9pm by Miss Iles and blazed right merrily. This was followed by a grand display of fireworks beyond precedent in Fairford, the sight of which afforded much gratification. And thus closed the proceedings of a day unique in the experience of all, and which will dwell in the memory of everyone whilst life shall last, such joyful anticipations having had to yield to such sad realizations.

16 August 1902 Wilts and Glos Standard Coronation of Edward VII

Although as in many other places, the programme for the celebration of the Coronation was carried out on the day originally fixed for the ceremony, the loyalty of Fairford proved to be of far too pronounced a character to admit of the actual day of their Majesties' crowning to pass by without some demonstration. In so far as practicable, the day was observed as a holiday. At 2pm there was a general muster of the children of the Parish in the Market-place, where a large concourse of their parents, teachers, and others had foregathered to witness the interesting ceremony of presenting a commemoration medal to each child, the tokens being pinned on to each recipient by the hands of numerous lady volunteers... A cricket match was played, Married vs Single which afforded considerable amusement to numerous onlookers. At the close of the match dancing was freely indulged in so long as daylight served, and a small but effective display of fireworks closed the proceedings. Although there was no combined effort in the matter of street and house decorations, the spontaneous efforts of individuals created an excellent effect notably in the Market-Place, London Street, the High Street and Milton Street, and even in the outlying parts of the town there was scarcely a house but displayed its flag or lantern or device of some kind....



Caldecott House decorated for Queen Elizabeth's coronation in 1953



'Newcroft' decorated for King Charles Coronation in 2023