



# The Fairford Flyer

Newsletter No 12

January 2011

## Where have all the shops gone?



The next meeting at **10am on February 17th** in the Farmor Room (a change from the usual time) will be devoted to this topic. Edwin Cuss will give a presentation of former Fairford shops using pictures from his comprehensive collection. We will then take a break for refreshments followed by a short walk to locate sites and put names to businesses that once existed or if inclement weather a workshop inside. As a result of all our efforts, we

hope to produce a publication with the object of making a comprehensive record of former trades and professions in the town.

FHS is very pleased to welcome Gloucestershire Archives to this meeting who will be providing additional material. The above picture of Fairford Saddlers was found in their archives among a series of pictures taken by Frank Dipper, former headmaster of Fairford Primary School. There is no record of date.

Trade Directories are an invaluable source of information about businesses in the town. FHS has copies from 1791 to 1939 and some of these are available online. The earlier issues give no addresses, the later ones usually give the street or area.

This entry is from the 1791 trade directory, it shows some interesting professions. John Keble, father of the more famous John Keble, lived in Court Close, now Keble House, Fairford, but was vicar of Coln St Aldwyns.

GENTRY.  
Barker Raymond John, Esq. *Lord of the Manor*

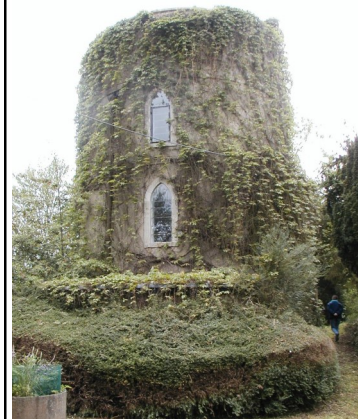
CLERGY.  
Edwards Rev. James, *Vicar*  
Keble Rev. John, (F.)

PHYSIC.  
Carter John, *Surgeon and Apothecary*

LAW.  
Morgan Charles Tyrrel, *Counsellor, and Justice of the Peace*

TRADERS, &c.  
Andrew James, *Pig-butcher*  
Betterton John, *Blacksmith*  
Betterton Jacob, *Glazier and Plumber*  
Bowlle George, *Maltster*  
Brown William, *Collar-maker*  
Carey John, *Tallow-chandler and Soap-maker*  
Carter William, *Miller*  
Carter Benjamin, *Mealman*  
Clinch Alexander, *Shoemaker*  
Collett Richard, *Sadler*  
Cox John, *Land-surveyor*  
Dyke John, *Hair-dresser*  
Edmonds John, (F.) *Mealman and Grazier*  
Hamlett Thomas, *Mercer*  
Hinton William, *Staymaker*  
Hook Charles, *Farmer*  
Howes William, *Pig-butcher*  
Humphries John, *Maltster and Baker*  
Hurft Richard, (F.) *Ironmonger*

## THAMES and SEVERN CANAL

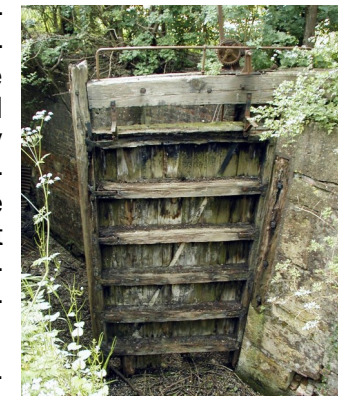


Inglesham Round House

Our March meeting on Thursday 17th is a talk by Bruce Hall, Chairman of the Cotswold Canals Trust. The bold plan to unite the rivers Thames and Severn, climbing up and through the Cotswold hills, was successfully completed in 1789. It involved the extraordinary achievement of constructing a 2¼ mile long tunnel from Sapperton to Coates. The aim was to bring coal and other goods from Wales and the Midlands to London and distribute goods made in the capital to places along the Thames and across to towns accessible from the Severn.

Sadly the canal did not enjoy a long period of success. Competition from the railway drained away trade and anyway there were frequent technical difficulties mainly connected with water supply and leakage. It proved very difficult maintaining enough water to float barges throughout the year. Before the end of the 19th Century there were plans to abandon it, at least east of the Stroudwater. It was finally officially closed in 1933 after a long period of decay.

In 1972 a committee was formed to try to renovate the Thames and Severn and a lot has been achieved especially at the Stroud end. However there are formidable problems: there are lots of locks needing repair, in places the bed has been filled in and buildings erected on the line of the canal. There is also opposition from some who don't want to see development taking place. In spite of all this the Cotswold Canals Trust looks with optimism and enthusiasm to the day when the Thames and Severn will again actively unite the two great rivers. They have recently been given some land near Inglesham roundhouse, close to where the canal and river meet.



Dudgrove Lock

Fairford Flyer edited by Alison Hobson. From the Archives by Chris Hobson. Photographs by Hobson Cameras.

## VISIT TO RODMARTON MANOR

To follow up the talk on Gimson and the Barnsley brothers we said we would organise a visit to Rodmarton Manor in the Spring. Rodmarton was built by Ernest Barnsley and much of the furniture was designed and built by many of their circle including his brother.

The visit has been arranged for **Thursday March 24th** at 2.15pm. We will make our own way there but if anyone needs a lift please let us know. Rodmarton is near the A433 between Cirencester and Tetbury. We can give details on exactly how to find the manor nearer the time. The cost will be £8 which includes a guided tour of the house and an unguided tour of the gardens. If you would like to go please contact Geoff (01285 712053) and pay your £8 by the end of February (cheques payable to Fairford History Society).

## ARCHIVE ROOM

Some of the items donated since the last Fairford Flyer have been:-

- An unused choir hat which strongly reminds me of my school beret, I don't blame the choir for rejecting the design.
- A programme for the first town crier's competition in 1996.
- A programme and information regarding the flower festival in 1972.
- The millennium jigsaw (3ft by 2ft). It's quite fun to spot what some of you looked like 10 years ago and remember some past friends!
- The most interesting find is a book from the Raymond Barker Estate (see 'From the Archives').

This is exactly the sort of material we want, it may not be particularly old now but it will be a record of Fairford's history for the future. FHS keeps a record of everything donated and from whom it came so it could be returned if required. If the donator does not want the item to go into the public domain we can do that too.

We receive many local history and family history enquiries by email: enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk or by phone 01285 711768. The Archive Room is also open to visitors each Monday afternoon from 2-4pm.

Enquiries received recently have been about Herbert Richard Chandler, some of you may remember him, he was a parish councillor from about 1936-1955 and was responsible for the bus shelter, opened on the occasion of the Queen's Coronation in 1953. Radio Glos wanted an interview about Coronation Street, (named on the coronation of Edward VII in 1902). We are grateful to June Lewis for carrying out this task. We have also been able to help a Betterton descendent with information from the parish registers. Trevor Betterton has also supplied us with Betterton family trees and also hopes to visit Fairford in the Spring.

## NEW FHS PUBLICATIONS

### **FHS Monograph No 7 – The clergyman of the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Fairford. Price £5**

The first oral history recording that FHS made was John Hunt giving an account of the Vicars of Fairford. Using this and some additional notes that John made as a start, Chris Hobson has completed a comprehensive survey of all the clergy who have officiated at Fairford Church finishing with Canon Edward Keble. It contains some very interesting information about some great characters and will be an invaluable reference work for the future.

John was a lay reader at the Church and this work is in remembrance of him as it had been planned that the work should be completed by John and Chris together.

## NEW ACQUISITIONS

**The Storm** by Daniel Defoe. Pbk 2005. Originally published 1704 and republished as a Penguin Classic on the 300th anniversary. Daniel Defoe asked for accounts of the storm in the national press of the day and as it caused great damage to the west windows of our Church the then Vicar, Edward Shipman, wrote a letter about it to Daniel Defoe which is included in the book, p73-75 (Defoe got the name wrong and has put Shipton instead of Shipman).

**The way we were** by Ana Bianchi Evans. 2010. A fascinating history of Coln St Aldwyns with some contributions by and pictures of Fairford residents (former CStA residents). This is available from the Coln Gallery, Fairford.

### **An official guide to Lechlade and Fairford [1961]**

A joint publication of Fairford and Lechlade Parish Councils. Town guides are always interesting, the content is much the same but much information can be gained from the advertisements and pictures.

**Cotswold Art and Crafts Architecture by Catherine Gordon**, —a follow up to our interesting talk in November. There are many books about the Cotswolds Arts and Crafts, this is very nicely produced and gives comprehensive information on the subject. Beside the war memorial designed by Ernest Gimson, Peter Waals from Sapperton married a Fairford girl Ruby Dora Bryan daughter of a draper of Fairford in 1903.

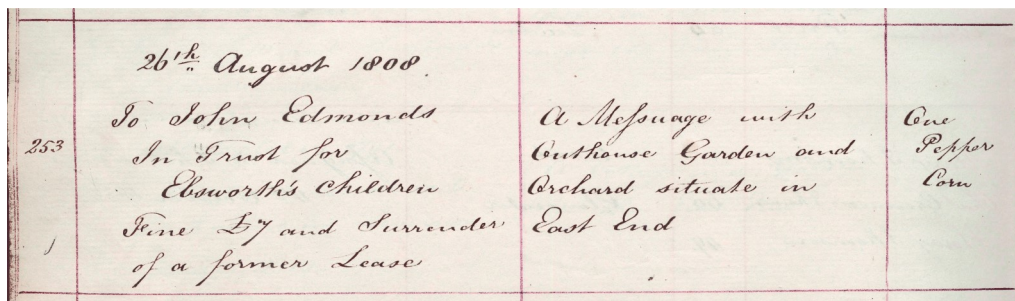
**Fairford Cricket Club—100 years Anniversary 1889-1989**. This book contains a very interesting history of cricket in Fairford written by June Lewis. It was sponsored by very many famous people. Once again the photographs and advertisements are extremely interesting.

## From the Archives

### Major New Archive Acquisition

The Society has been very fortunate to have been donated a unique historical document relating to Fairford property and people of the 18th and 19th centuries. The foolscap-size notebook is titled "Lifehold Estates belonging to John Raymond Barker Esq" and was donated to the Society by Heather Gorton, whose late husband Charles once worked for the Ernest Cook Trust. The 46-page document records the creation and renewals of leases relating to John Raymond Barker's property in Fairford, the earliest being dated 1768 and the latest 1884. Over 120 leases are recorded and the details given add greatly to our knowledge of Fairford's residents and property ownership during the Raymond Barker family's time as landlords. Some of the entries are quite revealing; for example the entry for Jonathan Wane's lease of a house in Milton End on 26th May 1803 gives him the option of paying either four shillings for rent, or just one shilling and "2 couple of fat hens". In fact poultry seems to have been an alternative form of currency in the 19th Century as six other lessees were given the option of paying part of their rent in chickens!

The book is currently being transcribed and a copy of the transcription will be made available in the Society's Archive Room in the Community Centre for all to see. Many of the old Fairford families are mentioned including the Wanes, Gilletts, Edmonds, Bettertons, Townsends, Beales, Savorys, Radways, Minchins, and many more. We are most fortunate to have been given this unique piece of Fairford history which will now be preserved for posterity. If you have any old documents in your attic or bottom drawer relating to Fairford please consider donating them to the Society where they will be cared for and made accessible for future generations.



An entry from the Lifehold Estates of John Raymond Barker Esq

### Fairford Entertainment

In the days before radio, television, video, DVD and the internet, our ancestors had to make their own entertainment. However, occasionally the citizens of Fairford were treated to live performances by touring professionals. The Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Standard for Saturday 6th May 1854 contains the following report:

*"Professor Ewart, the celebrated ventriloquist, gave an entertainment in the Crofts Hall, on Monday evening last. The novelty of the performance attracted a very numerous and respectable audience, who were highly gratified with the extraordinary display of talent evinced in this singular science by Professor Ewart. Such continued roars of laughter have never been heard in the Hall since its erection. We were somewhat startled and incredulous on reading the programme for the evening's amusement, but every item was realized to the fullest extent, in an infinitely amusing manner; and if Mr Ewart should, at any future time, visit our town, he may be certain of lecturing to a very large audience."*

'Professor' John James Ewart was a celebrated Scottish ventriloquist who made frequent and extensive tours of Britain during the 1850s and 1860s and received much acclaim in the local press wherever he performed. In an advertisement in the Glasgow Herald in March 1855 he claimed to be "The first ventriloquist in Europe". However, in later years it appears that his career took something of a downward turn culminating in July 1869 with him being mugged in Birkenhead while he was the worse for drink and been locked out of his lodgings. The Professor's bizarre behaviour and having frequent lapses into his stage persona during the subsequent trials at Birkenhead Police Court and Chester Assizes resulted in the acquittal of the four robbers due to lack of (reliable) evidence! There is no further mention of Professor Ewart in the press after 1869.

### William Child Iles

New Zealand has a thriving local and family history movement, much of which relates to families who emigrated there from the United Kingdom during the 19th and 20th centuries.

One of the many Englishmen who went to New Zealand to seek fame and fortune was William Child Iles. William was the son of Nicholas and Charlotte Iles, both of whom are buried in Fairford. Nicholas Roch Iles was an auctioneer and an agent for the Globe Insurance Company. Apparently he was also an agent for Mander & Power's Dublin stout according to

Pigot's 1842 Gloucestershire trade directory. William was born in Fairford on 26th April 1836 and joined the Army where he became a dispatch rider for Lord Cardigan during the Crimean War. He sailed to New Zealand in 1861 and had a number of jobs including being a warder in Dunedin Public Hospital for 14 years and a coach and wagon driver. One of his positions was as a warder in a mental hospital in Otago. Perhaps William had been attracted to this post because of his family's links with Alexander Iles's asylum in Fairford. William married twice and had 10 children and was a founder member of the Dunedin branch of the Salvation Army. He died on 15th

June 1923.

One way to find information on people and events in New Zealand is to search on the Papers Past website at: <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast>.

This website offers freetext searching of 61 New Zealand news papers dating between 1839 and 1945. More information on William Child Iles of Fairford and Dunedin can be found on the Dunedin Northern Cemetery's excellent website at:

<http://www.northerncemetery.org.nz/northerncemetery/home.html>.



### No Pigs Here!

Following on from the report on 'Smelly Fairford' in the last Fairford Flyer comes a letter from ironmonger and property owner Samuel Vines, from whom Vines Row derives its name. The letter was written at Fairford on 9th January 1888 by Samuel and refers to the change of tenancy of one of his properties:

"Dear Sir

*I have no objection to Thomas Witchell going into the other house but he must pay the same rents as he pays now. I will have a furnace put in. There is a kitchen range already which I took to Robert Herbert and there is a large yard. The privies were in that yard but at one time after a glut of rain the water overflowed and ran down the path into the well and we were forced to empty the well and move the privies to the bottom of the garden. Therefore they must not keep a pig there.*

*Wishing you a Happy New Year.*

*Yours faithfully Sam Vines"*

This is yet another example of the state of sanitation in 19th Century Fairford!

## Meetings 2011

### February 17th 2011 at 10 am

**Where have all the shops gone?:** a daytime talk followed by a short walk to locate the sites, and put names to, businesses that once existed in Fairford. Do you remember the location of the 'Barrel and Basket?' What was the shop in the old council offices in London Street?

### March 17th 2011

**The Thames and Severn Canal:** a talk by Bruce Hall, Chairman of the Cotswolds Canals Trust and will include recent developments at the eastern end of the Canal.

### May 19th 2011

**Fairford Park:** Nicholas Ford, the Agent and Director (Chief Executive) of the Ernest Cook Trust since 2002 will talk about the Ernest Cook Trust including reference to the former Fairford Park buildings.

**June 16th 2011** AGM (followed by a talk to be arranged).

All meetings take place in the Fairford Community Centre, Farmor Room at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated.

In 2010 FHS held 'open afternoons' in the Heritage Room; this is not only for Church visitors but also an opportunity for anyone else to come and ask questions or get help with their family history etc. It's also an opportunity to indulge in a nostalgic chat over a cup of tea!. These were quite successful, and this year the 'open afternoons' will be on **May 2nd and August 29th** Bank Holiday Mondays from 2pm. All visitors welcome.

FHS is a member of the Gloucestershire Local History Committee (of the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council) and this year have been asked to host the summer meeting for Gloucestershire local history societies. This will take place on **Saturday July 2nd** from 2–5pm. There will be two short talks followed by a choice of guided tours including the church windows, a heritage walk of the town, a tour and history of the Community Centre and then tea. There is a tradition that the host society members are available for the visitors to chat to—the incentive being a free WI tea, so please let Alison know if you are interested.

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