



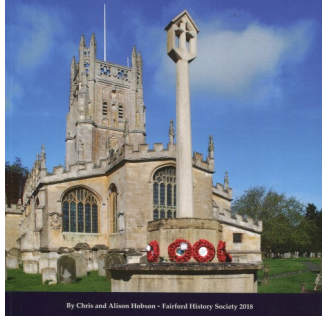
The Fairford Flyer

Newsletter No 27

July 2018

Fairford's Local Heroes

A record of the sacrifice of a Gloucestershire town in the two World Wars



By Chris and Alison Hobson - Fairford History Society 2018

In 2005 Fairford History Society produced the first in a series of monographs entitled Fairford War Memorial and Roll of Honour. It was a brief account of the lives and deaths of the men commemorated on the town's war memorial.

We now have a successor to that original document 'Fairford's Local Heroes'. It is in every way a much fuller account of its subject and its production has an appearance more suitable to its serious subject matter (as we commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War). As well as including further details of the men on the Fairford War memorial in both Wars, additional names from

have been included as well as brief details of those who served and survived the Great War. A new section about life in Fairford during wartime has also been included.

Soon after the end of hostilities in 1918 towns and villages up and down the country began to plan their war memorials. There was no government diktat over what they should look like or what should be inscribed on them. Neither were there regulations as to what qualified a name to appear on any memorial. In this free-for-all people sometimes appeared on more than one memorial or none at all.

We must thank in particular Chris and Alison Hobson for their work on this important new publication and likewise Kevan Kelsey for his work on the design and publication of this work. We would recommend to all who are interested in the town's history that you should add this book to your library. The publication was sponsored by Fairford Town Council, Friends of Fairford Church, Cotswold District Council, the Ernest Cook Trust and Fairford History Society members.

All FHS members are invited to the book launch on **Thursday September 6th**. (See back page). Copies will be available for sale at the book launch and at FHS meetings or contact 01285 711768 or enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk. Price £8

Geoff Hawkes

David Perry

Just before our AGM we learnt of the death of our president, David Ian Perry. He was just a few months short of his 90th birthday. He followed June Lewis as President and in his latter years he too took up his pen and contributed to the Parish Magazine and some FHS publications. There was no rule saying a president was expected to write for the History Society but it did ensure a variety of voices got heard and enjoyed. He was very supportive of the society's work and he was a font of knowledge about the town and its life.

David was a true Fairfordian, He was born in Fairford in 1928 and went to Miss Starkey's School in The Croft and to Cirencester Grammar School, He did National Service in 1948 at home and abroad. He sold the family butcher's shop in 1979 and then ran the Barrel and Basket for a while. He lived in various houses around Fairford and settled at the beautiful setting of *Colnside*, His greatest contribution to Fairford was that he was a Councillor for 36 years and was Fairford's first town mayor when Fairford's status changed to a Town from a Parish Council in 1983. He was a quiet unassuming man, fond of travel and family life.

He leaves a large gap in the life of Fairford, one more local we can no longer quiz about events of long ago. Our thoughts are with his friends and family, above all of Jane who has supported him throughout his long life.

Chairman's Report 2017/2018

As I am fond of saying, FHS is much more than the list of monthly lectures, important as they are. People do to some extent pick and choose topics depending on their own interests. In this past year we have ventured into a talk about Marston Meysey, a single street Wiltshire village, an update on the progress of Chedworth Roman villa, followed by a glimpse of the private lives of the Tudors. We continued with some home-grown topics from Edwin Cuss followed by a study of John Keble by Allan Ledger, a survey of the development of Cheltenham by Steven Blake and then intriguingly an introduction to folk song in the area and ending with Margaret Bishop speaking June Lewis's text on Farmor's School.

The things less seen and appreciated were the frequent calls for help with family and house histories. The more we know about the town and its people the more use we can be in building up a large stock of material which is of increasing value to members, to scholars and students, and to the general public. As I write these notes Ian Westlake is busy extending the shelving in the Archive Room to make room for more records. We are constantly pursuing the battle for more space. A huge thank you to all who make the society in all sorts of ways an active and valuable feature of life in Fairford. I am pleased and proud of what has been achieved. Each member of our committee contributes to our work but I must mention our tireless secretary, archivist, and everything else imaginable. Geoff Hawkes

FHS News

Friday 21 September - Farmor's School - WOYD (the World on your doorstep) Year 7 pupils visit the town including an FHS display in the Heritage Room. Volunteers are needed to talk to pupils please.

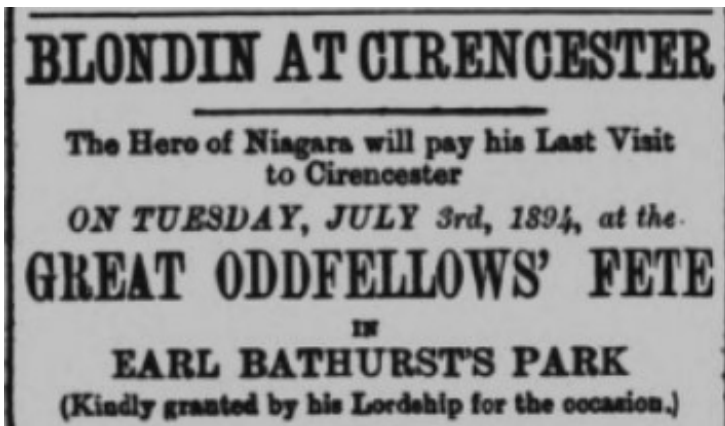
2018 Anniversaries: this year Farmor's School is celebrating the 280th anniversary of its founding in 1738. There will be a reunion event for past students and staff at **Farmor's School on 24 November, 2-5pm.**

See <http://www.farmors.gloucs.sch.uk/280th-Anniversary>

It is also the 10th anniversary of the reopening of the Fairford Community Centre which was celebrated during Fairford Festival in June.

Fiest World War: FHS's contribution to commemorate the ending of the First World War is 'Fairford's Local Heroes'. For the Cirencester event see page 5.

Archive Room: there is still a lot of work to be done in the Archive Room as the remnants of June Lewis's archive is still being dealt with and the room is rather full. However, FHS is always willing to receive donations of items relating to Fairford's history, especially local newspapers before 2004 and event programmes. Thanks to Ian Westlake, who has made a set of shelves which has helped considerably.



Stroud News 29 June 1894

BOOK REVIEW

Votes for women: Cheltenham and the Cotswolds by Sue Jones History Press, 2018 £14.99

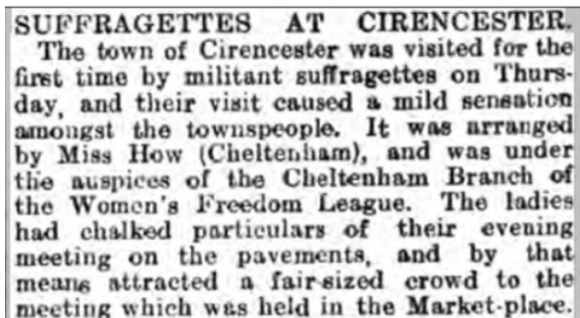
In 1918, after years of campaigning, British women over the age of 30 gained a parliamentary vote. This was a momentous step for women. This book is an attempt to show how local women's suffrage developed. Cheltenham was the hub of activity in the Cotswolds. Cirencester and Stroud had their own stories. Many records were destroyed in case they fell into the hands of the police but a book was found preserved at the Gloucestershire Archives presented to James Agg-Gardner MP as thanks for his support of the women's Suffrage Bill. From these signatures the author was able to fill out the profiles of many local supporters. In February 2018 a blue plaque was placed on the house in Sheep Street of Grace Hadow, (1875-1940) a leader of the Cirencester women's suffrage movement. The Bathurst family did not support women's suffrage.

There is one reference to Fairford, p179

'Miss Hadow's own efforts were more dispersed by then. Working for the West of England Federation, she visited places such as Nailsworth, Chipping Campden and Welford-on-Avon to help found branches. A meeting was held at Fairford in May 1913 to try to 'break new ground' but as with the WSPU (Women's Social and Political Union) earlier, there was no permanent impact. This was perhaps because the 'Antis' had been there immediately beforehand at the infant school so the WSS (Women's Suffrage Societies) was refused that venue and had to meet at the Bull Inn.

An additional factor might have been the potential threat to the windows of St Mary's Church, Fairford. See Fairford Flyer 25

Alison Hobson



Cheltenham Chronicle 5 February 1910

November 11 2018 - Cirencester

The Cirencester Community Development Trust in collaboration with the Barn Theatre Project at Ingleside are keen to commemorate the end of the First World War on Sunday 11th November 2018 in a unique and memorable way and are very keen to obtain the support of the local Parish & Town Councils. This project is called 'We remember 1918' and CCDT is keen to get the correct numbers of the fallen from each Town or Parish.

The email from CCDT continues:

“The plan is to create a human poppy in Cirencester Market Place and extending into and down Cricklade Street. We are hoping to start creating the human poppy at 2.00pm (which will allow people to have lunch and get to Cirencester in good time) by the building of a human poppy in the Market Place. The Market Place will then be turned into a huge amphitheatre for the day with all the shops, businesses and residents opening their doors, holding parties with family and friends.

The poppy would be comprised of men & women to represent each of the fallen, both in Cirencester and the rest of the Cotswolds.

All the Cirencester men would wear black ponchos to form the centre of the poppy. They will congregate in the middle of the Market Place.

All the men from surrounding villages will be dressed in red ponchos. They will form the petals of the poppy.

We would also like to add the element of young to middle aged women to symbolise the wives, mothers, sweethearts and children. They will be dressed in green ponchos. They will form the stalk which will flow down Dyer Street.”

The names from Fairford War Memorial were sent to this group and they have asked if we would like to send volunteers to take part. It would be excellent if we could send 34 volunteers to represent each First World War name on the Fairford War Memorial. Please contact Alison by phone or email if you are interested,



Farmor's School logbooks 1863-1900

Some years ago a project was started to transcribe the Farmor's School logbooks. With the help of volunteers most of it was completed with just a few gaps. Recently I have been collating the transcriptions with the aim of completion for the 280th anniversary of the school in November this year. Mostly the comments are routine about lessons, the pupil teachers and monitors and in the boys' case when they have been punished. The girls seldom seemed to have been naughty or perhaps it was not reported.

Some of the more interesting incidents:

Mar 1 1886

Only 43 present to-day. Snowing & prevalent colds. About 11 a smell of fire caused me to examine both schools. We soon found the smell to come from under stove in boys room. With the help of a carpenter we removed the stove & found floor beneath stove on fire. The iron on the floor had burnt through allowing the fire to come in contact with the floor & joists.

In 1892 there was an extensive rebuild and the classrooms were enlarged. The Boys School went to Milton Hall next to the Marlborough Arms and the Girls to the Croft Hall. Both Schools were coping in large rooms with up to 100 children for about 12 weeks at their respective sites.

November 21 1892

Very glad to be back in our own rooms again. We find it strange after being cramped in Milton Hall. The boys find the echo of the room rather difficult to contend with at first.

Adverse comments were made about the ventilation by the School Inspectors both before and after the rebuild.

June 21 1895

Visited this department. At 10 o'clock found the class room close although all the windows were open. Roof ventilation seems to be a necessity, and should be attended to. J Waite HMI Inspector

And my favourite, familiar to attendees of Thursday FHS meetings when the Youth Club is active above:

March 2 1894

As soon as weather becomes favourable for out door drill shall take the upper standards last lesson on Friday in the yard. We cannot drill in School as it disturbs the girls below.

There were a lot of reasons for half holidays: circus, menagerie, Sunday School treats, School treats given by Lady Katherine and John Raymond Barker in Fairford Park, Fairford Athletic Sports, choir outings etc.

June 29 1894

Attendance fallen off owing to Sunday School treats. Holiday on Tuesday July 3rd it being the occasion of Blondin's visit to Cirencester. (See page 3)

More seriously were the closures for several weeks because of outbreaks of measles and scarletina/scarlet fever. Sixty out of the 90 boys were vaccinated and it kept some of them away for up to a week. Both boys and girls did not attend school when the weather was bad, especially the long distance pupils (e.g. from Coln and Quenington). Children were also kept at home either to mind younger siblings while the parents were out at work on the land, or to help with potato planting, gardening and at harvesting times.

December 18 1900

Object lesson on 'Beer' as a product of Barley. I chose this in order to explain as well as I could the cause of the Arsenical poisoning which is creating such a stir.

What did this refer to?

In 1900, more than 6,000 people in England were poisoned by arsenic-tainted beer, with more than 70 of the afflicted dying as a result. The food safety crisis was caused by arsenic entering the supply chain through impure sugar which had been made with contaminated sulphuric acid. The illness was prevalent across the Midlands and North West Midland, with Manchester being the most heavily affected. Wikipedia

In the Girls School logbooks there is less information than in the Boys logbooks, just mainly routine and lessons, but what must be mentioned is the success of the needlework. Lady Katherine Raymond Barker seemed to have taken a great interest in the needlework and kept the girls supplied with material. In the winter needlework had to be done in the morning as the light was so bad they were unable to see in the afternoon. Children either bought the items made or sometimes they were sold at a sale of work. In the inspection reports singing and needlework were the most often praised. The school was visited frequently by Lady KRB and Miss Barker, the vicar and his wife and the curate in order to help with reading and scripture lessons.

June 17 1895

School visited by Mr. F. B de Sausmarez, H.M.I. who during his short stay, remarked. This is a beautiful school.

The aim is to transcribe the log books up to 1922, the start of the Mixed School under Mr Hedges. It will be useful to add to information regarding family history. Thank you to the original transcribers,

The Wings School at Fairford

A small advertisement in the Birmingham Daily Post of 16 August 1944 announced the imminent arrival of a new school in Fairford. The advertisement stated: "COMMONWEAL LODGE, from Devon, OPENING AS "WINGS" AT FAIRFORD, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, SEPTEMBER 1944. Progressive approved School for Girls. Individual Tutorials. Music, Riding included."

Commonweal Lodge had been founded by William Webb in 1916 on his estate at Purley in Surrey. In 1941 the school had to move to Ardock Lodge in Lewdown near Okehampton, Devon as its buildings at Purley were taken over by the military. Three years later the school took up residence in Fairford in the buildings of The Retreat, a privately-run asylum which had been founded by Alexander Iles in 1822 and was owned by Dr A C King-Turner when it closed in 1944. However, the advertisement is slightly misleading as "Wings" appears to have been an offshoot of Commonweal Lodge School which returned to its original home at Purley at the end of the Second World War and remained there until it closed in 2010.

As the advertisement mentioned, riding was a very important aspect of the school's activities and many of the almost 100 pupils brought their own ponies to school. "Wings" sponsored the Fairford Horse Show and Gymkhana which was held in the grounds of Fairford Park on 21 July 1945 and several of the girls took part in the show. The event was organised by the school's bursar, Major Frank Edwards, and the proceeds were donated to the Fairford Cottage Hospital. The event was repeated the following year and was even more successful. One of the young riders who achieved national prominence in the sport was 11-year old Patricia Moss who jumped at the London Horse Show in June 1946. She was an outstanding rider having competed at horse shows since the age of four and was frequently mentioned in newspaper reports on riding events. Pat Moss later turned her focus to rally driving having been taught to drive by her brother Stirling Moss, one of Britain's most famous Formula One racing drivers. She was one of our most successful female rally drivers becoming European Ladies Rally Champion five times in the 1950s and 1960s.

Gloucestershire Echo
Friday 22 June 1945

"WINGS" FAIRFORD.
HORSE SHOW
GYMKHANA & FETE
to be held in
THE PARK, FAIRFORD
On **SATURDAY, JULY 21st**
Commencing at 10 a.m.
In aid of the Red Cross
Agriculture Fund.
**SILVER CUPS AND GOOD
MONEY PRIZES**
Schedule and entry forms may
be obtained from the Hon. Sec.
"Wings," Fairford.
Entries for the Horse Show
must be sent by July 7th.
Entries for Gymkhana will be
accepted on the Show Ground.
Entrance to Show Ground 2/6

Pat Moss was not the only pupil of “Wings” to appear in the local and national press. Sisters Patricia and Diana Selous were pictured in the Gloucestershire Echo of 19 June 1946 with a horse named Winged Pan which apparently walked into the music room whenever it heard the sisters playing the piano and violin!

Diana Selous and Pat Moss both won prizes at the Gloucester and District Horse Show which was held on 27 July 1946 when Pat Moss was the only competitor to achieve a clear round. Unfortunately the month ended on a less happy note on the 31st when one of the horses was knocked down by a Royal Air Force lorry in Horcott Road; both rider and pony sustained injuries. The emphasis on horse riding was no doubt due to the influence of the Principal of the school, Mrs Joan Hilsden, who had previously been the proprietor of a riding school in Felixstowe. Mrs Hilsden as well as teacher Noreen Morley and pupils Pat Moss, Diana Selous and Pamela Trotman all competed at the National Horse Show at White City in June 1946.

Sadly the success at horse shows does not appear to have been translated to financial success and in September 1947 the buildings were put up for sale (see page 10). In 1948 the property was bought by Gloucestershire County Council and in August the Council requested tenders to build a new block and renovate the existing buildings. In December the Council announced that the site would become a special school for up to 80 residential pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties. The school opened in May 1950 as Coln House School which finally closed in March 2017.

However this was not the end of “Wings” as the school moved to Charlton Park near Malmesbury. Although still under the management of Mrs Hilsden there seems to have been less emphasis on equestrian activities and more on practical skills such as shorthand and bookkeeping. Post certificate and finishing courses were offered for girls up to the age of 19. Unfortunately the school failed to prosper for very long at Charlton Park and in November 1953 the Principal and two of her staff filed for bankruptcy thereby bringing an end to “Wings” School.

Chris Hobson

Fairford Flyer edited by Alison Hobson. With contributions from Chris Hobson, Geoff Hawkes and Alison Hobson and the FHS Archive
--

With Vacant Possession of the major portion

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

THE VERY VALUABLE FREEHOLD PROPERTY

known as

“ WINGS ”

(known for many years as “The Retreat”)

FAIRFORD

18 RECEPTION ROOMS 29 BEDROOMS 7 BATHROOMS

EXCLUSIVE AND MODERN DOMESTIC OFFICES

(affording accommodation for 125 people)

11 COTTAGES GYMNASIUM SMALL FARMERY

GARAGES STABLING

In all about 36 acres

All Main Services

Charming Gardens and Grounds

**IDEALLY SUITED FOR SCHOLASTIC, INSTITUTIONAL, HOTEL
OR SIMILAR PURPOSES**

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION

as a whole, or in 8 lots

(unless previously sold privately)

by Messrs.

JACKSON STOPS

at

The King's Head Hotel, Cirencester

on

Wednesday, September 3rd, 1947,

at 2-30 p.m. precisely.

AUCTIONEERS: Messrs. JACKSON STOPS, Castle Street, Cirencester. Tel 334/5.

London Offices: 8 Hanover Street, W.1., and at Northampton, Leeds, Yeovil,
Chichester, Chester and Newmarket.

SOLICITORS: Messrs. RAPER & FOVARGUE, Battle, Sussex.

MEETINGS 2018-19

All meetings take place in the Farmor Room of the Fairford Community Centre at 7.30pm except for the February **meeting at 10 am**

September 20

Women in Air Force Blue by Bill King.

The origins, growth and development of the Women's service of the Royal Air Force: the WRAF (1918-1920), WAAF (1939-1949) and WRAF from 1949 until merging with the RAF in 1994 and on to the present day.

October 18

The Bicentenary of a Poaching Affair: an incident from the author's recent book 'Landed Estates' by Eric Jones

November 16

Putting Fairford on the map by John Leighfield

There are no meetings in December and January

2019

February 21 (half term) at 10 am

Fairford Carnival—the final years 1953-56 by Edwin Cuss

March 21

Film night: from the FHS Archive

April 18

To be arranged

May 16

To be arranged

June 20

AGM followed by Mervyn Cully on Memories of the Keble family

There are no meetings in July and August

Thursday 6 September 6 for 6.30pm in the Barker Room

All FHS members are invited to the book launch of Fairford's Local Heroes by Chris and Alison Hobson
A revised and updated edition of Fairford's War Memorial and Roll of Honour published in 2005. Price £8
Please RSVP to Alison

Enquiries Alison 01285 711768
www.fairfordhistory.org.uk
email: enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk