



The Fairford Flyer

Newsletter No 28

January 2019

MONUMENTAL BRASS SOCIETY TO VISIT ST MARY'S CHURCH, FAIRFORD

The Monumental Brass Society is a learned body which studies commemorative brasses in the United Kingdom and abroad made from medieval times to the present day. The Society holds regular meetings where invited speakers talk about various aspects of church brasses. **Fairford History Society and St Mary's Church will be hosting a meeting of the Society in St Mary's on Saturday 30th March 2019 and all FHS members are invited to attend free of charge.**

The meeting programme is as follows:

- 12.00 Optional tours around the Churchyard with Chris Hobson, FHS
- 14.00 Opening remarks by Martin Stuchfield, President of the MBS
- 14.10 Geoff Hawkes - The Church and Windows of St Mary's, Fairford
- 14.35 Chris Hobson - The Tames of Fairford, Cirencester and Rendcomb
- 15.00 Tea
- 15.45 John Lee, University of York - The Brasses in Fairford Church
- 16.05 Nicola Coldstream, British Archaeological Association - Late medieval merchants as patrons of architecture.
- 16.30 Martin Stuchfield, closing remarks

Refreshments will be provided by FHS in the Community Centre.
Volunteers needed

FHS News

It is with great regret that the Committee learned that our Chairman, Geoff Hawkes wishes to resign his post. He has been Chairman since 2009 and was treasurer since the Society started in 2004. He would like to spend more time with his family. For the time being Ian Westlake will, if available, lead the monthly meetings and hopefully we shall elect a new Chairman at the 2019 AGM. The Committee would like to thank Geoff for his sterling leadership throughout the past 10 years.

Website: a revamped website will be coming on line during January. It will include a lot more information and will be much more easily updateable. www.fairfordhistory.org.uk

FAIRFORD'S LOCAL HEROES. Price £8

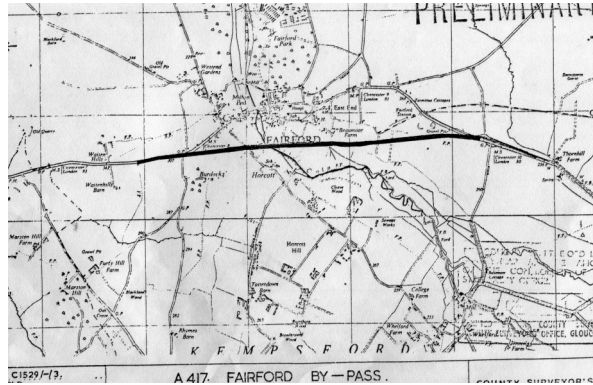
This book was published in September and has sold relatively well. Have you got your copy yet.? Available from FHS, St Mary.s Church or Coln Gallery. At the time of compiling, the cost of including those men who were lost in 1944 while flying from RAF Fairford could not be included but we have now produced a supplement which is available price just £1.

FAIRFORD'S EARLIER LOCAL HEROES

Having commemorated the Fairford men who served and died in the two World Wars in our publication mentioned above, it should be remembered that there were earlier conflicts in which men from Fairford served abroad. At least 14 men are known to have served in the Second Boer War in South Africa between 1899 and 1902 and two of them died during the conflict. Several of these men served in the war in either the Gloucestershire Regiment or the Royal Gloucestershire Hussars both of which won battle honours in South Africa. Earlier still was the Crimean War of the 1850s and at least one Fairford man, Mr. John Pillinger who lost his left leg at Sevastapol, is known to have been a veteran of that particular conflict. Even earlier, one Fairford man, Mr. Thomas West, served in Africa until 1826 when he was admitted to Chelsea Hospital suffering dysentery which he had contracted in Sierra Leone. Some Fairford men may have served in other 19th Century Colonial conflicts such as those in India or Afghanistan. Perhaps this topic could well be a suitable subject for another Occasional Paper!

Do you remember the idea of the Fairford Bypass?

In 1987 a plan for a Fairford Bypass was included in the Gloucestershire Structure Plan. The idea had been around for some years and Gloucestershire County Council had drawn up plans.



The aim was to get rid of lorry traffic, much as it is now 30 years later. However, it divided the town between those against, because of environmental issues and loss of business for shop owners etc., and those for the project who lived on London Street and Milton Street and were affected by noise and vibration from lorries.

A meeting was held in Palmer Hall to discuss the matter at which over 250 people attended. From the meeting's minutes it appeared that there was heated discussion and several shouted comments from the rear of the Hall which paused the meeting.

In the end it was decided that FTC should approve the idea of a bypass with reservations about the route. This was really because the Council was also divided and did not want to close the door on the project.

However in the next revision of the Structure Plan some years later the idea of the Bypass had disappeared; Lechlade didn't get their bypass either.

One wonders what the town would have been like had it happened, Would Horcott have become cut off from Fairford? Would there have been infilling of housing? And would we have lost our lovely river walks and water meadows? Would we have had fewer lorries through the town? Perhaps the Horcott-Milton Street crossroad would have been less difficult?

Fairford's Roadside Allotments

By Eric Jones

The large-scale 1849 map of Fairford in the Community Centre shows unconventional markings along the road for hundreds of yards up Waiten Hill on the west, besides towards Lechlade on the east and along the Southrop road. Syd Flatman asked what they signified. They look like lay-bys, though surely too many for the mid-nineteenth century.

The Open Spaces Society Information Sheet No. C10, 'Highway Verges', offers an explanation. It states that strips of land open to the public run along many highways between the metalled road and the fences of the adjoining fields. Such strips are often irregular and sometimes very wide. According to a legal judgement of 1819, people might pass along them when the roadway itself was out of repair. If a landowner excluded the public by fencing right to the road he became responsible for repairing it. As a result fences were set back and space left for people to pass. This fits with the road up Waiten Hill, for who would willingly incur the cost of repairing the highway from Cirencester through Fairford towards London? It was used hard by waggons carrying cloth from the Stroud valley, besides plenty of other traffic.

The Insatiably Curious Mr Flatman should have been satisfied but unfortunately the explanation implies a continuous strip of public land: as he points out, the Fairford 'lay-bys' break into strange shapes and awkward lengths. And why were verges elsewhere around the town not marked the same way? At this point Alison Hobson set the cat among the pigeons by observing that on some Fairford maps, notably the tithe map, short sections of the verges are numbered. She produced a copy of a terrier listing Fairford property in 1834, the original of which is in the Gloucester Record Office. It supplies owners and occupiers for the sections, which are described as gardens. The numbers run into hundreds.

We have to assume that the roadsides had fallen into private hands – most conspicuously those of John Raymond Barker – and were being let as allotment gardens. Did the practice continue uninterrupted through time? The verges were certainly in use in the 1950s but perhaps they had been reoccupied when food was scarce during the First and Second World Wars. Syd Flatman remembers seeing allotments both sides of the A417 from the Cinder Path to the station cottages, as well as going with a friend to collect eggs from a chicken run by the Waiten Hill stretch of the road. That was about 1960. Thereafter we may imagine that the use of the plots,

which after all were located inconveniently, dwindled away in more prosperous recent periods, like many of Fairford's little shops.

Nationally, the Allotment Movement started about 1780 as a response to the growing population and poverty of the time. Gloucestershire was a bad county for that. The misery can be seen in a Kempford Vestry Book of the late 18th century, where one heart-rending example was of a girl who was to be sent round the farmers, one month apiece, if no-one would volunteer to take her in. Allotments appeared before 1813 in Kempford, while the Overseers of the Poor provided fourteen acres at Whelford in 1800.

If labourers dug allotments to help feed their families, the poor rates could be kept down. This appealed to landowners, who were monopolising the land so that by the 1870s England had less equal ownership than anywhere in Europe except *possibly* Austria-Hungary and Romania. Farmers, who were mostly tenants, tended to resist the Allotment Movement despite benefiting from cheaper labour - until their minds were concentrated by the 'Swing' Riots of 1830, a sign of desperation among workers in which Fairford figured large.

Fairford's landownership was highly unequal. In 1777 Fairford Park had been extended over agricultural strips and it was enlarged in the 1780s as a pleasure ground which the Raymond Barkers were not about to share. The poor were driven to the margin and obliged to take allotments strung along road edges. Jeremy Burchardt, the leading allotment historian, tells us this was distinctly unusual, as was their private ownership. Finding out precisely when Fairford's roadside allotments were established is the next task.



NEW ROAD NAMES IN FAIRFORD

North of Cirencester Road: Stoneleigh and Fairford Gate (developer's names)

Pips Field Way: Pips Field was a plot of land owned by Mrs Simpson (a former Fairford newsagent). It had formerly been owned by the Townsends. She wanted the land to become affordable housing for the people of Fairford. Her heirs sold the land for development. It is not known why it was called Pip's Field.

Sarah Thomas Walk: Sarah Thomas lived at the old Milton House (since demolished) which was near the entrance to Fayre Court, and was very involved with the Milton Street and Maisey Hampton chapels. Her Victorian diaries were discovered by June Lewis who transformed them into a book, a play performed in the Milton Street chapel and a radio play. From these diaries a great deal has been learned about life and the people of Fairford in the 1860s.

Buckler Close: Katharine Tame (widow of Sir Edmund Tame, who was the grandson of John Tame) married Walter Buckler and in 1547 the Crown granted them Fairford manor in fee as part of an exchange of land.

Busby Close: Hugh Busby came with his family to the Bull Hotel in the late 19th century and was landlord there until he died in 1927. One of his sons, also called Hugh, ran Busby's Garage that was on Cirencester Road by the Town Bridge.

Jacob's Piece and Near Short Piece: On the 1834 Terrier Map three lots of land north of the Cirencester Road are Far Short Piece, Middle Short Piece, and Near Short Piece; these were owned by Jacob Betterton, hence Near Short Piece and Jacob's Piece

Lambe Close: Esther Barker was the younger daughter of Samuel Barker and inherited the manor of Fairford Park in 1727. She married James Lambe and died childless in 1769 leaving the estate to her husband's nephew John Raymond on the condition that he took the name Barker.

Milking Path Way: On the 1754 Enclosure map for Fairford clearly marked is a path called 'the Milking Path' running from Milton End, now Coronation Street, eastwards to Cow Common and the Common Lane.

Paton Close: Dorothy Paton was a Fairford Parish and Town Councillor and mayor from 1985-1987. She died in 2012.

Ritter Close: Ruth Ritter was a Fairford Parish and Town Councillor from 1983 and mayor from 1989-1991. She died in 1997.

Tomlinson Close: Tomlinson Close is a misspelling of the name Thomlinson by Cotswold District Council which they subsequently rectified with **Scott Thomlinson Road** to the south of Cirencester Road. (see below)

Tame Way: "Fairford never flourished afore the cumming of the Tames into it" (Leland, died 1552). John Tame was one of the last great Cotswold wool merchants. John and his son Edmond were responsible for the rebuilding of St Mary's Church and the installation of the renowned set of windows.

South of Cirencester Road

Concorde Crescent: The Concorde supersonic airliner made its first flight from Filton to RAF Fairford in 1969 and the airfield was the BAC Concorde Test Centre until 1977.

Honeybone Close: For over 100 years four generations of the Honeybone family carried on a watch and clock making business in Fairford. Honeybone clocks are now much sought after today, particularly in the Cotswolds as they represent fine examples of local craftsmanship and a link to Fairford's past. Members of the Honeybone family are still remembered as living in the town.

Scott Thomlinson Road: Scott Thomlinson (1923-2013) was a Cotswold District Councillor and Fairford Parish and Town Councillor from the 1970s; he was mayor from 1987 to 1989.

Yells Way: the Yells family of builders has been in Fairford since the 19th century. Peter Yells (1930-2009) was St Mary's churchwarden for 39 years; he and his wife, Rosemary (1933-2008) were very involved with the Fairford Steam Rally and many other organisations in Fairford.

Radways Close: Radways was the bakers at the top of the High Street next to the former chemist and charity shop, now Lynwoods. It closed in the 1990s and was very famous for its lardy cakes.

Carter's Ground: There were two Carter's Ground, one was to the east of Hatherop Road opposite Aldsworth Close on the 1841 Tithe map; it was owned by John Raymond Barker. The other Carter's Ground between Horcott Road and Rhymes Lane was owned by Mary Carter. In 1841 she lived in what is now Fairford House. The 'Carter' surname was common in Fairford and we have records of them from the 18th century. Dr John Carter was one of Fairford's first doctors and many of the 'Carters' are recorded as land owners.

Keble Fields (developer's name, east of Fairford)

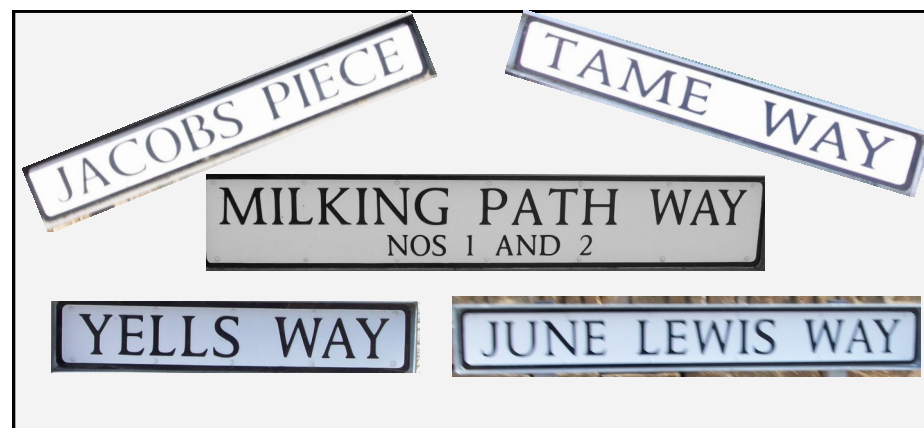
Austin Abbey Way: Edwin Austin Abbey was an American artist who lived at Morgan Hall from the 1890s to 1911. His most famous set of murals, 'The Quest and Achievement of the Holy Grail', adorns the Boston Public Library. He was also commissioned to paint the Coronation of Edward VII in 1901. He had a large artist's studio at Morgan Hall and entertained many of the famous artists of the day. He was a keen cricketer and became well known for his 'Cricket week'. He was captain of the Artist's XI.

Daphne Jones Close: She was the sister of Ruth Ritter and daughter of the Jones family of Morgan Hall. She came back to Fairford to live after being a nursing nun in the East End of London. One of the stories in 'Call the Midwife' TV series is based on her story.

June Lewis Way: June Lewis (1935-2015) June Lewis moved to Fairford from Lechlade at an early age. She went to Farmor's School and became the first head girl. She returned to Farmor's as headmaster's secretary in 1958 and remained working there as secretary, teacher and bursar until she retired in 1995. She wrote 28 books and was a writer for Cotswold Life magazine since the 1960s. She was a Cotswold Way Warden and had many interests including sheep and crafts related to wool. She became Fairford's historian in the 1980s.

Morecombe Way: (1933-2014) Lionel Morecombe formerly of the RAF was a former clerk to Fairford Town Council, he became a Town Councillor and was mayor in 1999.

Trubshaw Way: Brian Trubshaw (1924 – 2001) was the test pilot for the British Aerospace Concorde based at Fairford from 1965 to 1980.



From the FHS and Newspaper Archives

Newspaper reports about Horcott

Wilts and Glos Standard 21 September 1847

HORCOTT LOWER FARM

Near Fairford, Gloucestershire. 300 Superior Long Woolled Sheep, eight useful cart horses, 16 store pigs, 15 Ricks of well-harvested corn, in Wheat, Barley, Oats and Rye Grass; Good Agricultural Implements, and Effects.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION

BY C F Moore. Upon the Premises, on Thursday, the 7th day of October, 1847, the Property of Mr R T Rose, who has given up the Farm. Full Particulars in future advertisements

Wilts and Glos Standard 18 August 1877

The Thunderstorms: On Tuesday and Wednesday last this neighbourhood was visited by storms of unusual severity. On Tuesday the storm came on about 8.30pm and continued till past ten, the rain pouring in torrents accompanied by several vivid flashes of lightning and some heavy thunder. But this was totally eclipsed by the storm on Wednesday, which came on soon after midday and continued till past two. During this time the lightning was intensely vivid and evidently from its proximity we had full force of the storm. The thunder also was very heavy, and the way it rained will not soon be forgotten. The drains in the streets proved inadequate to carry away the unusual body of water which poured into them, and consequently the streets and many of the houses were flooded. Indeed had the rain continued much longer very few houses in London Street and Milton Street would have escaped. But as this juncture most fortunately the rain abated and no considerable damage was done. The Catholic Chapel Schoolhouse at Horcott; the occupation of Mr Drake, was struck by lightning and the tiling on the roof damaged. The lightning passed down the staircase. No one was injured.

Wilts and Glos Standard 1 November 1884

Notice is hereby given, that a separate Building named Horcott Chapel, situate at Horcott, in the Parish of Kempsford in the County of Gloucester, in the District of Cirencester being a Building certified according to Law as a place of Religious Worship, was on the 28th day of October, 1884, duly registered for solemnising Marriages therein, pursuant to the Act of 6th and 7th, Wm 4. C85
W L Cooke, Superintendent Registrar, Cirencester

Gloucestershire Echo 7 May 1937

Presented at Court

Among the ladies presented at their Majesties' Court yesterday was Mrs V M C Napier, MBE, wife of Brigadier General Napier of Horcott House, Fairford. She wore a gown of ice blue cloqué, cut on classical lines, train to match and lined with delphinium-blue crepe romaine. The foot of the train was trimmed with scallops of blue, and the sleeves were carried out in the same style to match the train, feathered fan and jewels to tone. The gown was a creation of Hilda Bell, 7 Montpelier Avenue, Cheltenham.

Gloucestershire Echo Friday 30 May 1947

FIRE DESTROYS STRAW RICK

Fairford NFS worked for seven hours this morning on a 14-ton blazing straw rick on Horcott Farm owned by Mr C W Norman. The rick which was standing by itself, was completely destroyed. The alarm was given at 1.50am. One appliance from Fairford attended under Section Leader F J Hope, but an appliance from Cirencester was not required.

Birmingham Daily Post 29 January 1957

HOUSES AT AIRFIELD FOR U.S.MEN OPPOSED

Cirencester Rural district Council is to make a "strong protest" against a joint Ministry and USAF proposal to build 100 houses for American forces at Fairford Airfield.

The USAF wants to build the houses next to the airfield and near shopping and educational facilities: it is "not prepared" to build them further away at the neighbouring hamlet of Horcott. "If ever the airfield was abandoned, the houses would be right out in the blue", Sir David Gamble, vice chairman said at the council meeting

Cheltenham Chronicle 1 April 1950

Cirencester RDC are up in arms at the proposed extension of the runways of Fairford airfield and intended to oppose the measures most strenuously.

It was pointed out at this week's meeting that a portion of the road from the Three Magpies Inn, on the Cirencester Road leading to Kempsford and portions of the Marston Maisey-Fairford will be closed.

Further that proposed new road will run East to West terminating near South Leaze Farm on the Marston Maisey-Maisey Hampton Road road, so that it will be of no benefit to either Kempsford or Dunfield.

The only access to Kempsford from the Cirencester Road-Fairford Road will be via Horcott Lane and Whelford while a journey to Fairford from Dunfield will entail passing through Kempsford and Whelford.

In the words of Mr Scruton, the people of Kempsford and Dunfield will have to go "literally miles round" to get to Fairford and Cirencester if the RDC's opposition to the scheme is not successful.

Gloucestershire Echo 3 October 1950 £2000 FARM BARN BLAZE AT FAIRFORD G.I'S Gave Alarm

American troops on guard duty raised the alarm when a fire broke out at a farm adjoining Fairford aerodrome in the early hours of this morning.

The fire was at Horcott Farm, the home of Mr C W Norman, where a Durch barn containing between 50 and 60 tons of unthreshed rye was involved.

Damage is estimated to amount to about £2,000.

Fire Service units from Fairford, Cirencester and Cricklade attended under the supervision of Div. Officer R J Jennings, of Cheltenham, but were unable to prevent the barn from being burned to the ground.

After four hours of fire fighting the blaze was brought under control, and was then allowed to burn itself out. It was still smouldering this afternoon.

Note: Horcott became part of the parish of Fairford in 1987

11

Meetings 2019

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

February 21 (half term) at 10 am

Fairford Carnival—the final years, 1953-1956 by Edwin Cuss

March 21

Film Night from the FHS Archive

April 18

Church Monuments of Gloucestershire by Chris Hobson

May 16

More men behind the Medals by Graham Pitchfork

June 21

AGM & Keble House memories by Mervyn Cully

Other dates for your diary

**March 30 2 pm in St Mary's Church
Monumental Brass Society
(see front page)**

Fairford Festival June 7-9 2019: the theme this year 'space' commemorating 50 years since men landed on the moon

2019 also marks the 75th anniversary of RAF Fairford and 50th Anniversary of Concorde at RAF Fairford. Commemorative events are being planned .

Date for your diary: August/September 2020 celebrating the visit of Henry VIII to Fairford—what a pageant opportunity!! Any volunteers?

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Fairford Flyer edited by Alison Hobson. With contributions from Eric Jones, Chris and Alison Hobson and the FHS Archive