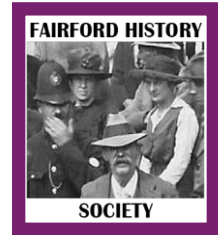


Fairford Flyer

No 72 March 2025



FHS membership runs from September to August and remains at £5. Visitors are always welcome at meetings at £3 each. You can pay your subscription at the meeting or by bank transfer, Lloyds Bank, sort code 30-92-06 A/C Fairford History Society No 02170130). You can also leave the subscription at the Community Centre in the FHS post slot by the FTC office door. Regretfully from 2025 we are no longer able to accept cheques as Lloyd's Bank is now charging 60p per cheque deposited to charity accounts.

FHS Meetings 2025

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 2025)

2025 Programme

20 March Remember! Remember! by John Putley - Gloucestershire has been involved in several plots, rebellions and conspiracies, and this presentation looks at some of them

24 April (4th Thursday) Maps and LiDAR imagery for historic studies in and around the Fairford and Cirencester areas by Peter Vujakovic of *GlosGeog* (Gloucestershire Branch of the Geographical Association)

10 May VE Day celebrations in the Cricket Field organised by the Royal British Legion (FHS display)

15 May Along the River Coln in Fairford - Edwin Cuss (postponed from February)

22 May 2pm Cirencester Civic Society (CCS) is giving FHS a guided walk in Cirencester: if you would like to go on this walk please let us know either by email or at the next meetings. The walk will take 75-90 minutes. It is free (apart from parking) as we are giving the CCS a walk round Fairford in July.

7-8 June Fairford Festival

19 June AGM Show and Tell - members bring their own objects to talk about, the objects do not necessarily having to relate to Fairford.

February meeting - Fairford in World War 2 by Chris Hobson

Chris's overview of Fairford in the war covered how the war affected Fairford and what contribution Fairford made. Advisory leaflets started in July 1939. Blackout started on 1st September 1939 as it was thought Germany would start bombing straight away. In September 1939 there were 1,190 road blackout accidents and in 1940 over 9,000 and Fairford's first fatal casualty was knocked down on the September 2nd 1939. Everyone had to have an Identity Card, and a National Register was taken on Michaelmas Day 1939 (see Newspaper cuttings). Rationing started in 1940, and it was interesting to see that it lasted on some items until 1954, not only food rationing but clothes and fuel, it was the era of 'make do and mend' and there was much advice available on how to do it.

Evacuation for school children started in 1939 but Lady Hirtzel of East End House had carried out an evacuation of a Dr Barnardo's children in 1938 during the Munich crisis. She then wrote a very useful report of the best procedures to be used. She was one of the 'movers and shakers' of Fairford running the WVS and the Settlement, local billeting officer and head of the War Invasion Committee, the HQ of which was at East End House. The impact on the school was immense as the number of children almost doubled and there were complaints about 'more toilets needed'. The schools also had to adjust their holidays so that the older children could help the local farmers.

Fund Raising went on all the time with events in Palmer Hall etc and Fairford raised £269 5s 9d for a Spitfire earning a letter of thanks from Lord Beaverbrook's Ministry.

Fairford had a Home Guard, originally formed from the Town's Thursday Football Club and an Air Training Corps, there are photographs of both.

Chris also covered the operations from RAF Fairford on D-Day and Arnhem. About 253 men were lost from RAF Fairford in these operations. The SAS and the SOE also flew from here to be dropped behind enemy lines.

Fairford Park House and the land to the north became the US 186th Hospital which received casualties from D-Day including Germans. One of the staff of the Hospital, Wally Glavor stole a Union Flag from the High Street during the VE Day celebrations but eventually returned it in 1998. This was one of the items on display from the FHS Archive which also included HMS Pride of Fairford which used to stand on the bar of the George Hotel to raise funds for the war effort, an ARP helmet and some of the numerous advisory leaflets sent out by the Government. One member brought a wartime bicycle lamp and a dried egg packet from the USA.



Memories of evacuees were also on display, those of Ivor Tully, who drew the plan of the Settlement, and was the only evacuee to go to Cirencester Grammar School, William Gardner, Peter Thompson (grandson of Mrs Walter Jones of Morgan Hall), Joyce Ward, Joyce Ross, Doris Halford, and those of Fred Waygood (age 12 in 1940) whose article 'Have you ever milked a cow, Fred?' appeared in the Evacuee Magazine in 2013. Fred is an FHS member who gets the Newsletter each month by post as he lives in Stafford. About 60 members attended this afternoon talk and we can only apologise for the microphone problems.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS

What was happening in Fairford in September 1939.

Gloucestershire Echo 2 September 1939

Trailers for every purpose, smart, well made, over 30 in stock sizes. List on request. Townshend Trailers, telephone Fairford 11

Gloucestershire Echo 6 September 1939

BLACK OUT DEATH WAS ACCIDENTAL - DRIVER CLEARED AT FAIRFORD

A black out fatality, in which a woman was killed, was described at the inquest at Fairford on Tuesday on Mrs Sarah Day, aged 58, of the Three Magpies Inn near Fairford who died from injuries sustained when she collided with a motor car on the Fairford-Cirencester road.

A verdict of accidental death was recorded, the jury exonerating from blame the driver of the motor car.

The accident took place at about 9.50 pm, a short distance from Mrs Day's home. She died from a broken neck....

Mr Walter Day, licensee of the Three magpies Inn, stated that his wife had enjoyed good health until a few years ago when she became subject to occasional epileptic fits. His wife frequently wandered about, and at such time walked on the road in preference to the footpath. Her sight and hearing were good. She was wearing black clothes.

The Coroner, in commenting on the difficulties of driving in a blackout observed that it would not be made easier if people walked in the road, which was contrary to the Highway Code. He expressed his sympathy to Mr Day and Mr Parker (on behalf of the driver) and members of the jury associated themselves with his remarks.

North Wilts Herald 8 September 1939

TOTTERDOWN FARM HORCOTT NEAR FAIRFORD

Sale of 26 HOME-BRED CATTLE, viz 13 dairy cows, 23 stirk and yearling heifers, stock bull.

51 CROSS-BRED SHEEP, viz 21 breeding ewes, 29 lambs, stock ram.

5 horses, sow in farrow, 160 poultry, implements and about 80 lots of furniture for which MOORE, ALLEN & INNOCENT have received instructions from the Trustees of Mr W J Whiteman, deceased to sell by AUCTION ON Thursday 21st September 1939 commencing with the cattle at 12.30 punctually.

North Wilts Herald 8 September 1939

Highworth Football Tournament

On Saturday the British Legion held a six-a-side tournament in the Recreation Ground. Thirteen teams entered, but three did not arrive. The semi-finalists were: Highworth Town v Watchfield and Westrop Rovers v Fairford, and both the Highworth teams were beaten. In the final, Watchfield beat Fairford. Mr F Ramsden presented the challenge trophy and miniature cups to the winning team. The arrangements were made by the committee with Mr J A Haggitt as secretary.

Cambridge Daily News 23 September 1939

IDENTITY CARDS FOR ALL [and the National Register]: - Early next month each one of us will have received an identity card as a symbol of British citizenship with its rights and duties. In most Continental countries every man carries his papers, but British citizens only have passports when they leave the country. Now we are conforming to European practice as we did in the closing years of the last war, because it is recognised as necessary for the proper organising of the great national effort.

The National Register that is to be taken on Michaelmas Day will show the government precisely how the men and women of the nation are employed and whether they could be more usefully engaged in the country's interests. Again, the Register will enable the local food authorities to determine how much food is required in each area and to regulate the rationing that will have to be instituted. The identity card will give a right to a ration card, while it will also impose a duty to serve if and when the holder is needed. To the householder who has been accustomed to filling in complicated pool coupons the task of answering the simple and general questions posed by the Registrar General should prove child's play.

Newcastle Evening Chronicle 27 September 1939

Nurse-Probationer required at a small private mental home. Apply with full particulars to matron The Retreat Fairford, Glos

North Wilts Herald 29 September 1939

Fairford Carnival result

The Carnival Committee announced that as the result of this year's event the sum of £298 2s 10d has been handed over to the Cottage Hospital and the Nursing Association. The committee states that this is considered to be a most satisfactory effort after taking into consideration the extremely dull weather which marred the proceedings. The members of the organising committee wish to tender their sincere thanks to the many helpers.



'Microphone at Large' was a series of outside BBC radio broadcasts made in the late 1930s, one of which was from Fairford. The following is an advert from the Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic, with photos of familiar names and the newly built Palmer Hall.



CHELTEMHAM CHRONICLE AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE GRAPHIC, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1938

" MICROPHONE AT LARGE " BROADCAST TO-NIGHT (SATURDAY) FROM FAIRFORD.

- 1.—The Old Mill, Fairford, with the Church across the meadow in the distance.
- 2.—Mr. Eric Gantlett, of Thornhill, Lechlade, who is talking on the famous carnival and on sheep.
- 3.—Mr. H. F. Baldwin, the builder, who will speak of the big band contest.
- 4.—Mr. S. P. B. Mais, who is conducting the interviews.
- 5.—Dr. C. King Turner, of Fairford, who is also to speak.
- 6.—Mr. Oscar Farmer, Clerk to the Church, whose description of the famous windows is to be broadcast.
- 7.—Mr. N. H. Geach, of Milton End Farm, who is describing the fat stock show.
- 8.—The Palmer Hall, a gift to Fairford by Col. A. J. Palmer, the scene of the broadcast.
- 9.—Miss K. Page, of Fairford, who is describing her work as hairdresser and her efforts for the Girls' Club.