

The Fairford Flyer

Fairford History Society
Newsletter No 4
January 2007

FAIRFORD HISTORY



SOCIETY



Long tradition of singing in Fairford

A new Fairford Choral Society has been set up in recent months; however, there has been a long tradition of choral singing. This is an extract, possibly from the Wilts & Glos Standard in 1880, written by 'Pioneer' regarding the 2nd Diocesan Choral Union held in the town.

"The weather was propitious. Early in the afternoon the musical bells of the church announced the arrival of his lordship (the Bishop of Ely, once Vicar of Kempford), and carriages of every kind, from the elegantly equipped barouche to the useful village cart were seen entering into the quiet unobtrusive town, while groups of pedestrians of both sexes were also cheerfully wending their way to the sacred edifice. The vicar (Rev A S Loxley) and his zealous and able curate were indefatigable in providing seats, and ministering to the comfort of visitors... Never, perhaps was the minster church, ...so crowded, except on that memorable day in 1520, when King Henry VIII, and his court inspected its peerless windows, and recognised the loyalty and love of his liege subject Edmund Tame... How beautiful, how glorious were the windows then - before storm and tempest, and time and the still more ruthless hand of man, had impaired a pane." It is to be hoped that 'Pioneer' would have been pleased with the restoration of the windows.



The lady in the photograph is thought to be Mrs Farmer and the vicar in 1910 was the Reverend F R Carbonell. Does anybody recognise anyone else?

Meeting dates 2006/7

7.45 pm at the Community Centre

15th February - Edwin Cuss. Along the River Coln - a visual journey

17th May - AGM & Fairford Railway

Membership Sept 06-Aug 2007

Members can join or renew at any meeting or by contacting Ian Westlake (712329) or by downloading a form from the FHS website and giving it to any committee member or handing it in at the FTC Office, 3 London Street .

www.fairfordhistory.org.uk

To the Editor, Wilts & Glos Standard Jan 10th 1872

Sir:- Some time back, at a meeting held at Cirencester, one of the gentlemen who acts in Petty Sessions for the Cirencester Division as a Magistrate, I believe it was at a Highway Board Meeting, remarked upon the excellent state of repair of the *roads* in the neighbourhood of Fairford. So far so good; it is however to the footpaths in Fairford and neighbourhood I now wish to draw attention, and when I say that owing to their being so much worn they are dangerous to walk upon, I say the simple truth. Will the Highway Surveyor take this hint? The dirt scraped off and a slight layer of gravel put on the top would remedy the evil complained of; as it is a foot passenger runs the risk of falling down from their being allowed to remain in such a wet and sloppy state.

Yours truly

(signed)

ONE WHO GOES TO THE POST OFFICE SOMETIMES AFTER DARK, AND HAS HAD ONE OR TWO NARROW ESCAPES FROM FALLING

Chairman's report. The year ahead seems set to be FHS' busiest yet! Our major project will come to fruition in October with the production of the play. Earlier in the year, in late Spring we intend to publish a new book entitled '*Fairford Now and Then*' with over 50 photographs, to remind us of the changing town in which successive generations of pupils grew up and went to school. All this comes on top of our usual programme of talks, our work in recording oral memories of Fairfordians, publishing occasional papers, servicing our outstanding website and generally building up our archive. We are still looking for help from video camera enthusiasts to set up a small team to record events in the town so that future Fairford will have its own visual archive stretching over the years. Can you help? You do not need to be a history buff – just proficient with video camera. We have all the equipment – please help us use it. **KC**

Fairford Community Play – Report

The Fairford Community Play is progressing well. Steven Deproost, our author has now delivered the first draft of the play and it promises to be very entertaining, funny and informative. Without revealing too much we can tell you that it will be called '*Lizzie Farmor's Edifying Circus*'. We are very grateful to Hugh Dudley, Nicky Clare, June Lewis and Colin Watkins for providing the research material for the project. Farmor's School are very actively involved in the play: Barry Kilgariff will direct it, Tony Frewer will be the musical director and Steve Martin will be contributing a section which will be written and performed by his GCSE pupils. Chris Roberts will handle publicity and Ivor Price will be in charge of Health and Safety – an important function in a play with such a large cast. Soon, Barry will start the process of casting, so budding Thespians should keep an eye and ear out if they want to take part. At the same time we will be approaching people to help with all the vital behind the scenes activities such as scenery, stage management and so on. We are very grateful for the assistance of FADS in the planning of the production and we look forward to their members helping us in both acting and behind the scene roles.

Don and Barbara Cobbett will be producing the souvenir programme which will have lots of information about the original Farmor's School. We also plan to have a DVD of the production made which will be available in October.

As you can see our aim is to involve as many people in Fairford as possible. So, if you feel unable to help with the actual production don't forget to come and see the play which will be staged in St Mary's church from 17th-20th October 2007. **JR**

The Archive

Thanks to everyone who keeps giving or loaning items to record for the archive. With the start of building at the Community Centre the promise of our own space to store the Archive is getting closer. The Heritage Room downstairs will also provide us with a small space to display items, so roll on 2008. So please don't throw those unwanted invoices, programmes, photos away, if they are from Fairford we want to see them. **AH**

Publications

A third **Occasional Papers** has now been published. **Occasional Paper No 3** is about **Valentine Strong** a well-known stonemason who designed and built Fairford Park for Andrew Barker in 1661. Valentine died before the building project was completed and he is buried under a magnificent bale tomb in Fairford churchyard. This publication is priced 75p. This, along with the two earlier **Occasional Papers** (on Commander Charles Haultain, RN and the Honeybone family of clockmakers), as well as **Fairford's War Memorial and Roll of Honour** by Chris Hobson price £5.00 are available from the Secretary or e-mail fhs@cotswoldwireless.co.uk

Rough Justice?

On Christmas Day 1839 Henry Gardner, a 19-year old labourer from Fairford was committed to Gloucester Gaol for an offence he perpetrated four days earlier. He was charged with "... burglariously breaking open the dwelling house of Henry Tovey of Fairford and stealing two sides of bacon and other articles." Henry Tovey, along with his brother Robert, was the owner of Fairford Mill. The case was heard at the Gloucester Lent Assizes on 31 March 1840 before John Raymond-Barker, magistrate, and Henry pleaded guilty to the charge. For this crime of burglary and theft Henry Gardner was sentenced to no less than 15 years' transportation to Australia. He was despatched to Sheerness where he boarded a ship called Eden which set sail for Sydney, New South Wales on 10 July 1840, arriving in Australia four months later. While this may seem to us today to have been an extremely harsh sentence, it was by no means out of the ordinary for a crime of this nature during the early Victorian era.

References: Gloucester Lent Assizes book in Gloucestershire Record Office (PFC 141 IN 1/16) and Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Standard 11 April 1840.

FHS Committee

Keith Cottam (Chair) 711054, Brian Routledge (Vice Chair), Alison Hobson (Secretary) 711768
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