

May 1891 - *Morbus Sabbaticus*

Morbus Sabbaticus, or Sunday Sickness, is a disease peculiar in its nature. The attack comes on every Sunday; no symptoms are felt on Saturday night; the patient sleeps well and awakes feeling well; eats a hearty breakfast: but about Church time the attack comes on, and continues until services are over for the morning. Then the patient feels easier and eats a good dinner.

In the afternoon he is much better, and is able to take a walk, talk politics, and read the Sunday papers; he manages to eat a substantial tea, but about Church time another attack comes on unexpectedly, and he stays at home. He retires early, sleeps well, and wakes up on Monday morning refreshed and able to go to work, and does not have any symptoms of the disease until the following Sunday.

I would like to report that this lovely piece of irony came from the pen of the Reverend Carbonell but in fact it was reprinted from the Dursley Parish Magazine, presumably from a parish which also suffered from this highly selective 'disease'!

2010 Programme

February 18

Ashmolean Museum – a transformation

In November 2009 the Ashmolean's £61 million redevelopment opened to the public, supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. A new building was created that has doubled the Ashmolean's gallery space, incorporating full environmental control, a new Education centre, and state-of-the-art conservation facilities.

June 17

AGM and Doug Newton on Concorde

September 16

Swing Riots in Fairford by Jill Chambers, author of Gloucestershire

Machine-Breakers

November 18

to be arranged

**All meetings in the Farmor Room,
Fairford Community Centre at 7.30pm**

If enough people are interested follow up visits will be made to Gloucestershire Archaeology in Gloucester and the Ashmolean Museum. Please contact Geoff Hawkes (712053) or Alison (711768) for further details.

www.fairfordhistory.org.uk

FAIRFORD HISTORY



SOCIETY

The Fairford Flyer

Newsletter No 10

January 2010

Memorable winters – from the Archive

1947 - This was a particularly bad winter, all over the country everything ground to a halt. Relief operations became necessary for remote locations. Unfortunately one such operation ended badly. Several Halifax aircraft from RAF Fairford were detailed to drop supplies to the snowbound villages of Staffordshire. The villagers had not had outside supplies for 14 days. On February 13 while attempting to drop supplies to the snowbound village of Butterton, one of the aircraft crashed at Grindon Moor, Staffs. Five crew, two press photographers and an NCO of the Glider Pilot Regiment were all killed. It is thought that the weather deteriorated over the dropping area and the aircraft struck high ground.

This picture we think is of Eugeniusz Ostaszewski from the Polish Hostel skiing in Fairford Park that winter.

Maurice Jones remembers his mother opening their back door at The Virgils to be faced by a wall of snow and having to dig through to the coal house.



1963 - In her diary, Meg Perry, who worked at a stable near Poulton, recorded 51 days without hunting from December 1962 to February 1963. The lowest temperature was 34 degrees of frost - the snow was so deep they were able to walk over the top of the gates and fences:

Thursday January 1

Snow. Frost. East wind drifts. Down Ampney road blocked. Betty's Grave, Ready Token, Sunhill road blocked. Single line traffic to Fairford between Poulton and the Verge [farm].

Sunday January 11

The kitchen windows did not thaw out all day and the steam from the bath froze before it could get out of the bathroom window, this is now the twentieth day since we hunted.

1963 continued

Saturday January 19

Roads blocked again, no buses tonight. Mill Lane blocked, Sunhill-Fairford road blocked and very bad at Marston Hill. I should think that the Down Ampney road is really blocked by now. A snow plough was stuck when P tried to come along it this afternoon. Blizzard tonight and snowing at 5pm and still on at 9.30 pm.

This entry is not about snow but is of interest.

Wednesday January 30

Test match [against Australia] drawn. Common market talks broken right down so we do not go into Europe.

Meg also records that horse racing re-started at Newbury on March 11 and the Cheltenham Festival that year was very wet, *Mill House* won the Gold Cup and *Winning Fair*, the Champion Hurdle.

1982

A blizzard hit the area in January - pictures in the Archive from the Wilts & Gloucestershire Standard showed an abandoned car with snow higher than its roof on the Cirencester - Fairford Road; a bus stop with its sign almost obliterated and a picture of the Market Place with the cars completely snowed in. At Lechlade Garden Centre, a large section of the glass roof collapsed under the weight of the snow.



1963 – the Market Place



A 1982 bus stop

The Fairford Parish Magazine

In 2008 the FHS was given a number of volumes of the Fairford Parish Magazine dating from around the turn of the 19th Century. The parish magazine was started by the Reverend F R Carbonell in January 1889 and sold, at a loss, for one penny for each monthly issue but was made possible by a number of "half-crown subscribers" who subsidized the magazine in the early days. The vicar used the parish magazine to launch his very successful appeal for funds for an extensive programme of renovation for St Mary's including the windows, the roof and the organ. During the first two years it incorporated a national publication titled 'The Banner of Faith' which was published by the Church Extension Association. From 1891 'The Banner of Faith' was replaced by the 'Church Monthly' magazine. These volumes originally belonged to Mr Sidney Jacques who was Fairford's verger for many years. The volumes were donated to Fairford Library which later passed them on to the FHS for safe keeping.

The local sections recorded births, marriages and deaths as well divine services in St Mary's, and they also included items of local or church news or interesting bits of information intended to edify or entertain.

February 1889 - Early closing

A public meeting of the tradesmen and employers of Fairford will shortly be called, to see if any arrangement can be made for closing early on one day of the week. Due notice will be given by bills in the shop windows.

Thursday was chosen to be Fairford's early closing day which was welcomed by the cricket club in the April 1889 issue of the magazine as it allowed them to play matches during the week. The then vicar, Reverend F R Carbonell, would have appreciated this move as he was one of the opening batsmen in Fairford's team, although his run average left much to be desired!

January 1890 – Scrumptious pudding

If you have got a steamer (not a sea-going one) try the following pudding: - Take two eggs and their weight in flour, sugar, and butter. Dissolve one teaspoonful of carbonate of soda in the eggs; then stir in the flour, sugar, and butter. Add two teaspoonfuls of any jam; put it into a pudding basin large enough to hold twice the quantity. Leave half the basin empty to allow room for the pudding to swell. Steam it for two hours. Don't attempt to boil it, or you will have to give it to the cat!

Gone Fishing

The Coln has long had a reputation as a great river for fly fishing and for many years the fishing rights along much of the river has belonged to the proprietors of The Bull Inn. The **Fishing Gazette** frequently carried reports of the state of the Coln and extracts from a letter by a correspondent signing himself ' E M W' published in the edition of 28 May 1898 gives a flavour of the times:

"Dear Mr Marston – I intended long ago to write to you of my experiences at Easter, fishing from Fairford, on the Coln.

The Hotel water (2s 6d per day) comprises about one and a half miles, commencing at the back yard, I may say, of the inn – the Bull. This piece of water is characterised by a Mr Rogers, who was fishing – a very nice man, and evidently an expert – as the very prettiest bit of dry fly water in England. There are certainly a good number of fish in this length, but so shy. I fancy that, from being fished for so much, they have developed eyes in their tails.

While I was there no less than fourteen to sixteen rods worked away on that unfortunate one and a half miles. Then, after an interval of some distance, perhaps a mile, the hotel has the fishing of about 200 yds of meadow below a mill – no mill pool below however.

The hotel, after another interval of a few meadows, has the fishing for two miles down. This piece contains a lot of pike, dace, etc, and also some very fine trout, necessarily big ones.

The hotel is comfortable, but not exactly cheap as to prices. The place is, unfortunately, so easy of access from Oxford, that I should imagine the water gets – or rather the fish get – but little rest.

The scenery is very pretty, and the church has the finest stained glass windows in England – so I am told, at least, and I am quite willing to accept the statement as fact.

PS – I should mention that the river is annually assisted by the introduction of the High Wycombe breed of trout."

This is just one of the numerous reports which highlighted the excellent fishing to be had on the River Coln in the 19th Century.

ARCHIVE ROOM

As said in the last issue the Fairford Archive is growing apace **BUT** if you have any Fairford memorabilia we are very pleased to copy and record items and return them, especially photographs. If you do not want them used in publications you can make this stipulation or if you want to reserve the right to have them returned if the Archive is ever dismantled these provisos are written into the donation form. Sources are always recorded.

In 2009 705 items were catalogued for the archive, most were articles and pictures but also 20 books and a few artefacts. My favourite artefact is a souvenir of Fairford in the shape of a clog – about 12 cm long and dark green. Does anyone remember this and can date it approximately?



Enquiries

In 2009 FHS responded to over 35 family or local history enquiries. The strangest coincidence was when a member of the Cowley family from South Africa made an appointment to consult the Archive one Friday. This was a very pleasant visit and the lady was thrilled and moved to find the headstone of Robert and Mary Cowley in St Mary's Churchyard. On the following Monday another visitor appeared in the Archive Room, a descendant of Isaac Cowley from South Africa. This Isaac Cowley founded a Church in South Africa and conducted the marriage ceremony of the previous visitor's great[?] grandmother, neither visitor knew of each other until their visit to Fairford. Apparently the Cowleys had a farm in South Africa which they called *Fairford*. We are hoping to get pictures of the Church and the family farm later on this year from the latter visitor.

Most enquiries initially come via email through the website and FHS would like to thank Suzanne Jones for continuing to maintain it for us.

The books and other items in the collection may be consulted in the Archive Room which is open on Monday afternoons 2-4pm or at other times by special arrangement (01285 711768).

Fairford Flyer edited by Alison Hobson. From the Archives by Chris Hobson. Thanks to Meg Perry for diary extracts, Alicja Christofides, WGS and June Lewis-Jones for the pictures. Any comments or letters would be appreciated.

NEW FHS PUBLICATIONS

FHS Occasional Paper 5 – A Christmas tragedy. Price £1

On Christmas Eve in 1874 a mother and her two children caught the train from Fairford station for a festive holiday in the West Midlands. Sadly, they never completed their journey. This new occasional paper (printed in A5 format) tells the story of one of the worst accidents in British railway history.

FHS Monograph 5 The Tracys of Toddington and Fairford. Price £3.00

The latest in the monograph series tells the story of the Tracy family which added Fairford manor to their extensive estates at Toddington and Sudely in 1591. The monograph recounts the turbulent history of the Tracys during the Civil War following which they had to sell their rights to Fairford in order to pay the fines imposed by Parliament and retain their Toddington estate.

New CDs

Geoff Bishop is continuing to produce oral history CDs this year. He has been busy interviewing people who suffered from flooding in 2007 and together with pictures taken at the time (especially a collection donated by Graham Young) this will make an important record. Syd Flatman has recorded interesting reminiscences of Fairford in the Fifties.

Please contact Geoff Bishop (713747) if you would like to contribute to the oral history record on any subject at all relating to Fairford.

New Acquisitions

Cotswolds at War by June Lewis-Jones. Revised Edition. June has added a completely new chapter 'Seventy Years on' as well as some new photographs. The new chapter includes information about the Polish Hostel in Fairford of which we learned such a lot last year. June is also publishing a reprint of her cookbook this Spring entitled 'A Calendar of Cotswold Cookery'.

Waiting to be Heard, the Polish Christian experience under Nazi and Stalinist oppression, 1939-45 by Bogusia J Wojciechowska. Bogusia was at the Polish Hostel in Fairford and attended the Polish event in May. She very kindly sent us her book from the USA. Although a daunting title the book contains some very interesting accounts and pictures of the Polish exile experience throughout the world and includes Fairford.

Descendants of Peter Kimber of Down Ampney by Vanessa Dixon. FHS was able to locate the house where Elizabeth Kimber lived in Fairford from our 1841 Tithe Map and the author kindly sent a copy of her family history – an excellent example of genealogical research.

From the Archives

Old local newspapers are a mine of information and **Jackson's Oxford Journal** frequently reported on Fairford news. An intriguing item from the issue dated 20th February 1864 follows:

"Fairford – On Saturday last the inhabitants of this town were subjected to a regular take in: in the course of the day the bellman was sent to announce that precisely at seven o'clock a gentleman would appear in the Market-place and sell 100 gold sovereigns at 5s each, and about that time a conveyance, with two men, drove into the square, and after spinning a very plausible tale for some time till a sufficient number of spectators were assembled, they commenced to sell a lot of rubbish too numerous to particularize, and having duped the people to the tune of about £5, they threw a lot of dolls and other toys about, and while the bystanders were scrambling for them, a signal was given, the light was extinguished, and with a stroke of the whip away went the horse, and they were out of the town in a few minutes."

There must have been a few red faces in Fairford over this scam, including the bellman – I'm sure the current Town Crier wouldn't have been taken in by a con like this this!

20th May 1865

Fairford May Fair

"This fair was held on Monday last, and much satisfaction was expressed at the great improvement which took place in the amount of business done in comparison with that of previous years. It is stated that business to the amount of £3000 was done by two gentlemen alone; this augurs well for the establishment of our new corn and cattle market, which will take place on or before the completion of the East Gloucestershire Railway. It is certain that with the assistance of our friend Mr John Trinder and other spirited dealers and farmers in the neighbourhood, who have already promised their support, our market will be second to none in the county."

The sum of £3,000 in 1865 would be the equivalent to about £130,000 of today's money, a tidy sum for a local market transaction. Unfortunately Fairford had to wait another eight years before the railway line opened and even then it had little impact on the town's market.