

Corsham Spotlight

Newsletter of the Corsham Civic Society

November 2011

Volume 9 Issue 3

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Contributions to Spotlight are welcome.
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www.Corsham-Civic-Society.co.uk

Editorial

Lord Methuen has kindly agreed to be our Patron - see page 2.

After such a popular visit to Hartham Park in July, Allan Bosley has kindly allowed me to reproduce the handout he provided for us. I hope this will be of interest to those who were unable to attend on the day. Allan mentions the house became a focal point for political, social and recreational life in North Wiltshire at the turn of the 20th century. On pages 6 and 7 you will see that I have included a couple of articles which reflect these various aspects.

The article by Anne Lock on page 10 brings to our attention that sites within Corsham and Lacock parishes have been proposed for the land needed by Chippenham to house its strategic employment and residential expansion. A new railway station at Thingley Junction has also been suggested, to the detriment of one at Corsham.

Joan's scones (pronounce scones the right way and it will rhyme!) have proved popular at the garden parties we have held over the years and several requests for the recipe have been received. I have included this on page 10.

The Heritage Open Days (HODs) which the Society organised and which took place in September was a great success. I will include a review of HODs in the February issue of Spotlight as, unfortunately, I do not have sufficient room in this issue to do it justice.

Jane Browning

New members

A warm welcome to the following new members:

Kate Carless
Professor Ron George
Brian Tregunna
Margaret Smith
Joy and Leon Gower
W.G.V. (Bill) Hall

REMINDER

Visit to the Bath Spa Graduate Centre at Corsham Court on 8th December 2011.

Entrance through the main gates to the Court, then turn left in front of the building and head for the clearly marked entrance to the University's part of the building in the west wing. There will be stewards to point you in the right direction.

Members only - free - so please bring your membership cards.

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Lord Methuen**

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Lord Methuen, the Society's first Patron.

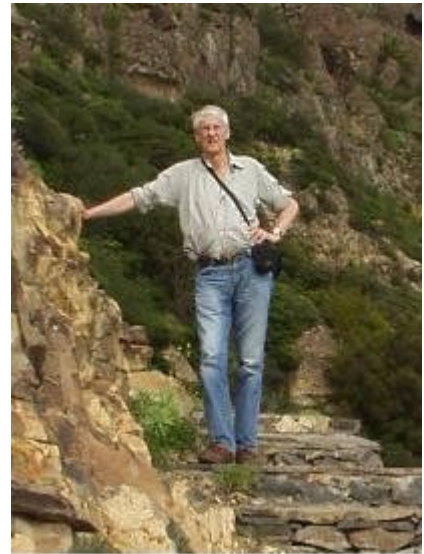
It is with great pleasure that I can announce that Lord Methuen has accepted the honorary office as Patron of our Society. We had the pleasure of hearing Lord Methuen speak to us in April on the work of the House of Lords of which he is an active member. He is one of the ninety elected hereditary peers to serve in the House of Lords.

Robert Alexander Holt Methuen, 7th Baron Methuen, is the third and youngest son of Anthony Methuen, 5th Baron Methuen. Robert succeeded his brother, Anthony John, in 1994, entered the House of Lords in 1995 and has been a member of several Select Committees, including the Science and Technology Committee and the European Union Committee.

Robert, Lord Methuen, was brought up in Corsham. He was educated at Shrewsbury School and Trinity College, Cambridge. During his career he spent time as a Design Engineer at the Westinghouse Brake and Signal Company in Chippenham and as a Systems Engineer with IBM UK and Rolls-Royce plc.

Lord Methuen is hereditary Patron of the Lady Margaret Hungerford Almshouses in Corsham, but he is now in the course of handing this role over to his cousin, James Methuen-Campbell. Lord and Lady Methuen currently live in Ashbourne in Derbyshire.

Michael Rumsey



Scones - by Joan!

Ingredients for 9 to 10 scones:

450g Self Raising Flour
80g Butter or Margarine
3 Level Tablespoons Sugar
Pinch of Baking Powder
¼ Litre/9 Fluid ozs Milk

Rub flour and butter/margarine to a breadcrumb consistency then add the sugar and baking powder. Make a 'well' in the middle and add the milk – mix in with a knife. Form the mixture into a ball with your hands; add a little flour if a bit sticky.

Roll out the mixture on a lightly floured board until approximately ¾ inch thick, and then cut with a 3 inch cutter.

Place on a baking tray and bake at 210° (fan) for 11 minutes.

Joan Maciver

Christmas message from the Chairman

Dear Friends,

Another year has slipped by and, like me, I expect you are wondering where the time has gone. Nevermind, 2012 presents itself in one month's time and with it some very special occasions.

Firstly, we will be celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee over the first weekend in June. This is followed closely by the Olympic Games which are being held in London. This is the third time since 1896 that London has held the games in the modern era. I am too young to remember the 1948 games, but perhaps some of you may have attended some of the events. Thirdly, 2012 sees the 200th anniversary of probably one of Great Britain's greatest writers of fiction, Charles Dickens. He was born on February 7th in 1812, so we can expect a flurry of activities next year. I hope to contribute to this bi-centenary with an article reflecting Dickens' association with Pickwick in our March edition of Spotlight.

May I thank all those people who have contributed in one way or another in making our Society's year yet another successful one, our 48th. As you have already noticed in this edition, we now have a Patron, Lord Methuen, and we also have someone to take the minutes at our Committee Meetings, Pat Mosdall. My grateful thanks to these two people for undertaking these two tasks.

I now take this opportunity of wishing you all the compliments of the season and a very Happy New Year.

Michael Rumsey

Review

Around eighty members and friends joined our guided tour of Hartham House in July, with Allan Bosley giving a very interesting and entertaining history of the House. The handout provided by Allan has been reproduced on Pages 4-6.

The weather stayed fine for the garden party in August. Our President Anne Lock and her family had made a splendid job of making their lawns and gardens very attractive. Thanks go to them, to Margaret Shewring for her cake stall and also to Joan MacIver, who provided delicious scones and jam. It had been agreed earlier that any monies made would be donated to the bid by the Swindon and Wiltshire History Centre for the purchase of the Lacock archives – an article on these archives was included in the March 2011 Spotlight and we will receive an update at our February meeting next year. £181.50 was collected and will be held until called forward by the History Centre.

Pam Slocombe, organiser of the Wiltshire Buildings Record opened the winter programme. The society is based at the Swindon and Wiltshire History Centre at Chippenham, where members of the public can undertake research into local buildings. Of local interest, she mentioned Ridge Farm, Neston, which has bee boles, apertures in the wall used for bee keeping and a stable range which was very large for the seventeenth century. Numbers 3,4 and 5 Ridge Cottages are unique in that they have religious sayings dating back to the seventeenth century written on the roof rafters.

In October Dorian Gerhold gave a absorbing talk on West Country carriers and stage coaches before and after turnpiking. As early as the seventeenth century there was a reliable (even in snow) public road service operating to timetables to and from London. There were no non-London services until the eighteenth century. Movement in Wiltshire was mainly by wagons rather than pack horses. The first stage coach to Bristol was in 1657, to Marlborough in 1660 and to Salisbury in 1656. The Turnpike Trusts improved the road surfaces which allowed the faster movement of goods and people. In the early 1760s times improved more with the advent of "steel spring" an invention of Richard Treadwell, which allowed a smoother mode of travel. After stagnation between 1790 and 1815 due to the wars with France, the 1820s were the golden age of stagecoach travel. The 1840s saw the advent of the railways.

Jane Browning

A History of Hartham Park House

The Hartham Park that you see today is the result of a unique history.

Lady Anne James

1795 is an important date in the history of Hartham Park and a good starting point for this brief history. Lady Anne James's (née Goddard) family had owned the estate at Hartham for over 400 years. She decided on the death of her husband, the Chairman of the East India Company Commodore William James, to move from their London home at Eltham. She commissioned the renowned architect James Wyatt to remove the farm house on the Estate and redevelop the property.

The result, completed in 1795, is at the heart of the present building, although now largely obscured or altered as a result of later developments. Lady James died before she could occupy the building and the property was subsequently leased. Sir Alexander Malet, who later went on to become Governor of Bombay, was born at Hartham Park in 1800.



Hartham Park—from John Britton's *Beauties of Wiltshire*

Two houses, two histories

Some time before 1816 the house was purchased from the Estate by Michael Joy. He was an exile from North America in the aftermath of the War of Independence due to his sympathies for the British Government. His son, Henry Hall Joy, brings us to an interesting confluence of Hartham Park, Hartham House, an adjacent property no longer in existence and a leading literary figure of the period.



Hartham House. 1768

Hartham House had been owned by the Duckett family for a comparable period to that of the Goddards and Hartham Park. The Ducketts, like the Goddards, were a notable North Wiltshire family but they too had relinquished their ownership of the property and during the first decade of the 19th Century the property was owned by Sir Benjamin Hobhouse.

Sir Benjamin's son, John Cam Hobhouse and Henry Hall Joy were close friends who took the Grand Tour together when they visited Venice in 1815. There are diary records of repeated visits and meetings with Lord Byron there. John Cam Hobhouse went on to become the executor of Lord Byron's estate, as well as a vocal politician, ultimately ennobled as Lord Broughton of Gifford.

Early 19th Century

In the 1830s Henry Hall Joy became the owner of Hartham House as well as Hartham Park in a land swap arrangement and he chose to knock down Hartham House.

Today there is very little indication that Hartham House ever existed, although The Garth, in the present Hartham Park courtyard, was the Farm House associated with the property and is the oldest building on the

site. There is also a remaining ice house (subsequently turned into an air raid shelter during the Second World War) and the cast iron gates that mark the entrance to Hartham Park are crested by the Duckett coat of arms. During the 1850's Hartham Park was bought from the Methuens, to whom it had been sold, by Thomas Henry Allen Poynder and passed by inheritance to his son, William Henry Poynder.

Sir John Poynder Dickson Poynder

On the death of WH Poynder the estate passed to a nephew, John Dickson Poynder. In 1884 he succeeded his uncle, Sir Alexander Collingwood Thomas Dickson, as sixth baronet and on inheriting his maternal uncle's property he assumed by royal licence the additional surname of Poynder in 1888.

It was during the period of ownership by Sir John Poynder Dickson Poynder that the house became a focal point for political, social and recreational life in North Wiltshire.

Sir John became MP for Chippenham in 1892 and a Member of London County Council from 1898 to 1904. He also served in the Second Boer War as aide-de-campe to Field Marshall Lord Methuen, Commander in Chief, winning a DSO in 1900.

There are records of Winston Churchill having stayed at Hartham Park over the Christmas of 1896, during the summer of 1897 and again in 1899, and subsequent correspondence between the two men continued for much of their lives.



Sir John had Hartham Park significantly remodelled during his ownership, and the house hosted a great many gatherings, including visits by the Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, the third son of Queen Victoria who was attracted by both the shooting and the golf locally.

The grounds were landscaped by Harold Peto and a superb Dutch water gardens built (now, sadly, largely overbuilt as a result of 1960s development.)

Sir John and Lady Dickson Poynder. Circa 1906

Stické Tennis at Hartham Park

In 1904, the Stické Tennis Court was added in the grounds to the north west of the house. Stické Tennis began at about the same time as Lawn Tennis, the artillery building a closed court at the gunnery range at Shoeburyness, Essex in 1877. Subsequently courts were erected throughout the Empire, and thereafter as its popularity spread, in country house estates.

The First World War, however, changed the world order and following 1918 there was neither the enthusiasm nor the youth of the country to sustain the game.



The Stické Tennis Court.

Today there are only three courts playable throughout the World. The one here at Hartham Park, where there is an enthusiastic and active stické tennis club, at Knightshayes in Devon and a further court that is presently used for badminton in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh within the grounds of the then Viceroy of India's summer palace.

Sir John Dickson Poynder was appointed Governor of New Zealand in 1910 and raised to the peerage as Lord Islington. After two years he returned to become first Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies and then Under Secretary of State for India.

The Second World War to the present day

Following his death in 1936 the Hartham Park estate was purchased by the Nicholson family of Gin fame, who resided here during the Second World War. The upper floors of the house, previously the servants quarters, became the billet for 100 WAAF personnel, A watch for 10 Group, RAF Fighter Command, during the Battle of Britain and for the remainder of the War. 10 Group Headquarters was at Rudloe Manor a mile and a half to the West.

From the 1960s onwards Hartham Park has been used for business, briefly becoming the headquarters of the Bath and Portland Stone Company, and since 1997 under the current owner, Jeffrey Thomas, has offered serviced office accommodation to some 40 companies.

In addition the house also now contains one of the best local restaurants in the area, Jack's Restaurant and Bar. Hopefully, this allows the house to be used and enjoyed very much in the spirit of hospitality for which Hartham Park has had a reputation for the past 225 years.

We are always interested in any additional 'local knowledge' about Hartham Park. Many people who still live locally had relatives working at Hatham, or have family stories associated with the the place. If there are other items lurking in people's attics or family photo albums, or recollections stored away in 'the little grey cells' then I would be pleased to hear from them.

Allan Bosley
allanbosley@btinternet.com

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From The Bristol Mercury, Saturday January 9th, 1869

"Corsham

Coursing

On Wednesday last Thomas H.A.Poynder Esq., with his accustomed liberality, gave a day's coursing to his tenants and their friends on his Hartham estate. At eleven o'clock a large party of sportsmen with their dogs assembled at the keeper's, near the Pickwick- lodge farm, where they started, and soon found plenty of sport, having had during the day upwards of thirty runs, and killed eight hares. The day being fine, brought a great number of spectators, concerning whom were many of the gentry of the neighbourhood. At four o'clock the whole company separated, expressing their obligations and gratitude to the author of such a capital day's sport."

PRIMROSE LEAGUE Demonstration at Hartham Park 1896

Picture not available on web version as copyright of Trustees of British Museum

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Primrose League badge from around 1889. It includes the League's motto, the Latin words IMPERIUM ET LIBERTAS ('Empire and Liberty'). There were many designs of badges and they were particularly attractive to women. They were said to have done as much to win recruits as the most ardent of addresses.

On 22 July 1896 a Unionist demonstration was held at Hartham Park to celebrate the return of Sir John Dickson-Poynder from his round-the-world tour. It was the largest gathering of its kind in the area, with reports of up to 10,000 attending. It had taken months of preparation by Primrose League members from Chippenham, Corsham and Calne. The Primrose League, so named after the favourite flower of Benjamin Disraeli, was an organisation for spreading Conservative principles in Great Britain. It was founded in 1883 and active until the mid 1990s. It was finally wound up in December 2004.

The weather was fine. Anticipation of a memorable occasion was high. There was a Punch and Judy exhibition, Corsham band provided the music along with a band from Chippenham, there were swings and roundabouts and Mr. Bird from Corsham provided tea. Races had been organised, including a needle and thread race for young women and one for girls, a half mile flat race and an egg and spoon race. There was to be a bicycle parade, a donkey race and a gymkhana race. An hour, from 6 till 7, had been reserved for Political Addresses when The Right Hon. Graham Murray, Q.C., M.P. (Lord Advocate for Scotland), and Sir John Dickson-Poynder, Bart., M.P. both spoke. There was not a good start. News arrived that in the early afternoon a wheel had come off a conveyance near Biddestone "and precipitated a number of people into the road". The occupants were from Kington St Michael; Miss Evans the school mistress was unharmed, as was Mr. Dyer, but Mr. Davies, well-known and highly respected schoolmaster, sustained fatal head injuries.

However, the jollities continued until the gymkhana race.

Mr. John (Jack) Ogg, of the Station Hotel, Corsham, a most accomplished rider, lost his life. Jack was well known throughout this part of the country as a most accomplished rider. An eye witness recounts how going round the bend of the hill he lost his reins, the horse at once ran out of the course and the umbrella which he was carrying being in front of him he was unaware of the existence of a tree, he banged his head against a branch with such force that he broke his neck. Dr. Wood of Corsham and Dr. Smith-Batten of Calne attended. Jack was taken to the pavilion on a stretcher where he soon passed away. He was surrounded by his friends and a clergyman offered up a fervent prayer. The news was passed to Sir John, who cancelled the firework display.

Jack Ogg had been a member of the Demonstration Committee and it was he who had suggested the gymkhana race be included. He had suggested that each rider have to dismount to drink a bottle of soda, but shortly before the race this aspect was taken out. Jack expressed his regret as he had brought a very quiet horse which would have easily let him mount and dismount.

Jack and his wife Fannie had at least 3 children. Fannie took over the running of the hotel after Jack's death and in the 1901 census is shown as the proprietor of the Railway Station Hotel, with her brother, John Duck, managing the business. Fannie and Jack's parents and two unmarried sisters had moved to Corsham, possibly to help the family.

The account of the Demonstration in the Primrose League Gazette on 1 August 1896 made no mention of the two deaths.

Jane Browning

Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) Hospital at Corsham in World War 1

Following the article in the July 2010 edition of Corsham Spotlight, I have been sent a photograph, shown below, of a group of patients and staff at Corsham Town Hospital circa 1915 by the great grandson of Percy Francis Harwood, arrowed. The photo was taken by Herbert Spackman, the well-known local photographer. As the picture shows, Percy had gun shot wounds to his face and shoulder. It is thought he was in the Middlesex Regiment. at this time. He returned to service in India, then Egypt, until he was demobbed on 27th March 1919.

Percy's great grandson is keen to know more about Percy's time at Corsham Hospital and the other people in the photograph. If anyone has any information, could they please contact me, my details are on the front cover, bottom left.

Jane Browning, Editor.



Percy Francis Harwood at Corsham Town Hospital. Note the different styles of the two Bath chairs. The Daily Needs board to the right of the door is difficult to read, but appears to state "broom head, flowers, matches, outdoor games"

Open Gardens 2012

Your support is needed, please!

Don't forget to let us know if you would like to include your garden in the Open Gardens weekend next year on 23rd and 24th June.

We are hoping for a variety of garden-types, for example; small, well-tended, wild-life, water, dry. Please let any of the Committee know if you are interested in participating.

Tribute to the Life of Dr. William Lewson Burrowes

This was the eulogy spoken by John Bright at the funeral of his very dear friend and neighbour, Dr. William Burrowes.

It was my privilege to have been a friend and neighbour of Bill for over 50 years. Angela and I first met Bill and Nancy when we came to Corsham in 1959. He was then a partner in the group practice in Corsham known to us all as "The Porch". Over those years I grew to know and respect him and have a personal reason to be grateful to him.

Bill was born and brought up in Northern Ireland, trained at Queen's University Belfast and then the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast, where he met his wife. Then followed service in the Royal Air Force principally in the Middle East.

His coming to practise medicine in Corsham was indeed fortuitous and almost a matter of chance. He was a Registrar at the Royal Victoria Hospital and through a family connection was asked to come to Corsham as a locum to enable the senior partner Arthur Wheeler to take a holiday. He stayed for 3 weeks; another 3 weeks, then for several months when he was asked to join the Practice. Fortunately for Corsham he decided that the appeal of being a general practitioner in Wiltshire was greater than that of pursuing a career in hospital. He came here in 1949 and remained for the rest of his life.

He became senior partner in 1970 and retired from The Porch in 1985. But that was not the end of the career in medicine that he so loved as he continued for a number of years as locum in numerous practices in the surrounding area.

His interest in medicine was deep and lasting throughout his time in Corsham. He was involved in many other fields of medicine :- he served as President of the Bath Clinical Society; as the Admiralty Surgeon and Agent at H.M.S. Royal Arthur;; Depot Medical Officer at RNSD Copenacre; Medical Officer to Bath Academy of Art; Clinical Assistant in Medicine and Neurology at the RUH Bath; Deputy Police Surgeon and he served on numerous other medical committees.

But that was not all for he was much involved in matters Corsham; he served as a Governor and Chairman of Governors of the Regis School and the County Primary School.; he was President of the Corsham Gardeners Society; he was President of the Corsham Division of the St John Ambulance Brigade and was honoured to be a Brother of the Order of St. John.; President of the Corsham Branch of the Royal British Legion.; founder Chairman and chairman for 17 years of Corsham Link and subsequently Vice- President.; a Vice- President of Corsham Cricket Club.

He was deeply interested in Music and the Arts, in sport – rugby, cricket, tennis and of course golf. Bill was primarily a man of medicine, who cared deeply for his patients and their welfare be they rich or poor and this showed throughout his life.

He was much loved and respected by his patients as has been shown by the many tributes paid following his death. He was in my view the last of an era. He was a man of quiet integrity. A man of honour. A truly good man, with a lively sense of humour, who will be much missed by us all. A fine tribute was paid to him by Dr Barry Wheeler now in Nova Scotia (the son of Arthur Wheeler), "Bill was probably the best I ever worked with and a great character"

But above all he was a devoted and loving husband, father and grandfather to his family.

I feel fortunate to have been his friend.

Editor's note: The Civic Society were represented at Dr. Burrowes' Memorial Service.



Robert Neale, clothier



In 1774 Robert Neale, clothier and MP, obtained from the College of Arms a confirmation and exemplification of arms to be borne by him, his family and descendants.

The 1774 confirmation states that Robert Neale's ancestors had borne arms "argent, a lion rampant between two dexter hands in chief gules, debruised by a fesse or, charged with two lions rampant supporting a sinister hand of the second". The mantling is "gules and argent". The crest is described as follows: "on a wreath of the colours, an armed arm embowed proper, brandishing a sword argent, pommel and hilt gold." The motto is "loyal au mort". [Source: Fox-Davies, Arthur Charles, *Armorial*

Families: A Directory of Gentlemen of Coat Armour - provided by Ray Neale.]

In plain English, the arms consist of a silver shield (usually represented by the colour white) with a lion standing erect between two right hands in the upper part in red. Across the middle of the shield, there is a broad horizontal band in gold, usually represented by the colours yellow or gold, with two lions standing erect supporting a left hand of the second. The crest consists of a wreath of red and white below an arm bent in a natural way brandishing a silver sword with gold pommel and hilt. The motto is probably Norman or Anglo-Norman and has been translated as "loyal unto death" or "loyal to the dead (one)".

The lion rampant and the colours gules, or and argent originate from the arms borne by the ancient Nigelli and Albini. The origins of the Neale red hand are unclear. However, the red hand has been a traditional symbol of the Irish O'Neill family and of the province of Ulster. The northern O'Neills once ruled as kings of Ulster.

Ian Storey



Neale arms and dates above the rear entrance to the Mansion House. Dates of 1721 and 1897 either side of the coat of arms signify the dates.

Corsham Station Update and Chippenham's Development Proposals



In October at the Wiltshire Transport Alliance meeting in County Hall an agenda item concerned the plans of the LEP – Swindon & Wiltshire Local Economic Partnership. These were explained by Paul Johnson. It became clear he supported the placement of Chippenham's strategic expansion, both employment and residential, at Showell, within the parish boundaries of Lacock and Corsham. In addition he also proposed reopening Thingley Junction for passenger use, plus the "brownfield" land around for employment. He maintained Corsham Station could not be re-opened and believed access to Thingley, with no need to tangle in Chippenham's congestion, would please

Corsham residents. But will the train take them where they wish to go? Not according to the 2001 Census we await those for 2010. Wiltshire Council have yet to produce their final draft Core Strategy for consultation, but earlier this year - during the first period of consultation - Corsham area was to receive no additional large scale development.

Your Committee believe the LEP and "Chippenham Vision" aspiration to be flawed. Certainly a senior Planning Inspector has indicated it is unacceptable for one area to encroach on another (apart from the odd corner). We fear that were Thingley to go ahead, over time more and more development would adhere to it – it is after all an aim of WC to site employment adjacent to homes in the hope that commuting will lessen. Does the Core Strategy propose new settlements in the countryside? We await that final draft with interest.

In the meantime I attended the WoEP's Rail Conference in Bristol, addressed by Network Rail, First Great Western and TravelWatch SW to ascertain key projects. It was good to meet again with officers, councillors and campaigners with whom one had become familiar over the past twenty-five years (and realise that Bath is as supportive of Corsham Station reopening as when our Campaign commenced in 1986).

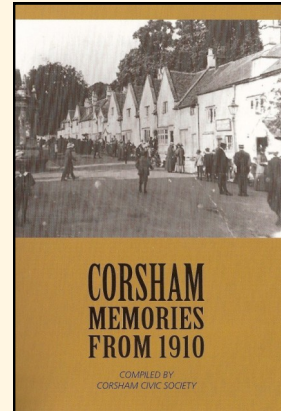
Anne Lock

Want an idea for a Christmas present?

Corsham Memories from 1910 is an ideal present for those interested in Corsham, its history and peoples.

This is a collection of memories of people who were born in Corsham between 1910 and 1950.

On sale at the Corsham Bookshop, Corsham Heritage Centre, and Barnett Brothers newsagents, all on the High Street, priced at £9.99. All proceeds will go to Civic Society funds.



The First St. Bartholomew's Church Magazines 1883

Earlier this year a book was donated to the CADT which was discovered to contain copies of the first ever St. Bart's Church Magazines published in our parish dated 1883. It was introduced by the Rev. George Linton, the cover was printed by Lewin Spackman and the stationer was Mr Francis Baines. It cost 2d per month and sadly only remained in being for one year. The book has since been presented for safe keeping to the new Rector Reverend Andrew Johnson.

This discovery brought forward a story of the Baines family who lived and worked at 36, High Street and their descendants, who still live in the town. The premises at 36, High Street are now occupied by Allen & Harris and were previously known as the Wine Lodge. Francis Baines was born in South Hamlet, Gloucestershire. His father was a chemist and a bookseller. In the 1881 census Francis, aged 23, was following in his father's footsteps and had set up in the High Street as a chemist. In later records he is described as being a chemist, a bookseller, stationer, and seller of wine. It is understood he produced his own photographic postcards of Corsham for sale in the shop.

As the only chemist in Corsham at that time, his advice on ailments was often sought. *(It probably saved many an expensive visit to the local Doctor, before the advent of the National Health Service.)*

His work in and for the town did not stop there. He was a stalwart and very respected member of the local community. As secretary of the Corsham Gas Works and the Water Company he also subscribed to the fund to convert the Market Hall into the Town Hall in 1882. In 1894 he was a founding member of the Corsham Parish Council. Francis and his wife Martha are buried in Corsham churchyard.

Herbert Baines, his son, carried on the retailing tradition with two shops next to each other in Pickwick Road, selling grocery and confectionery. He was also instrumental in starting up the glove factory at the corner of Paul Street. Herbert's sister, Winifred, married Richard Knapp, who farmed at Great Lypiatt Farm, Neston. This brings us to Geoff Knapp, son of Richard, who also farmed at Great Lypiatt, and their work has also done much for the town. Geoff has served the Corsham Civic Society for many years. He is a member of the Corsham Area Development Trust and also works tirelessly for his church.

Just an everyday story of local families who worked for themselves, their families and the local community, and continue to do so.

Pat Whalley

2012 PROGRAMME

Jan 20th	7.00 for 7.30 pm	Annual Dinner at Guyers House
Feb 24th	7.30 pm	“The Lacock Archives” Talk by Stephen Hobbs, Archivist at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre in Chippenham.
Mar 23rd	7.30 pm	“Dated Buildings in the Corsham Area” Talk by Dr. Negley Harte, Chairman of the Corsham History Group, Chairman of the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, and President of the Wiltshire Record Society.
Apr 27th	7.30 pm	“After Eden: the Origin and Evolution of Cultivation and Cultivated Plants” Talk by Peter Thoday, well-known for his television programmes on gardens.
May 11th	7.00 for 7.15 pm	AGM at the Town Hall : with entertainment
June 23-24		Corsham Open Gardens Weekend (Civic Day)
Jul 27th	6.00 pm	Visit to Hilmarton. There is a Poynder family link to both Hartham Park and Hilmarton. Park at the ‘The Duke’ & meet at the Church, tour the village and then enjoy a drink in the local pub.
Sep 28th	6.30 pm	“The acquisition of the Art Collection at Corsham Court” Talk by James Methuen-Campbell who is very knowledgeable about art and music.
Oct 26th	7.30 pm	“Corsham’s Secret Underground” Talk by Alan Macrae, a Wiltshire Councillor, who used to work underground.
Nov 23rd	7.30 pm	“The Great War and Wiltshire Soldiers” Talk by Richard Broadhead who has written several books about the 10,000 Wiltshire men who lost their lives in the first world war. He is also Chairman of the Hilmarton History Society.

All meetings to be held at the Pound Arts Centre, 01249 701628, unless otherwise stated.
Guests are very welcome. Members £2, Non-members £5, includes free tea or coffee or £1 off a glass of wine.

Corsham Civic Society

Corsham Civic Society was founded in 1963 to represent the people of Corsham in all aspects of conservation, preservation and the promotion of this delightful Wiltshire town.

The Society is a registered Charity, a member of ASHTAV (Association of Small Historic Towns & Villages of the UK).

It is our aim to promote high standards of planning and architecture, to create a wider awareness amongst the local population of environmental issues, the geography, history, natural history and architecture of the area, and to secure the preservation, protection and improvement of features of public amenity and/or historical interest, both in Corsham and in the surrounding countryside.

Corsham Civic Society
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