

Ongar Millennium History Society Newsletter

February 2008

Welcome to 2008! OMHS has kicked off in a flurry of activity. The committee is already hard at work planning for the 2009 programme, sales of the DVD are going really well, and the kneelers for St Martin's are nearing completion, thanks to the flying fingers of the sewing groups. We have some exciting events coming up in the next couple of months – a talk on Copped Hall and, of course, the Marion Slade Lecture which is moving to Great Stony this year as our audiences have unfortunately grown too big for the Church Rooms. Amazingly our membership now numbers 85.

Jenny Main, Editor

Forthcoming Events

A Talk on Copped Hall by Trevor Roberts,
Press Officer of the Copped Hall Trust,
following our visit last year + OMHS projects update
at Great Stony
on Thursday 21st February, 7.45 for 8.00 start

The Marion Slade Lecture 2008

"Our Heritage of Trees"
by Jon Stokes,
Director of Rural Programmes for the Tree Council,
at Great Stony
on Friday 28th March, 7.45 for 8.00 start

Cheese and wine

Raffle

Tickets £6.00

John 362461/Barbara 363722

Committee Members

Chairman: Felicitie Barnes
Treasurer: John Winslow
Minute Sec: Elisabeth Barrett

Vice Chair: Jenny Main
Secretary: Barbara MacDonald
Bookings Sec: Wendy Thomas

Bygone Ongar 1940's - 1960's

If there was such a thing as a "DVD Top of the Charts" for Ongar, there would be no contest!

Sales were running very well during November and December (and quite well subsequently) and have now reached around 950 copies. The VHS video version has sold out. Apart from local retail outlets (Senners, Ongar Library, and Hockings) the DVD was distributed for sale to village post offices in High Ongar, Fyfield and Kelvedon Hatch. In addition, orders were received from Epping Bookshop, the Family History Society of Essex, Acorn Films of Chingford and at my front door! A number of our members were also quite active in achieving sales through their own contacts.

Edwyn Gilmour was interviewed on BBC Essex which resulted in several enquiries and subsequent sales by mail order.

Promotional copies were sent to local schools, Ongar Town Council, Eric Pickles M.P., Lord Lieutenant of Essex Lord Petre, BBC Essex, Essex Records Office, and East Anglian Film Archive.

A lot of feedback has been received - all of it congratulatory - and perhaps the following extract from a letter received from Ann Williams (nee Cornell) now living in Bury St. Edmunds sums it up.

"..... I felt I had to write to thank you so much for producing it. I was so thrilled to be taken back to my childhood and especially to have a moving picture of my Dad at the Ongar Show. He was always behind a camera so I have only very few photos of him....."

John Winslow

Not only, but also

While all the focus was on the DVD, there is still a demand for our book, "Aspects of the History of Ongar". We were able to satisfy an order received for our remaining stock, which is now exhausted.

John Winslow

Ongar's Trees

A special exhibition to launch the Ongar Tree Strategy

**Saturday 16th February to Monday 25th February 2008
at Great Stony, Mon-Fri 9-5 + Sat mornings**

A chance to see photographs of the OMHS nominations and other local trees from the EFDC 50 Favourite Trees competition, plus a presentation of Ongar's Landmark Trees. There will also be a chance to win a prize by entering a quiz prepared by Ongar Wildlife Society (OWLS)

Landmark Trees – a guided walk round Ongar Town Centre

On Saturday 19th April 2008 a guided walk is being planned to visit a number of local landmark trees (see "Aspects of the History of Ongar" chapter 31). The walk is scheduled to start about 11am (location to be notified) and will take about 90 minutes. This may be followed (after lunch) by a second event involving discovering and measuring local veteran and ancient trees. Again more details to follow.

These events are being organised by the Ongar Tree Strategy Steering Committee.

Bob Macdonald

OMHS Christmas party

It all seems such a long while ago now, but on Wednesday 5th December, around 50 of our members met at the King's Trust Centre in the High Street for our Christmas get-together.

Being one of the oldest buildings in Ongar, (Oops mind your head) it lends itself to a warm and cosy atmosphere, just perfect for the festive season. It's such a pity that the space is not a tad larger!

There were plenty of nibbles, more wine than we could drink (and drive safely home), a "Where in Ongar" photo quiz, and a raffle to help offset the cost.

Thanks must go to the ladies of the committee who did the shopping and preparing, etc and to everyone who came along, which made for a most enjoyable evening.

John Winslow

Epping Forest District Museum

"The Art of Scouting - 100 years of adventure"

19 January to 4 March 2008

Admission free

Usual museum opening hours

Phone 01992 716882 for details

Hardings Farm, Greensted, in 1938

A school project on Greensted offers a nice snapshot of a farm of the time. The report highlights the value, maybe unrecognised, of such independent and youthful approaches having some original and unusual insights.

The East family owned Hardings Farm. 75 acres of the 118 acres of the farm's land was then grassland with unimproved pasture. It had an abundance of wild flowers. The pasture supported one bull and thirty-nine cattle. Three labourers worked on the farm together with the farmer's son – four workers on just 118 acres! The project details some of the daily routines.

Cowman's Winter Routine

6.30am to 8.30am	Milking
9.00am	Breakfast
	Clean sheds, cart straw
12.30pm to 1.30pm	Dinner
	Cart manure and fodder, and ditching
4.00pm	Milking
5.30pm	Go home

Wage 34/6d a week for 48 hours; Sundays milking with alternate Sundays free.

In summer, hoeing, hay making, and harvesting replaced ditching.

Horseman's Winter Routine

6.00am to 12.00pm	Ploughing, sowing, draining
	Dinner
1.00pm	Tending Horses and Machines
5.00pm	Go home

Wage 40/0d a week for 50 hours; Saturday afternoon and Sunday free.

In summer, mowing, corn cutting, harvesting and stacking.

Anne Brooks

Ed's note: Thanks to Anne for letting us have this information from her talk on Greensted, which members enjoyed last October.

Family History Workshop - Are you interested?

We are hoping to plan a workshop on practical aspects of family history research using computers and the Internet. It will be a one-day course with a tutor, hopefully in Ongar.

There will be a charge for this event, but before we go ahead with the arrangements, we need to know if there is enough interest to make it worthwhile. Please let Jenny know if you would like to take part (- if you contacted me last time, I still have you on my list!)

The Boodle tomb

If you'd looked into St Martin's Churchyard on 27th November you might have seen two ladies closely inspecting the large mantle top chest tomb which is in such a bad state of repair. Felicitie Barnes and Rosemary Tait of the Ongar Millennium History Society were recording the inscriptions on the tomb at the request of the PCC.

Some time ago the Town Council (at our request) surrounded the tomb with warning tape whilst investigations were under way to decide what was the best course of action to make it safe. There are two possibilities – one is to dismantle the tomb and lay the memorial slabs flat in the ground. The other, more expensive, is to dismantle and then rebuild the tomb from the ground up. Archdeacon Peter is very much in favour of the second, provided it can be done without too much cost and Jem Barnecutt has undertaken to write to various grant making bodies to see if any money would be forthcoming from them. The Town Council are prepared to pay some money (as it is their responsibility for making the structure safe) and the PCC might be able to contribute a small amount.

In the meantime, we have been encouraged to record the inscriptions for posterity, and this is what Rosemary and Felicitie found. They recorded only what was visible from ground level (not the top of the tomb therefore) and they used water and a paint brush to remove external grime!

North facing slate panel

In Memory of Mrs SARAH MITFORD, Wife of JOHN MITFORD
Some time of this Parish Esq. She departed this life December 8th 1776
Aged 31 Years.

Also in Memory of Mrs MARY MITFORD Second Wife of JOHN
MITFORD who Departed This life June 4th 1784 27 years.

South facing slate panel

In Memory of MR JOHN BOODLE late of this Town. Surgeon. Eldest
Son of JOHN BOODLE Esq and SARAH his wife Who departed this life
April 16th 1798 Aged 51 Years.

Also of EDWARD BOODLE late of Brook St., Grovenor Sq:- London,
Esq. who died August 3d 1828 In the 75Year of his Age.

West facing slate panel

In Memory of JOHN BOODLE Esq who departed this life 1st March
1791 Aged 77

(The East facing panel is missing)

Top plinth west facing

JOHN BOODLE ELDEST SON OF JOHN BOODLE
DAVIES STREET, DIED *16th March 1895 Aged 88*
(*date is partly undecipherable)

Top plinth east facing

CATHERINE SOPHIA CHURLOW DAUGHTER OF SAMUEL
RAYNES OF BAWTRY YORKSHIRE WIFE OF JOHN BOODLE
DIED 3RD OCTOBER 1876 AGED 39

Top plinth south facing – left side

MARARETTA, DAUGHTER OF JOHN ADOLPHUS YOUNG OF
HAREHATCH, BERKS, AND WIFE OF JOHN BOODLE DIED
*JANUARY 1838
(*date is undecipherable)

Top plinth south facing – right side

FRANCES ANNA DAUGHTER OF JOHN GRIFFITHS OF ARGYLL
STREET AND 2ND WIFE OF JOHN BOODLE DIED 7TH MAY 1874
AGED 70.

For those of you who are interested in such things, and have access to the Internet, putting Boodle Mitford Chipping Ongar into a search engine brings up some interesting results!

The Rev'd Susan Cooper

Ed's note: Thank you for allowing us to reproduce this article which first appeared in the January issue of St Martin's Chipping Ongar with St Peter's Shelley Church magazine.

"Through Changing Scenes" (2 events)

A History of Blackmore in words and music

at the Priory Church of St Laurence, Blackmore
on Sat 23rd February 2008 at 7.30pm

A History of Stondon Massey in words and music

at St Peter and St Paul Church, Stondon Massey
on Sat 19th April 2008 at 7.30pm

Tickets £8, Snrs £7, Students £3
Box office 01277 821180

St Martin's Church Kneelers

At the start of this project, we had no idea as to what we had taken on. At the suggestion of the rector at that time, Barry Pyke, we were invited to make kneelers for the altar rail in St Martin's as the OMHS contribution to the celebration of the 925 years of the church. We could have spent our £500 in many different ways but that was his suggestion.

First of all we had to have a design to work to, and the person to ask was OMHS member Margaret Abbess, who had already contributed to the cultural life in Ongar through her art and needlework. The 925 celebration was in September 2005. Our work started then. Margaret did her research and made designs featuring the history of Ongar.

We measured up, ordered the materials through Gill at the Sewing Box, and on October 28th 2005 we drew the designs onto the canvas. Since then we have been sewing. There have been 3 regular groups of 4, 5 or 6 meeting for 2 hours each week.

The materials have certainly cost us the allocated £500, goodness knows what the labour would have cost. We are now in the process of putting in the final stitches. Ken from Ashley Craft is putting them together for us, and they should be ready in the church, for a blessing on Mothering Sunday.

I would like all of you to join with me in thanking Margaret for the wonderful designs, for her expertise, and most of all for her enthusiasm in getting it right. It has been a learning curve for me and for most of the others (not all), a wonderful way of spending a Monday morning, whatever the weather, and hearing all the latest gossip!

Felicite Barnes

My Family on the Isles of Scilly

Watching "An Island Parish" made me think about my Great Uncle Edwin Fitzwilliam Thompson, born 15 November 1884, who was one of four brothers. Their father died at the age of 34, so the boys were put in an orphanage. At the time they were living in Plaistow. I think at that time Plaistow was in Essex, so that is how my Grandfather came to be in Ongar. Edwin was sent to work on a farm on Island of St Martin's, where his daughter Lillian told me he had to live in the barn with the animals. I found him on the 1901 census, aged 16, on St Martin's. He later moved to St Mary's, married Lillian Jenkins and they had four children Nina Doreen, Lillian Edwina, Florence Ruth and Robert John. He served in the First World War and later had a daffodil farm. He died on the 8 March 1967 at Longstone Terrace, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly and was buried in the churchyard with his wife. I have two photos of him, one in his army uniform and one with King Edward VII laying a foundation stone for a new chapel at Hugh Town.

The Isles of Scilly comprise of some 55 islands and over 90 rocks, lying in the Atlantic Ocean some 28 miles south west from Land End on the Cornish coast. The name Scilly comes from Sully meaning sun island which describes its climate, with an excellent sunshine record. The temperature is remarkably constant through out the year.

Richard Thompson

Dates for your diary

19 Jan to 4 March

The Art of Scouting
Exhibition at EFDC Museum

Sat.16th to Mon 25th Feb
Mon-Fri 9-5+ Sat am

Ongar's Trees – a special exhibition
at Great Stony

Thursday 21st February
7.45 for 8.00

Talk on Copped Hall by Trevor Roberts
at Great Stony

Sat 23rd February
7.30

History of Blackmore in words and pictures
St Laurence's Church, Blackmore

Sunday 2nd March
10.30 (NB provisional date)

Dedication of kneelers at St Martin's
(Mothering Sunday)

Friday 28th March
7.45 for 8.00

2008 Marion Slade Lecture
'Our Heritage of Trees' by Jon Stokes
at Great Stony

Sat 19th April
11am

Landmark trees walk
(More details to follow)

Sat 19th April
7.30

History of Stondon Massey in words
and pictures
St Peter + St Paul Church, Stondon Massey

Contributions for next newsletter please!
The next newsletter will be produced in May 2008, so any
articles to Jenny by 18th April please.
Thank you!