

FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY

"To save Fulbourn's past for the future"

NEWSLETTER NO. 27

Summer 2008

FVHS 9th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY 15TH MAY AT THE FULBOURN CENTRE.

Members are reminded that our Ninth Annual General Meeting will take place on Thursday 15th May, 2008, at the Fulbourn Centre, commencing 7.30 p.m. An Agenda and nomination form for Officers and Committee members is enclosed within this Newsletter. Perhaps you would like to put forward your name, or know some one who would? Please do not hesitate. We are always looking for pro-active members who wish to contribute towards the running of YOUR society.

Following the formal part of the evening, John White has kindly offered to talk about 'Campanology....and the Bells of Fulbourn' - a subject about which he is very familiar!



CAMPANOLOGY...and the Bells of Fulbourn

.....Following the Annual General Meeting.

‘NOT JUST OLD BONES: THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF PAST LIVES’ - A report of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society Conference on March 8th 2008 from Glynis Arber.

A warm welcome from Carezza Lewis, set the tone for the day. We were then given a broad overview of the programme by Dr Jen Heathcote (English Heritage Regional Scientific Advisor) who drew examples from the other speakers, to illustrate her talk on an

‘Introduction to Techniques and Terminologies’.

She explained that most of us are interested in people and this interest extends back to our ancestors and past populations. Yet only recently, has technology allowed us to look at them as people and individuals, rather than as a collection of bones. Now we are better prepared in our attempts to understand events that happened in their lives.

The use of Technology, such as geophysics and aerial photography in archaeology is now well established. Indeed, in the latter case computer software can provide new insights, as was later shown by Chris Going (Geoinformation, Historic Ltd. Cambridge) whose lecture ‘The Hidden Faces of Overlord’ provided a fascinating analysis of D-Day from Reconnaissance Imagery.

Other new developments eg in DNA profiling and the rather less familiar science of stable isotope analysis, as well as microscopic identification of pollen, insects, diatoms are also adding to the ways Archaeology can be interpreted. For instance:

Skeletal Remains can tell us of ‘handedness’ ie which hand, right or left, was dominant for the individual or population. Why is this relevant? There are implications here for showing how the early brain evolved, with its predisposition for cognitive and language development ie. the experience of being human.

Facial reconstruction from Skulls. Initially used for forensic purposes, to aid in identification of human remains. Archaeologists also use this technique, which incorporates an amalgamation of scientific data with artistic license informed by empirical remains ie the shape of nose, eyelids, ears and lips cannot be predicted with absolute accuracy - but creative guesses can be put forward.

DNA has the potential to inform on certain aspects of appearance, eg a similar gene to the one related to red hair, has been found in the DNA of Neanderthal Man. and of course, DNA is also useful for determining blood relationships within groups of individuals.

Evidence of Accidents and Injury from bones can help Archaeologists view a skeleton as a person. eg the skeleton of a Neanderthal man (c. 60,000 BP) showed many healed injuries, including a withered arm, but he had died in relative old age for that time (approx 40 old years) and it could be argued he must have contributed to that society, and have been cared for, in order to have been able to survive for so long.

Certain Diseases have an impact on bones, eg Congenital abnormalities, Infections such as Tuberculosis and Leprosy, Joint diseases, Tumours - all of which give further information about the lives of humans in the past.

Bone Chemistry, with new research such as stable isotope analysis, is discovering more about the diet and even geographical locations and movement of ancient populations

This Report will be continued in future editions of the Newsletter.

FAMILY HISTORY EVENING AT FULBOURN LIBRARY: A Personal ‘Voyage of Discovery’

The Family History Evening held by Fulbourn Library on Thursday, 28 February, was a resounding success. It was ably organised by Gill Aslett with Colin Wood on hand to answer questions and help unravel the mysteries of convoluted search engines and computer software programmes designed for the Family History Researcher.

Fulbourn Village History Society was represented by our Archivist, Pat White, whose card index

proved a valuable source of information, while John Patten had the Society Lap Top ‘fully loaded’ with all 8000+ entries of the data base, ready for inspection. Tony Goodall was also present and able to field any enquiries about photographs and historic buildings relating to Fulbourn. It proved a mutually beneficial association with Fulbourn Library which fulfills our common objectives towards assisting anyone interested in research.

Amongst the enthusiastic audience was myself, though not in my official capacity as Secretary. I had come to find out how to uncover more about

my own family history, and a very rewarding 'voyage of discovery' it proved to be. My main interest was to track down my paternal ancestry since, as an only child, I had understood I was the last of the 'Arber's'. The one clue I had to my grandfather's background was his Military Service Record. This showed date and location of birth, and his transfer from the Army to the Royal Air Force when it became a separate branch of the Armed Forces.

However, with my grandfather's date of birth available, and the unexpected knowledge he was born and lived in Cambridge, off East Road, it was easiest to obtain the Census Returns for 1891 through the web site ancestry.com (free when used via the Library computer - otherwise there is a registration fee). Sure enough, a record of Frank Arber, scholar, age nine, existed. Even more exciting, I could see the names of his siblings, including a brother whose occupation was listed as 'grave digger'!! The handwriting of the census recorder was, as is often the case, almost illegible and I could not decipher the employment of my great-grandfather, Stephen Arber. This will be an avenue to pursue in the future.

But perhaps the most satisfying outcome, was to learn that great-grandfather had also been born in the same parish as his son, ie St Andrews the Less, Cambridge. It appears this was a large parish, with a residential area mostly developing in the mid nineteenth century to house workers associated with the coming of the railway. Which means our family has roots in the city dating from the 1840's and that they seem to have lived in the same area ie around East Road, for at least 100 years. In many respects, it is this social history aspect of genealogy which fascinates me, rather than the 'blood line' implications. A reminder that even in towns, a 'village' situation existed, where the movement of people was relatively static. Indeed, my parents, marrying in 1939, lived only three streets from each other - again, in the neighbourhood of East Road! So I feel I am fully justified in describing myself as 'being both Cambridge born and bred'.

N.B. While the computer is available during usual Fulbourn Library opening hours, I understand that using it during the evening period, from 6.00 pm to 8.00p.m. is recommended as they are less busy at this time.

FEBRUARY TALK 'FIFTY YEARS WITH 'THE NEWS': Reminiscences of a Cambridge Journalist.'

In February, Rodney Tibbs provided a fascinating insight into his life as a journalist on the Cambridge Evening News, having in October 2007 completed fifty years unbroken years - the only time he was not writing was during the journalists strike! Illustrations showing extracts of old newspapers and photographs of the buildings and people associated with our local Newspaper gave a wonderful overview of the changes and developments that have taken place since its appearance as a broadsheet in 1898.

The first position undertaken by Rodney Tibbs was to review films, and many of the audience were taken on a trip down memory lane with the roll call of old Cambridge cinemas such as the 'Regal', 'Victoria', 'Central', 'Tivoli' (on Mitchams Corner) 'Playhouse' (on Mill Rd), Kinema' (off Chesterton Road). Personal anecdotes enlivened the evening, and it was disclosed that 'Kiddies Corner' was written by a fictitious 'Uncle Robin' who encouraged a charity collection of 'bun pennies' (showing Queen Victoria's image) from children. However, these arrived in all sorts of containers, including treacle tins - but with some of the treacle still inside!

Journalist used to write letters published by the newspaper, under pseudonyms. Surprisingly, they were not suspected by the Editor, even though one address of 73 Ainsworth St was a bomb site. A further letter was sent from a non-existent 'Miss R Stallaway of Fulbourn', who admitted to having, during the war, helped further relationships between British and Americans in many fields.

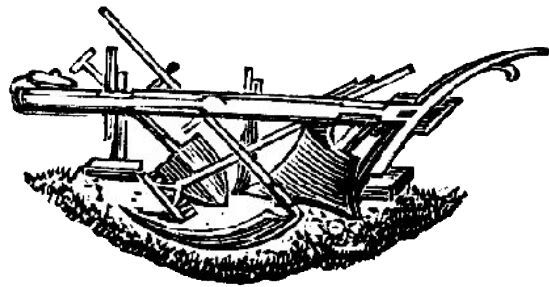
It was revealing to find that Rodney, after such a long career (which is still continuing, as Motoring Correspondent), had some general observations to make regarding the state of journalism. He felt newspapers were originally steeped in local life but have gradually been replaced with less parochial viewpoint. In the past, reporters used to meet people. Now they can work from home, using laptop computers, take their own photographs, and send copy via the internet to a sub-editor who only needs to organise headlines. When Rodney Tibbs joined 'The News' there were only 55 people on the staff. Now there are 350, but for a lower circulation. Yet ultimately, he does not believe newspapers will ever be replaced by other media, since they are essentially both portable - and cheap.

MARCH MEETING: THE A - Z OF VICTORIAN FARMING

Our speaker for the March meeting was Peter Ibbett, who talked about the 'A-Z of Victorian Farming'. He explained that his interest was first aroused on this subject when he inherited old books that had belonged to his family. These were the two volumes of 'Morton's Cyclopaedia of Agriculture', sold in 1851 for a total cost of £3 15s. It was published during the era of Victorian 'high farming', which followed the agricultural depression begun during the Napoleonic Wars.

The philosophy behind these books was typical of the age. Old traditions were questioned and discarded in the light of new, scientific procedures and inventions. Landowners or their tenants who farmed, expected a good profit as a result of improvements in stock, fertilizer, machinery and drainage. Scientific methods were utilised with agricultural products being tested and statistics compiled. It was no coincidence that during this period there was a growth in the formation of Agricultural Associations and Farming Societies, who helped provide the data upon which cyclopedias such as those written by J.C. Morton, relied.

With gentle humour and an admirable depth of knowledge, Peter Ibbett recounted interesting extracts from the Alphabetical compilation of Morton's Cyclopaedia. A fascinated audience were regaled with



the Victorian perspective on such widely diverse topics as: Allotments, Accounts, Animals, Blood, Bones, Cottages, Carrots, Drainage, Education, Excrement, Fertilizer, Farms (Model), Game, Harvesting, Horses, Heavy Land, Insurance, Labourers, Mills, Ossiers, Pronunciations, Reaping, Sewing Machines, Saw Mills, Tile Machines, Toads, Vermin, Weights and Measures, Weighing Machines, Windmills, (not suprisingly, 'X' was not attempted, and 'Y' unfortunately, I seem to have missed) while 'Z' turned out to be somewhat creatively, zigger ie maize.

Technical drawings of rather esoteric machines, well illustrated the presentation. Some may have remained a fantasy of the imagination, but it was pointed out that many of the inventions from the Victorian period were adapted for agricultural machinery still in use 100 years later. An apt insight into how both a practical and prosaic approach to technology can stand the test of time.

BOOK LIST

In Vol XCVI for 2007 of the Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, (of which Fulbourn History Society is an affiliated member), our publication 'In Search of Fulbourn: A Report by Fulbourn Village Research Project', appears in the Recent Accessions to the Cambridgeshire Collection compiled by Chris Jakes. Other titles, most relating to local history are also listed (The Archive Store has a copy). However, with the holiday season - and hopefully, time for leisure reading - almost upon us, members might also be interested in the following extract giving details of novels set in Cambridgeshire:

ASTIN, Oliver [London: Austin Oliver Cole, 2006]
Everything Stops for Tea (novel based on author's experience of growing up in Willingham')
BARTON, C.N. [London: Janus Publishing Co Ltd, 2006]
The Cambridge Diaries: A Tale of Friendship, Love and Economics
CAPE, Tony [New York: Felony & Mayhem, 2005 (1990)]
The Cambridge Theorem: A Mystery of the Cambridge Spies
CORK, Vena [London: Headline Publishing Group 2006]
Green Eye
DAWSON, Jill [London: Sceptre, 2006]
Watch Me Disappear (crime novel set in Prickwillow and Ely area)
DOUGHTY, Louise [Cambridge: Simon & Schuster UK Ltd, 2006]
Stone Cradle

FEILER, Bruce [London: Harper Collins Publishers Inc, 2003 (1993)]
Looking for Class: Days and Nights at Oxford and Cambridge.
FITZGERALD, Penelope [London: Robert Hale Ltd, 2006]
The Gate of Angels
GARNER, Seth [London: Robert Hale Ltd, 2006]
The Blood Partnership
GARNER, Seth [London: Robert Hale Ltd, 2006]
Broken Surface
GREGORY, Susanna [London: Little, Brown, 2006]
The Tarnished Chalice
LANCASTER, Mary [Bath: Bladud, 2005]
An Endless Exile (story of Hereward)
LENNON, Patrick [London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2006]
Corn Dolls
MORROW, James [London: Wiedenfield & Nicolson, 2006]
The Last Witchfinder
PERRY, Anne [London: Headline Book Publishing, 2006]
At Some Disputed Barricade
POULSON, Christine [London: Robert Hale Ltd, 2006]
Footfall
RIDLEY, Su [Sevenoaks: Kenton Publishing, 2004]
Unnatural Justice
SHAW, Catherine [London: Allison & Busby Ltd, 2006]
The Library Paradox
TURNER, Robert [Saffron Walden: Darksight Publishing, 2006]
Future Echoes in the Dark
WALSH, Jill Paton [London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2006]
Debts of Dishonour: The Return of Imogen Quy
WILSON, Derek A [London: Constable, 2006]
Unquiet Spirit