



Friends of Wiltshire Victoria County History

The Victoria County History of England

Friends of Wiltshire VCH

WVCH Trust Registered Charity No 1102882

Newsletter No 10, October, 2018

The Newsletter of the Friends of the Wiltshire Victoria County History, keeping you in touch with news, events and fund-raising.

Summer Event at Clyffe Pypard



Trustees Gil Alder and John d'Arcy, Chair Vicky Landell Mills and The Countess of Inchcape at Manor Farm, Clyffe Pypard

Thanks to the great generosity of Georgina, The Countess of Inchcape, the Wiltshire County VCH Summer Event has raised funds towards the continued research and writing of Chippenham's history. The Countess hosted a highly enjoyable and successful party on June 11th in her lovely garden at Manor Farm, Clyffe Pypard.

Almost 100 Friends and supporters of the WVCH attended and were able to enjoy not only delicious prosecco and canapes, but also strolling on the lawn, viewing the abundant flowers and catching sight of the Highland cattle.

Some guests took advantage of a chance to see the 14th Century Parish Church of St. Peter which, although much restored, has some fascinating features. The famous architectural historian and broadcaster Sir Nikolaus Pevsner and his wife Lola are buried there and the church yard gates were specially commissioned by Sir Nikolaus in his wife's memory. Pevsner's connection with the area was highlighted in a talk given during the evening by Julian Orbach, who is preparing a new edition of the Wiltshire volume in Pevsner's Buildings of England series.

The evening was made even more enjoyable by the idyllic sunny weather.

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Dear Friends

My Time at the VCH



Almost thirty years is a long time to be involved in a project, as I have been with the VCH. Soon after becoming a Wiltshire County Councillor in the late 1980s, I was drafted onto the committee of the VCH. It was a very different set-up then, with three historians paid university grade salaries. The Councillors' role was merely to attend the annual meeting for a progress report and a good lunch. Before chairing my first meeting, I was inducted into the mysteries of the VCH by the redoubtable Ken Rodgers, chief County Archivist at the time.

In the 1990s it gradually became apparent that the days of Local Authority financing were coming to an end and we thought the newly set up National Lottery might be a source of additional funds. To qualify we had to set up a charitable trust and seek community involvement, so the WVCH Trust was set up. Our then Patron, Sir Maurice Johnston, Lord Lieutenant, used up a bottle of Quink signing the appeal letters. We organized lectures and summer parties and were able to fund useful add-ons, such as the digitization of the volumes. We were, and still are, hoping to win a National Lottery bid.

Volumes were completed (Malmesbury, Amesbury, Cricklade), but belt-tightening at Wiltshire Council continued. Only two historians were employed and, under the chairmanship of Christopher Newbury, a partnership was formed with the University of the West of England, hoping for a valuable academic link, but it was an uneasy partnership. Both the University and the Council were under severe financial pressure and we were not at the top of either of their lists of priorities. Funding was terminated in 2014. The Trustees then had to decide to keep the project going or allow it to hibernate/die. Of course, this was a no-brainer: we would carry on.

Taking over from John Bush as Lord Lieutenant and our Patron, Sarah Troughton, brought a new enthusiasm to

our re-launch in 2014. A great deal has been learnt about how to manage on a shoestring and not take on unsustainable commitments, whilst maintaining the academic standards that are an essential part of the VCH nationally.

We have been incredibly fortunate in the Trustees that have come forward. Initially, some recently retired senior local government officers, Ivor Slocombe, Frank Marshall and John Hurley, provided the backbone which ensured things were properly done. They were joined by others with historical knowledge and enthusiasm and friends and advisers, like John Chandler, have been invaluable.

Through the wonderful generosity of hosts we have had highly successful summer parties in fascinating places and some surprise donations along the way, but fundraising remains a priority. We now have a website and Facebook page and have learnt the hard way that we are not a charity with an easy appeal and we still wait for that National Lottery win.

Now that our independence is firmly established and Volumes 19 and 20 are under way, it is time to bring the aim of completing the remaining Wiltshire volumes into focus. The objective must be to complete the Wiltshire VCH big red volumes in the nearer, not the distant, future.

I am delighted that Michael Wade has become our President and that David Moss is the new Chair of the Trustees. It is the moment for the next chapter of producing the Wiltshire VCH to begin.

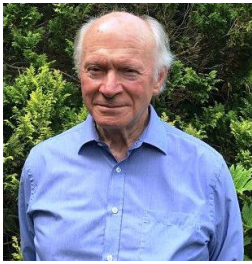
Victoria Landell Mills

October 2018



Friends and supporters enjoying the evening sun as guests of The Countess of Inchcape at Manor Farm, Clyffe Pypard.

Incoming Chair, David Moss



Having read History at Magdalene College, Cambridge, David joined the civil service, working variously in the Department of the Environment, HM Treasury and, principally, in the Department of Transport. Much of his work was international, leading for the UK in air services negotiations with many countries, including the USA and the EU. In the early 1990s, he was Chairman of the European Civil Aviation Conference (a UN body based in Paris). He then joined Railtrack Group plc as Director, Commercial and then Director General, European Affairs.

Retiring to Bradford on Avon in 2000 and reviving his interest in history, which he shares with his wife Angela, David has been involved with the Bradford on Avon Preservation Trust, of which he was chairman from 2004 to 2017. The Trust is instrumental in conserving and enhancing the heritage of Bradford.

WVCH President, Michael Wade



As announced in our last newsletter, we are welcoming Mr Michael Wade to the new position of President, with a special interest in raising funds to further the research and publication of the remaining Wiltshire VCH volumes.

Michael, who has homes in London and at Trafalgar Park, near Salisbury, the latter which hosts events supporting charitable organizations, has a wide experience in business, politics and finance. He is also currently chairman of the London Festival Opera and active in raising funds for research at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London.

Vacancies

Wiltshire VCH Trust will shortly have vacancies for two interesting and important roles: those of Secretary and Treasurer. All members and officers of the Trust hold unpaid, honorary positions.

If you are interested in taking part in a project which has been called 'the greatest publishing project in English history', further details appear on page 4 of this newsletter.

Recent Talks

The script of the talk given by Julian Orbach at our Summer Event at Clyffe Pypard on the relationship between the Victoria County History and the writings of Canon Goddard, Nicholaus Pevsner and Geoffrey Grigson, can be found on our website.

John Chandler's talk entitled Rewriting the History of Chippenham, which he delivered to a packed St Andrew's Church, also in June, is available as lecture notes on the website.

Data Protection

Following our recent Data Protection exercise, we have now adopted our new Privacy Policy, which will shortly be available to view on our website.

Legacies

If you are considering making or updating your will, please consider leaving a legacy to the WVCH Trust.

A gift in your will is an excellent way to support causes which are important to you and, as charities are exempt from inheritance tax, it can also be tax-efficient for you.

Please contact our Treasurer, James Holden, for more information.

Email: vjholden@gmail.com

el: 01225 869159

Forthcoming Events

Vacancies for Wiltshire County History (VCH) Trust Honorary Officers

Honorary Secretary

The current Hon. Secretary to the Trust, Keith Strickland, is stepping down next March. We are looking for a volunteer to continue Keith's valuable work, which is central to the smooth and efficient running of meetings of the Trust and its two main sub-groups. The Hon. Secretary works with the Chair, David Moss, in preparing agendas for the four Trust meetings a year, takes and writes up concise meeting Minutes and helps ensure business is conducted in accordance with the Trust's constitution. The Hon. Secretary also supports meetings of the two main sub-groups, which have responsibilities for the Trust research projects and fundraising. Meeting skills, including minute writing, are important, and some experience of governance in the charity sector, or similar, would be helpful. Our new Secretary will have the chance to participate fully in the work of a very active Trust and contribute to advances in our understanding of Wiltshire history.

Honorary Treasurer

We are also looking for a new Treasurer to replace James Holden, who is stepping aside from that role to concentrate on chairing the Trust's Project Group. Accountancy for the Trust is straightforward and based on simple spreadsheets so the work is not demanding, though it does require good attention to detail and reasonable comfort in working with numbers. In return, our new Treasurer will have the satisfaction of playing a key role in the further development of the Wiltshire VCH project.

If you are interested in either role, we offer an informal conversation with Davis Moss, the Chair of the Trust. You can contact David either by phone, on 01225 863946, or by email at prebend@greenbee.net

The Christmas shopping season is fast approaching, so sign up now to **Easyfundraising** and be start raising money for the greatest national publishing project in English Local History: WVCH

Easyfundraising is the UK's biggest charity shopping fundraising site.

It's simple to use and it's free.

1.4 million supporters have raised over £23m for their charities at no cost to themselves.

If you shop online at all chances are you could have been raising donations for WVCH.

Simply go to the www.easyfundraising.org.uk website, select Wiltshire Victoria County History Trust as your cause, register and start shopping.



This newsletter is distributed electronically to all those members and supporters who have supplied email addresses and given their express permission for us to contact them in this way, so saving on postage costs in the future and also ensuring that more of your contributions go towards the writing of the VCH.

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