



ARNOLD'S NEWS

The Newsletter of Corsham Area Heritage

Spring 2014



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE WITH NEW CONFIDENCE

The effort we invested before, during and after the Open Meeting held on 14 January 2014 has paid dividends. We have discovered a rich vein of previously-untapped personnel resources - with several coming on to our Management Committee.

Nomination Forms were completed and an AGM was held on 11 March 2014. The previous Committee of 5 has become 10. A new member takes over the role of Treasurer, and we now have a Vice-Chairman. How has all this come about? By placing heavy reliance upon "virtual" meetings rather than "physical" ones. Easy, really - and very workable for most of what we need a committee for.

We've long recognised the value of publicity. We publish this newsletter. We contribute to Alison's excellent *Corsham & Box Matters*. We've added the Corsham Churches magazine, *Spring Spirit*, to the list, making our first entry in the March edition.

We now have 3 separate wall displays in the Pictor Room. Do drop by and see what's there. One shows *John Fowler & his Steam Plough*. Another comprises photographs taken by Mike Pope when his Hatt Farm was used for the filming of *Lark Rise to Candleford*. A third shows *Corsham Town Centre in the 1960s*. Local builder Martin Joyce has loaned us its photos. Martingate Centre had not yet been built and the soon-to-be-demolished Corsham Library was under construction!

Other matters for your attention:

- CAH is assisting with Corsham's 1st Walking Festival
- We've started work on our "Corsham Places and People website"
- We're investigating what facilities Springfield Campus will offer

And finally:

- Please keep your donations of old documents rolling in, and
- Likewise your membership renewals - numerical strength matters

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Corsham Area Heritage's primary purpose is to research, celebrate & present the heritage of the Corsham Area to the people who reside there and those who visit the Area, whether they are here visiting friends or exploring what the Area has to offer.

Corsham Area, as defined by Wiltshire Council, comprises Corsham, Box, Colerne &

Corsham Families: THE BAINES FAMILY - by Pat Whalley

The Baines family seem to have settled in Corsham around 1870. John Baines had been born in Bradford on Avon. He and his wife Maria are recorded in the 1871 census as living in the High Street, along with their four children. He was a chemist, stationer and bookseller, while also bottling wine. Appropriately they lived in what had been known as the Wine Lodge, now the offices of Allen & Harris.



Son Francis followed in father's footsteps, continuing to run the family business until 1920. He married Martha and they had five children. The eldest, Herbert, also continued the family tradition, trading as a confectioner in the High Street and as a grocer in Pickwick Road. During WW1 Herbert served in the Royal Engineers from 1915-17, when he was invalided out. His younger brother Reginald joined the war effort when he was old enough, in 1918. He was a CPO in the Royal Navy, serving on patrols and on escort ships.



It was Herbert, however, of which most is known. He continued to live in Corsham, was Secretary of the Gas Company, and of the Gasworks from 1920. He and his wife, Ethel, had daughter, Edna. She became the wife of Vic Beavers and lived in Pickwick Road, from which they ran Corshamside Dairies.¹ When I was 12, I used to help my Uncle Jack deliver milk for the Dairy, as a Saturday job. Happy days!

Our second picture shows the splendid residential property that was once the White Lion and which stands next to house formerly occupied by the Beavers.

¹ CCS book - Around Corsham and local research by Pat Whalley

THE HULBERT FAMILY - by Pat Whalley

We have recently been given some information about an ARTHUR HERBERT. He apparently worked for Bath & Portland Stone Firms Ltd. He enjoyed playing cricket, as indeed did many of the Hulbert family. He died in 1976. It is recorded that members of the Hulbert family were among Sir Walter Hungerford's men in the 16th and 17th centuries. So the family have long connections with Corsham. We'd like to find out more; to record the family story.

Did you know Arthur Herbert? Are you a member of his family? Perhaps you played cricket with him? Please contact us with any information that you have - either by email or by calling in at Arnold House when you are passing.

CORSHAM'S TOC H - by Pat Whalley

Toc H was started during WWI at Talbot House in Poperinghe, Belgium. The name is an abbreviation of Talbot House - "Toc" signifying the letter T in the signals spelling alphabet and the H standing for House. It was a Christian movement - providing a soldiers rest and recreation facility, styled as an 'Everyman's Club', regardless of rank. It was founded in memory of Gilbert Talbot, who died at Hooge in July 1915, by his brother, Neville, an Army Chaplain, and the Rev. Tubby Clayton.

CAH has received a donation of family papers from Kathleen Sawbridge, relating to the time when Toc H was thriving in Corsham. The Rev. Hugh Sawbridge and his family lived here between 1937 and 1959. He worked with Tubby Clayton as Area Padre for Toc H South West. He contributed greatly to the work of the Corsham branch.

Needing a base from which Rev. Sawbridge could travel throughout the south west, the family settled at the 'Old Vicarage' in the High Street - opposite the now Jaipur restaurant. There were 4 children - Katharine, Philedda, Hugh and Bartle. Mrs Margaret Sawbridge organised the local Toc H recreation room and canteen, located in what is now Church House. Katharine remembers her father being allowed to coppice wood behind the house in the Park for firewood.

A meeting room was established in Grove Rd. in a single storey building, now converted into studio accommodation. Carol singing in the town took place every Christmas. (Our picture shows the Toc H choir at the Mayo Memorial in about 1957 - I know, I was there!)

Toc H faltered but retained the building in Grove Rd., as a bookshop. It was sold later along with land which included 2 Station Rd.



LOOKING AROUND

We asked Pat Whalley what other groups did in the Corsham Area where 'celebrating' local heritage was concerned. She began with Women's Institutes and reports:

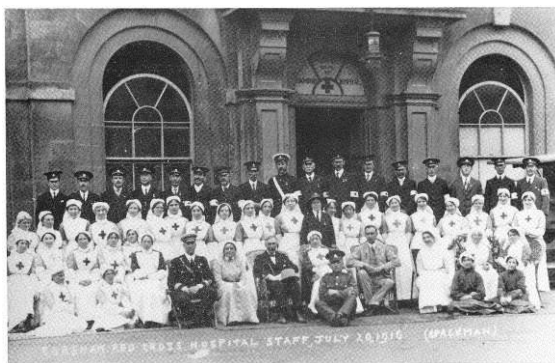
““WI organisations are very well supported in our area. There are 6 in total - Corsham Afternoon, Pickwick, Neston, Box and Lacock. They have regular talks on a variety of subjects, book clubs, scrabble groups and walking groups. They take a serious interest in the environment, wildlife conservation, local history, and things of local interest. They support events - such as the Suffrage march in Corsham last year, collecting money for local charities and cleaning by-ways as at Westwells. They arrange visits to places such as the Sevington School, Bletchley Park and the Blue Glass factory at Bristol. They take educational courses at their own Denman College. They vote on matters of current national importance.”

Clearly every conceivable interest is catered for - including our local heritage.

MARKING WWI'S OUTBREAK - by Pat Whalley

CAH continues to play a lead role in the organising of events to commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of the War to End All Wars. I sit on the Corsham committee through which all the various ideas are being channelled. Meetings are being held regularly. One was held early in February. It confirmed:

- Young people are to be taken to France and Belgium in May, to visit the sites of the battles and the war graves.
- There is to be a Recruiting Office set up in the Town Hall in August, to enable us all to get a flavour of the recruiting procedures of the day.
- The use of the Corsham Town Hall as a Hospital will be re-created.
- The schools are investigating choirs, interpretative art and research into those local people who may have been involved.
- Consideration is being given to creating poppy fields in Corsham and in Box.
- An "around Corsham walk" is being devised, one that focuses on the town's role in the War.
- The latest technology is being used. Several websites will be created and linked so as to identify what, where and when.



There are four years to cover, so it will not all happen in 2014. Keep a lookout for the programme as it evolves.

LOST SHOE OR LUCKY CHARM? - by Sandra Cholerton

During recent renovations at Arnold House, a single child's shoe was discovered under the floor boards in Flat 2 upstairs. Enquiries of Devizes Heritage Museum suggest that it is likely to be a mid to late 18th century "workaday" shoe worn by several owners. Was it lost because there were no further children at the time to wear it? More investigations into the family in residence at the time may provide clues to this.

An alternative suggestion has been put forward by Tim Burge of the Conservation & Museum Advisory Service. He reminded us at a recent meeting that it was known that single shoes were hidden during renovations as a lucky charm to protect against evil spirits. Whatever the truth, the CAH will now get advice on how best to conserve the shoe so that it can be put on display in Arnold House (and maybe to continue protecting against evil spirits!).



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