



THE OXFORDSHIRE VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY TRUST

Charity number 1064776

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2019

VOLUME XIX (WYCHWOOD FOREST) PUBLISHED



Lord Lieutenant Tim Stevenson (right) presents a copy of the new volume to Lord Glendonbrook (left) and Martin Ritchie, our hosts at the official launch at Bruern Abbey.

Photo: Alan Vickers

VCH Oxfordshire XIX (*Wychwood Forest and Environs*) was launched in September in the splendid surroundings of Bruern Abbey, thanks to the generous hospitality of Lord Glendonbrook and Martin Ritchie. Over 80 supporters helped mark the occasion.

The new volume focuses on the former royal forest of Wychwood in west Oxfordshire and on a dozen surrounding places, of which Shipton-under-Wychwood was the centre of a late Anglo-Saxon royal estate and minster parish extending across the area. Wychwood (with Cornbury park) was one of the great royal forests of England, and as well as serving as a deer preserve provided coppice wood and timber and common grazing for neighbouring villages, until the bulk of it was cleared for farmland in the 1850s. Surrounding places depended on the forest to varying degrees, supplementing traditional Cotswold sheep-corn farming and small-scale industries such as pottery-making and quarrying. Bruern is the site of a small Cistercian abbey founded in 1147, while Ascott gained notoriety in 1873 as home of the 'Ascott Martyrs', reflecting local agrarian difficulties and social conflict. The volume totals 409 pages, with over 100 maps and illustrations and 8 colour plates.

A 25% discount is available until 31 December by ordering direct from the Boydell & Brewer website (<https://boydellandbrewer.com/a-history-of-the-county-of-oxford-hb-24919.html>) and entering code BB768 at the checkout.

GOOD PROGRESS ... BUT WE NEED YOU

The Oxfordshire VCH has made good progress this year, publishing Volume XIX and beginning research on the Hook Norton area, which (with Chipping Norton and adjoining parishes) will be published in Volume XXI. We are grateful to everyone who helped us with donations.

Over the past four years the Trust has been able to fund 3½ research posts, relying heavily on a 2014 legacy. **That is now spent, and from October 2020 our funding will have to be reduced, risking loss of a research post, unless we receive an increase in donations over the next few months.** If you wish see the Oxfordshire VCH continue at its present rate, then please help us now. Once Volume XX (The South Chilterns) and Volume XXI (the Chipping Norton and Hook Norton area) are completed, just two more volumes (on the Burford and Chadlington areas) will complete the Oxfordshire series of 23 volumes. But to make this happen, we need your support.

HOW TO DONATE TO THE TRUST

Our continuing success in supporting the Oxfordshire VCH project depends on attracting donations totalling £150,000 a year. You can make a contribution by:

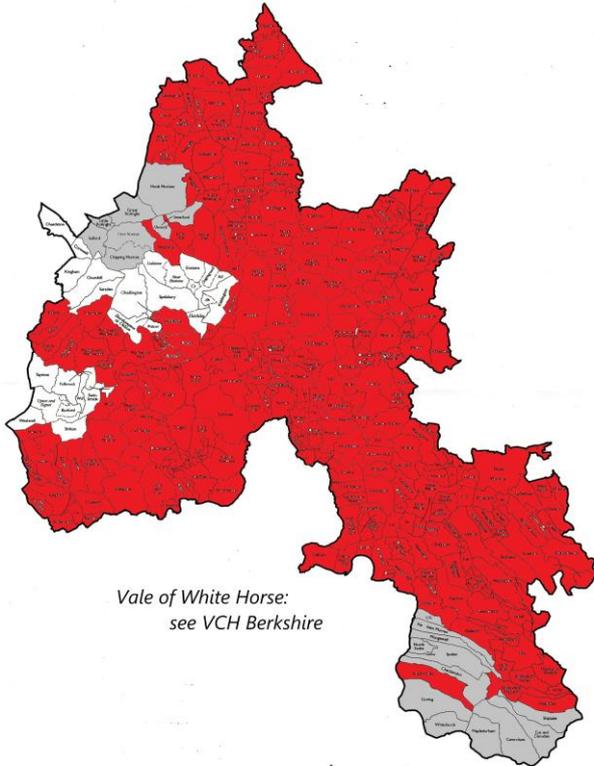
- Cheques made payable to 'The Oxfordshire VCH Trust', which can be sent to the Hon. Treasurer at East House, Rokemarsh, Wallingford OX10 6JB. If you are able to gift-aid your donation we can increase the value of the donation by reclaiming the tax paid – a gift aid form has been sent out with this newsletter.
- Regular donations by bankers' standing orders. A standing order form can be downloaded from the website (see page 2) or requested from the Hon. Treasurer.
- CAF charity cheques.
- Bank transfer into the account of the Oxfordshire Victoria County History Trust, sort code 30-99-03, account no. 01228711.

Donors will be acknowledged in the published volumes unless they choose otherwise, listed as:

- Sponsors (over £5,000)
- Benefactors (£1,000-£4,900)
- Donors (£100-£999)
- Other supporters (under £100)

COMING NEXT....

With Wychwood published, the next two volumes will focus on **The South Chilterns (Volume XX)** and on the **Chipping Norton/Hook Norton area (Volume XXI)**, leaving just two further volumes needed to complete the Oxfordshire series.



VCH Coverage 2019: red areas published, grey in progress (Volumes XX-XXI), white to be started (Volumes XXII-XXIII).

Work on the **South Chilterns** is well advanced, with **Caversham, Crowmarsh Giffard, Eye and Dunsden, Goring, Mapledurham, Mongewell, Newnham Murren, Shiplake,** and **Whitchurch** available in draft on the VCH website (see opposite). **Checkendon, Ipsden,** and **North Stoke** will be added shortly, and Red Book publication is scheduled for late 2021. For **Volume XXI**, work on **Hook Norton** and the **Rollrights** began during 2019, with work on Salford, Swerford, Over Norton, and Chipping Norton itself to follow. The Hook Norton work is benefiting from close liaison with the Oxfordshire Buildings Record and with Hook Norton History Group and museum. **Subject to funding** (see over) publication is scheduled for 2024, by which time work on the two final volumes should be under way.

NEW VCH WEBSITE

The VCH Oxfordshire website is where we mount draft work-in-progress and provide general information on the project, the Trust, and upcoming events. The old site has recently been replaced and has a new address:

www.history.ac.uk/research/victoria-county-history/county-histories-progress/oxfordshire

Published volumes (up to Volume XVIII) remain available free of charge at British History Online:

www.british-history.ac.uk/search/series/vch-oxon.

WHAT IS THE VCH OXFORDSHIRE TRUST?

The Trust is a charity set up in 1997, to raise funds to enable the Victoria County History of Oxfordshire to complete its 'gold standard' histories of every town and parish in the historic county. The research and writing is carried out by a team of four professional full-time historians led by the County Editor, Dr Simon Townley.

In partnership with Oxfordshire County Council and the Universities of Oxford and London a total of 19 volumes has been published so far. The complete history will comprise 23 volumes, published as hardback 'Big Red Books' and subsequently made available online free of charge. The Trust currently has to raise three-quarters of the project's annual funding by seeking donations from individuals, institutions and trusts.



Hook Norton: one of the buildings being investigated with help from the Oxfordshire Buildings Record and Hook Norton Local History Group.

THE OXFORDSHIRE VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY TRUST

(registered Charity 1064776)

President: Tim Stevenson, Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire.

Trustees: Dr Kate Tiller (Chairman), Nigel Mogg (Vice-chairman), Sir Hugo Brunner, Christopher Butterfield, Prof. Robert Evans, Catherine Fulljames, Timothy Hallchurch, John Harwood, Tom Hassall, Cllr Hilary Hibbert-Biles, Dame Frances Lannon, Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale, John Leighfield, Dr Jill Pellew, Dr Donald Ratcliffe, Sarah Taylor, Prof. William Whyte, Liam Tiller (Hon. Treasurer)

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