



THE OXFORDSHIRE VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY TRUST

Charity number 1064776

VCH NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2018

THANK YOU

A big 'thank you' is due to all our supporters, whose generosity has allowed the Oxfordshire VCH Trust to continue funding three quarters of the cost of researching, writing and publishing VCH histories of every town and parish in the historic county. Our income of just under £150,000 for 2017-18 almost balanced our expenditure.

Please keep up the good work by helping us to ensure that 2018-19 is equally successful, and that the following projects all reach fruition.

FORTHCOMING VOLUMES



Caversham Bridge. A draft history of Caversham (now a suburb of Reading) has recently been added to the VCH website (see p. 2).

Volume XIX: Wychwood Forest and Environs. Our next 'Big Red Book' is on schedule for publication in the second half of 2019. It will cover [Ascott-under-Wychwood](#), [Bruern](#), [Fifield](#), [Idbury](#), [Leafield](#), [Lyneham](#), [Milton-under-Wychwood](#), [Ramsden](#), and [Shipton-under-Wychwood](#), together with the former [Wychwood Forest](#) itself and the adjoining [Cornbury Park](#). More details overleaf.

Volume XX: The South Chilterns. Draft histories have now been researched and written for [Caversham](#), [Crowmarsh Gifford](#), [Goring](#), [Mapledurham](#), [Mongewell](#), [Newnham Murren](#) and [Shiplake](#). Work is under way on [Whitchurch](#), [North Stoke](#), [Ipsden](#), and [Eye and Dunsden](#), and research on [Checkendon](#) will begin next year. Finances permitting, publication is planned for the second half of 2021.

Volume XXI: Chipping Norton and Hook Norton. Work on this volume will begin early in 2019, starting with [Hook Norton](#) and (later in the year) [Chipping Norton](#) (town and parish). Other places to be included are: [Over Norton](#), [Great and Little Rollright](#), [Salford](#), and [Swerford](#) with [Showell](#). Finances permitting the volume will be in draft by late 2022, followed by 'Red Book' publication in 2023-4. A local launch of the project is planned for 2019 as part of our fundraising.

WHAT IS THE OXFORDSHIRE VCH 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 18 volumes have 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.

THE VCH AND YOU: HOW TO DONATE TO THE TRUST

Our continuing success in supporting the Oxfordshire VCH project depends entirely on attracting donations to pay for the work. Please help us continue the project and meet our annual £150,000 fundraising target. You can make a contribution by:

- Cheques made payable to 'The Oxfordshire VCH Trust' 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.
- By 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 ask to be omitted) as:

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

WORK DURING 2018

Work over the past year has focused on finalizing our **Wychwood area** volume (to appear in the second half of 2019); on completing further parishes for our **South Chilterns** volume (scheduled for publication in 2021); and on laying the foundations for our work on the **Chipping Norton area**, which will begin early in 2019.

The **Wychwood volume** covers a dozen places including the former **royal forest** and **Cornbury park**, with its important country house. **Shipton-under-Wychwood** was the centre of a late Anglo-Saxon royal estate which stretched across the area, affecting its later development in many ways. Individual settlements nevertheless developed contrasting characteristics, ranging from estate villages such as **Lyneham** through to vibrant 'open' villages such as **Milton**, with its quarrying, religious Nonconformity, and large population. The **forest's** importance for surrounding settlements is fully explored, and the volume will contain a wide range of photographs and specially drawn maps.



Club Day at Leafield, a village included in the Wychwood volume.

The latest online drafts for the **South Chilterns volume** cover **Mongewell** and the large parishes of **Goring** and **Caversham**, which extended from the Thames up onto the Chiltern uplands and were transformed in the 19th century, thanks largely to the coming of the railway. Caversham in particular became a suburb of Reading, its population growing from just over 1,000 in 1801 to nearly 7,000 a century later. It now exceeds 30,000. The social and physical consequences of those changes are fully explored, along with the parishes' earlier history.

Work on the **Chipping Norton area** will begin in 2019 with research into **Hook Norton**, which is now best known for its brewery, and which has attracted the attention of historians both as an Anglo-Saxon 'royal vill' and as an archetypal 'open' village. We look forward to working with Hook Norton Local History Group, and also with those involved in recent work on **Chipping Norton** and its buildings, including ongoing investigations into the castle site.

VCH OXFORDSHIRE ONLINE

The Oxfordshire VCH website includes draft histories awaiting revision, as well as general information about the project and how you can help to bring it to completion: www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/oxfordshire

Published 'Big Red Books' are made available on British History Online from two years after publication. The latest addition is **Volume XVIII (Ewelme Hundred)**, which was published in book form in 2016 and is currently being digitised. This makes the whole Oxfordshire set so far freely available: www.british-history.ac.uk

TRUSTEES' NEWS

Thanks are due to Michael Macfadyen and Professor Joanna Innes, who recently retired as trustees. In their place we welcome Dame Frances Lannon, Cllr Hilary Hibbert-Biles, and Dr Donald Ratcliffe, and look forward to working with them.

LONDON CENTRAL OFFICE NEWS

The VCH nationally is overseen from the Institute of Historical Research in London University, whose new Director Professor Jo Fox took up her post in January. One of her first initiatives was to hold a day symposium to celebrate the work of the VCH and to explore how it might develop in the future. A Chair is being established in the History of People, Place and Community, whose holder will have direct oversight of the VCH and of the Centre for Metropolitan History. We look forward to working closely with Jo and with whoever is appointed, to help take the VCH project forward.

TALKS AND ACTIVITIES

Talks about our research are given regularly, and are listed on the VCH Oxfordshire website. We occasionally also hold events with other organizations - in April, for instance, we held an Oxfordshire field weekend in conjunction with the Society for Landscape Studies and the Oxfordshire Buildings Record, including guided walks around the Wychwood area and visits to buildings in Chalgrove, covered in Volume XVIII.

GDPR*

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* General Data Protection Regulations

THE OXFORDSHIRE VICTORIA COUNTY HISTORY TRUST

(registered Charity 1064776)

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