



Friends of Wiltshire Victoria County History

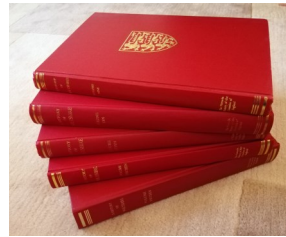
The Victoria County History of England

Friends of Wiltshire VCH

WVCH Trust Registered Charity No 1102882

Newsletter No 19, March, 2022

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



Charity Status Change - WVCH Becomes a CIO

Readers may be interested to know that the Wiltshire Victoria County History Trust is in the process of becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, or CIO for short. This is the latest stage in the evolution of arrangements for financing and organising research for the creation of the VCH for Wiltshire.

Work on the Wiltshire VCH began in the 1940s and between 1953 and 2011 volumes 1-18 were published. In those days the local authorities, and particularly Wiltshire County Council and Swindon Borough Council, funded the work and employed the researchers. For a period the University of the West of England was also involved, but these sources of funding gradually dried up. Responsibility for work on volume 19 (Mere area), which was in progress, was taken over by the Institute of Historical Research in the University of London (which contains the central office for the VCH), helped by a bequest. And in November 2014 a group of volunteers, eager to ensure that work on the VCH was continued, got together to form the Wiltshire Victoria County History Appeal Trust, with the initial aim of fund-raising to allow work to start on volume 20 (Chippenham). Since then the Appeal Trust has developed into the present Wiltshire Victoria County History Trust, research work on both volumes 19 and 20 is nearing completion, and work has started on volume 21 (Alderbury).

The Trust has developed in the years since 2014 but, like many small charities, is still essentially informal: it has a constitution and has set up the friends as a supporting organisation, but it does not have any formal legal status. In 2013 a new form of charity began to be introduced, known as Charitable Incorporated Organisations. The idea behind this new form is that it allows charities to acquire a formal status (a legal personality) without having to go through the additional complication of becoming a limited company and registering with Companies House. The WVCH trustees reckoned that the time had come to change to the new form and the Charity Commission have approved the change. We hope this will happen shortly, at which time we will adopt a new charity number.

Becoming a CIO will mean that liability of the trustees is limited if the charity becomes insolvent, and it has given us the opportunity to modernise our constitution so that, for example, it is clear that our business can be done through virtual meetings as well as ones where people are meeting in person. Otherwise the change will not affect the ways that we work or the ways in which we communicate with our supporters. We look forward to the continuing interest of our present supporters and to attracting new ones.

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New Publication on Bremhill Parish

In tandem with ongoing research for Volume 20 of the Victoria County History on the Chippenham area, The Bremhill Parish History Group has recently published a delightful and attractive book on the history of Bremhill Parish, entitled *Bremhill Parish Through the Ages: The Heritage of a Wiltshire Community* by Louise Ryland-Epton.

As the culmination of 2 years' research, the hardback volume draws on a mixture of primary sources, from archive and online research, and reminiscences from volunteers in the community, presented in 'bite-sized' sections and charmingly illustrated with a combination of photographs and sketches.

The book covers many aspects of life in North Wiltshire from the 10th century to the present day, including a poem by Dickens, how the Quakers and Moravians educated the people of the parish, the effects of two world wars, and modern farming practices. In short, there is something to interest everyone.

The Bremhill Parish website (bremhillparishhistory.com) has details of how to obtain a copy. It is also available from Chippenham Museum and the Chippenham branch of Waterstones, priced £20.



Sundial at East Tytherton inspired by the Ziggurat pyramids of the Middle East

Modern Art at Chippenham Museum

The current exhibition in the art gallery at Chippenham Museum is a celebration of post-war printmaking: *Wiltshire on Paper*.

Celebrating art from the Golder-Thompson Gift to Chippenham Museum, centred on the Bath Academy of Art at Corsham, the exhibition includes works by artists living and working in the Bremhill Parish.

Artist Richard Smith lived behind the old girls school in East Tytherton and had the initial idea for the Ziggurat sundial in the village. The sundial was executed by his friend and fellow artist, Joe Tilson, who lived just over the northern Bremhill parish border in The Old Rectory, Christian Malford.

The exhibition runs until the 2nd April. Chippenham Museum is open daily from 10am–4 pm.

From Our Website

Chippenham is the last large urban Wiltshire area to be covered by the VCH and will form the major part of Volume 20. The volume will include chapters on the different aspects of the history of the town and the surrounding villages of Bremhill, Christian Malford, Hardenhuish, Kington St Michael and Kington Langley, Langley Burrell, Pewsham and Tytherton Kellaways, all of which lay within the Chippenham Hundred.

"Chippenham in the 18th century was an important junction, the hub of seven roads radiating from the town which came under the control of turnpike trusts. The earliest, the Chippenham trust of 1727, provoked hostility when it began charging travellers along the roads which it administered, the London road as far as Studley Bridge via Derry Hill, and the Bristol road to Tog Hill (in Doynton, Glos). The trust abandoned the Bristol Road at its turnpike act renewal in 1743, and turnpiked the Bath road as far as Pickwick instead. Responsibility for the Bristol road was assumed by the Sodbury trust in 1751/2, which also turnpiked the road branching from it at the Long Stone near Lanhill towards Castle Combe and Chipping Sodbury (Glos). The importance and use of this road increased after 1825 because it afforded a direct route to south Wales by steamboat from Aust (Glos) to Beachley in Tidenham (Glos). Although east-west traffic between London, Bath and Bristol was undoubtedly the most important, especially after c.1750, three north-west roads were also turnpiked between 1755 and 1768. The Malmesbury trust turnpiked the route through Stanton St Quinton to Chippenham in 1756, the Holt trust the road to Lacock, Melksham and Bradford on Avon in 1762, and the Chippenham trust road to a junction of roads at Draycot Cerne in 1768. In 1773 there were tollgates at the St Mary Street—Causeway junction and at Chippenham Clift; a gate at Allington Bar was then no longer in use. In 1805 the Chippenham trust was permitted to erect gates and a tollhouse at the northern and western approaches to Chippenham bridge, and these were in use until c.1834, when new gates and tollhouses were built at the junction of the Bath and Lacock roads, at Lowden, Hungerdown Lane and on the London road at the Stanley turning. The Chippenham trust's roads were disturnpiked in 1870 and all the others serving the parish had been disturnpiked by 1877".

(Volume 20 draft, wiltshirehistory.org)



Toll House on the corner of Stanley Lane and the A4 London Road, Chippenham
Built c.1835
The original doorway has been blocked in.

Walks and Talks

Bremhill Parish: a community history

On-line Zoom talk—14th March , 7.30pm

By Martin Nye, Chair of both Bremhill Parish History Group and the Trustees of Wiltshire Museum, and Louise Ryland –Epton, Author and WVCH Researcher

Hear how this engaging and beautifully illustrated parish history has been produced alongside the Chippenham VCH volume.

Tickets: FREE—booking essential. Ticket sales close at 5pm on the day of the lecture.

https://www.wiltshiremuseum.org.uk/?event=bremhill-writing-a-community-history&event_date=2022-03-14

Salisbury Area Walking Tours

There are still places available for our rescheduled walks in the Salisbury area, led by West Country Blue Badge tourist guide David Richards.

The first, on **Wednesday 23rd March 2022**, is titled *The Hidden History of Salisbury*, looking at about 20 buildings and works of art around Salisbury, asking questions like ‘What does it represent?’ and ‘How old is it?’

The walk will commence at 10.30am outside the Tourist Centre in Fish Row, behind the Guild Hall in Salisbury, and will be over in time for lunch, at The Cosy Club in New Street, close to the end of the walk.

The second, on **Wednesday 27th April 2022**, is a *Tour*

of *Stratford-sub-castle*. Exploring the village, church and fields beside Old Sarum, including the life and influences of the Pitt Family.

Again starting at 10.30am, this time outside the Reading Room opposite the church in Stratford-sub-castle. There is parking available, but with no nearby pub lunch has been arranged at The Wheatsheaf in Lower Woodford.

To book these walks, please email David Moss, saying whether you wish to book the tour and lunch or just the tour — wiltshirevch@gmail.com. Please note there are only 25 places available on each walk.

Payment of £15 per head for each tour should be made by BACS if possible, giving your surname as the reference. (Sort 40-52-40, Account 00033115)

Alternatively, cheques should be made payable to ‘Wiltshire VCH Trust’ and sent to Mrs Tean Dallaway, 15 St George’s Place, Semington, BA14 6GB.

Payment for lunch will be on the day.

For the Salisbury walk, please book by Friday 11th March and for the Stratford walk please book by Friday 15th April.

STILL PLACES AVAILABLE

Chippenham Origins: Zoom talk and Walking Tour

Join Mike Stone, VCH trustee, Blue Badge Guide and former Chippenham Museum curator, for a Zoom presentation on ‘**King Alfred and the Origins of Chippenham**’ and a guided town walk around Chippenham exploring sites relevant to the talk.

A provisional date has been set for the talk—Wednesday 25th May at 7.30pm. Details for the walk and booking instructions will be released soon.



St Lawrence Church, Stratford-sub-Castle

Forthcoming Events

Diary Dates

Monday 14th March—Bremhill Parish: a community history on-line Zoom talk

(Booking through Wiltshire Museum, Devizes, see p3)

Wednesday 23rd March—Hidden History of Salisbury Walk, led by David Richards

Wednesday 27th April—Walk around Stratford-sub-castle, led by David Richards

(Booking Details for the above talks are on page 3 of this Newsletter)

'Chippenham Origins': Zoom Lecture and Town Walk with Mike Stone

Zoom talk: Provisional date Wednesday 25th May, 7.30 pm

(Booking details to follow)

RAISE FUNDS FOR US WITH YOUR ONLINE SHOPPING

Please support Wiltshire Victoria County History Trust by raising free donations when you shop online through **Easyfundraising**. Your holiday booking could earn us donations!

If you haven't signed up yet, it's easy and completely free. 6,100 shops and sites will donate to us when you use Easyfundraising to do your everyday online shopping—at no extra cost to you. Every donation you raise makes a difference to us so please sign up today.

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

You can also download a reminder button to your desktop, which will remind you if you shop with a company that is part of the scheme. Once you have done this the button will prompt you if you are browsing a company that belongs to the scheme, so you will never forget.

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/wvcht/>

If you are reading this Newsletter but you are not yet a Friend of WVCH please contact our Hon. Treasurer, Tean Dallaway, at wiltshirevch@gmail.com

Subscription rates are £20 pa single, £30 couple, £50 club/society, £100 corporate, £500 life

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.

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.

Our newsletters are also available to read on our Web-site: <https://www.wiltshirehistory.org>
gilalder55@gmail.com