

WYCHWOODS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Air Commodore Graham Pitchfork's talk to the November meeting was on 'Aviation Heritage in the Cotswolds'. He told us of some of the early attempts by man to fly in the area using balloons, gliders etc., and of the establishment of the factories in Bristol, Gloucester and Cheltenham which produced some of the first powered aircraft. Their production soared in the First World War which also saw the building of Royal Flying Corps airfields (Oxford, Witney etc.).

Then came the era of the travelling air-shows (Alan Cobham) which tried to create an interest in flying aimed at young men who were helped by the flying clubs and the Air Training Corps.

Then followed the most intensive period of airfield building for the training of aircrews in the Second World War (over 30 RAF airfields within a 20 mile radius of Shipton Church). Many of these airfields lie derelict like those at Chipping Norton and Broadwell, others, like Brize Norton and Fairford remain operational and others are used by flying enthusiasts for the flying of gliders and aeroplanes, and for the preservation and storage of aviation history.

Martin Way, whose last talk to the society was our last talk in the Beaconsfield Hall, talked at our December meeting on 'Old Coaching Roads' These roads had spread across this area in the 18th century, their growth stimulated by their use by the Royal Mail.

Most of the roads fanned out from London like the one through Chipping Norton on to the west, and the London-Gloucester route through Burford, established in 1750. Some years later, after the Act of 1770 the Burford to Banbury road (now A361) was turnpiked through Shipton. Most of the furniture from the old turnpike roads has now disappeared, although Shipton is fortunate to have retained both turnpike house and milestone. Other memorabilia from the old coaching roads had been collected by Martin Way (harness, tokens, bills of fare, posters, pistols, blunderbuss, etc.) which he displayed for our members' inspection.

For a full report on the Burford/Banbury turnpike road please see Joan Howard-Drake's article in our next journal.

The remainder of this season's programme is:-

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| At Shipton | 17 Feb. | Packer and Simms – Chipping Norton Photographers
by Alan Watkins |
| At Milton | 16 Mar | Living on the Thames Floodplain: Recent Excavations
at Yarnton by Gill Hey |
| At Shipton | 20 Apr. | The Upper Thames Patrol by Bill King |
| At Milton | 18 May | Has That House a History ? by Anthea Jones |

All meetings begin at 7.30 pm. Visitors welcome @ £1 each

These photographs were sent to Mr. Norman Treweeke in late 1940 while he was serving with 223 Squadron at RAF Summit, Sudan, and he thought that readers might like to see them, following references to the late Eddie Townsend in the last two issues.

One shows Eddie with his sister Beryl and friend Buddy Rainbow. Beryl subsequently married an American and moved to Detroit.

The other is of Eddie's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Townsend – does this jog any other memories?

Old photographs are always popular in the magazine, and we thank Norman for sending them to us.

