



2017 spring programme

All meetings take place in the Combe Down Primary School Hall in Summer Lane. Doors open at 7pm for a prompt start at 7.30pm.

Members £1, Non-Members £3.

Wednesday 22 February

Routes and Roads, Turnpikes and Trusts

Martin Coulson has been investigating the history of the highways and byways of our area.

Wednesday 15 March

Life on Combe Down in the 1920s and 30s

John Daniels tells of discoveries made while doing research into two families that lived on The Firs.

Wednesday 26 April

Foxhill – history in the making, heritage recorded
Susan Fletcher of Curo.

Wednesday 17 May

The Lady Lena In 1980 Jenkyn and Helen Knill rescued this electric river launch (built 1890) from destruction. The talk will cover her days as a pleasure cruiser, her post-war use and later abandonment before she was sold to the Knills for £1.

Reports on meetings

Where did the stone for Aquae Sulis come from?

In September, Professor Maurice Tucker talked to us about his research into identifying the source of stone used in the building of Bath. Limestone has a sort of DNA (from its formation) and this helps identify roughly where and when stone was quarried. There is stone that is known to be part of a Roman structure in the Roman Baths but the outside has been so thoroughly tainted by hot running water for 2000 years that Prof Tucker is keen to 'borrow' a piece for analysis. Then we'll know for sure that it all came from Combe Down.

The Admiralty in Bath

In October Karen Power came to talk to us about the Admiralty move to Bath during WW2 and, in particular, the establishment of the Fox Hill site. The depth of her research was clearly evident both

from her presentation and from the exhibition materials which we were able to display on the night. The move to Bath and Combe Down was clearly quite a traumatic event for both the Admiralty workers who moved at very short notice and for local residents who had to find billeting room for them.

Building modern Bath

In November Dr Amy Frost, Curator of Beckford's Tower and Collections Manager for the Bath Preservation Trust made a welcome return visit. She gave us a visual tour of many buildings put up in Bath during the 20th century – some good, some bad, and some downright ugly. Amy concentrated largely on the good and was as ever incredibly knowledgeable, enthusiastic and engaging. The extraordinary drawings by Robert Atkinson illustrating a proposal to remodel the centre of Bath during WW1 were fascinating. It never happened of course as The battle of Somme rather changed the authorities' perspective on what was important.



Lodge Style

Atkinson's scheme is exhibited at the Museum of Architecture (which reopened on 11 February). More locally Amy identified several interesting buildings but none more so than Lodge Style in Shaft Road. Designed by Charles Voysey and built in 1909 in the Arts and Crafts style. Details of Voysey and his designs are available on line.

A miscellany of medicine

In December we enjoyed mulled wine and a mince pie of two before Dr David Carr took to the floor as the cabaret. Beginning with the development of

the surgery during his long career as our doctor he rapidly moved on relating how he bought the land for the new surgery on his credit card and many funny stories about patients he had known, patience he had needed, and happenings to a Combe Down doctor. Who knows – some of his stories may even have been true! Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the show and we had what was probably the best turnout of the year. Thank you, David.

Project 'Community Records' 2017

We announced at the November and December meetings that we would like to collect a file of information about all the community activities in the village. This will be placed in the archive for future reference. 2017 is a year of change as the new Mulberry Park housing starts to be occupied. We are also seeing a change from paper records to electronic communication – which will be much more ephemeral and difficult to capture. Our big problem is getting contact and asking the groups to file 'stuff' for us. Members identified thirty-three groups from the more formal such as the Friends of Firs Field to sports groups such as the Combe Down Cricket Club (who play on Glass House field) to the less formal like Foxhill Art Buddies or the Trinity Road Community Club. And of course, we need a volunteer to act as researcher/coordinator. Could you?

The oral history project

We have the technology and a willing volunteer and some professional advice! Committee member Sophia Pandit has kindly agreed to coordinate the refresh of our oral history project and Kay Kebby-Jones has agreed to help with interviews. Janet Read managed to record a number of key individuals some years ago (including the late Freda Beatty and the still very much alive Phil Bishop). Watch this space.

The towers of Combe Down: part 4

The Combe Down water tank was once a landmark along Bradford Road standing between Drew the butchers (now Seafoods fish and chips) and the MOD Foxhill entrance. The tank was built in 1881 when water began to be pumped, at first by a waterwheel driven by the Whittaker springs, and from 1885 by steam, from the Tucking Mill pumping station to supply the village.

Mains water supply arrived in Combe Down in

the mid-1950s making the water tower redundant and it was finally demolished in 1964 after an uninterrupted working life of over 70 years. Disaster had struck in 1919 when a gale blew the tank lid off bringing down the tram wires above the road and causing some damage to the house opposite. The Bath Chronicle of 6 December was pleased to report however that 'the water supply was not in the least affected' and 'no personal injury resulted from the unusual accident'.

This photo shows the view east along Bradford Road in a snowy 1950s winter with the water tank in place and mains water on its way. Interestingly it also shows another structure standing beside the water tank which has also gone and may have been a communications aerial for the MOD Foxhill site. And now the MOD has also gone to make way for Mulberry Park and the square of land where the water tank once stood, until recently the turnaround circle for the bus, has become part of the new entrance roundabout.



Allotments and Upper Lawn Quarry

There has been something of a collision between Combe Down's quarrying heritage and its allotment heritage in recent weeks. Upper Lawn Quarry would like to take another slice of the allotment site (they took a piece at the top of the site in 2000) and we hope and trust that they will back-fill quarried-out land or make other land available so that quarrying and allotment production can continue in harmony. Both are needed and both are part of our heritage.

And in other allotment news comes this report from the Bath Chronicle of January 1914:

THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT.—Henry Whittaker, of Fair View House, Combe Down, a quarryman, was summoned for stealing a quantity of Brussels sprouts, value 2s., the property of George Carter, growing in a garden in the parish of Monkton Combe.—Defendant pleaded not guilty.—The prosecutor valued the sprouts at 2s.—P.C. Dando said that he and P.S. Cook made inquiries, and saw the defendant. Witness asked if he might look round defendant's house, and defendant said he might. Witness found the top of a sprout in the back kitchen, and outside in the garden he found three stalks. Two of the stalks corresponded with the stumps left in the prosecutor's ground.—P.S. Cook gave corroborative evidence.—Defendant denied the theft. He did not take the sprouts; he had plenty of sprouts and greens on his allotment, and he offered to give anyone a feed of greens if they wanted it (laughter). Whittaker handed in a letter testifying to his good character.—The magistrates gave the defendant the benefit of the doubt and dismissed the case. The Bench said they considered it a case of grave suspicion, and the police had acted quite rightly in the matter.

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Alma Villa, 159 Church Road



One of the most impressive buildings in Combe Down is Alma Villa (Glenburnie) which stands at the eastern end of Church Road. With its beautiful painted metal balustrades and separate chapel, it is one of the village's largest and most iconic Victorian buildings. In recent decades it has been part of Monkton School.

Built during the 1850s, Alma Villa was first occupied by Thomas Crutwell, a solicitor from Corsham who became Clerk to the City of Bath. He was a member of one of Bath's most established families whose members included Richard Crutwell, the publisher and bookseller who founded the Bath Chronicle in the 18th century. The extended Crutwell family lived in and around Perrymead, Widcombe. Thomas and his wife Mary lived at Alma Villa from 1860 to 1868 before moving to Newbury. Sadly, two of their three children died in infancy before they took up residence at Alma Villa. Their third surviving daughter died in 1866 aged just 27.

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The Crutwells were followed by Jane Dewhurst, an elderly single lady of independent means (an income from 'foreign securities') who lived there from 1868 to 1895 together with a couple of nieces and three live-in servants. The next owner was Thomas Ashman from Holcombe and his wife Mary. Edward Dudley, a widower and retired civil engineer from Herefordshire, lived in the house from 1908 until his death in 1922. In 1911 he can be seen on the census with his daughter Margaret and two servants. Margaret's older sister Ethel had married the boy next door – well, almost! In 1908 she married Harry Sangster Rivington, a schoolmaster by trade, who lived with his parents and siblings at Combe Villa (now known as Scott House, Church Road). Harry was the son of Captain George Rivington RN, a well-known local figure.

Originally named Alma Villa after the first battle of the Crimean War (September 1854), the house was re-named Glenburnie somewhere between 1901 and 1911 (probably by Edward Dudley).

Monkton School took over Glenburnie in the 1920s and it served as a boys' boarding house for some years, before becoming the school's Pre-Prep department. The chapel was dedicated in the 1930s.

With the construction of the new Pre-Prep and Nursery on the former Mount Pleasant Quarry in 2016, Glenburnie became surplus to requirements and together with the chapel has now been sold to new owners who plan to return it to a family home.

Did you know that..

George Carwardine (1887-1947), who lived in Entry Hill – almost in Combe Down! – invented the Anglepoise lamp? While developing new concepts for vehicle suspensions, he created a mechanism which he thought had uses in other fields. He particularly saw its benefits for a task lamp and so the Anglepoise was born. Carwardine applied for a patent and initially manufactured the lamp himself in workshops in Bath.

He later licensed the design and 1935 saw the release of the familiar household lamp.



The Anglepoise 1227

Goldney House, The Avenue

Gillian and Tony Corke have recently moved into Goldney House and would like to learn about the history of the house and site alongside the Co-Op. If you could help their research could you call or drop a note through their door?

Christopher Tipping plates - last few for sale

Many of us remember the commemorative plates that were commissioned to mark the completion of the stabilisation of the Stone Mines. Each of the 691 householders living over the mines was given a ceramic plate – one small part of a map – representing not only their individual house but the mine world beneath and the creatures to be found there.

Of the single print run that was made for exhibition, there are a number of duplicates remaining and these are available for sale to Combe Down residents.

Prices are from £5 to £10 depending on the image and detail depicted, with further price reductions available on request.

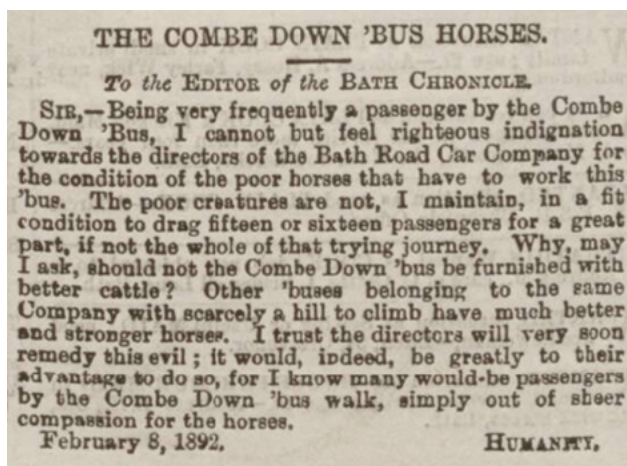
Contact: Jen Morgan at info@ralphallencornerstone.org.uk or phone 01225 8374319.

The Ralph Allen CornerStone

The Ralph Allen CornerStone is closed to visitors for the winter months while it undergoes an upgrade to the display panels and interactive screens. It will continue to be open by appointment and will be available for hire as usual. The reopening is planned for the beginning of April.

If you would like to volunteer for any of this refurbishment of the heritage information presented, or add your views on how CornerStone can become more appealing in keeping alive our stone heritage, please contact Jen Morgan at info@ralphallencornerstone.org.uk or phone 01225 8374319.

And finally...



New member application form

If you are already a member, there is no need to fill this in - simply send or give your payment to Tim Lunt (see below)

First name(s)

Surname(s)

I/we apply to become a member of the Combe Down Heritage Society until 31 March 2018 and I/we agree to my details being held on computer for the duration of my membership

Address

Postcode

Phone

Email

Membership options - please tick as required:

Standard £5 Concession £3 Family £12

I am sending an additional £ as a donation to the society

Total amount paid

Ages of children
(if family membership)

Gift Aid declaration for this and future donations

Please treat as Gift Aid donations all qualifying gifts of money made by me today in the future

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the Charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand that the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after 6 April 2008.

Signed

Date

Payments by cheque, payable to 'Combe Down Heritage Society', or cash should be made to the Membership Secretary: Tim Lunt, 141 Church Road, Combe Down, Bath BA2 5JL Please ask for a Standing Order Form if you would rather pay direct.