



Issue: 13

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# BLHS Newsletter

The monthly newsletter for Bicester Local History Society

## Over the Hills to Glory Talk

### The Story of the Ascott Martyrs

Why, in May 1873, did exchanges at the gate into a bean field between two young farm labourers and a group of women from the village of Ascott-under-Wychwood, lead to the imprisonment in Oxford Gaol of 16 women, and two babies? The magistrates' decision provoked a riot in Chipping Norton, featured widely in the national press and resulted in questions being asked in Parliament. This talk explores the story of the Martyrs and what it reveals about the lives of the agricultural labourer and his family.

This talk, by Carol Anderson, will be held in the Clifton Centre on Monday 17th July at 7:30pm.



Carol will be bringing some books on the subject with her for members to purchase. These are *The Ascott Martyrs* by Beverley McCombs for the special 150th anniversary price of £12.50, and *The Ascott Martyrs* edit. Keith Laybourn, also for £12.50 (normally £15). These will be cash sales only.

## Annual General Meeting

As usual we do not have a meeting in August, so the next meeting after this month's one will be our AGM on 18th September.

This is your chance to raise any matters that you think need addressing regarding the Society, as well as to vote in the committee members for the following year. It also marks the start of the 2023/24 membership year, so subscriptions will be due and renewal forms will be sent out in August.

So if you have any items you want to add to the agenda, or any nominations for committee members, or know of anyone who you'd like to invite to join, then you have the next month to do so. Agenda items and committee nominations need to be submitted to the committee by the end of August.

## Dates For Your Diary

Over the Hills to Glory talk

17th July @ 7:30pm

Bicester Advertiser local history article

3rd August

August newsletter submission deadline

6th August

AGM agenda and committee nominations deadline

1st September

September newsletter submission deadline

3rd September

Bicester Advertiser local history article

7th September

2023 BLHS AGM and talk

18th September @ 7:30pm



## Local Historians of the Future

At BLHS, we continue our efforts to nurture the local historians of the future by engaging with local young people. Having successfully guided school children from Brookside School and Bure Park School on history walks, and given talks on a variety of local history topics in other local schools, this time we responded to a request from the Second Bicester Brownies, who were working on their local history badges.

A lovely evening in late May saw a bunch of twenty Brownies following a Saxon woman (aka our treasurer, Sally James) from their base at the Methodist Church through Sheep Street, Market Square and Causeway to St Edburg's Church, and back.

The stroll provided the opportunity to discuss the origins of Sheep Street's name; to consider life and work in the many yards; to reflect on the Hunt's part in the town's prosperity; to ponder the development of the market and the contribution of the Priory; to look for clues to people's living conditions in the past and, of course, to appreciate some architectural gems.

The girls' enthusiasm and ability to speculate about features we spotted on the walk was inspiring.

The Brownies left with a copy of the Town Trail and it's to be hoped that they will have been motivated to continue their exploration of the town's history.



## Committee & Contacts

### Editor:

Matthew Hathaway  
[editor@blhs.org.uk](mailto:editor@blhs.org.uk)

### Committee Members:

Bob Hessian (*Chairman*)  
[chairman@blhs.org.uk](mailto:chairman@blhs.org.uk)  
01869 350662  
Sally James (*Treasurer*)  
01869 243804  
Mark Lewandowski (*Minutes Secretary*)  
John Roberts (*Membership Officer*)  
Matthew Hathaway  
Peter Crook

### Meetings Address:

The Clifton Centre  
Ashdene Road  
Bicester  
OX26 2BH

### Postal Address:

BLHS c/o Sally James  
14 George Street  
Bicester  
OX26 2EG

### Website:

[www.blhs.org.uk](http://www.blhs.org.uk)