

Report on Cottages to Mansions talk

From Cottages to Mansions

The inside story of some Farnborough Houses

Following the AGM of the Farnborough Society in 2016, Jo Gosney gave an illustrated talk on a number of the older houses in Farnborough including:

- Farnborough Place. Seat of the Lords of Anglesey in the 15th century, reputedly remodeled around 1675 in the style of Christopher Wren. Insurance documents of early 19th century show value at £5,000. Sale documents of 1819 give detailed layout of all the rooms.
- Lodge gatehouses. One each side of the driveway.



The occupant who was the gardener at the big house used one lodge as his living quarters and he slept in the other one.

- Yew Tree Cottage in Farnborough Street. Former bakery with ovens still in situ although today only a feature. Villagers used to leave their Sunday meals to be cooked whilst they were at church.
- Street Farm. Probably oldest building in the early village of Farnborough. Now small dwellings. Occupied at one time by William Smith, a potter and farmer. A book entitled *William Smith, Potter & Farmer*, by George Bourne, the grandson of William Smith, illustrates in the detail what life was like there in the mid 1800s.
- Farnborough Hill. Originally a small house called Windmill Hill, rebuilt by Thomas Longman, the publisher and ultimately purchased by the Empress Eugenie, widow of the exiled Emperor Napoleon III of France. Now an independent catholic school for girls.

- The Thatched Cottage. Formerly potters' cottages, turned into a public house in the 1960s.



- Cove Court. The first vicarage for St John's Church in 1844. Now demolished to make way for Shakespeare Gardens.
- The Workhouse. Formerly in Union Street. Details of the inventory and much of the day to day running are available in Hampshire County Records Office.
- The Pavilion. Also known as The Lodge, set within Victoria Court. Built by Mrs Foreman of Windmill Hill as a home for her nephew, Lt. Edward Greene, who had fought at the battle of Waterloo.
- Castleden Hall. On the site of the College of Technology today. Built by William Knell, a local entrepreneur who also built Knellwood. Details plans of the Hall show it as a private house surrounded by a small 9 acre farm. In 1873 it became a school and a pedestrian tunnel was constructed under the Farnborough Road. The tunnel still exists today but there is no access to it.

We are very fortunate that so many records exist to give us an insight the lives of earlier Farnborough inhabitants.