



Wheathampstead History Society

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News and events

- **Wheathampstead Place.** Members may have seen that work is being done on the front wall of Wheathampstead Place. This is necessary because damp has been found in the timbers as a result of the cement screed used in earlier restorations.
- The **Herts Association for Local History** Spring Meeting and AGM will be held on Saturday 18 May at Pirton Village Hall with a programme of short talks, book presentations and the Lionel Munby Memorial Lecture. Details at www.halh.org.uk
- **Next meeting:** Our next meeting will be at 7.30 on Wednesday 15 May when Andy Wiseman will talk about the *History of Policing in Hertfordshire*.

Notes and queries

Peggy Cory Wright 'First Lady' of Wheathampstead

Peggy Cory Wright was born in Lancashire in 1903 and arrived in Wheathampstead in 1932 with her husband Douglas who had served on the battleship HMS Conqueror during World War I. They married in 1924 and celebrated their 63rd wedding anniversary.

The couple made their first home at Four Limes on The Hill where they brought up their three daughters, June, Cleonie and Marigold. Parties there were famous locally with a hundred guests forming a human chain circulating in and out of the rooms and up and down the stairs. Gymkhana were held each summer throughout the war in the four-acre field behind Four Limes. A bomb that landed in that field during World War II caused a chandelier to fall from the ceiling.

Mrs Cory Wright was local organiser for the Women's Voluntary Service during the war, writing propaganda plays and touring with them round the country. She recalled cycling through the village on dark nights checking that all was well, but encountering only PC Barker, the village bobby, on a similar mission. She was president of the local branch of the Red Cross and president of the local branch of the British Legion, never missing laying a wreath on Remembrance Day at the village war memorial.

In 1951, the Cory Wrights moved to Mackerye End where they opened the gardens every spring for the National Gardens Scheme, raising several thousands of pounds for various charities.

Peggy became a parish councillor in 1939 and served 41 years as parish, district and county councillor. She was chair of Wheathampstead



Parish Council from 1950 to 1953. In 1963 she served a term of office as Lord High Sheriff of Hertfordshire and in 1973 was honoured for her County Council work by promotion to the rank of County Alderman. She was for a time President of the WI and took on the chairmanship of governors of Wheathampstead Secondary School when it opened, having campaigned for the school to be built.

She will be best remembered by the village for her campaign for the village bypass. It was named after her when it opened in 1978. She died aged 84 in October 1987 at the home of her daughter, Lady June Horlick, in Ross-shire, just a few weeks after her husband. *Ruth Jeavons*

This is the first of an occasional series about notable residents of Wheathampstead in recent years. Who do you think should be included in future items?