

2023 Programme

*All meetings are held at the Victory Hall,
Stockcroft Road, Balcombe, RH17 6HP, starting at 7pm.*

Wednesday, March 15th: Helen Poole – ‘Elizabethan England’

The reign of Queen Elizabeth I was a time of spectacular projects and big personalities that left a legacy in our part of Sussex and beyond. Religion and the constant pressure from enemies abroad were issues of the day. The talk explores some of the local people and places with a part to play under Gloriana.

Wednesday, April 5th: David Sawyer – ‘The South Downs: history and opportunities’

David Sawyer is the Chairman of the Friends of the South Downs. His illustrated talk describes the history of our National Park, and highlights the major historical sites along its length.

Wednesday, May 17th: Louise McCall – ‘A Wartime Childhood’

Born in Lwow, Poland (now Lviv, Ukraine), and a long-time Balcombe resident, Louise describes her many WW2 experiences, fleeing her native country as the Red Army advanced in order to occupy.

Note – the April talk will be preceded by the AGM.

Saturday, May 20th: Exhibition. 10am – 4pm

Wednesday, September 20th: John Hilary – ‘From Balcombe House to Nymans: the Messel Family in West Sussex’

John Hilary is an honorary professor at the University of Nottingham. He is one of the Messel family representatives to the National Trust, and his book *‘From Refugees to Royalty: The Remarkable Story of the Messel Family of Nymans’* was published in 2021.

Wednesday, October 18th: Gilly Halcrow – ‘The history of Food, Drink and Table Manners’

Not long ago, our table manners left a lot to be desired and great feasts appear to have been a riot! Gilly traces the development of our present customs from those startling earlier practices, from 1200 to today’s TV chefs.

Wednesday, November 15th: Dr John Godfrey: - ‘Memorialising the Great War: Balcombe’s Victory Hall in Context’

John writes and lectures on many aspects of 19th and 20th Century Sussex history. This talk marks a welcome return to Balcombe, when he will explore the Victory Hall’s place in memorialisation at international, national and local levels. 2023 marks the centenary of our Victory Hall.