

Introduction

This is not a guidebook, nor is it a local history. It is intended instead as a celebration of place by people who either live in the Pang Valley or who are fascinated by it. The project to produce the book started at a memorial service for a remarkable woman – Felicity Palmer of Frilsham – who had lived in, worked in, studied and loved the valley and its people for more than half her life. Her friends decided to produce a book of essays on the subjects close to her heart and this is the result.

Once started the book grew and the difficulty was to know where to stop, what to leave out. Readers living in the lower valley may feel that they have been neglected, as may those living along the southern edge at Bucklebury. Our only excuse is that those areas have been celebrated in print already by their own people, as has Compton.

Our ambition for this book is that it will stir an interest in the valley in anyone opening it. It is a book to dip into. Some pieces are longer and more challenging, others are shorter and lighter. We are looking for the 'ah, yes!' factor – for the spark of recognition of a name, a picture or a place that builds an understanding of the landscape and turns a mere location into a home.

We hope that, as our readers move around the valley, they will recognise the names and the places and the whole landscape will start to grow in meaning for them. If the reader is encouraged to search out but one of the sites or read but one of the other books mentioned, we will feel that we have succeeded.

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