

DRAFT

PITSTONE & IVINGHOE MUSEUM SOCIETY

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 18 November 2004 at Pitstone Green Museum

1. Present:-

Kit Kite (Acting Chairman) John Wallis (Treasurer) Norman Groom (Museum Manager) Peter Keeley (Deputy Museum Manager) Gillian Arney (Archivist) Anne Ball (Publicity Secretary) Brenda Grace (Secretary) and 13 members.

2. Apologies were received from:- David Lindsey (Watermill Manager) Jeannette Wallis (Trading Secretary) and Sue Lipscomb (Programme Secretary), Mike Malone, Owen and Alex Wynne, Hazel Travis, Val Rayner, Colin Arney, B. Wright and Brenda Parkins.

3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting which was held on 20 November 2003 were agreed and signed.

4. Matters arising

No matters arising

5. Acting Chairman's Report – Kit Kite

Firstly, following a long stay in hospital and a nasty operation, "Welcome back" to John Wallis.

David Lindsey is in hospital at the moment and all our good wishes for a speedy and healthy return are sent to him.

I was co-opted on to the Committee as Vice Chairman with the specific task of sorting out some communication problems which were affecting the running of the museum and am pleased to report that these are now completely solved and the museum is back to its friendly and happy workings.

The Nissen hut has been transformed and was ready for visitors by the last open day. This was due to a great deal of hard work by Norman, Peter and team and I would like to thank them all.

The catering staff held a meeting in February and were able to sort out some of the difficulties they were having. Help in organising and running is still needed. In spite of an appeal for help in the bulletin only one new person was found. Catering is vitally important to the success of our open days and our thanks go to all the ladies involved.

The monthly Society meetings had a mixed response but everyone who came was happy with the subjects and speakers.

It was recently realised that there might be a gap in the Society's insurance policy. Norman, David and I are treating this as a matter of great urgency and hope that it will be concluded very shortly. *(the gap concerns new demands by the insurance company regarding employers liability)*

Last but by no means least, I thank ALL volunteers for their help during the past year – in particular, Brenda, who has kept me on the straight and narrow since I joined the Executive Committee.

6. Treasurer's Report – John Wallis

The accounts were presented.

Museum Account.

The figure shown under Refreshments shows £661 for this year which seems wrong. The figure will be checked and corrected in the next Newsletter.

When I took over this job 12 years ago the figure in the funds was a very similar one to the one shown now.

The accounts were accepted as a true record, proposed by Mike Morris and seconded by Jean de Selincourt and carried.

7. Museum – Peter Keeley, Deputy Museum Manager

A great deal of effort has been made in the loft area above this room. There was a huge quantity of 'stuff' in there. Artefacts, rubbish, tools and equipment, timber, etc., has all been sorted through and rubbish disposed of. William Hawkins has kindly accepted some items for long term storage in his barn. Items remaining will be sorted again and either retained for the future, or disposed of by sale or donation to suitable bodies. As an example, there were 20 hay knives, 30 scythes, many stone bottles and a small mountain of horse harness. Woodworms were prolific.

We have also made a start on re-roofing the area which houses the wheelwrights, dairy, cobblers shop, plumbers shop and brushworks. The corrugated iron for this job was £2000 plus. The re-roofing of the cowshed will soon be started. Tiles for this are 75p each.

8. Programme Secretary – Sue Lipscomb

Sue at short notice, could not attend the meeting and due to technical difficulties her report was not received.

9. Watermill Report - David Lindsey

Geoff Travis kindly presented this Report for David Lindsey who was unwell and unable to attend the meeting. The Report follows the now well established format.

1. VISITORS

(1) General Public : Mill again open 14 afternoons bringing 845 visitors - an increase of 8½% on 2002 - with an average of 60. A very pleasing result. The most on any one day was 171 (August Bank Holiday)

(2) Sales : Gross takings (excluding flour) were £1090: 10% more than 2002.

(3) School Parties : the final figures not yet available but should be close to the annual average of 1650 children and adults. Since May there have been 40 parties which equates to about 1000 in 6 months. Two more are booked for December.

(4) Other Parties : just 2 with 48 people. The mill has not been successful in attracting such parties in recent years, but one already booked for April 2005.

(5) Milling : 271 bags of flour produced = 406kg or nearly 8cwt which sold for £324. Despite the difficult growing season this year, we have succeeded in ordering good quality Hereward wheat for 2005 at a very reasonable price from a farmer near Baldock. It awaits collection.

2. HAPPENINGS

(1) The 'Bread Making Evening' held in January in conjunction with the local WI was a success. The 50 attending were fascinated to see moving pictures of bread whilst it was mixing, rising and baking. Profit from the evening was shared between the Ivinghoe Church heating fund, the WI and the mill.

(2) Pitwheel Wedges : At last year's AGM mention was made of the problem with the wedges working loose allowing the large pitwheel to shift on its shaft and that a millwright had agreed to come after Christmas. He failed to turn up. However, after a day's hard endeavour in March, Chris and Bob managed to refit and secure the wedges. Fortunately, they held firm through the season until the very last milling on 26 September. After 19 bags of flour had been produced, they came loose again with the result that the pitwheel wooden cogs did not mesh with the metal teeth of the wallower and 3 cogs were chewed up.

It was clear that something was not being done correctly so it was decided to ask another millwright to make new wedges and fit them; he came to measure up on 19 October and he carried out the work Tuesday and Wednesday this week. New oak cogs have been made by Bob Megson.

3. REPAIR and MAINTENANCE

(1) The new gable shutter made by David Goseltine has been painted 'Ashridge red' and fitted with a perspex inner window to keep out the weather when the shutter is open.

(2) Bob Megson has refurbished the lower half of the door and replaced the rotten part with new timber. It has been painted and fitted.

(3) Sealing the wheel buckets has continued on an 'as-and-when' basis; it is slow work (the first attempts with this were done by David Lindsey under the direction of Bob Megson in 1987!).

(4) Other work has included replacing rotten fence posts, repairing broken fences, coating the storage shed with 50/50 mix of bitumen and creosote and countless similar repair and maintenance jobs.

(5) The French burr runner stone was raised in March before milling began, cleaned and checked. This will be done again before the end of the year and when wear will be checked to see whether dressing is necessary before the 2005 season.

4. REGISTRATION

The mill has been managed and operated in exactly the same way as when registered. The only two differences are: the amount of paperwork has reduced significantly, and we do our own thing without having to give account of it to a policing body.

Withdrawal is all the more joyous in view of the new 'Museum Accreditation Scheme' which was launched yesterday and which will require more written work than ever before. The changes are set out in SEMLAC's "In Brief" dated 5 November which is well worth studying!

5. VOLUNTEERS

Looking after the mill as successfully as has been done, could never have been achieved without the continued support of the loyal band of volunteers, especially just now with two key personnel 'hors de combat'.

David wished to express his thanks to-

the 'Core Group' (John and Chris),
the Close Support Group' (Corrall, 'B', Geoff (Eccles), Gill (Graves), Tom (Derbyshire) and Charles), the 'WAW Group' (the 16 wardens and assistants who look after the mill on open days), the 'As-and-When Group' (David Goseltine, Bob Megson, Roy Cutler, Mike Morris, Ron Ashurst and Bob Simpson) who undertake various projects when requested and the Fringe comprising a wide range of people, some of whom have helped at the mill in the past and others who are just interested in the goings on at the mill. All are pleased to help out from time to time.

And of course, not forgetting the local community whose support is greatly valued and appreciated.

10. Publicity Report – Anne Ball

Just to confirm what Peter said in the Newsletter, in the past, we have paid for an advert to go into two newspapers, The Bucks Herald and the Leighton Buzzard Observer for the Family Fun and Craft Days. At the beginning of the

season The Bucks Herald put their prices up considerably, so we used The Berkhamsted Gazette on two occasions. However, we have been unable to establish that paid adverts bring any more visitors into the Museum. The Committee therefore made the decision not to pay for any more adverts in the future. We will, of course, keep an eye on this during 2005.

One or two people have been unable to continue to help with the circulation of the leaflets. If anyone is able to help, do please let me know. As a small charity, we of course need all the help we can get. If anyone feels they are able to take a few leaflets to keep in the car to issue on visits, do please let me know.

As I mentioned before, we do get quite a few visitors as a result of the posters put on the roadside prior to open days. However, we do need more posters to be put up. Do contact Norman or myself if you feel able to help with this task.

Thank you to those who helped with the leaflet distribution this year.

11. Election of Officers and Committee Members

		<u>Proposed by</u>	<u>Seconded by</u>
Chairman	Kit Kite	Malcolm Lee	Geoff Travis
Vice Chairman	Position vacant		
Treasurer	John Wallis	Mike Morris	Brenda Grace
Secretary	Brenda Grace	Kite Kite	Anne Ball
Committee voted en bloc	Proposed by Geoff Travis seconded by Andrew Gould and carried.		
Museum Manager	Norman Groom		
Deputy Museum Manager	Peter Keeley		
Watermill Manager	David Lindsey		
Programme Secretary	Sue Lipscomb		
Publicity Secretary	Anne Ball		
Trading Secretary	Jeannette Wallis		
Archivist	Gillian Arney		
1 committee member	Vacant		

John Wallis said that he wished to stand down as Treasurer at the end of the financial year 31 March 2005.

12. Appointment of Independent Examiner.

David Hardwick was proposed by

13. Any other business

13.1 John thanked Norman Groom and Brenda Grace for holding the purse strings while he was in hospital.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.