

PITSTONE & IVINGHOE MUSEUM SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2005 AT 8.00PM AT PITSTONE GREEN MUSEUM

1. PRESENT:- John Wallis (Acting Chairman) Norman Groom (Treasurer, Museum Manager and Membership Secretary), Peter Keeley (Deputy Museum Manager) David Lindsey (Watermill Manager) and Brenda Grace (Secretary) and twelve members.

2. APOLOGIES WERE RECEIVED FROM:- Kit Kite (Chairman) Anne Ball (Publicity Secretary), Sue Lipscomb (Programme Secretary), Jeannette Wallis (Trading Secretary) Joan Double, Cathy Terry, Geoff and Hazel Travis, Helen Hickson, Mike Malone and Jean de Selincourt.

The Chairman, Kit Kite arrived at the start of the meeting and said he was not well enough to stay, but had just come to do one thing and that was to thank Brenda for her help and support. He presented her with a beautiful bouquet. He then handed over his report to John Wallis and asked him to Chair the meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE AGM 20 NOVEMBER 2004 were approved and signed.

4. MATTERS ARISING

No matters arising

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Kit Kite

A long time ago it was realised that the Constitution and the name of the Society required a certain amount of adjustments to reflect the changing conditions under which we were operating and to simplify rules and regulations.

The officers concerned spent many hours preparing the appropriate documents and then more hours getting agreement with the Charity Commissioners before success was achieved.

- Changes in insurance for personnel, equipment and buildings came up frequently.
- Health and Safety regulations for staff and public.
- Food regulations have to be constantly examined to ensure we don't overstep the mark when organising and operating our Open Days refreshments.
- Craft exhibitions and demonstrations, country dancing, etc., require organising and operating.

All these things and many others require some input from the Committee so if you think the Committee Meetings are a waste of time – why not join us and find out?

I am pleased to report that our appeals for help in the year have resulted in some success. A number of volunteers have joined us and a warm welcome and thanks to you all.

Those involved in refreshments have worked extremely well and hard, but I am sure one or two more would be greatly appreciated.

Incidentally, does anyone know a person who is experienced in display work? We need advice on how to improve many of our displays. This would help the Committee and the people working to improve our public image.

2005 has been a great success and I look forward to an even better 2006.

Thank you EVERYONE!

Kit Kite

6. TREASURER'S REPORT ON 2004/5 ACCOUNTS – John Wallis

General £1883, Museum £1431, Trading £4393, Watermill £15739
Total Funds £23445 as at 31 March 2005.

The Society's funds have fallen by £6,049 due to the expenditure on Museum repairs and improvements of almost £14,000. Total income from our National Savings Investment Bonds amounted to £985.

General Fund The net from our photocopier of £67 includes income from the sale of Museum Guides less the cost of printing newsletters elsewhere.

Monthly Meetings The drop of £166 of income is largely due to missing the success of the 40th Birthday Party held in 2003 which raised over £100 and three meetings of over £50 each.

Stationery rise of £91 costs due mainly to increased use of more sophisticated materials for computers/laminator.

Miscellaneous expenses The £275 includes purchases of a second hand overhead projector £60, 50 second hand stacking chairs £120 and £49 for our MODES Association annual fee.

Museum Fund Admission income down by £775 despite having two Easter Mondays in the year.

Grants £510 from the Countryside Stewardship Scheme for our Prune orchard.

Museum Sales Should be £605, but omitted to make the transfer from Trading Fund. This will be made in 2005/6.

Refreshments Up by £302 (believed may be due in part to increase in prices).

Advertising Now that we have reduced our paid advertising these costs have fallen by £313.

Repairs and Renewals Have increased by £8634 to £13,958 because of extensive repairs to buildings and the provision of more display and storage space.

Trading Fund The two amounts for sales (Museum £605 and Watermill £307) should have been transferred to their respective funds. These will be made now in 2005/6.

Stock Purchases £53 cover the purchase of SPABs 'Mills Open' book for sale at the Watermill.

Watermill Mill Sales as for museum (above). Repairs and Renewals £903 includes millwright costs of £675 for re-wedging the pit wheel.

John Wallis

The Accounts were accepted as a true record.

Proposed by Andrew Gould and seconded by Sandra Barnard and carried.

Norman said that since taking over the Accounts from John, he has now transferred the Trading Account to the General Fund.

The Committee held a meeting and a decision was made for an interest free loan of £2000 to go to the newly formed Society (Ford End Watermill Society) The agreed Lease will be for 18 months, this will be followed by a generation Lease.

David Lindsey said that by the way we operate we have helped the Society very much. We are grateful to the Society for the money.

Membership

The Treasurer felt that the Family Membership should be reinstated.

The proposal is that it should be £10. for family. Also the Single membership for everyone should be £6.

This was agreed.

This to take effect when the membership is due on 1 April 2006.

7. MUSEUM REPORT – Peter Keeley

We have spent a lot of money over the last 12 months. In the area we call the sheep yard, we now have a new curved roof over the area covering the wheelwrights, brushworks and the new workshop. The specially made curved corrugated iron was £2000. and during last Winter there were approximately six people involved with this and it was hard, cold work.

The other roof job was the complete re-roofing of a listed building.

Various background jobs have been happening and one being, clearing the loft above the Meeting Room (above where you are sitting). That is of course on going. Also Jeff's Workshop, which he made out of a stable, this has been tidied.

Norman has designed a sandblasting machine. We have lots of items waiting to be done. We have this year had a problem with the Crossley Gas Engine, but this, we hope has now been solved. We had to employ a Contractor to reline the water gully above the Meeting Room. It is now guaranteed for 25 years.

The Trading of Museum was much better, 30% up from previous year. We had Kathleen Haran as our new Craft Co-ordinator. This is the first time a charge had been made for a table, to the Craft exhibitors to display their products.

We have another new volunteer, Dave Fuller who at present is painting doors, gutters etc.,

We are thinking of extending the Museum in two areas. The Radio and Science Room is very short of space, also Disabled access is needed from the back. We should be able to get Grants for this. The other area is to extend at the bottom of the sheep yard.

We are at present applying for a Grant to fit a door on to the Grain Barn, which we hope to start work on next month.

We received a generous donation from John Davis of £3000.00. in memory of his Wife Jean, who was a very active member of the Society. We also were able to reclaim £850.00. tax under the Gift Aid Scheme.

Of course our Archivist, Gill Arney left us this year. Cataloguing of the items in the Museum is a requirement of the Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA). It was felt that the present system being used was not very user friendly, so Bill and Sandra Barnard offered to help and have been editing this on to a separate document. Kit has also been involved with checking over the Filing Cabinets and other areas.

Peter Horn has joined us this week as a newcomer to the Tuesday workers.

Peter Keeley

8. PROGRAMME – Sue Lipscomb

(This was read out in her absence)

Since our last AGM we have had a wide-ranging selection of talks, my aim being to try to suit all tastes. The Christmas Social was a new venture, sadly only supported by 19; let's hope that this becomes more popular and that members attending this year will bring with them a short 'party piece' to entertain others. Another idea, which is new to our Society, is the 'Hobbies Evening'. This proved extremely successful, 39 people attended, and I would like to make it a regular feature along with our ever popular Cheese, Wine and Antiques evening in the Summer.

As usual, support varied for our talks from 14 to 33, but because of the larger numbers that our 'Hobbies Evening' and 'Cheese, Wine and Antiques Evening' attracted, we managed an average attendance of 30 this year.

Many thanks go out to all those members who support the talks. I would be very grateful for any ideas of good speakers whom I might book in the future.

Sue Lipscomb

9. WATERMILL – David Lindsey

1. VISITORS

- (1) General Public : Mill open the traditional 14 afternoons attracting 814 visitors – a decrease of 3½% on 2004 – with an average of 58. An acceptable result. The most of any one day was 137, again on the August Bank Holiday as last year.

- (2) Income : Gross takings (excluding flour) were £1090: 1.6% more than 2004.
- (3) School Parties : the final figures not yet available but should be close to the annual average of 1200 children. We have been well used by Dell Farm Outdoor Study Centre based at Whipsnade and by the Chiltern Study Centre based in Ivinghoe.
- (4) Other Parties : a marked improvement on last year – 97 visitors in 6 parties. The last one, was a party of 12 disabled people who, despite not being able to access some of the mill, thoroughly enjoyed their afternoon and have said they would like to come again. All credit to Jill Graves who took care of them and showed them round.
- (5) Milling : About 8½ cwt flour produced and sold. The good quality Hereward wheat from a farm near Baldock milled very well and produced excellent flour.

2. REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

- (1) Work has begun replacing 3 of the shutters which were in poor condition, beginning with one on the stone floor (farm side).
- (2) The pitwheel wedges, which were mentioned last year, have behaved themselves all season, they are monitored regularly – to prevent being caught out a third time.
- (3) Sealing the wheel buckets has been successfully completed. Jeff Hawkins would have been delighted to hear this news.
- (4) General maintenance has been done as/when necessary.
- (5) The rats have already appeared!!

3. ARCHIVES

Jill Graves ably assisted by husband Les has completed re-cataloguing the mill's artefacts and display items and is now about to convert the Conservation Records to tie in

4. VOLUNTEERS

As was said last year, and it has to be said again, looking after the mill as successfully as has done, could never have been achieved without the continued support of the staunchly loyal volunteers, cheerfully getting on with things regardless. Complaints are left for weekly debriefing meetings in the Rose & Crown where they are resolved most amicably.

Many thanks to all.

Very sadly, the death of Geoff Eccles on 15 September is reported to this meeting. It was fully reported in the October issue of the Newsletter. He was a natural with the children visiting the mill and a wise counsellor when sitting on the Steering Committee of FEWS. He will be hard to replace.

5. FORD END WATERMILL SOCIETY – 1 November 2005

We have set up a steering group. We came up with a very simple Society. Constitution now in force. We have held two committee meeting. We have Insurance. Lease is now signed for 18 months. Chris Tugby is Mill Manager, John Wallis is Treasurer, Keith Russell is Membership Secretary. We will go for Registration as a Charity.

David Lindsey

10. PUBLICITY – Anne Ball

(This report was read out in her absence)

Having said at this time last year that we would not pay for any more adverts in local papers, we did this season on two occasions for the Museum. I now email to the three major local Newspapers, which seems to have worked satisfactorily.

The work of Publicity Secretary will be considerably reduced in 2006 now that David Lindsey has made the decision to 'go it alone'. As the Watermill continued to open on more and more days, this increased publicity work, as well as the cost of postage.

P&IMS

AGM 17 November 2005

Circulation of leaflets for both Museum and Watermill was completed ahead of the first open days.

Once again, thank you to those who helped with the leaflet distribution.

Anne Ball

11. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<u>CHAIRMAN</u>	Kit Kite	<u>Proposed by</u> Jill Graves	<u>Seconded by</u> Peter Keeley
<u>VICE CHAIRMAN</u>	Vacant		
<u>TREASURER</u>	Norman Groom	Ron Ashurst	John Wallis
<u>SECRETARY</u>	Brenda Grace	Norman Groom	John Wallis
<u>COMMITTEE MEMBERS</u>			
<u>Museum Manager</u>	Norman Groom	Ron Ashurst	John Wallis
<u>Deputy Museum Manager</u>	Peter Keeley	Brenda Grace	Bill Barnard
<u>Programme Secretary</u>	Sue Lipscomb	John Wallis	Norman Groom
<u>Publicity Secretary</u>	Anne Ball	Sandra Barnard	Brenda Grace
<u>Trading Secretary</u>	Jeannette Wallis	John Wallis	Jill Graves
<u>Committee Member</u>	John Wallis	Norman Groom	Brenda Grace
<u>Committee Member</u>			
<u>Non Committee position</u>			

Archivist - A nomination had been received for the position.

Sandra Barnard. Proposed by Norman Groom Seconded by Peter Keeley and this was carried.

12. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

John Wallis had expressed that David Hardwick would like to step down from this post.
David to be thanked for his services over the years.

Norman Groom said that he had approached Roy Geary and he was willing to take on this position.

Proposed by Norman Groom, seconded by John Wallis and carried.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 Norman said he had received a letter from a member saying that she did not want to renew her subscription. Her reason being that she felt now the Museum was not involved with local history and it was more involved with engines. Norman said he had sent a reply to say that he felt that society members were not interested in local history significantly to come down and help us with displays, and it is only the 'hobbyist' that keeps the Museum going.

13.2 We need articles for our Newsletters.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Following the meeting museum artefacts were displayed on a table and a general discussion by our members ensued.

Signed Kit Kite

Date 16 November 2006