

Pitstone and Ivinghoe Museum Society



Newsletter April 2005

Date for your diary

Cheese & Wine Thursday 4th August .

2005-2006 Subs. are now due

Please renew your subscription promptly as it does make the work somewhat easier and we do not have to send out a reminder. A subscription slip is attached to this Newsletter.

Norman Groom

From The Chairman

As any housewife will tell you, in spite of what the politicians say we are not better off and money is harder to come by.

Your committee is, as usual, keeping a close eye on the situation and although we are at present in the black we cannot completely rule out some increases during the year.

This is my opportunity to publicly thank two people for their exceptional service to the Society.

As we know, it is always difficult to persuade people to volunteer to help so a big thank you to Corral for managing to be our very capable Membership Secretary for the last 10 years despite her extremely busy personal life. We all wish her the very best of luck in the future.

John Wallis? What can I say that has not been said by every other member? For the last 12 years he has been our Treasurer, one of the most difficult jobs in any organisation. He has given his professional help and advice to many in a quiet, unassuming manner and made sure we did not spend our money in a wasteful way. Our insurances and regular payments were made on time and petty cash spent by members was reimbursed as soon as requested. His sense of humour has relieved many a tense situation and we will all miss him very much indeed.

So, to both of them, very many thanks once again. Of course John will still be a committee member.

Kit Kite

Programme 2005

All meetings are held in the Education Room in the Pitstone Green Museum at 8.0pm.

Thursday 19th May 2005

Railways through the Chilterns

Ron White is busy in his retirement, running Britain's largest archive of colour photographs of railways both in this country and abroad. They are all housed in his home and there are over a quarter of a million!

Thursday 16th June 2005

Stowe Landscape Gardens and the Restoration Project

Ken James has been a steward at Stowe since the National Trust took over in 1989, and as such he is extremely well informed about this unique landscape garden and the work in progress there.

Thursday 21st July 2005

Hobbies Evening

We do hope that as many members as possible will attend this very first PIMS evening where member's hobbies will be on show. Do bring along some of the items that you use / collect as you enjoy your hobby. Here is the chance for you to set up a display for others to see. Please phone Norman Groom (01582 605464) so that space can be set aside for you.

Thursday 4th August 2005

Cheese, Wine & Valuations

Stephen Hearn has once again promised to join us for this event at the Museum. We shall open up at 7p.m. to allow members and their guests to walk around the exhibits, and then begin to serve the cheese and wine at 7.30p.m. Once we have given you coffee in the barn, the valuations will begin. This year we ask you to bring no more than two items, which we shall put on separate tables. We hope that this will ensure that Stephen gives a valuation of at least one of your possessions and maybe, if time allows, the second.

Entry will be £4.00 for members and £5.00 for non-members.

Thursday 15th September 2005

Reminiscences of two wartime Evacuees

Cherry Anne Evans and her sister will be coming along this evening to share with us their experiences as young girls evacuated from London to rural Buckinghamshire. Did you have a similar experience? Do come along and see whether your evacuation was in any way similar to that of these two ladies.

Thursday 20th October 2005

Behind Bars in Buckingham

Our speaker this evening is John Credland, a professional photographer. He began collecting photographs of this subject whilst helping the author of a book entitled 'Behind Bars in Buckingham' with the

photographic content. The book was written to commemorate the 450th anniversary of the gaol.

Sue Lipscomb, Programme Secretary

From the Museum

Hobbies Evening We have two events that are being held in the Big Barn this year, the Hobbies evening and the Cheese and wine. (See Sue's list for dates etc). Sue, our meetings organizer has asked me to coordinate the hobbies evening as it requires the tables and space to be allocated.

The idea of a hobbies evening came from the Engine Club where in the past we have found it to be very popular. Tables will be provided in the Big Barn and if necessary in the meeting room for members to bring along their hobbies to show to others. Please support this event and make it a success. It is an opportunity to meet and talk to other members of the society. The tables are 6ft X 3ft and we are looking for all kinds of hobbies or collections. I know there are many members in the society with a variety of interests, some of them come to our craft days. I will also be twisting the arm of those who work at the museum. The normal meeting charges will apply but will be waived for those exhibiting.

Please give me a ring on 01582 605464 (Norman Groom) or see me at the museum or the monthly meetings. We need to know how many are coming and if there are any special requirements in order to allocate space.

Cheese & Wine The Cheese and Wine is being organized by Sue and there are details elsewhere in the newsletter. It is an added bonus again with Stephen Hearn's valuation evening as well. If you have never been before you must come along to this one. It is not just the valuation, Stephen spends quite a time on each item talking to the audience, giving us lots of information about the objects as well as their value. The last time we held this event we ran out of time so we must limit the valuation to two

items per member, with the second item valued if time permits.

This will be a 'tickets only' event and tickets will be available at the monthly meetings, the museum open days and at the museum on Tuesdays, Thursdays or Sundays. If you cannot get to any of these then fill in the enclosed application slip and send it, together with a SAE to Brenda Grace at: -

20 Wellcroft Road, Ivinghoe, Leighton Buzzard, Beds. LU7 9EF.

Donation to the Society As you will know from the last Newsletter Jean Davis who died recently was a very active member of the Society and John Davis has made a very generous donation to the Society in memory of Jean. The committee is considering ideas for a substantial project that will be a fitting tribute for Jean's work for the Society.

Museum Report.

The bulk of effort at the museum during the last quarter has been directed to roof repairs and all related tasks. Now we are confident that we have fairly sound roofs over all the museum buildings, with the following exceptions.

1. There is a small area of roof over the office where tiles have slipped. We hope to attend to this later this year and hope that when we do so we do not find more extensive retiling necessary.
2. The corrugated roofs over the silos are in a very poor state. We could not possibly contemplate their replacement and will need to talk to the National Trust when they become our landlords.
3. The gully between the two roofs over the cart sheds and the meeting room is leaking quite badly and this has caused some rot. Work should start soon, first to repair the rot and then to re-line the gully.
4. Small repairs are needed on the Owen Barn roof.

Following all the recent corrugated roof repairs, this summer we shall have to apply bitumastic paint to all these new roofs, except the curved roof in the sheep yard which will have to be done in 2006.

A great deal of painting of red external woodwork needs to be done this summer.

None was done last summer despite pleas for volunteers to assist.

The staircase to the upper floor is being rebuilt; this work is progressing satisfactorily and when complete will result in a much safer access to the 1st floor via which we can confidently take visitors. Unfortunately full public access will need fire escape arrangements.

The arrangement of the grain growing and harvesting displays in the grain barn is now virtually complete, just minor re-arrangement and a few additional notices will complete the task. The display in the Owen Barn is being altered but the final arrangement is still under discussion. The loose-box known as 'Ron's Workshop' will be cleared and restored this summer, and one idea for its use is to relocate the archaeology display there. This would free up the whole of its existing location, which is currently underused.

The whole of the end bay of the building, which includes Jeff Hawkins' old workshop, is currently being restored. The front part of the workshop was open to the public all last year but there is still outstanding restoration work there. Now that Chris Wallis has virtually finished the structural repair of the rear section internal restoration has commenced.

Other minor repair and restoration tasks have been or are being done, but individual mention would lead to an unnecessarily lengthy report.

The first bank holiday open day of this year, Easter Monday, was very successful showing an improvement over last year, which in turn was our best attended and most profitable ever.

Peter Keeley, Deputy Manager

Treasurer and Membership

For those of you who attended the November AGM, you probably know that I said I would take on the job of Treasurer when John stepped down. At first sight this may seem madness, as manager of the museum is almost a full time job, however there is 'method in my madness'. The museum achieved registration status a couple of years ago and we reached the first

rung of the ladder giving us a similar status to the Chiltern Open Air Museum and Milton Keynes Museum, not bad for a bunch of amateurs! Unfortunately in 2007 they are removing the bottom rung of the ladder and I do not want to give up what we have achieved. It does mean more paperwork and in particular producing a financial forecast for each year, which in turn requires close contact with the income and expenditure of the museum, hence the Treasurer's job.

When John was Treasurer he would often take the subs at the museum or meetings and then had to pass the information on to the Membership Secretary, sometimes returning the membership cards to those that had paid. I have combined this with the Treasurer's job and produced a database of members that enables me quickly to print all of the cards or mailing labels. The subscriptions can now be paid directly to me either at the meetings, the open days or at the museum, and I can give you your membership card straight away. Those that cannot pay this way, please send your slip with cheque to me, Norman Groom, at: - 39 Periwinkle Lane., Dunstable Beds. LU6 3NP. Your cards will be sent to you in the next newsletter or if you require them earlier, please enclose a SAE.

Cheques payable to: - PIMS

A payment slip is enclosed with this newsletter. One or two members pay by direct debit, please ignore the payment slip if you do so and we will send you your card when our bank statement has been received. There is one change in the membership this year in that we are sending out a joint membership card to married couples. We already only send out one newsletter and this change will allow the database to be used for both cards and mailing labels. If for any reason this is not acceptable to you, please let me know and I will enter you as separate persons in the database.

Plant Stall Jean de Selincourt has been providing the majority of the plants for the plant stall on the museum open days. This has been a great attraction, as well as raising funds for the museum. Due to other commitments, Jean is no longer able to

continue, although she may on occasions bring some plants along when available. We must thank Jean for all her efforts in the past and ask if anyone else can provide plants and/or help sell them on open days. I know that one or two members have supplied plants but one or two other people would help. The plants would have to be delivered on the day and any unsold ones removed within a day or two.

Book sale. Another successful money raiser has been the second-hand books in the museum shop. They have been a substantial part of shop sales and we have to thank members who have brought books along to sell. However the shop is now full to bursting, so for the moment please, no more books. We will appeal again when we have space.

New Craft Organiser. Gillian Loose asked the committee if we could find someone to replace her, although she said she would carry on this year if necessary. We thank Gillian for her efforts this past year and Peter Keeley has found a replacement. Kathleen Haran has offered to do the job. Kathleen has previous experience in organising craft events and she has lots of new ideas that we can try out. There is going to be a bit of a learning curve this year, as Kathleen has not attended any of our open days before.

Poor attendance on some of our open days has been disappointing for the craft people and we are trying to get more unpaid advertising. One form of this is roadside advertising, but it is difficult to find people to put up road signs in areas other than those that we cover now. The top and bottom roads approaching Vicarage road from Tring and Marsworth are a possibility. If we provided the signs is there anyone who would put up additional signs in the morning of the open days and remove them in the evening.

Beds & Bucks Engine Club Coach

Trip At the last engine club meeting Sylvia said that she still has a few spaces left on the coach trip to the Black Country Museum. If you would like to come, give Sylvia a ring (evenings is the best time) on

01525 712949 Full details are in the last newsletter.

Message I would like to thank the people from PIMS for their support of this trip.

Sylvia Andrews

Battle of the worms

We are fighting two wars at Pitstone, one against rust and the other against woodworm. When you are fighting a war the first task is to know your enemy. Rust we understand and to a certain extent we can cope with, woodworm is a different matter. I never did understand the life cycle of the woodworm but recently came across an article that provided some information. The eggs are laid by the furniture beetle in the end grain, cracks, crevices or holes in the wood. The larvae hatch out and bore into the wood where they remain and grow, feeding on the wood for a period that can exceed three years. They eventually bore out of the timber and emerge as the furniture beetle to begin another life cycle. I always thought that treating the wood with creosote would stop the problem but after treating a winnower at the museum, I was surprised to see active woodworm still. I can only assume that the grubs were already within the timber and they had then bored themselves out. Perhaps the creosote will at least stop further infestation. The solution is apparently to use a syringe to inject the appropriate woodworm killer into all the holes to ensure full penetration. OK if you have a problem with a piece of furniture in your house but not when you have a whole building full of it.

Norman Groom

WEA The WEA Summer meeting will be on 14th June at Pitstone Green Museum. If you are interested come and hear about next year's courses and meet some of the tutors. For further information ring Marjorie Connelley

Archivist News As no contributions from members of the Society have been received recently to enliven the newsletter, I have reprinted an item from 'Yesterday's

World'. Some of you will remember this Society magazine which flourished from the early 1970's to the mid 80's when it died also from lack of contributions.

This is from July 1977 when Diana Sear was the Editor.

Golden Rules for Bicycle Riders

Extract from the book "Bicycling 1874"

Inwardly digest this information if you ride a "penny farthing" bicycle.

Never buy a bicycle unless it is of the best quality and by one of the best makers.

Never attempt to ride a bicycle with a driving wheel too large for you.

Never fail to thoroughly clean and oil your machine before starting on a journey and daily when in use.

Never use any oil but the best sperm.

Never tamper with the adjustment of the wheels, nor take the machine to pieces unnecessarily.

Never stir out on your machine without taking with you a spanner and oil tin.

Never turn the wheel of the bicycle from you when the machine has a tendency to fall, but always in the direction which it is falling.

Never travel a long journey without having your drawers lined smoothly and carefully with chamois leather or buckskin.

Never ride in the early morning fasting; a little rum and milk, with an egg beaten up in it, is an excellent sustenent.

Never fail if you are in a strange country to ascertain the character of the roads, from natives of the districts, before starting.

Never ride until you are faint, but rest yourself thoroughly at the first indication of exhaustion.

Never try to see how far you can ride without dismounting; a short walk, by bringing a different set of muscles into play will rest considerably.

Never attempt to ride up the worst hills; you may be able to do, but it will be better both for yourself and the machine, not to attempt it., especially on a long journey.

Never place your feet on the rest for ride down a hill, which you cannot see all the way to the bottom., without having your

machine thoroughly in hand, in case an immediate dismount becomes necessary.
 Never fail to give a wide berth to patchy places in a road
 Never fail to lean well forward up hill and again to the wind.
 Never fail to lean well back on your bicycle in going down hill.
 Never ride in the dark except when compelled to do so, unless you know every inch of your road thoroughly
 Knickerbockers are the best nether garments to ride in, and moderately thick boots are better than thin ones.
 Never fail when resting on a journey to place your machine beyond the reach of meddling hands.

Gillian Arney

Bess - On The Mill 16 : **'Going Welsh at t'Mill'**



Well, here I am, back again full of life and vigour. John and the Boss are both improving but not yet full of vigour like me.

The season has started really well.

The Boss had been unhappy with the fall in the number of visits by parties in the last two years. But to date over 30 school parties have been booked up to the end of June (estimated 700 to 800 children) and 6 adult ones as well. There were only 4 of these in 2003 and 2004 together.

In addition, on Easter Monday we were kept very busy with over 100 visitors who filled the mill most of the afternoon. The new Hereward wheat milled well and produced excellent flour. The Boss says I'm not to tell you how many bags were milled and sold. Can't see why as it's all part of the mill's success and visitors' enjoyment. He's already baked some bread with the flour and said it's the best yet. Even the troublesome pit wheel wedges behaved themselves so it all augurs well for the rest of the year - paws crossed.

What's all this about going Welsh then, you ask. First, on Easter Monday we experimented with an old Welsh rhawlech which translates as a 'slate-like shovel or scoop' or simply a 'flat scoop' used for filling bags with flour from a rectangular container (see illustration). It came from a mill in Dyfed called Felingwm (Valley Mill). We thought it might be good with our meal tray but its angles were not quite right so John is going to make a copy but modified to suit our tray.

Rhawlechau (the 'au' = 's') were used extensively in mid and west Wales and were taken by Welsh migrants to America (recruited by William Penn for their milling and millwrighting skills) and used in the watermills they built in Pennsylvania. Similar rhawlechau are used in Romania and Spain. A member of SPAB's Mills Section (a Welshman) is now researching their history and distribution.

Second, Ernie Jones who's also Welsh and the husband of Sue, our new school party contact, took some photos of the old Tanygrisiau woollen watermill in Blenau Ffestiniog and passed them on to the Boss. He's very pleased to have them not just because they're of an old mill but because it's one of the nicest mill names he's come across - Tanygrisiau means 'under the stairs'. The mind boggles - sounds like an indoors Lilliputian mill doesn't it?

My mum Erma is Welsh so the Boss has been able to have some linguistic help.

Tabochi

☞ **Bess o Velin.**



Welsh Rhawlech

Committee:-

Chairman Kit Kite

Tel. 01296 668918

Treasurer Norman Groom

Tel. 01582 605464

Secretary Brenda Grace

Tel. 01296 668167

Museum Manager Norman Groom

Deputy Museum Manager Peter Keeley

Tel. 01582 792701

Watermill Manager David Lindsey

Tel. 01582 600391

Archivist Gillian Arney

Tel. 01296 668123

Committee John Wallis

Tel. 01296 661997

Programme Secretary Sue Lipscomb

Tel. 01296 630578

Publicity Secretary Anne Ball

Tel. 01442 822672

Trading Secretary Jeannette Wallis

Tel. 01296 661997

Other Officers:-

Craft Co-ordinator Kathleen Haran

Tel. 01582 792895

Membership Secretary Norman Groom

Newsletter Sandra Barnard

5 Hawker Close, LB

Museum Website:-

<http://website.lineone.net/~pitstonemus>

Watermill Website:-

<http://www.fordendwatermill.co.uk>

Thursday 4 August 2005 – Pitstone Green Museum - Cheese, Wine and Antiques Valuation Evening.

Tickets are available Members £4 Guests £5

These will be sold at our Monthly Meetings, at the museum or at our Open Days.

Alternatively you can send a cheque made payable to:- PIMS

To:- Mrs Brenda Grace, 20 Wellcroft, Ivinghoe,
Leighton Buzzard. Beds. LU7 9EF.

Please enclosed a stamped addressed envelope.

No of Members..... No of Guests..... Cheque £.....

PITSTONE & IVINGHOE MUSEUM SOCIETY SUBSCRIPTION FORM.

Name :-.....

Address :-.....

.....

Post Code :-Tel No

Please find enclosed the sum of £ for the 2005/2006 subscription to the Pitstone & Ivinghoe Museum Society.

Membership £6.00 Senior Citizens £5.00

Cheques payable to :- PIMS. send to :- Norman Groom at 39 Periwinkle Lane, Dunstable, Beds. LU6 3NP. or payment at a Monthly Meeting or Museum Open Days

Watermill Opening Times

From 2.30 – 5.30p.m.

- *8th May Sunday- National Mills Day
- 22nd May Sunday
- *30th May Spring Bank Holiday Monday
- 12th June Sunday
- 26th June Sunday
- 10th July Sunday
- 24th July Sunday
- 14th August Sunday
- 28th August Sunday
- *29th August Bank Holiday Monday
- 11th September Sunday – National Heritage Day
- *25th September Sunday
- * Milling demonstrations from 3-5p.m. Approx.

**Adults £1.20, Children (5-15) 40p
Members of PIMS free**

Museum Opening Times

From 11.0a.m. - 5.00p.m.

Craft and Family Fun Days-

2nd Sunday in the month-

12th June, 10th July, 14th August,
11th September.

Museum Days- Bank Holiday Mondays

2nd May, 30th May,

29th August.

Monday 2nd May – Beds & Bucks Engine
Club Rally.

**Adults £3 children £1.50. Members of
PIMS free**

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