

Pitstone & Ivinghoe Museum Society



Newsletter April 2006

Picture by B. Wright (01296 668083)

From The Chairman

As I am writing this the sun is shining and it seems that Spring has come at last, reminding us that Easter Monday, our first open day, will soon be upon us although there are still final arrangements to be made.

However, having seen everyone working flat out I am certain that Norman, with his merry men and ladies, will be ready for the opening and my sincere thanks to all involved.

PS Have you heard this one?

A villager was lonely and so he decided life would be more fun if he had a pet. He went to the pet shop and told the owner that he wanted to buy an unusual pet. After some discussion he finally bought a centipede, which came in a little white box to use as his house.

The villager took the box back home, found a good location for the box and decided that he would start off by taking his new pet to the Pitstone and Ivinghoe Museum as it was their fun day. He asked the centipede in the box if he would like to do this. There was no answer from his new pet. He waited a few minutes then asked him again if he would like a walk to the museum. Still no answer. He decided to try just once more and shouted, "do you want to come or not?"

A little voice came out of the box, "I heard you the first time! I'm just putting my shoes on!"

Cheers -

Kit Kite

Museum Report –April 2006

The Grain Barn has a new look. The whole of the end wall, which faces the Nissen Hut, has been removed and rebuilt to include a roller shutter door and new corrugated iron to replace the old rusty stuff and the cracked and broken cement asbestos sheet up above. To help with this we obtained a £2000 grant from BOB MDS (Bedfordshire Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Museum Development Service) which just about covered the cost of the new door and its installation, the materials used for the remainder of the rebuild, and the licence and cost of disposing of the old cement asbestos sheet. The labour was by museum volunteers, and the work was done during the long cold spell.

The water leak has been found and many metres of rusty underground pipe have been replaced by modern (blue) plastic. This took a significant amount of time and effort by the volunteers, and hopefully our water supply is now assured for the foreseeable future.

There are two projects underway on the model railway front. Following a successful season of showing the Gauge '1' layout in the Nissen Hut

it has been decided to build an outdoor layout at the same gauge on which live steam model locomotives and their trains can be run for the public. Dave Fuller and Maurice Wingrove have been the main helpers in this project which takes the form of an double endless loop on the edge of the tree belt near to the Nissen Hut. It will not be ready for use at Easter but it is hoped to have trains running by mid-summer.

We have also obtained, at a very reasonable price, some second hand sections of multi-gauge track (2½", 3½", & 5") which it is proposed initially to erect as a straight run through the woods at the rear of the grain barn. Work will commence on this during the summer but is unlikely to be complete this open season. When it is complete it will be possible to give rides to the public, and in the future we have it in mind to extend the run around the boundary to finish at the cart sheds. It is felt that this will be a popular money spinning facility for children if not for adults as well.

We realise that model railways are not a museum function, but they are always popular with the visiting public and will help to make us better known in the area.

The clearing and sorting of many years of accumulation of non catalogued artefacts and much junk and rubbish from the lofts has continued. We now have room to manoeuvre and several schemes are under consideration for use of the lofts. The loft space to the rear of the office has always been a place for restoring and storing of catalogued artefacts, and during the past winter this store has been completely renovated. Still to be completed is the erection of additional space-efficient shelving on which to store the remaining contents of the main loft so that that can be renovated in the near future.

We had hoped to complete the transfer of the Archaeology room to its new location before

the first open day on Easter Monday 17th April. We have failed in this, but at least we now have a room which is fully prepared for transfer of the archaeology exhibits to their new quarters. This will be accomplished during the summer.

Other work of artefact restoration and building maintenance are proceeding to plan. Thoughts are being given to expansion of the areas open to the public; we are desperately in need of more space in which to display exhibits. Two possible places for this are (a) a small rearward extension to the Science and Radio Room, and (b) additional buildings at the far end of the sheepyard. Perhaps there will be more to say about this in the next Museum Report.

Finally, you will probably all remember that the Museum site was bequeathed to The National Trust in Jeff Hawkins' will. We have recently heard on good authority that this will not take effect until around autumn 2008 so some aspects of the Museum's plans for development must remain 'in limbo' until then.

Peter Keeley, Deputy Museum Manager

Appeal for help

Over the last few issues of the Newsletter I am sure you are aware of our constant appeal for more helpers. I was hoping that my more serious appeal in the last Newsletter would have produced some results but sadly no, the response was NIL which does not bode well for the future of the society.

Thank you to Julia Barnard who has come forward to demonstrate Natural history through a microscope on open days.

Norman Groom

2006-2007 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

Snapshot of Pitstone

Pitstone Green Farm :-Reproduced from the publication below :-

“ In Pitstone Green There is a Farm” by Jean Davis & Mary Farnell

First published 1979
by Pitstone Local History Society,
Pitstone Green Farm,
Pitstone, Bucks.

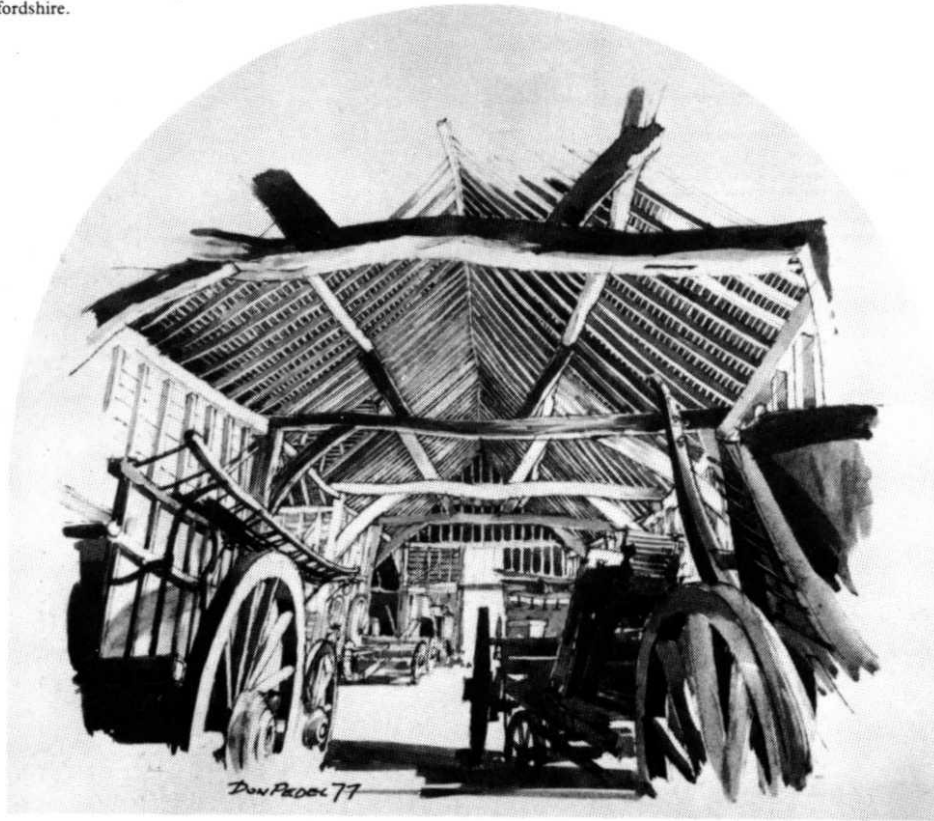
Copyright © 1979
Pitstone Local History Society

No part of this book may be
reproduced in any form without
written permission from the
Society

ISBN 0 9506582 0 0

Printed in Great Britain by
Maund & Irvine Ltd., Tring,
Hertfordshire.

Jean Davis prepared the text
Mary Farnell prepared the photographs
Together they designed the book



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Nearly all the photographs in the book come from the Society's collection, the major exception being stills from the film "The Agrarian Revolution" made by Hugh Baddeley Productions of Hatfield, Hertfordshire, which show members of the Society using implements from the Museum.

Some of the background material is taken from work done by a WEA group in Pitstone and Ivinghoe under the tutorship of Hugh Hanley, now County Archivist for Buckinghamshire. Facilities were made available at the County Record Office to photograph the two maps of which extracts are included, and other help was

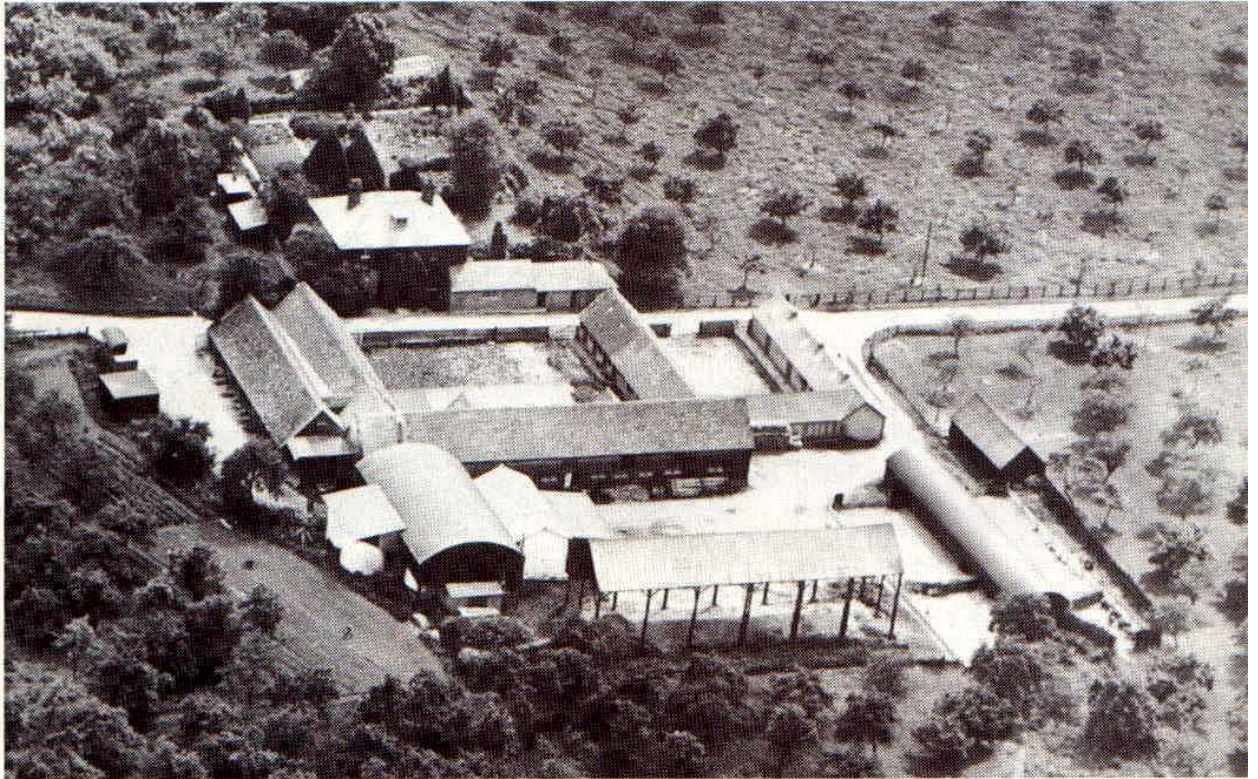
freely given by the staff there and also by those at the County Museum and members of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, all in Aylesbury.

Much of the written material is based on the old farm records at Pitstone Green Farm and on the local farming knowledge of Jeffrey Hawkins and Donald Levy, although valuable assistance has been given by many members of the Society.

Our grateful thanks are given to them all, and to the many people who have lent or given the Society the photographs which now appear in this book.

Spring, 1979

Pitstone Green Farm



Until 1830, Samuel Hawkins's farmhouse was an old building, perhaps timbered and thatched, which had belonged to one of the farms comprising the holding. Redundant farmhouses were often converted into labourers' cottages. In 1830, however, the remaining farmhouse was pulled down and a modern one – the present Pitstone Green farmhouse – was built on almost the same site. All the outbuildings were demolished except the great barn and a small shed, still known as Stevens' barn. The total cost of the new house and buildings was £896 14s. 3d. To-day the cost would be more than a hundred times as much.

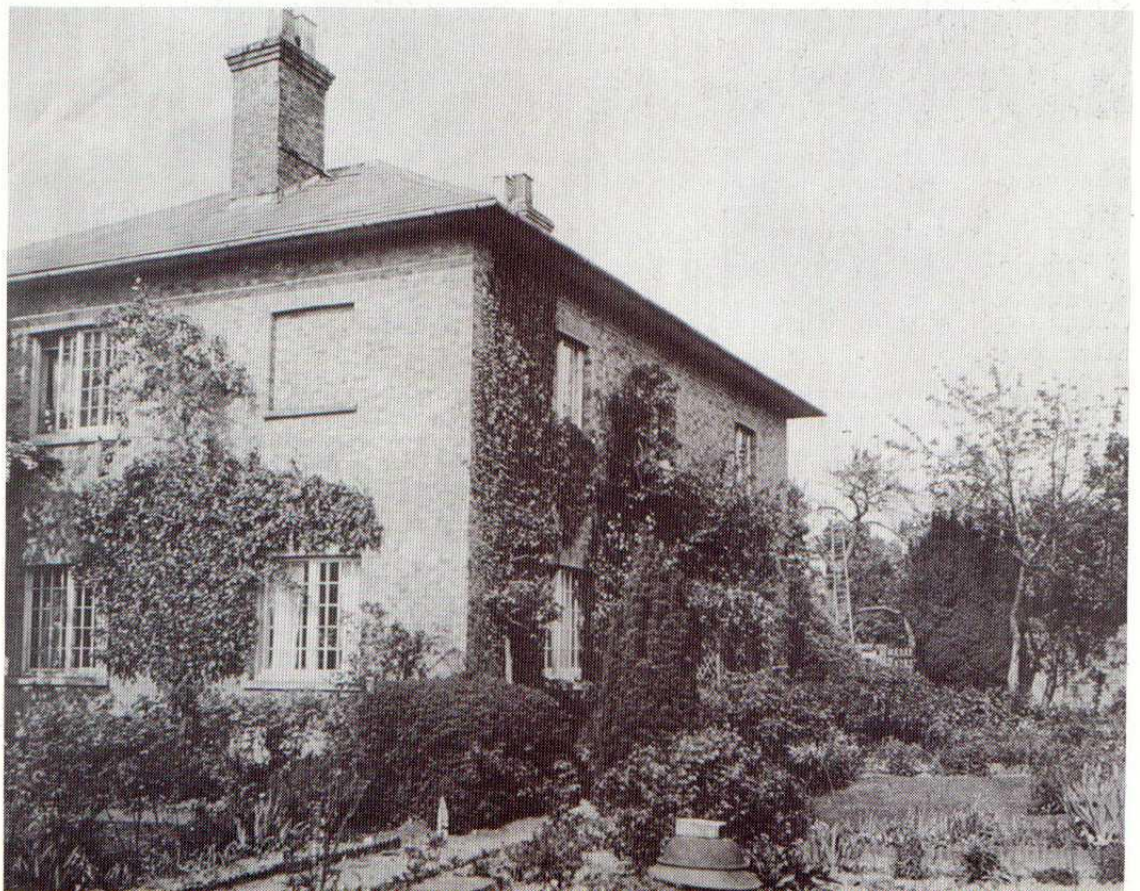
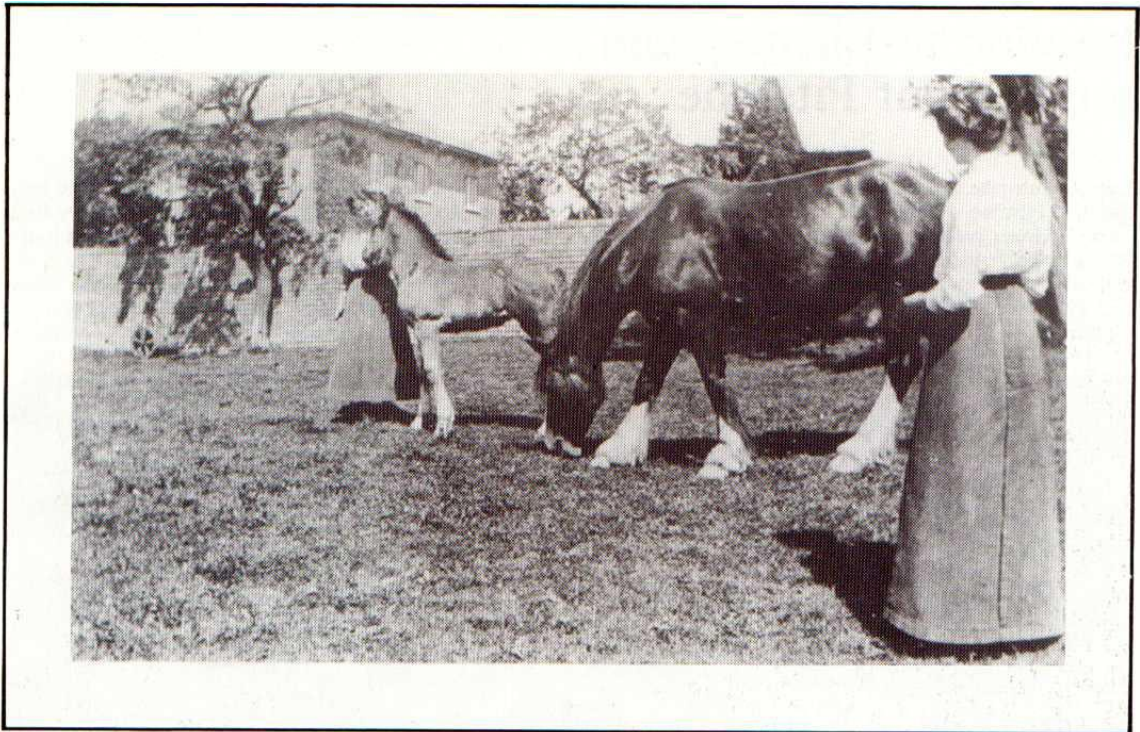
Bricklayers, joiners, masons, carpenters and plumbers were all Ashridge employees – which helps to explain the otherwise surprising lack of these craftsmen in Pitstone in the first half of the 19th century.

The new house and buildings were placed so as to form the other three sides of a square with the existing big barn. To the west was a cowshed with standings for 10 cows, a loose-box and a range of pigsties. On the east was a "nags' stable" with standings for two light horses for riding and driving (the farmer's car of those days), a big stable for up to 10 cart-horses and, above, a loft for hay and chaff for the horses. Between barn and stable was a granary, with space below to shelter stock kept in the "fold yard" within the square. During the winter, cattle were kept in this warm sheltered yard and many tons of manure were made to put on the land. Cowsheds, sties and stables were easily cleaned into the yard; and straw from the oats, barley and wheat threshed on the

threshing floors in the big barn was carried straight into the yard for the cattle to eat or tread into manure. And this is more or less how these buildings were used until the last war, when changes in farming began to make the buildings obsolete.

Timbers from demolished buildings were used to build a cart-shed (wagons being rarely used on local farms) on the back of the stable so as to face the east. The sun must not shine upon the carts' wooden wheels, as this would cause the wood to shrink and the wheels would drop to pieces in their iron tyres. The bay nearest the house had a plastered ceiling and double doors; this housed a special vehicle for the farmer's family, the chaise. New rick frames were provided to stack the harvested corn off the ground, out of the reach of rats and mice. The frames were 16 ft. in diameter and raised on York staddle stones. With the threat of the "Swing" riots in 1831, orders were given to move the ricks away from the buildings, in case they were fired by rioters.

The brick and slated house, typical of other "Bridge-water" farmhouses, was square and solid, with five bedrooms for the family and an attic for the domestic servants. Added on were a brewhouse, a wood-barn, a harness room, earth closet, hen-house and duck-house. A copper pipe from brewhouse to cellar conveyed the beer to barrels below, whilst a dairy at the cool north-east corner was half underground, with a room above, reached from the kitchen, where the farm servants – young unmarried men – slept. So modern a house and barns could, of course, command a higher rent.



Farm Economy – Old Style

At the start of the 19th century, when the Hawkins family came to Pitstone, the war against France had forced up the price of grain and large profits were made by some farmers. Labourers' wages remained low, however, and hours were long – dawn to dusk in the winter and 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in the summer, six days a week (Below*). These conditions persisted until after the first world war. Many single men were employed by the year, living in with the farmer's family. Labourers were hired at the local Statute Fairs ("statties"), and in 1834 the labour-rate system was introduced in the parish whereby farmers must either employ out-of-work labourers on their land or pay a rate towards their upkeep.

As the century progressed, the farmers' social status rose and the easy familiarity of man and servant changed. Population increased, more men were employed by the day and needed the accommodation in the one-up-one-down cottages into which the old farm-houses had been converted. Nevertheless, male farm servants were still resident in Pitstone as late as 1871, but the Bridgewater farmhouses were designed to keep their accommodation separate from that of the family.

In the year that his father died (1839), John Hawkins married Emily Heley of Ivinghoe, who bore him two sons and two daughters. In February 1840, the Pitstone Green Farm weekly wage bill was £5 8s. 11d. for nine men and four boys – say 10s. a week for the men and a little over 4s. a week for the boys (Opposite). At haytime and harvest the rate rose, with free beer as well.



1854 Sent Plumbs to London

Sept 14	7 baskets of Damsons		
	They make 5/6 basket	1	18 6
	1 basket of Plumbs	3	3
Sept 18	9 Damsons 5/6	2	9 6
21	21 20 5/6	5	5 -
"	1 20 3/6	3	3
25	23 20 5/6	5	14 6
"	1 1/2 20	2	6
26	22 20 5/6	6	8 6
Oct 2	20 1/2 20 3/6	8	7
	1 Prunes	1	6
5	23 20 5/6	11	5 6
9	16 1/2 20 9/6	7	15 6
12	Prunes 6/6	3	12
* 12	1/2 20 5/6	1	19 8
8	Damsons	4	4
16	20 10/6	2	10
18	20 10/6	2	10
Current forward		63	7 8

At the same time, John Hawkins was selling milk for 1/2d. a pint, butter at 1s. 1d. per lb. and a fowl for 1s. 6d. When he sold his grey horse for £27, he gave the purchaser one shilling "chapmoney" – a rebate, or possibly "luck" money. Each week he went to market at Leighton Buzzard and elsewhere, and the sale of the principal crops (wheat, barley and oats) brought in roughly the same amount as the other produce, including peas and beans, tares, hay, straw and plaiting straw, eggs, milk, butter, fruit, fowls, ducks, cattle, sheep, wool and pigs. In the year 1839–40, the farm showed an over-all profit of about £275.

The yield per acre was increased by buying manure and ashes and by growing legumes (peas and beans). The heavier land was improved by the extensive installation of rag, or chalk, drains carried out by John Hawkins in the 1840s and 50s.

The economy of local fruit-growing is illuminated by his account books of 1854 and 1855. "Plumbs", prunes and damsons, harvested from September to November, were sent to the London markets; but over a third of the sale price was spent in gathering and carriage costs. An extract is shown above.

NB:-The Swing Riots

The Swing Riots were an agricultural phenomenon. Following years of war, high taxes and low wages, farm labourers finally snapped in 1830. These farm labourers had faced unemployment for a number of years due to the widespread introduction of the threshing machine and the policy of enclosing fields. No longer were thousands of men needed to tend the crops, a few would suffice. With fewer jobs, lower wages and no prospects of things improving for these workers the threshing machine was the final straw, the object that was to place them on the brink of starvation. The Swing Rioters smashed the threshing machines and threatened farmers who had them. The riots were dealt with very harshly. Nine of the rioters were hung and a further 450 were transported to Australia. SB

From The Censuses by Sandra

1851... Pitstone Green Farm

John Hawkins 39. Farmer of 250 Acres employing 20 labourers. Born Pitstone Bucks. Mary Ann 20. Farmers wife, born Slapton Bucks. Sarah Emily Hawkins daur 4, born Pitstone Bucks. Eliza Berton 16, general servant, born Aston Abbots Bucks. Arthur Nash 18 Servant, agricultural labourer, born Pitstone. George Pitchford 14 Servant, agricultural labourer, born Pitstone.

Next door...Francis Pitchford 55, widower, agricultural labourer, born Pitstone

William 22, unmarried, straw plaiter, born Pitstone. Charles 20, unmarried, straw plaiter, born Pitstone. Thomas Pitchford 18, unmarried, straw plaiter, born Pitstone. Elizabeth Rolfe 55, widow, housekeeper, born Bucks Longwick. Phillip Rolfe 10, housekeeper's son, straw plaiter, born Pitstone.

(Ref. Public Record Office Census HO107/1716)

1861 ... John Hawkins 49, Farmer of 250 Acres employing ??(not readable) men and 5 boys b. Pitstone. Mary Ann 30 wife b. Slapton.

Samuel Hawkins 21 son, unmarried, farmer, born Pitstone. Sarah Emily Hawkins 14, daur, John Henry son 9, Albert David son 8, Matilda R daur 6, Edith May daur 5, Joseph son 4, Frederick James son 3, Julia Ann daur 1, Alice Maria daur 6 months. All the children were born in Pitstone. They had a visitor, Elizabeth Turney? Gadsdon age 17 born Slapton and a general servant Maria Thompson aged 26 unmarried, from Little Hampden.

Next listed was the Cox Family born Pitstone.

(Ref. Public Record Office Census RG 9/842)

1871... The Farmer is now Mary Ann Hawkins a widow 40, of 319 acres employing 10 men and 8 boys. She is helped on the farm by sons John H 19 and Albert D 18 and daughter Edith Mary 15.

There are 3 more daughters Laura Sabina? 9, Florence 6, Mary Ann 4. The housekeeper was Mary Goodwin 24 unmarried from Markyate Herts. There was a general servant Emma Nappin? 16 unmarried, from Thame Oxen . Next was Charles Cook 49 married from Bucks Linslade. He was the Farm Baliff.

(Ref. Public Record Office Census RG 10/1390)

1881... Mary Ann "Benson" now 50 has remarried .She describes her occupation as "Farmer of 330 acres empl.11 men 5 boys".

With her is Richard Benson described as "son in law, visitor" he is 39 married and he gives his occupation as commercial traveller. He was born in Birmingham Warwick. Albert David Hawkins is still working on the farm 28 unmarried, together with sisters Alice Maria 20, Florence 16 and Mary Annie 14. None of the children were married.

Note: Brenda Grace has found the following information, which proves Richard above was not her husband.

Marriages, 7 Oct 1871 Edwin Benson 59 widower, Brickmaker of Kings Norton son of James Benson Manufacturer Mary Anne Hawkins 42 widow, Farmer of Pitstone, daughter of David Gadsden, Farmer Mary died 19 October 1894 aged 63 of Pitstone.

(On the 1871 census Edwin was living at 129 Sherborne Rd. Kings Norton aged 59 and a widower, with daughter Jane and Granddaughter Ann Robinson. He was a brushmaker employing 10 men 9 women and 8 boys. With the family was a visitor Frederick Hawkins 13 born Pitstone.)

Next in Stank Lane is the Coker family.

(Ref. Public Record Office Census RG 11/1447)

Edwin Benson on census day in 1881 was visiting the Marchbank family, William & Ann at U Lane Ends, Cowling Yorkshire. He is 69 a visitor. He describes his occupation as "Farmer of 380 acres employing 18 men & 4 boys".

1891... On this census we see Mary Ann Benson now 59 and once again a widow and a farmer. With her is son Joseph Hawkins 34 single and farmer's son, daughters Florence 26, Mary 24 both single. Rose Neaves 17 is their domestic servant from Hain? Surrey.

Next door in no 3 Pitstone Charity Estate is the Coker family.

(Ref. Public Record Office Census RG 12/1127)

1901... Now we see the farm run by two partners John H Hawkins 49 a widower and brother Joseph 45 still single. John's children, Edith M 21 daur, Leonard J 19, farmers son. Kate T Cook 17 is their domestic servant.

(Ref. Public Record Office Census RG 13/1330)

Sandra Barnard

Programme 2006

All meetings are held in the Education Room in the Pitstone Green Museum at 8.00 pm.

Thursday 20th April

Artefacts from the Distant Past

Dave Chennells and Tony Seabrook are both fanatical about their hobby; metal detecting. William Hawkins has given them permission to search the fields around the farm so many of the artefacts they bring to show us will have come from our local area. Through these objects they will take us back in time, in some instances into pre-history.

Thursday 18th May

It's on the cards!

Sandy and Dave Clarke have been collecting cards for many years now. Dave collects cigarette cards and Sandy, trade cards, which tend to be even older. Some of the cards they have date back to the 1880's and their idea of fun is to buy a box of assorted cards and then have the pleasure of sorting through to find the ones they haven't got in their collection.

Thursday 15th June

Wine, Cheese and Antiques

We are delighted that Stephen Hearn has agreed to be our guest at this popular summer event once again. The museum will be open from 7p.m. to allow members and their friends to walk around the exhibits, and then refreshments will be served at 7.30p.m. Please do not bring more than two

items, which will be separated onto two tables. In this way we will ensure that at least one of your items will be seen by Stephen, and with any luck, both will.

Thursday 20th July

History in the Field

Tony Rook lives in Hertfordshire and is an archaeologist, local historian, author and broadcaster who has had an on-going involvement with the Time Team. He will be talking to us about fields, their boundaries and what lies beneath the surface.

Dates for your diary

'Hobbies Evening' **Thursday 17 August**

Open Days 2006

Easter Monday April 17th
Bank Holiday Monday May 1st
Bank Holiday Monday May 29th
Sunday June 11th
Sunday July 9th
Sunday August 13th
Bank Holiday Monday August 28th
Sunday September 10th

Opening times from 11.0 a.m. to 5.0. p.m.
Adults £3 Children £1.50.
Members of PIMS free
.

Thursday 15 June 2006 – Pitstone Green Museum

Cheese, Wine and Antiques Valuation Evening

MEMBERS - £4

GUESTS - £5

Cheques to be made payable to PIMS

No. of members.....

No. of Guests.....

Cheque £.....

Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope

The address to send to is:-

Pitstone & Ivinghoe Museum Society, Pitstone Green Farm, Vicarage Road Pitstone LB
Beds LU7 9EY - It would help us if you could please mark the envelope C & W in the
bottom left hand corner.

Numbers are limited so if you are interested in this event, please apply soon.

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

Committee:-

Chairman

Kit Kite

01296 668918

Treasurer & Membership Secretary

Norman Groom

39 Periwinkle Lane, Dunstable,
Beds. LU6 3NP 01582 605464

Secretary

Brenda Grace

20 Wellcroft, Ivinghoe, LB Beds. LU7 9EF
01296 668167

Museum Manager

Norman Groom

Deputy Museum Manager

Peter Keeley

01582 792701

Committee

John Wallis

01296 661997

Programme Secretary

Sue Lipscomb

01296 630578

Publicity Secretary

Anne Ball

01442 822672

Trading Secretary

Jeannette Wallis

01296 661997

Other Officers:-

Archivist

Sandra Barnard

5 Hawker Close,

LB Beds LU7 4HH

Craft Co-ordinator

Kathleen Haran

01582 792895

Newsletter

Sandra Barnard

Museum Website:-

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