

*Pitstone & Ivinghoe
Museum Society Newsletter*



Winter 2008

Chairman's Report

I think I should start this report by formally recording the Committee's appreciation of the work put in by my predecessor Kit. I have no doubt that his will be a hard act to follow.

Since his report at our last committee meeting on 5 October, the work of constructing and decorating the buildings, which will shortly be occupied by the model railway and others items has been completed other than the application of the floor paint and all involved should be congratulated. No doubt, Peter's report will detail the work and name all those involved. Their appearance fits in well with the older buildings in the Sheep Yard.

The next project on which work has just started will be the extension to the Science Room and will probably take us into late Spring.

I am given to understand that our finances are in a healthy situation and with Easter being early this year, the income (weather permitting!) should make good the expenditure which has taken place in connection with the new building.

Before I close, I must acknowledge with thanks the extra work Norman has put in occupying the Treasurer's office. I'm sure he will relinquish it with pleasure.

There is no doubt that currently we have a very good cross-section of skills in our team of weekly volunteers and I think we can look forward to the future in confidence.

David Goseltine

Museum Report – January 2008

Most of us who work at the Museum during the winter closed season have been fully occupied, one way or another, on the new building at the far end of the Sheeppyard during the last 3 months. It is now officially to be known as the Model Rooms and we hope to move all our models, currently scattered around various rooms and buildings on site, to be together in this new location. The very wet weather followed by the very cold weather has slowed things down a little. At the time of writing this report the building is complete apart from some work on fitting the doors (which we have made) and finishing off inside. The painting has been done, and all the 12 lights are fitted and working, albeit some of them with temporary wiring. Fairly soon in this New Year we shall be able to start moving

some things in, and it is still probable that it will be open to public view on the (very early this year) Easter Monday open day. The area around here has already been landscaped; some very poor scrubby trees and bushes have been removed, and others pruned, and grass seed has been sown and is growing well. This year it will be possible for the first time for the visiting public to walk all the way round though the tree belt from the new Model Room to the Cart Sheds, and the undergrowth will be kept down in an attempt to encourage them to do so.

And talking of the Cart Sheds, Michael and Alan have started to erect the grain mill, which was given to us by Lacey Green Windmill and is now partially restored by them. It will be located in the Cart Sheds adjacent to the rear entrance to the Meeting Room. We have thoughts of fitting an electric motor so that the mill can be seen “working”, although we have no intention of trying to make flour. The millstones on this machine are in a very poor state and it is likely they will have to be substituted by home-made look-alikes.

The restoration of the hayloft above the Meeting Room is still on hold since Spring last year but will probably resume as a bad weather indoor job for John C, Nigel and Ken during the winter. Their good weather jobs will probably involve various small drainage tasks around the site, and of course assisting with the other major building task for which we obtained planning consent, the rear extension to the Science Room. Work towards this extension has already started and Joe and myself have already done some minor digging, demolition, and building, and this project is expected to gain pace as the better weather returns. However, nobody should expect to be able to enter this new building and see artefacts on display this year. As for 2009? - Who knows?

Really there is little more to say. Several people who work away unseen in the background, such as Jill polishing and preserving harness and tack, and Sandra striving to put our archives in better order with Mike and Jean assisting when they can, visit the Museum regularly to progress their work. Roll on Spring and, hopefully, warmer weather.

Peter Keeley, Business Manager

“Highs and Lows”

Over the last few years, there has been a problem in finding new committee members to handle the administration of the society. Things were reaching a low point when Kit Kite stepped into the breach as Chairman. The committee wishes to pass on their thanks to him for helping out at a difficult time and for being such a

good Chairman. However, prior to the AGM last November, Kit had to stand down due to health problems but I gather now that things are on the mend and we wish him well and hope that it will not be too long before we see him again at the museum for a chat.

The other blow was that John and Jeannette Wallis also wanted to resign from the committee as they had served for many years and wanted a break. Fortunately, both John and Jeannette will carry on their duties regarding the school parties and the museum shop respectively. They were both on the committee when I first joined the society in about 1990 and had probably served many years prior to that. Once again, the new committee wishes to pass on their thanks to John and Jeannette for their services over the many years.

Finding a new committee was thought to be almost impossible when our team of volunteers at the museum came to the rescue. David Goseltine, who must be the longest active serving member of the society, is once again our Chairman, serving previously many, many years ago. I believe David started working with Jeff Hawkins at the museum back in 1965.

Sandra has been working at the museum for quite a while now but recently her husband Bill has volunteered to be Membership secretary. John Youngs, our resident carpenter has offered to handle the accounts, as his profession was an Accountant and is now our Treasurer. John Childs has always been the one we approach when we have construction/building tasks or problems and he works with a small team of volunteers. John was a natural as Site Manager and joins the committee in that position. As you already probably know, Peter Keeley wanted to change his title from Museum Deputy Manager to Business Manager, as Peter tends to handle all that side of things. Rob Barber, another of our volunteers, who loves messing about with anything mechanical, joins us as Deputy Manager. Nigel Thompson tends to work with John Childs on our construction projects; he joins us as a committee member. Although Nigel's profession was a Dentist, he is a dab hand at almost anything that comes up especially pulling out nails! So these are the new additions to our committee and we have already had our first committee meeting and everything looks set for an interesting time ahead.

That's the good news; the bad news is that the catering this year may pose a few problems. Due to various reasons neither Helen Hickson nor Brenda Grace are able to help to the extent they have in the past, and that has been considerable. We have never been able to find anyone to take over Helen's job as Catering Manager to handle all aspects of catering. However, the support of those that help us on Open Days has allowed us to continue and maintain our high standards. This year

however we will rely more than ever on their and your support to provide this service. On Saturday February 9th at 11am in the Meeting Room, we are again holding a Catering Meeting and all those that helped last year in any way whatsoever are invited. We are also looking for additional help both at the counter on open days, taking the money, or administration duties in the background. If you think you may be able to help please come along to the meeting, there will be no commitment and even if you have just ideas, we would like to hear them. Anne Ball has agreed to provide a small buffet after the meeting and I am sure she would like a little help. Anne is going to phone around to invite those that helped last year but time is short as well as help, so if you are not contacted for any reason please come along, we really need your help this year.

Norman Groom

Joe Marling busy digging the foundation of the science room extension, note the onlookers, only two this time. Anyone working usually attracts many more.



Peter Keeley finishing the wiring in the recently completed model room, is it those same onlookers?



Membership

Please make a note of our current fees.

The 2008/2009 membership subscription will be due on 1st April 2008. Subscriptions are now £7, with a £1 reduction per person if you accept one newsletter and one membership card for a couple living at the same address, i.e £12 per couple.

Please pay after 1st April by cheque. This is now our preferred method of payment. Cheques should be made out to Pitstone and Ivinghoe Museum Society and returned with the slip that you will receive in April to the museum address:- **Pitstone Green Farm, Vicarage Road, Pitstone, Leighton Buzzard LU7 9EY.** **Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope**, if you want your membership card quickly, otherwise they will go out with the next newsletter. Cash will only be accepted for people without a bank account.

Bill Barnard Membership Secretary

Peter De Wint

Whilst scanning and checking the museum's photograph collection I came across a black and white photograph of a painting by Peter De Wint.

The original painting was bequeathed to the Tate Gallery by John Henderson, an artist, archaeologist and art collector, in 1879. The painting was watercolour on paper and its title is:-

“Cornfield, Ivinghoe, Buckinghamshire”



The colour picture can be seen on the Tate web site.

<http://www.tate.org.uk/>

Type “Peter De Wint” in the search box.

The notes below are from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

Sandra Barnard

Peter De Wint (21 January 1784 - 30 January 1849) was an English landscape painter.

De Wint was the son of an English physician of Dutch extraction who had come to England from New York; he was born in Stone, Staffordshire. He moved to

London in 1802, and was apprenticed to John Raphael Smith, the mezzotint engraver and portrait painter. He bought his freedom from Smith in 1806, on condition that he supplies eighteen oil paintings over the following two years. In 1806, he visited Lincoln for the first time, with the painter of historical subjects William Hilton, R.A., whose sister Harriet he married in 1810. De Wint and Hilton lived together in Broad Street, Golden Square, where John Varley also lived. Varley gave De Wint further lessons and introduced him to Dr Monro, who ran an informal academy for young artists. De Wint first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1807, and the following year at the Gallery of Associated Artists in Watercolours. In 1809 entered the Royal Academy schools. He was elected an Associate of the Old Watercolour Society in 1810 and was made a full member the following year. By that time, as an established drawing-master, he was spending his summers teaching well-to-do provincial families. In 1812, he became a member of the Society of Painters in Watercolours, where he exhibited largely for many years, as well as at the Academy.

De Wint's life was devoted to art; he painted admirably in oils, and he ranks as one of the chief English watercolorists. "No artist", asserted Alfred William Rich, "ever came nearer painting a perfect picture than did Peter de Wint".

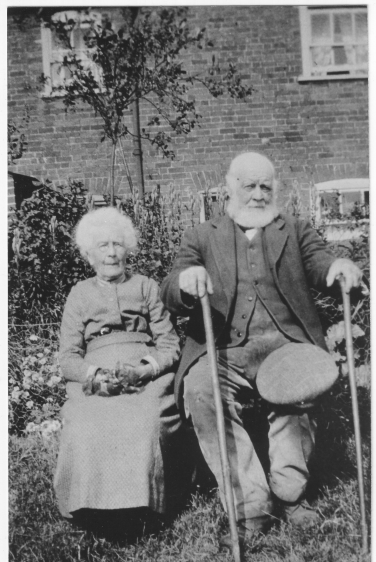
A number of his pictures are in the National Gallery, the Victoria and Albert Museum and The Collection, Lincoln. He frequently visited his wife's home city of Lincoln, and many of his panoramic landscapes and haymaking scenes are set in Lincolnshire. He occasionally toured in Wales, and in 1828 travelled to Normandy. He died in London.

Copyright:- Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Pitstone Soldiers

This article remembers two Pitstone soldiers, Alfred and Samuel Coker who both died in the Great War of 1914-1918 in the theatre of France & Flanders. They were both from the Coker family.

**Picture:- Their parents
James and Sarah Coker
outside their home in Pitstone**



**In Memory of
Private S COKER**

**10594, 1st Bn., Welsh Regiment
who died
on 05 March 1915**

**Remembered with honour
DRANOUTER CHURCHYARD**



**Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission**

**Samuel Coker
Died of wounds**

He was born in Pitstone and he
enlisted at Aylesbury, Bucks

Grave/Memorial reference:
II.B.8.

**Alfred Coker
Killed in Action**

He was born in Pitstone and
enlisted at Tring Herts

Formerly 190602, R.E.

Grave/Memorial reference:
VIII.K. 3.

**In Memory of
Private A COKER**

**7716, 1st Bn., Bedfordshire Regiment
who died age 35
on 09 October 1917**

**Remembered with honour
HOOGE CRATER CEMETERY**



**Commemorated in perpetuity by
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission**

Family History of the Coker Family from the censuses

1881

Address- Stank Lane Pitstone

James Coker age 23, shepherd, born Pitstone

Sarah 22, wife, lace maker, born Quainton

James Shillingford (Coker) 4, stepson born Quainton

Emma 5 months, daughter, born Pitstone

1891

Address- Charity Estate Pitstone

James Coker 33, farm labourer, shepherd, born Pitstone

Sarah 32, wife, straw plaiter, born Quainton

James Shillingford (Coker) 14, stepson, farm labourer, born Quainton

Emma 10, daughter, scholar, born Pitstone

Mary A 9, daughter, scholar, born Pitstone

Alfred 7, son, scholar, born Pitstone.

1901

Address- Town Houses, near the bridge, Pitstone

James T Coker 43, shepherd on farm, born Pitstone

Sarah 42, wife, born Quainton

Mary Ann 19, daughter, single, straw plaiter at home, born Pitstone

Alfred 17, son, single, farm labourer (horses), born Pitstone

Edith M 13, daughter, straw plaiter at home, born Pitstone

Richard 11, son, scholar, born Pitstone

Elizabeth S 9, daughter, scholar, born Pitstone

Samuel G 7, son, scholar, born Pitstone

Ellen G 5, daughter, scholar, born Pitstone

Minnie 4, daughter, scholar, born Pitstone

Francis E 2, son, born Pitstone

Ethel 2 months, Granddaughter, born Pitstone

Research by Ena Ashurst

Note:- Marriages Dec 1879, Berkhamstead 3a 687

Coker James Thomas, Shillingford Sarah

Website... <http://freebmd.rootsweb.com/>

Thank you Ena for your contribution. More articles like this are very welcome.

Sandra

Programme 2008

For members who have not attended meetings for some time, the entrance to this room can be found by walking along the lane past the reception buildings and down towards the back of the Museum where there is car parking through the gate, that is open on meeting nights. The entrance is on your left.

All meetings are held in the Education Room in the Pitstone Green Museum at 8pm. ***ALL VISITORS VERY WELCOME***

Thursday 21st February

Buck's Czech Connection

Neil Rees has always had an interest in local history, and when working in the Czech Republic he met two English ladies who had married Czechs in the Second World War. They told him about the Czech President and members of the Government who lived in exile in Aylesbury Vale during the war and Neil decided to investigate. He has since written a book about his findings, which is the definitive account of this period and highly valued by the Czechs.

Thursday 20th March

John Milton in the Chilterns

Colin Oakes has come highly recommended from several sources and will be talking about Milton's time in the Chilterns which was a troubled and rather brief episode in his life. First, he was stuck with his parents in a one-horse-town studying for a profession he was not interested in. Much later, whilst he was here avoiding the plague in London, he felt guilty, lost in an area which didn't understand him and mistreated by all around him. However, it was in the Chilterns that he found a way of avoiding his problems and working on perhaps his greatest work.

Thursday 17th April

The Enigma Code

Dr Clive Foxell has enjoyed a varied working life, employed by GEC, the Post Office and BT. He has written a number of books about the local railways, still travels through Metro-land and his hobbies include railways, photography and model engineering. His talk will outline how the Poles attempted to 'crack' Enigma and how, when war was imminent, a brilliant team was assembled at Bletchley Park to find a solution. Their progress and setbacks will be described as the Germans added further complexity to Enigma. This will be illustrated with particular reference to The Battle of the Atlantic which nearly humbled this country.

Sue Lipscomb, Programme Secretary

NB: If you would like to be put on Sue's email reminder list, so that you receive an email about a week before each meeting, please send her an email –

Sue.Lipscomb@btopenworld.com

Front Cover Picture...The Old Range in the Victorian Kitchen at the Museum

Open Days 2008

Easter Monday 24th March.

Early Spring BH Monday 5th May
(models day).

Spring BH Monday 26th May.

Sun 8th June.

Sun 13th July.

Sun 10th August.

Summer BH Monday 25th August.

Sun 14th September.

Opening times from

11.0 a.m. to 5.0. p.m.

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Email... daigos@tiscali.co.uk

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Rob Barber 01296 680494

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**Please Note:- Last date for articles for
next copy 31st March 2008**

Museum Website:- <http://website.lineone.net/~pitstonemus>

Pitstone and Ivinghoe Museum Society

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