

*Pitstone and Ivinghoe  
Museum Society  
Newsletter*

*Summer 2009*

## **Museum Report – July 2009**

Following the record breaking Easter Monday open day we had two more excellent results on the following two bank holiday Mondays – the early May and the late May. We easily broke all previous records for both of these days. But then, on the next two open days, Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June and Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July we only just exceeded the previous year's result, and it was perfect weather on the day. We can only surmise that this is due to there being so many other attractions in the area on these days. On Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July I understand the takings from the Tractor & Trailer rides were the worst within memory. But then there were hardly any children at the Museum on that day.

We are still waiting to see some development towards the provision of allotments in the field at the back of the Museum, but we understand there may be some action shortly provided planning approval is granted for a new gateway access from Marsworth Road. We have 'jumped the gun' here to a certain extent; we have spent a great amount of time and effort in clearing and tidying the extra parcel of land we understand is going to be added to the Museum site. We have excavated for a wildlife pond of about 90 square metres in area, we have installed the liner and filled it with water.



**Pictures by Rob Barber**

This took several days of pumping from one of our wells, and from the brook. (Yes! There is a brook on our land; how many of you readers knew that?). Unfortunately digging this pond has led to the loss of about 6 mature osiers, but there are enough remaining and we planted about five new ones last winter and intend to plant more this coming winter. Beyond the osiers the whole area was totally overgrown with brambles, nettles, elders, ivy, and other obnoxious growth, and over the last 12 months we have completely cleared this. Provided we rough mow this area frequently, and use a strimmer on the steeper slopes as required, we should have quite a pleasant area at our disposal in time. Of course, at present one boundary is defined by the ugly concrete wall of the old Chiltern Engineering factory which will be removed if and when that site is developed for housing, but in the existing economic climate it is anybody's guess when this will happen.

The Silos. I feel sure you will all know what I am talking about here; those large round concrete structures under an arched corrugated iron roof as you take the rear exit from the big barn on your way to visit 'Wag's Wharf' or the Lancaster Bomber. When I remember on open days they are back-lit from within. For a museum like ours where we are so short of covered-in exhibit area they seem like a great big waste of space, but they are historically important. They were the first buildings of their type in Britain, built in 1947 when we were just starting to recover from World War 2 and almost everything was rationed or in short supply. They were built as a prototype to a design on paper by NIAE (National Institute of Agricultural Engineering) by Jeff Hawkins, then a young man who had not long previously taken over the farm from his father, Leonard. NIRA was located in Yorkshire when the design work was carried out, but around this time relocated to Silsoe in Bedfordshire, and Jeff's brother, John, was in charge of this design project. John's deputy at Silsoe, Ken McLean, is now retired and living in Cambridgeshire, and he paid us a visit with his wife on the last open day. He was very interested to see the silos, and pleased that they were still intact, and indeed capable of being used again after a little restoration work. He left us with a copy of NIAE's report on the extended tests carried out on the plant in 1948, along with a copy of a book written by John in 1948 on mechanical aspects of modern farming.

Ever since I first became acquainted with our 'silo' grain drying plant I have viewed the condition of the roof with concern, it is very rusty and

daylight can now be seen through it from inside in many places. In the winter, if rain in any quantity falls through it onto the concrete silos beneath, and if we subsequently have a hard frost, the concrete will very likely 'spall' (fragment itself away from its steel reinforcement) and thereby ruin an historically important artefact which is still in excellent condition. The task of re-roofing the plant is beyond the capabilities of our small gang of volunteers as well as beyond the reach of our financial resources. We can only hope that our landlords, The National Trust, will appreciate the significance of this plant and do what is necessary. The National Trust has recently commissioned an Archaeological Survey of the whole Museum site, (copy available; more comment in a future newsletter) and the surveyor recognised the importance of preserving the plant and mentioned the immediate need for repairs to its roof. Let us hope The National Trust appreciates this need.

The 'authorities' have discovered we sell food to the general public on our open days and have insisted on inspecting us. This inspection was carried out just after the early May open day, and fortunately, no serious faults were noticed. The fact that we are in the middle of a two-stage renovation was noted and we are required to submit ourselves to a further inspection after the work is finished. Fortunately these inspections by the local authority are free. I wonder why similar inspections by other departments of the local authority are not free. (Peter Horn knows which department I have in mind here).

#### **Picture by Peter Keeley**



Finally, the Museum has successfully tried a new venture; we have hosted a wedding reception. This was on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July and fortunately the weather was lovely. Preparations began on the Thursday before, but really started at about 10 am on the Saturday with the arrival of Nicola from the wedding party

and her group of volunteers. There were tables and chairs to be positioned,

bunting and balloons to be installed and a very full bar to be organised, for which they had parked a mobile refrigerator trailer near the Nissen Hut. The bar itself was in the 'Potters Shed'. The caterers arrived and set up barbecues in reception yard and hot plates and serving dishes in the refreshment area. The disco arrived and set up, and right on time the wedding party began to arrive. There were 2 coach loads plus half an orchard full of cars, plus a selection of classic cars which parked in the Rickyard; about 150 people all told. And an ice cream van arrived, and got told off for being late. We had difficulty getting him in as his van was much taller than the bunting. Most of the Museum was open with four of us strolling around, talking and watching. Plenty of drink was consumed and all seemed to be having a wonderful time. The disco closed down at around eleven and guests drifted away slowly, with the 2 coach loads going back to a Dunstable hotel to continue into the night. A very successful day, I think, but it would have been less so if it had been rainy.

Other than this there does not seem to be much else of interest to report this time. Projects in progress when the last newsletter was published are still in progress now and will probably still be so at the time of the next newsletter in the autumn. In short, no other new projects have started, and none have finished.

**Peter Keeley, Secretary**

### **Blacksmith's Collection**

One weekend way back in the 1970's Jeff approached me and enquired if I was available to help him collect some items for the collection. When I confirmed I was, he went on to explain that he had a friend who lived at Stokenchurch named Chris Barry, a television producer. Chris had informed Jeff that the local blacksmith had just retired (or died) and the smithy had to be cleared out. So on the following Saturday I met Jeff at the farm, helped him couple up one of his flat bed harvest trailers to his Land Rover (the one that Reg Jellis now drives) and off we went. On arriving at Stokenchurch we located the smithy and went inside where we found it complete. I, in my ignorance, thought we would only take a few items but no, we spent a few hours there and emptied the building completely. We took considerably longer to return to the Farm than going there! The next job was to build the furnace and flue in Stevens Barn (Jeff always called it 'Stivens') where it can be seen to this day.

**David Goseltine**

## Meetings

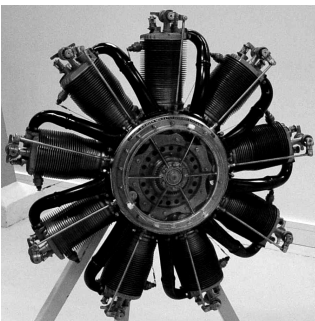
### **The First Landing of an Aircraft at Halton**

On Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2009, Francis Hanford, curator of the Trenchard Museum, gave a talk, at a well attended meeting, on the first aircraft to use Halton as a base.

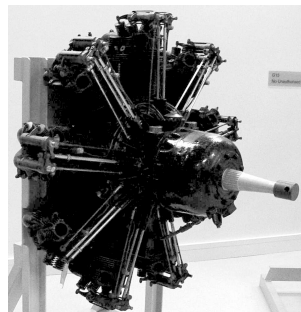
He told us great emphasis was put on army training, following the reverses suffered by the British army at the hands of the Boers during the South Africa War. Large-scale manoeuvres became an annual event. The army manoeuvres of September 1912 first introduced the use of spotter aircraft. The 1913 manoeuvres used a greater number of aircraft.

The “Whiteland” forces would retreat northwards towards Nuneaton, pursued by the “Brownland” army, who marched to the mid-Bucks area from Aldershot and Salisbury Plain. The 50,000 troops were given 3 days of rest encamped on private estates across mid-Bucks. On the Halton estate Mr Alfred de Rothschild fed and watered 3,000 troops at his own expense. One of his fields was cleared of sheep and used by the commander of 3 Squadron, Major Robert Brooke-Popham (aka Brookham), for his aircraft. The aircraft consisted of a number of Henry Farman F20s, Bleriot, and 3 different Bleriot Experimental types from the Royal Aircraft factory at Farnborough.

When the exercise restarted some of the aircraft took off to check the enemy’s movements and then drop messages of their observations, to the “Brownland” cavalry headquarters near Aylesbury. The aircraft proved to be more manoeuvrable than airships, and the pilots claimed that they could have destroyed the airships if required.



**Photos of 2 rotary engines displayed at Duxford Imperial War Museum.**



Francis Hanford illustrated his talk with slides of aircraft and engines. Some of these aircraft used rotary engines, with the camshaft fixed to the

body of the aircraft, with the entire cylinder block rotating around it. The propeller was bolted directly to the crankcase.

For an animation of a Gnome rotary engine visit

**<http://www.animatedengines.com/gnome.shtml>**

Radial engines look similar to rotary engines when not in motion. See

**[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radial\\_engine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radial_engine)**

The Trenchard Museum web site is at

**<http://www.trenchardmuseum.org.uk>**

**Bill Barnard**

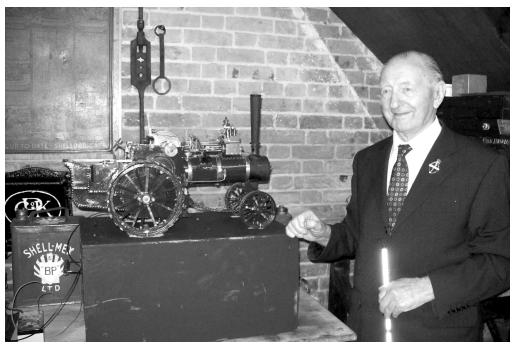
### **Hobbies Evening**

The meeting on 18th June was our Hobbies Evening. The attendance was slightly disappointing but those of us who came were delighted by the enthusiasm of the exhibitors. These included a collection of photographs of many dogs trained and fostered for the blind by Jill and Les Graves. There was a large collection of old postcards brought in by Brenda Grace. Nigel Thompson joined by Ruby Sharp, gave a potters wheel demonstration. Geoff Travis showed his miniature railway layout with models built to scale. Frank Banfield also showed his larger scale model railway. Paul Chapman displayed his wonderful collection of miniature watering cans, and there was also a display of various vintage cars brought in by their owners. Apologies to anyone I have missed out.

### **Cheese Wine and Antiques Evening**

The 16<sup>th</sup> July was our very popular cheese and wine and antiques evening at the museum with Stephen Hearn. This was very well supported as in previous years. Once again he showed us all his remarkable skill of weaving a story around every item he identified.

**Sandra Barnard**



### **Congratulations**

to Jack Brantom on his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday which was in July. He is seen here in the engine room at the museum with his working model traction engine that is displayed there.

## **Posse Comitatus**

This title refers to the census taken through the whole of the country, town, village and hamlet in 1798, on every male from the age of 16, to the age of 60, who were able bodied and able to fight “Napoleon” if needed. A record was also kept of those who were lame, blind, idiots etc. Horses carts and wagons were also counted along with their owners. Some of the spelling is not as we know it today; “Jalles” is “Jellis”, “Thimpston” “Shrimpton”.

## **1788 “Posse Comitatus” for Pitstone**

### **Farmers**

John Ashby  
William Ashby  
James Burt  
John Burt  
William Burt  
John Collins  
Joseph Collins  
Doctor Eustace  
John Eustace  
Thomas Jalles  
William Jalles  
William Poulton  
Joanas Simmons  
John Simmons  
Joseph Simmons  
James Stevens  
John Tompkins  
John Williamson

### **Taylors**

Henry Parsons  
Joseph Parsons  
James Simmons

### **Blacksmiths**

John Fenn  
Richard Read

### **Collar Makers**

John Butterfield  
Edmund Seabrook

### **Cordwainers**

Thomas Stevens  
William Stevens

### **Servants**

James Collins  
William Collins  
Thomas Collyer  
William Collyer  
Samuel Cooper  
Thomas Ededs  
James Fenn  
Thomas Fenn  
William Fenn  
John Foster  
William Foster  
William Garner  
Jacob Harris  
John Nooles  
James Payne  
John Rance  
Edward Thimpston  
William Tompkins

### **Labourers**

John Allcock  
Thomas Bignall  
Thomas Boarder  
George Coker  
John Collins  
William Collins  
Joseph Collyer  
Joseph Collyer  
William Dollimore  
Joseph Elliot  
William Gurney  
Edward Harris  
James Hedges  
Goodman Jenkins  
Stephen Kempster  
Joseph Messenger  
Richard Moors  
John Narroway  
Francis Peyiatt  
William Pipkin  
Jerimiah Pitchford  
John Pitchford  
Thomas Stratford

## People Keeping Draught Horses

	<u>Horses</u>	<u>Wagons</u>	<u>Carts</u>
William Ashby	4	1	2
James Burt	4	1	4
John Collins	3	-	2
Thomas Eustace	3	-	-
William Jalles	3	-	1
William Poulton	3	-	2
Richard Read	1	-	-
Joseph Simmens	3	-	2
James Stevens	15	2	6
John Tompkins	3	-	3
William Tompkins	5	1	2
John Williamson	3	-	2
<u>Totals</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>28</u>

50 horses, 5 wagons and 28 carts

### **Ena Ashurst**

**Note.** According to various sources Buckinghamshire is the only county for which the “Posse Comitatus” survives in its entirety.

## Bucks Family History Society Open Day July 25<sup>th</sup> 2009 at The Grange School Aylesbury

**Our stand at the above occasion with myself and Brenda.**



We were also helped by Anne Ball and my husband Bill. This proved to be a very popular event and was very well attended by 750 researchers.

This occasion proved to be extremely good publicity for the Museum.

**Sandra**

## **Membership**

We currently have 120 fully paid up members of PIMS. For anyone that may have forgotten to renew their membership from last year, another form is enclosed with this newsletter. For those not wishing to renew, thank you for your past membership.

**Bill Barnard**

## **Programme 2009 -2010**

All meetings are held in the Meeting Room in the Pitstone Green Museum at 8.00pm. ***ALL VISITORS VERY WELCOME***

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August '09 \*\*\* Please note: no August meeting**

## **Thursday 17th September '09**

### **The Archaeology of the A41; Aston Clinton Bypass**

Robert Masfield was the archaeological consultant who was involved in the management of the Aston Clinton Bypass once it was realised that there was a potential for interesting finds. He will talk about three main sites; the woodlands roundabout, the Lower Icknield Road near Buckland and the area at the top of Tring Hill. The finds were related to many different periods of history from Prehistoric times right up to the Middle Ages.

## **Thursday 15th October '09**

### **Experiences as an Auctioneer**

This will be Stephen Hearn's second visit of the year, this time to talk about his life as an auctioneer. Knowing Stephen I'm sure that there will be much merriment and laughter. He has promised to include some reminiscences of his childhood in Wigginton.

PLEASE CONTACT PETER KEELEY (01582 792701 [pjk96pr@btinternet.com](mailto:pjk96pr@btinternet.com)) TO SECURE A SEAT AT THIS TALK.

## **Thursday 19th November '09**

### **AGM & short talk**

We look forward to seeing you all at the AGM and may be able to book a short talk to follow the official business.

## **Thursday 17th December '09**

### **Christmas Social**

This year, as always, we will have mince pies and sausage rolls ready for you and some liquid refreshment too. All we ask is that you come to this social event, bringing with you if you wish, some anecdote, reading, song or anything that might interest or amuse the assembled group. If you would prefer not to 'perform' please don't let that put you off and come simply to chat to others.

## **Thursday 21st January '10**

### **Sulgrave Manor and the Washingtons**

Martin Sirot-Smith, our speaker this evening was, from 1988 until 2002, the Managing Director of Sulgrave Manor near Banbury. He succeeded in raising the profile of the manor, thus increasing the visitor numbers enormously. He often appears in role as Lawrence Washington, Lord of the Manor of Sulgrave in 1539 when he tells of how he came to build the manor and how his great, great grandson Col. John Washington was to emigrate to Virginia in 1656. This event began the American line of the family, producing George Washington, President of the USA. Martin will also give an illustrated talk showing the treasures in the house and will talk about some of the special events that have occurred there.

## **Thursday 18th February '10**

### **The Rothschild Archive**

Barbra Ruperto is our speaker this month and will not only be talking about the archive in London where she works but also the Rothschild family in the Vale of Aylesbury.

## **Thursday 18th March '10**

### **Ashridge Estate – the management of a landscape**

Our speaker, Graeme Cannon, has a long standing association with the countryside. He began working for The National Trust at Ashridge in 1986 and has been Property Manager for the estate since 1995. He also has an additional role representing The National Trust on matters of countryside management throughout the Chilterns. He will be giving us an illustrated talk which covers the whole estate and includes a bit of everything from habitat management, land uses and history/archaeology (only a little) to filming and also some of the less pleasant issues they deal with.

## **Thursday 15th April '10**

### **Ashlyns: My life in a Foundling Hospital**

In the 1730's, Captain Thomas Coram returned from many years at sea and was appalled by the plight and neglect of children left to die on the streets. In 1739 he received a Royal Charter from King George II to establish a "hospital for the maintenance and education of exposed and deserted young children". This became known as the Foundling Hospital and over a period of two hundred years, up to the Second World War, the Foundling Hospital took in over 27,000 children. The governors of the Foundling Hospital decided in 1926 that it should be moved to Berkhamsted. Our speaker, Lydia Carmichael lived there from 1938 until 1948. Two years later it became Ashlyns School.

### **Sue Lipscomb, Programme Secretary**

*Note:* - 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](mailto:Sue.Lipscomb@btopenworld.com)**

## **Front Cover Picture. by Norman Groom**

Margaret Smith Basket Weaving on an Open Day

## **Open Days 2009**

Sun. 9<sup>th</sup> August

Summer BH Mon. 31<sup>st</sup> August

Open 13<sup>th</sup> September -

Whitchurch Morris Men

and Aldbury Morris Men

Opening times from

11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Admission charges adults £4 children £2

Members free.

## **Committee:-**

### **Chairman**

David Goseltine

Email... [daigos@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:daigos@tiscali.co.uk)

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Norman Groom 01582 605464

### **Treasurer**

John Youngs 01582 833678

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### **Deputy Museum Manager**

Rob Barber 01296 680494

### **Museum Business Manager**

Peter Keeley 01582 792701

### **Secretary**

Peter Keeley

### **Site Manager**

John Childs 01582 833501

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Nigel Thompson 01296 668754

### **Programme Secretary**

Sue Lipscomb 01296 630578

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Sandra Barnard

### **Craft Co-ordinator**

Position Vacant

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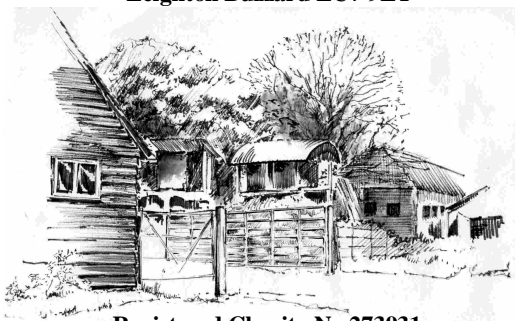
**Museum Website:-** <http://website.lineone.net/~pitstonemus>

Hits since January 2007... 16,129

**Pitstone and Ivinghoe Museum Society**

**Pitstone Green Museum, Vicarage Road, Pitstone**

**Leighton Buzzard LU7 9EY**



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