

*Pitstone and Ivinghoe  
Museum Society Newsletter*



## **Museum Report –July 2010**

Now well into summer, and over half of our public open days passed by, it is perhaps time to look back and see what we have achieved so far. The first three Bank Holiday Monday open days yielded takings quite similar to last year, except as reported in the last Museum Report, the Easter takings were somewhat down on last year's all time record which could be put down to the weather being cloudier, windier, and colder this year. The first two of our Sunday open days in June and July were disappointing and again this could have been weather related in June when early season north-easterly winds blew straight from the tundra of northern Europe. But in July the weather was (in my opinion) absolutely perfect with lots of sun and warm gentle wind to make the Museum an idyllic spot to be. Was it Formula 1 which kept them away, or did they all want an early meal so as not to miss the World Cup (football) final ?

Visits from outside groups are not doing well either this year; indeed before summer started our booked visits were over. The visit from a U3A Group from Luton went well and a 60<sup>th</sup> birthday party also was very successful thanks to the weather. We also had another visit from a group at Aylesbury College. For the rest of the year we just have Joe Marling's concert and a 99<sup>th</sup> birthday party. As expected visiting parties from schools have more or less petered out, but for next year we have already had enquiries about another wedding reception.

By early May we who work regularly at the Museum began to appreciate how exposed to public view we had become since The National Trust decided (in their infinite wisdom) to site a permissive public footpath against our northern and eastern boundaries. With just a simple chain-link fence separating us the general public could see everything we did and everything we owned in hitherto private areas of our site. Not that we ever did anything to be ashamed of (speaking for myself, anyway), but many items of some value were clearly visible from the path. We decided we must use some of our slender resources to enhance our security on these sides and we have erected a two metre high quality wooden fence in parallel with The National Trust's chain-link fence, but just within our boundary. We can only hope that, as yet, there have been no thieves passing by noticing items for removal when the darker evenings return soon. To a person equipped with simple small wire cutters which fit easily into a small pocket a chain link fence can easily and silently be breached in a few seconds. The Museum is fitted with a comprehensive security alarm system which covers both indoors and outdoors, but there is a practical limit to how much of such a large site can be completely covered at reasonable expense.

And talking of thieves, during the May half-term week someone raided the new catering area and stole ice creams and canned drinks which were in the freezer and cupboards from the Monday open day. The newly refurbished area is not yet completely finished so the criminals got away undetected, and the only way they could have done this is via the driveway and the gate into the reception yard. Because of this we are considering implementing additional security measures for the whole site.

The pond is looking quite healthy with abundant wildlife. All our plants seem to be thriving, and we have the expected variety of insects, amphibians and small fish (which were introduced). And we have two ducks, occasionally three, which have been seen mating there but not nesting. Following creating the pond, we planted about a dozen new osier cuttings amongst the remaining osiers as a replacement for the 4 or 5 we had to uproot for the pond. All of these cuttings seem to have ‘taken’ but mysteriously 2 or 3 of the old osiers started the year well with small leaves shooting, but suddenly died. The osiers are cropped every year, in the winter, and collected by our basket-maker Margaret who you can usually see sat outside the Owen Barn on open days demonstrating her craft.

Dave’s outdoor ‘1’ Gauge model railway, which he moved almost single-handed during the winter from under the trees to its new site in the orchard has suffered a few teething problems but these seem to have mainly been solved now and the outdoor trains can be routed through the indoor layout from time to time. This is certainly a big attraction for dads and kids.

Last year, in the spring, I managed to plant just one new fruit tree in our orchard. Then, during a warm dry spell when I omitted to water it appeared to have died. This year I inspected it and it was well and truly alive, so I celebrated this by planting another half-dozen. All these trees I have planted are from suckers of the existing trees which I have collected and nursed in my garden at home for a couple of years. They are all gages, and I have planted a couple in William Hawkins’s orchard as well, with his permission of course. I intend to gather a few prune suckers this year and bring these on for planting in a couple of years. I have one or two small gages available if anyone wants them, but now is not the time for planting out; they should not be planted until late autumn.

**Peter Keeley, Secretary**

## **ASHRIDGE- A Potted History Part 2**

### **THE EGERTONS 2; THE DUKES OF BRIDGEWATER.**

Scroop Egerton (1681–1745) the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl married well (Elizabeth Churchill, younger daughter of the Duke of Marlborough) and both he and his wife were well regarded by the royal family. Their low key dedication to the service of King George I led to him being made Marquis of Brackley, 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Bridgewater, in 1720, but by then both Scroop’s wife and only son had died. Scroop had a brother Henry who became Bishop of Hereford. Scroop was now a duke but having no male heir at that time realised his title could die with him. He managed to negotiate a variation in the terms of his grant of a dukedom so that the children of his brother could inherit the title if he had no male heir, but Henry declined to pay the required 200 guineas legal costs for this change to be put in place. Time would show that while “taking care of the pennies would ensure that the pounds would look after themselves”, “penny pinching” was not always a good idea. Scroop also declined to pay this fee.

Scroop took a second wife, Rachael, daughter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Bedford, and they had eight children, three sons, the eldest dying at five from smallpox. Scroop died in 1745 and his eldest surviving son John (1727–1748) became 5<sup>th</sup> Earl and 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Bridgewater.

Some years before he died Scroop had obtained an act of parliament to make the Worsley Brook navigable so that he could more easily transport coal from his waterlogged mines at Worsley to the River Irwell and Manchester, but nothing came of this and the act expired. John IV, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Bridgewater died at the age of 20 from smallpox in 1748, and his brother Francis, who was considered frail and backward, became 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke at the age of 11.

### **Francis Egerton (1736–1803) in a 1788 engraving.**



Francis, 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Bridgewater was at boarding school in Markyate when he succeeded to the title. His mother, who had remarried soon after Scroop's death, had no time for him, and his step father was a strict disciplinarian. Virtually abandoned by his mother and step father, Francis fortunately came under the influence of his cousin, Samuel Egerton, his Uncle, the Duke of Bedford, and Lord Trentham. He was found a place at Eton where he was an average pupil, and then sent on the 'Grand Tour' where he saw French canals being built and developed an interest in collecting fine art. At 21 he gained full control of all his estates and began, with John Gilbert, building the Bridgewater Canal. No attempt is made here to describe his canal building as it is well described elsewhere. He never

married, although he was not disinterested in the other sex, and he became an extremely rich man. Ashridge by this time was in a very poor condition; the original buildings were over 500 years old. The duke intended to demolish and rebuild and moved all his book and art collection to Bridgewater House in London. Demolition was just starting when he died in 1803.

### **THE EGERTONS 3; THE LATER EARLS OF BRIDGEWATER.**



#### **John William Egerton (1753–1823)**

Lieutenant-General John William Egerton, son of the Bishop of Durham and grandson of the Bishop of Hertford who 80 years previously had declined to pay the legal fees to ensure continuity of the dukedom became the 7<sup>th</sup> earl; the dukedom died out. He was also left the Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Shropshire estates, and, of course, Ashridge. He started the rebuilding at Ashridge, and the result is essentially what you can see today. Had the 3<sup>rd</sup> duke lived longer it is most unlikely he would have built anything on this scale as he was a most modest man and lived a simple life. Rebuilding started in 1808 and Lord and Lady Bridgewater formally moved into the estate in 1814, although rebuilding continued until 1817. The 7<sup>th</sup> earl had inherited a huge fortune and was spending on many improvements on his Ashridge estate.

John William had a younger brother, Francis Henry (1756–1829), and a sister Amelia. Francis was a problem and the brothers did not get on at all well. He mostly lived in France



(despite England and France being at war with each other) and scrounged money whenever possible, and seemed not to enjoy very good health, whereas John enjoyed robust health. However John took a cold after a shooting party in January 1823 and his health went downhill from then on until he died in the autumn.

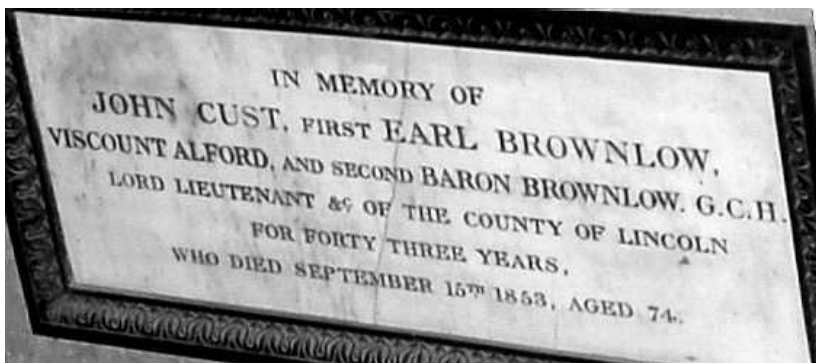
The Bridgewater title passed to Francis who became the 8<sup>th</sup> earl. John died a disappointed man as he had no children and he had been unable to re-establish the dukedom. He considered his brother Francis totally unsuitable to inherit Ashridge and he left him a small (by his standards) annual income, so Francis continued to live in Paris until he died 6 years later and the Bridgewater title died with him. Under John's will his wife, Charlotte,



Countess of Bridgewater, was left the Ashridge estate for her lifetime when it was to pass to John Hume-Cust, Viscount Alford, his great nephew. The sister of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> earls, Amelia, had married Sir Abraham Hume and they had one daughter, Sophia, who married John, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl Brownlow who was a direct descendent of the Richard Brownlow who was a lawyer in Elizabeth's reign.

### **John Cust, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl Brownlow Funerary Monument in Belton Church Lincolnshire**

Sophia's and John's eldest son was Viscount Alford. However there were conditions attached to his inheriting Ashridge under the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl Bridgewater's will: he was to assume the family name of Egerton, and he was to acquire a dukedom (or at the very least become a marquis) within 5 years of inheriting. If he failed in this the estate was to pass to his



younger brother, Charles, under the same conditions, and if in turn Charles failed the estate was to go to William Tatton Egerton of the Cheshire branch of the family with no preconditions.

The Countess of Bridgewater continued improving the Ashridge estate and lived on until 1849. Pitstone Green Farm and Farmhouse buildings, much as they appear today, were just one of many such developments.

## **THE BROWNLOWS**

This is where ownership of Ashridge becomes complicated. Viscount Alford duly changed his name to Egerton, but he was not a well man and died within 2 years; he had two sons, John William Spencer Egerton Cust being the elder. There was a notorious court case contesting the wills which determined the inheritance of Ashridge which went against J.W.S.E. Cust, but at appeal in 1853 this decision was reversed. This is not the place to discuss the legal technicalities, so at the age of 12 J.W.S.E. Cust found himself owner of Ashridge, but only a month later his grandfather died and he found himself also to be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl Brownlow and the owner of even more land in Lincolnshire. He was probably the wealthiest young boy in the country, but already he had tuberculosis and was not to enjoy a long life. His mother, Lady Marian Alford, administered the estates until he became of age, but he only lived four more years when the title and all the land went to her younger son on his death.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Earl Brownlow Adelbert Wellington Hume Cust** (Front Cover Picture)



(This framed original print can be seen in location E “Farming and Village Life” at the Museum)

Adelbert Wellington Hume Cust, the younger son, became 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl Brownlow and owner, amongst other properties, of Ashridge. He married Lady Adelaide Talbot and they were devoted to each other. Unfortunately they did not manage to produce any children. They moved in the highest social circles and entertained ‘virtually everybody who was anybody’ at either Ashridge or Belton, the seat of their Lincolnshire estates. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl Brownlow died in 1921 and directed in his will that his Ashridge estates and those in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and Buckinghamshire were to be sold to pay off any debts and mortgages. The Lincolnshire estates

remained within the family. The earldom died with him, but the Baronetcy of Brownlow passed to a second cousin, a Cust, and this title was still in existence in 1978 when 7<sup>th</sup> Lord Brownlow inherited it from his father.

## **THE COLLEGE**

The break up and sale of the Ashridge estate did not take place overnight. Christie’s sold of the valuable contents of the house in mid 1923 and towards the end of 1925 the sale of the house and estate was announced. A syndicate made an offer purchase both house and estate, while at the same time an anonymous offer of £20,000 was received to acquire parts of the land for The National Trust. There started a flurry of activity involving the Brownlow and

Talbot families and even the Cabinet at 10 Downing Street and within a month there was £40,000 available which was sufficient to delay consideration of the syndicate's offer. Three months later it was announced that The National Trust would purchase 1,700 acres for the nation, and a year later they acquired a further 165 acres, including Frithsden Beeches.

In November 1927 it was announced that a Mr E.C. Fairweather had bought the house and remaining estate and was reselling the whole in large and small blocks. Six months later a Mr Thomas Place bought the house and 1,200 acres and straightaway placed it on the market again. Simultaneously another 8,700 acres had been sold off involving around a quarter of a million pounds. Then, in June 1928 it was announced that the house and 80 acres had been purchased as a present to the Conservative Party to be used as a college for education and political training. The funding for this came from a Mr Urban Hanlon Broughton who, briefly, had gone to USA in 1887 as a railway engineer and made a lot of money, returning to UK in 1912 and becoming the (Tory of course) MP for Preston in 1915. A Bonar Law Memorial Trust was set up to manage the college. The remaining lands around the fringes of the college grounds were sold off piecemeal as building plots with a substantial area reserved for the golf course.

During the 1939-45 war the buildings were commandeered for a branch of the Charing Cross Hospital and additional concrete buildings were erected in the grounds. Some of these were not demolished until 1983. The first patients arrived at the time of the Dunkirk evacuation. Also there were a number of military camps set up in the surrounding woodlands, screened from observation by enemy aircraft.

After the war ended, and with increasing financial problems the deed of trust governing the use of the college was varied, and during the 1950's it became the home of the House of Citizenship which was a finishing school for young ladies. In 1959, with support from industry, it became the Management College which it still is to this day. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the college in its present form was celebrated last year, 2009. A glossy booklet to commemorate this anniversary was published and a copy will eventually reside in Pitstone Green Museum's archives when suitable storage facilities exist.

**Peter Keeley**

### **A Special Thanks.**

The volunteers at the museum have made a remarkable improvement to the site and its buildings over the years, attempting many difficult and demanding tasks. I would not normally single out any individual member, as all of us work extremely hard. However I must mention two of our members, Joe Marling and Roy Cutler. Over the last few weeks they have often worked five days a week erecting our new boundary fencing. Not just fencing panels and posts, but individually vertical boarded sections to the highest standard. The fencing is over three hundred feet long and I estimated Joe must have hammered in about 3500 nails. It would have taken our Tuesday team the whole of our open season to achieve such a result.

**Norman Groom**

## **Barons Brownlow**

### **Cust Baronets, of Stamford (1677)**

- Sir Richard Cust, 1st Baronet (1622–1700)
- Sir Richard Cust, 2nd Baronet (1680–1734)
- Sir John Cust, 3rd Baronet (1718–1770)
- Sir Brownlow Cust, 4th Baronet (1744–1807)  
(created Baron Brownlow in 1776)

### **Barons Brownlow (1776)**

- Brownlow Cust, 1st Baron Brownlow (1744–1807)
- John Cust, 2nd Baron Brownlow (1779–1853)  
(created Earl Brownlow in 1815)

### **Earls Brownlow (1815)**

John Cust, 1st Earl Brownlow (1779–1853)

- John William Spencer Brownlow Egerton-Cust, 2nd Earl Brownlow (1842–1867)
- Adelbert Wellington Brownlow-Cust, 3rd Earl Brownlow (1844–1921)

### **Barons Brownlow (1776; Reverted)**

- Adelbert Salisbury Cockayne Cust, 5th Baron Brownlow (1867–1927)
- Peregrine Francis Adelbert Cust, 6th Baron Brownlow (1899–1978)
- Edward John Peregrine Cust, 7th Baron Brownlow (b. 1936)

The Heir Apparent is the present holder's son the Hon. Peregrine Cust (b. 1974)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baron\\_Brownlow](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baron_Brownlow)

## **Sandra Barnard**

## **THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE CART SHED – AND IT'S NOT A CART**

Have you been round to the Cart Shed on an open day recently? There's something other than carts and Nigel's tractor residing there now.

But to start at the beginning - one day some garden railway steam enthusiasts were presented with a large bag of bits of what purported to be a Stuart model beam engine complete with boiler. This started the grey matter working to find a use for the said engine. It had been bought at auction some years previously by Geoff "on spec" and upon



reassembly, believe it or not, it did not work! Another member of our group Roger, who has since sadly passed away, was very good at remedying that sort of thing and soon found the problem and got the engine going. The chap who had originally machined the parts for the engine [Stuart models come as a pack of scrap metal and a set of drawings and you have to do the rest on a lathe and workbench] had not checked that all the casting sand had been removed

from the valve chest casting – hence it would not go.

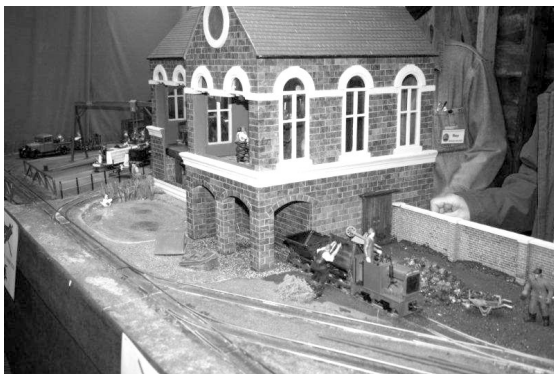
With the engine now in working order – what to do with it? Why not build a small railway layout centring on the beam engine for exhibition purposes. There are many exhibition layouts in small, compact railway scales depicting industrial scenes but none [at that time – 2003] at “our” scale of 16mm to 1ft. Much head scratching ensued to design a layout that was compact but interesting. An early idea was that the beam engine would drive a dynamo that would power the trains. However, when we calculated that the dynamo would have to turn at 1000 rpm to generate each one volt, it was soon realised that a beam engine nominally turning at about 25 – 40 rpm would have great difficulty raising the 12,000 rpm we would need for 12v train operation.

So we decided that if we used the beam engine to pump water from underground, to allow canal barges to carry coal to fuel a boiler to make steam to power a beam engine to pump water to the canal for the canal barges to . . . err, I think I’ve written that already!!!



Eventually the idea was born to emulate the Wendover arm of the Grand Union Canal and the pumping station at Tringford. In the days when the Boulton & Watt beam engine was working [erected 1817 until replacement by electric pumps in 1927], the wharf at Tringford was simply the canal bank alongside the pumping station but we felt that a proper wharf was required. Also there were no trains at Tringford but there was a 2ft gauge railway connecting the Colne Valley Water Company’s Eastbury Pumping Station at Watford with the Watford – Rickmansworth branch of the LMS railway for deliveries of their coal, chemical and salt. .

So in our imaginary setting these two locations have been merged into one and called “Wags Wharf”. In addition it was an early consideration in the design of the model that as much as possible would actually work on our railway. The first animations were the little fellows, Alf and Fred who tip the coal and ash from the wagons. The coal is loaded into the wagons on the wharf by a 304mm to 1ft operative pending someone working out how to



build an overhead gantry crane with grabline to actually off load the barges. The ash from the boiler is deposited into a wagon under the boiler room by another [largish] operative. This was followed by the amazing unloading of the diesel fuel barrels inside the engine shed.

Since coming to Pitstone at the beginning of 2009 a large crane has been added to deliver sweeties to the visiting children, a working coal elevator now lifts the coal up to the boiler house and most recently, you can hear the sounds of the birds in the trees, the water gently lapping and the frantic workings in the engine shed. Geoff still has aspirations for actual water in the canal but Chris says something different! Roy, who built the baseboards and the two barges moored at Wags Wharf also “grows” trees for the layout and another tree or two are due to sprout shortly.



The layout is regularly operated by Geoff at the regulator of the boiler and beam engine; Chris, our electronics wizard and the aforementioned Roy. We are ably assisted at various times by Pete and Malcolm. The layout started life on the model railway exhibition circuit back in 2004 and was “out” regularly until 2008. These things only have a limited life on the exhibition circuit so when the opportunity came for us to form part of the Pitstone experience the chance

to hang up the keys of the Transit van was greatly appreciated.

For the technically minded, we are modelling a two foot gauge industrial railway using “O” gauge homemade brass track and points. “O” gauge used to be 1.25 inches in “real money” but now 32mm, hence 32mm equalling 2ft means we model at 16mm to the foot. The points were all handmade by Roger to very tight radii of 9” & 12” suitable for the compact track layout and 4-wheel locomotives and rolling stock. Train operation is controlled from each end of the layout using 12 volts DC through the track. The locomotives and rolling stock are made from kits and modified where necessary for our specific use.

The beam engine has a 1 inch diameter cylinder with a 2 inch stroke and operates best with minimum steam pressure, i.e: not more that 5lbs/sq.inch. The boiler is made of copper with superheater pipe through the propane/butane mix gas burner below. For safety reasons the boiler is regularly steam tested at its maximum operating pressure of 40lbs/sq.inch but at anything like this pressure the engine runs very erratically for some unknown reason. We try to keep the engine turning at something like a realistic speed of about 25 – 40 RPM, but sometimes this is tricky – you cannot scale down gravity! The boiler is also tested cold to 60lbs/sq.inch to verify structural integrity. The pressure is registered on a gauge over the boiler which is visible from the operator’s position and a dummy gauge is shown to the public side. Water is pumped manually into the boiler through a pre-heat chamber [using exhaust steam] and monitored by the sight glass to the front of the boiler. The glass is viewed by the operator by way of a “rear view” mirror high up in the boiler room! Condensate in the steam is a problem caused by heat loss from the [relatively] long lengths of pipework between boiler – engine – exhaust outlet so there is a catch tank below the

layout. So if you see one of us surreptitiously sneaking across to the trees and emptying a two litre ex-milk bottle, it's not what you thought it was.

We are often asked if there is a real life "Wags Wharf", but sadly no. What did exist was **Wednesday Afternoon Garden Steamers** playing with their steam trains at that time each week. And this was long before footballers had them!

**Geoff Evans**

### **Membership**

We currently have 123 fully paid up members out of a projected total of 149.

To remind those who have not paid yet, you will find a membership renewal slip inside of this newsletter.

Also, if you have intended to complete a Gift Aid Form, but have not done so yet, please do this before Autumn, so that we can process them all in one batch, ready for Her Majesty's Inspector of Revenue and Customs. The Gift Aid Form was issued with the last newsletter, if you have lost it or require another copy, please contact me at the Museum address, or email me at [\*\*barnardw@bre.co.uk\*\*](mailto:barnardw@bre.co.uk).

**Bill Barnard Membership Secretary**

### **Programme 2010**

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

**August '10** There is no August Meeting

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> September '10**

**Chair Making in the Chilterns**

Dr Catherine Grigg is the Curator of Wycombe Museum and became our Curatorial Advisor for the museum here at Pitstone. During her illustrated talk she will explain how Windsor chairs were traditionally made in the Chilterns and the Thames valley. At the end we should all be able to identify a chair from this region and also be able to differentiate between one made in the eighteenth century and one made in the nineteenth century.

**Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October '10**

**Working at the Museum Store**

The Museum Store is run by the Dacorum Heritage Trust Ltd., the accredited museum organisation for the Borough of Dacorum. It is based in a converted fire station in Berkhamsted where over 65,000 objects are housed, all relating to the history of Dacorum. The collections of various societies in Dacorum are looked after here. The Curatorial Advisor of the Store, Nina Bevan will be coming to give us an illustrated talk and show artefacts.

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November '10**

**AGM**

**Sue Lipscomb**

**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)**

### **Open Days 2010**

Sunday, **8th August**,

**Old Time Dancers**

Summer Bank Holiday, **30th August**

Sunday, **12th September**,

**Whitchurch Morris Dancers.**

**Liveowls on display.**

Opening times from

11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Admission charges adults £4 children £2

Members free.

### **Committee:-**

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David Goseltine

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

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**Museum Website (recent update July 2010):-** <http://website.lineone.net/~pitstonemus>

Hits to July 2010...24188

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