

Pitstone and Ivinghoe Museum Society Newsletter



Autumn 2012

Museum Report – October 2012

In previous years one of the first subjects for this October report has been financial; that is to say how much profit have we made this year from our Museum open days, and how much have we at our disposal to spend this winter on maintenance and improvements. I cannot do that this year; I can only speculate because we still have one more open day scheduled. As surely all of you will recall, we have had a rather wet and disappointing year, and this has had a consequential effect of open day attendance and takings. At a recent reckoning we were something of the order of £2000 down on our takings for last year, but a good day with fine weather on 14th October could improve the situation considerably. Obviously it also depends on how many people know we have an extra open day in October, and remember this on the day.

The replacement “Green Shed” is now well on the way towards completion; it has four walls and a roof and a set of double doors is on the way. Then a few wires to reinstate the electricity supply and we shall be in business. We are going to use the new “green shed” as a carpenter’s workshop superseding the present carpenter’s workshop further down the sheepyard which, several years ago, served to house our dairying display which is now in the Nissen hut. We shall have to cease calling our new building “the green shed” (unless of course we paint it green which is most unlikely) and think up a new name for it. The double doors, referred to above, are to allow us to move large items in there to undergo restoration work in the winter season; carts and other large wheeled items are the sort of things we have in mind. Several of us would like to tackle the restoration of the large 4-wheeled chaff cutter which currently resides at the far end of the grain barn.

Some of you may have heard that I have been unwell all summer. For several years past my main summer work at the museum has been to “maintain the growing environment”. This means cutting the grass, caring for the fruit trees, and a bit of flower growing, although most of the flower display is now in the capable hands of Shirley Marling. Because I have been unable to do this work the tasks have had to be shared by others and they soon realised how much work is involved; so much so that a large professional 5-gang mower for towing behind a tractor was acquired. Using this it is possible to cut the grass in the orchards speedily in long straight cuts, just leaving the growth around the trees to be cut using the small yellow Stiga ride-on, and saving many man-hours per month.

Peter Keeley, Secretary

Film Props

The museum has recently been providing props for ITV as they are making a 5 part drama called ‘Lightfields’ on Stockers Farm in Rickmansworth.

We have provided a very wide range of items from an old tin of rusty bolts to a cultivator refurbished last year by Nigel Thompson. The requirement was to 'dress' the set as an old farm. We have provided a large quantity of assorted machinery, old tools, jars, pans, baskets, sacks, sieves and even rusty sheets of corrugated iron.

LIGHTFIELDS is a supernatural drama set on a remote farm on the Suffolk coast. The story follows three families who each live in Lightfields farmhouse at different time periods (1944, 1975 and 2012) and who are linked by a spine chilling presence: the ghost of a teenage girl who died in mysterious and tragic circumstances.

Rob Barber

Paper Mill Visit August 2012

CRUMBLE, STUFF AND MACHINES THAT GO 'PUFF'; INK AND LEAD, TOGETHER IN BED

Having precipitated with a ferocity making pressure washers seem like the gentlest of lawn sprinklers, the heavens hurled themselves mercilessly down upon our impossibly narrow craft as it inched its way forwards. Its bows struggled to penetrate the swirling waters of a river so swollen by the August monsoons that one could scarcely bear to think what hidden dangers might be lurking in their murky depths. Its deck passengers were huddled together, seeking such protection from saturation by the unrelenting onslaught of the elements as was afforded by the scant canopy overhead. Perhaps, reflecting upon the fact that while some had called them 'intrepid' for contemplating such a voyage others had branded them, 'foolhardy', they were beginning to wonder, "Is this the end?"

It was, actually.

The boat passengers.

Okay, maybe the river was only the Gade. Perhaps it wasn't that swollen and the rain not quite of biblical proportions. And it's true that the only potential danger to navigation may have been a semi-submerged supermarket trolley. But this confrontation with nature-in-the-raw(ish) did mark the end of some members' visit to the paper mills at Apsley.

I'm going to resist the temptation to try and précis everything we learned that day about the evolution of both paper making and printing. Either you were there so you know or, if you weren't; I'm guessing that it may perhaps not be your "thing" anyway. But if anyone who wishes they could have been there, missed out because of other



commitments, do try and find the time to go along under your own steam. It's absolutely fascinating.

On the day, "hospitality" was good -- tea and bikkies for starters, followed by a short video presentation to "set the scene". Then, casting an experienced eye over the assembled gathering (mid-teens in number) and no doubt identifying potential troublemakers, the "powers" (volunteers, mostly employed by John Dickinson for decades prior to its recent closure) split us into two groups for "handle ability".

My group was introduced first to the intricacies of papermaking by hand. A lady demonstrator kicked off the proceedings and her efforts were then very ably mimicked by two of our braver (more extrovert?) members. Did you know some 'niche market' paper contains chopped up bank notes and other includes grass clippings from Wimbledon's Centre Court? No? Neither did I.

The 'troublemakers', meanwhile, went on a guided tour of the factory. There, they saw specialist papers made on a (sort of) "commercial" scale both by hand (two, quite young, skilled hands, that is) and also mechanically (one quite old machine, lovingly tended by equally skilled "minders"). This machine dated back to 19 0-something-or-other and, puffing and wheezing, with steam issuing from almost every pore of its body,

Members producing paper themselves.



looked like a cross between a Rowland Emmett creation and something from a Wallace and Gromit cartoon. But it worked – and we were, actually, very fortunate to see it "in steam" whilst there!

The two groups then swapped places before finally coming together for a talk on changing practices in paper making and printing from their inceptions to the present day. The two disciplines couldn't have evolved as they did without each other. It was the explosion of demand for paper following the invention of the printing press which

spawned the development of machines capable of ‘mass-producing’ it in rolls. Only the availability of paper in rolls then made possible development of the continuous ‘presses’ we know today. All interesting stuff!

We next repaired to the cafe where most of us fell upon a fish and chip lunch, before embarking upon the river trip - which, you may remember, is where you came in.



Paper making by hand.

Members examining the paper produced.

Thanks, as ever, to Sue for setting the whole thing up and providing some of the pictures.

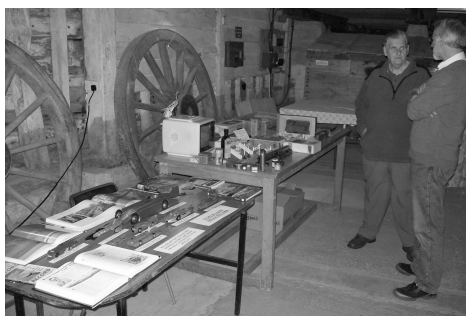
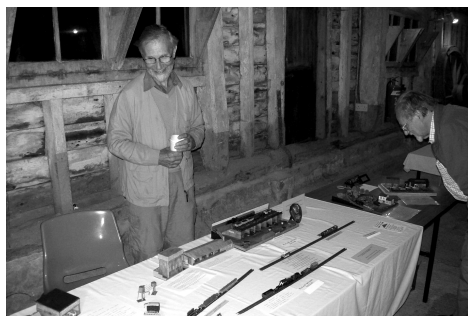
John E. Cole

Hobbies Evening Thursday 16th August '12

Several members attended this evening putting out some memorable displays of their hobbies.

Geoff Travis with Ron looking on.

Norman & Dennis discuss the display.



I showed my family history research and Bill his old records and computers. There were dolls clothes, model furniture and bead jewellery. Geoff Travis brought his miniature model trains and Ron Hartwell his vintage musical equipment. We had a display of a model steam engine. Dennis Trebble showed his collection of Bluebird Cars and other memorabilia. Rob Barber brought his AC Cobra car.

Sandra & Bill Barnard

Front Cover

Picture shows Hazel & Geoff Travis, Ron & Barbara Hartwell and Sue Lipscomb.



Barbara Barber's Olympic Uniforms and Booklets. The most topical display of all at our Hobbies Evening.

The chance of a lifetime

It is always difficult to know what to bring to the Hobbies evening and the accompanying picture will probably not be much help. However, those of you who know me have heard about my involvement with shooting and as I was

fortunate enough to be Assistant Chief Range Officer for 25m pistol shooting at the Olympic and Paralympic Games, I thought it might be interesting to bring along some bits and pieces from the Olympics.

Most of you will have heard about the Gamesmakers, with their purple/red uniforms but as an NTO (National Technical Official) I was glad to be in turquoise/blue and also had the formal uniform shown in the photograph. It is a shame it is not in colour, as the dark blue jacket lining with the main London landmarks outlined in turquoise was very impressive, and the buttons even had Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament etched into them.

If I had to use just one word to sum the whole experience up, it would be surreal. Even now, after the Paralympics, I still keep wondering if I was really there! As we were already working at the start of both Games, we were given a ticket to the Opening Ceremonies and I definitely think these were better than the Closing Ceremonies.

Each sport had to hold a test event and these were usually much smaller than the actual Olympic event. Shooting however was different and held a World Cup in April with double the number of competitors we were expecting in July. The bitter weather we had then was quite a shock to many competitors and I was very grateful that I had put in a hat, scarf and gloves at the last minute. As NTOs we stayed in Greenwich for the test and then Bexley for the Olympics, but having to allow for traffic delays to/from Woolwich Barracks meant we were usually up around 05.15 and didn't get back until 18.30, so quite long days.

Sadly the ranges were built just for both Games, and will be taken down afterwards, so we were not quite sure what to expect when we arrived. I think we all deserved

Blue Peter badges, having spent quite a few hours sticking bits of paper here and there, as although the target system was electronic, the backing targets needed to ratify any records are still paper. These needed to be changed after every 5 shots (in a 60 shot match), so we covered quite a few miles on match days as we had several relays and had to walk from the firing line to the targets each time. Normally, there would be people waiting in a passage at the targets, but the powers that be decided to save money and dispense with this.

The GB team did not shoot very well at the test event but most of us felt very privileged to be behind Peter Wilson when he won his Double Trap Gold Medal.

The Paralympic Games, held after the Hobbies evening, were another wonderful experience and probably enhanced because we stayed in the Village this time and were able to be with the athletes every day. Of course, a huge choice of food available 24/7 was quite irrelevant! With 3 medals, the GB team this time exceeded their target but sadly did not win an expected gold.

Barbara Barber

The Aldbury Murders Continued.

We have some papers in the archives that are a report of this case that was published in the Times Newspaper. This prompted me to look up Hansard on line for the dates mentioned.

There were several debates in Parliament as to whether the two men due to be executed should be reprieved, arguing that the crime was not premeditated and quoting various other cases involving poaching where there had been leniency. On 14th March 1892 during questions at a Commons sitting, Mr. Webb (Waterford, W.) asks the Home Secretary Mr. Matthews about a memorial. This was signed by upwards of 1,500 people resident in the locality where the prisoners lived, begging for mercy for these unfortunate men. On 15th more questions were asked by Mr. Cobb (Warwick, S.E., Rugby). The matter was further debated on 16th –18th March.

Copy of the debate of 16th March 1892 below. Debates 17th & 18th March 1892 (next Issue).

Sandra Barnard Editor

Hansard 16 March 1892

THE CONDEMNED POACHERS.

HC Deb 16 March 1892 vol 2 cc1028-32 **1028**

§ SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick) I beg to ask the Home Secretary if he can state to the House if any decision has been arrived at with reference to the carrying out of the sentence passed upon the men recently convicted of murder near Tring?

§ THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS,) **Birmingham, E.** No decision against a prisoner is irrevocable until the last moment, and I shall keep my mind open to receive and give full weight to any fresh facts that are brought before me. But, after giving the most careful consideration to the evidence, to the depositions, and to information received since the trial, the conclusion to which I am driven is that this was not a case of death unintentionally caused in the course of **1029** an affray, or of murder only by construction of law. It was a case in which the death of two men was caused by frightful violence inflicted with formidable weapons and with the deliberate purpose of taking life. Both the victims had their heads battered in by repeated blows after they had been felled to the ground, and one of them, having attempted to escape, was pursued and killed in his flight.

§ MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in recent years, there has been any case connected with a poaching affray like this in which sentence of death has been carried out, and where there has been no evidence whatever of any previous intention or willingness expressed on the part of the men convicted to commit murder? I would also ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, in reference to this case, he has received any communication from several of the jury engaged in the trial intimating that there was considerable difference of opinion among them as to the verdict they should give, and that the minority finally gave way to the majority?

§ MR. MATTHEWS The first part of the hon. Gentleman's question I think he will see it is impossible for me to answer without abundant notice. It is impossible to suppose that without such notice I could refer to all the cases tried in late years. With regard to the latter part of the question, I have to say that I have received a letter from a gentleman, who, I believe, was one of the jury—who states he was on the jury—to the effect that he and some others were at first inclined to return a verdict of manslaughter, and that the majority of the jury were of a contrary opinion, and that those who thought with him had yielded to the opinion of the majority and concurred in a verdict of murder.

§ MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to say whether he thinks a diminution of the severity, not to say the savagery, of the punishments for poaching would not have the effect of diminishing these murders?

1030

§ MR. MATTHEWS The punishments for poaching do not enter into this question at all. Had these men been perfectly independent both of the owner of the land and of the owner of the game their conduct might have been what it was; anyone other than the two keepers might have attempted to arrest the poachers on the night in question.

§ SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) The right hon. Gentleman in his first reply alluded to some evidence laid before him since the trial. May I ask him whether the friends or representatives of the prisoners have had an opportunity of sifting that evidence, and also whether that evidence is to be laid before the Judge who tried the case?

§ MR. MATTHEWS The principal information to which I referred is contained in lengthened communications from the prisoners themselves. The only other information I have received consists of answers to questions I put to the learned Judge upon points in the evidence with comments he desired to make.

§ MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester) With the greatest diffidence, may I address a further question to the right hon. Gentleman, who has promised to keep an open mind to the very last moment? May I ask him to remember a case which I think is on all fours with this—a case in which the right hon. Gentleman reprieved a man, named Long, on the express ground that there was no evidence of premeditation, though the murder of a keeper, or two keepers, resulted exactly in the same way as in this case, while other two men were left for execution on the ground that they had uttered threats the night before as to what they would do if they met the keepers? May I ask the right hon. Gentleman to refresh his memory before it is too late by reference to this case, and I think he will find that the man was reprieved on the express ground that there was no evidence of premeditation.

§ MR. MATTHEWS I do not carry in my mind the exact details of the case the hon. Gentleman has mentioned, but, may I point out, that premeditation does not mean, and **1031** ought not to mean, either in law or in common sense, a design to kill formed beforehand? It means a deliberate purpose to kill, formed at the time and executed not merely in the heat of blood, but when the heat of blood should have ceased, as it ought to do when an adversary is felled to the ground or is actually in flight.

§ MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) I should have thought it would have been desirable to place this matter upon the usual principle, and that where there is no evidence that these men went out to murder the keepers, that they only went for the purpose of bagging a pheasant, I should have thought that the usual principle would have held, that as there was no intention to murder at the time they entered on the trespass, and that on that ground the right hon. Gentleman would have advised Her Majesty to exercise the prerogative of mercy. In the second place, it is not denied in the evidence, so far as I have been able to ascertain, that these men now under sentence of death were first attacked by the keepers, and, surely, whether or not an intention to kill entered the minds of the men after they were attacked, we must, in estimating their guilt, remember that they were engaged in a struggle which lasted some time. It is unfair to adjudge the men guilty of murder, putting it on the lowest ground, when they, being attacked, engaged in a struggle in defence of their lives. In addition to that, I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, with reference to the statement he has made that he has received communications from the prisoners, whether it is a fact that Eggleton reiterates the statement that he remembers nothing after he had been struck on the head and rendered senseless? I do not know if that is the case. I do not know how Eggleton can be hanged for battering in the head of the keeper, after the keeper had been felled to the ground. That is the statement made to us by the right hon. Gentleman.

§ MR. MATTHEWS No.

§ MR. CONYBEARE Yes, the right hon. Gentleman stated that one of the keepers, if not both, had been brutally done to death after being felled to the **1032** ground. That was the statement. I want to know, as the right hon. Gentleman has referred to material evidence received by him since the trial, and which has had full weight with him in arriving at the conclusion that the sentence shall be carried out. I want to know whether Eggleton reiterates the assertion that he has no recollection of anything after having been rendered senseless by a blow on the head. Is this man to be judicially murdered by the right hon. Gentleman? (Cries of "Oh, oh," "Order" and "Withdraw.") That is the issue just before us.

(Renewed cries of "Withdraw.") If I have transgressed the Rules of Debate I certainly will, with great pleasure, withdraw my expression if the ruling of Mr. Speaker directs me to do so.

§ **MR. SPEAKER** I should hope that any discussion on this painful case and in reference to a judicial decision will be conducted in a judicial spirit.

§ **MR. CONYBEARE** I have not the slightest desire, Mr. Speaker, to aggravate the feelings of the right hon. Gentleman, and I withdraw the expression. I did not, of course, mean to use it in any personal sense, but in the ordinary meaning of the word. I wish also to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has received a memorial signed by upwards of 1,500 people resident in the locality where these prisoners lived, begging for mercy for these unfortunate men.

§ **MR. WEBB (Waterford W.)** rose to ask a question, but Mr. Speaker reminded him that time would not allow of an answer.

§ **MR. MATTHEWS** Obviously I have not time to answer the hon. Member, and even if I had the time I should decline to follow the hon. Member's argument. I may, however, remind him that the jury decided the case. Application is made to me as adviser to Her Majesty to see whether there is any real or substantial ground for recommending mercy, notwithstanding that the guilt of the men was ascertained by the jury. I have concisely, but I hope with sufficient fulness, stated the view at which I have arrived after most careful consideration, and at this hour I can say no more.

§ House adjourned at Six o'clock.

<http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/>

Membership

Membership stands at 148 people. There are reminder slips included in this newsletter for the remaining 12 single and joint members, who have not yet renewed their membership for this year. Membership is £10 for a single person £15 for a couple. Please send remittance to The Membership Secretary at the Museum's address.

Bill Barnard (Membership Secretary)

Programme 2012

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

Thursday 15th November '12 AGM ... Bees

Nigel Thompson, a long time volunteer and supporter of the Museum has been keeping bees for over 10 years now. He still describes himself as a 'keen amateur' and has joined both the Mid Bucks Beekeepers Association and the British Beekeepers Association. After our AGM Nigel will give us an illustrated talk about bees and show us the working of a beehive.

Thursday 20th December '12 Films from the Archives

Once again we are delighted to welcome Frank Banfield and his amazing film archive. He has a vast collection of 16mm cine films, and will choose a selection, mainly of local interest, dating between 1937 and the 1970s. These films will be interspersed by our usual mince pies and mulled wine.

Thursday 17th January '13 Restoring Oil Paintings

Mike Harrison and his father Bert are 'picture liners'. Their skills enable them to work on old oil paintings with holes, rips or cracking paint and restore them. Mike will tell us about paintings on canvas, hardboard and wooden panels and through his PowerPoint presentation will show how each type can be repaired and restored. He will bring materials and tools of the trade many of which are Victorian in origin and will also show us a half-restored painting.

SPEAKERS WANTED!!

Now is the time of year when I am frantically compiling the programme of talks and visits for 2013. I have some good ideas but not enough to fill the programme for the whole year. That's where I'm hoping that you might come in. My brief for the subjects of talks is firstly those linked with local history, secondly talks concerning the local environment and finally anything else that I think would interest our members! It may be that you, as a member of PIMS, would be prepared to give a talk yourself or alternatively you may know of an excellent speaker and could give me their contact details. Your ideas for visits would also be very useful. Please send a.s.a.p. to **Sue.Lipscomb@btopenworld.com**

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 –

Pictures of a recent wedding reception at the Museum.

Another very successful event, very much appreciated by all those attending and financially rewarding for the museum. It was a long weekend with virtually continuous attendance required through from Thursday to Sunday for setting up, the event itself and being present for the clear up on the Sunday. It is such a shame that the work load for such rewarding events has to be always carried by one or two individuals.

Norman Groom



Wedding of Iain and Samantha Russell.

Open Days 2013

Easter Monday **April 1st**
Early May B.H. Monday **May 6th**
Spring B.H. Monday **May 27th**
Sunday **9th June**
Sunday **14th July**

Sunday **11th August**
B.H. Monday **August 26th**
Sunday **8th September**
Sunday **13th October**

Opening times from
11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.
Admission charges adults £5
children £2. Members free.

Committee Officers:-

**Chairman &
Museum Site Manager**
John Childs **01582 833501**
**Vice Chairman &
Museum Manager**
Norman Groom **01582 605464**
Treasurer
John Youngs **01582 833678**
Secretary
Peter Keeley **01582 792701**

Other Committee Members:-

Archivist
Dennis Trebble **07738786210**
**Programme &
Minutes Secretary**
Sue Lipscomb **01296 630578**

Publicity Secretary

Anne Ball **01442 822672**
**Membership Secretary &
Technical Adviser**
Bill Barnard ..email
w.f.barnard@btinternet.com
**Newsletter Editor &
Computer Records Officer**
Sandra Barnard ..email
alexrose42@btinternet.com
Committee Member
Paul Chapman...email
mchapman@blueyonder.co.uk

Non Committee Posts:-

Craft Co-ordinator
Brenda Grace **01296 668167**
Dancers
Margaret Elliott ..email
MEchippie@aol.com
Trading Secretary
Jeannette Wallis **01296 661997**

Holding Trustees:-

Don Levy
Bob Morgan
John Wallis

Museum Website:- www.pitstonemuseum.co.uk

**Pitstone and Ivinghoe Museum Society
Pitstone Green Museum, Vicarage Road, Pitstone
Leighton Buzzard LU7 9EY
Registered Charity No 273931**