

Pitstone and Ivinghoe Museum Society Newsletter



New Year 2014

Museum Report – January 2014

After many months of hard work the refurbishment of the loft above the meeting room is coming to an end. The entrance door at the top of the stairs has been replaced with something in keeping with the rest of the building and there is some further carpentry work to do on the small doors that were used for loading and unloading grain in the 1800's. The floor is not in the best condition so we are now covering the whole floor with hardboard and then covering the central walkway with industrial carpet tiles. Some 75% of the Cook collection is now in the Big Barn awaiting sorting, cataloguing, photographing, and moving up to the loft. Some of the heavier farming and engineering items will be incorporated into our own collection. There is still a lot of work to do however before it is suitably displayed for viewing by the public.

The Blacksmith's shop is undergoing a sort out and tidy up of all the tools and equipment. The old straw that covered the inside of the corrugated roof to keep the pigs warm had already been removed as it was disintegrating and falling everywhere. It has been a matter of sorting out what should be in a blacksmith's shop from what would be considered as scrap metal. Getting the balance right is essential, leaving it as a working shop, yet allowing the public to see the many tools a blacksmith would use. In doing so we have discovered many unusual items that we are still not certain of what they would have been used for, in spite of searches on the internet.

One other project that is progressing well is the restoration of the Shepherds Hut which was in the orchard near to the museum entrance, and to use it as an exhibit rather than a store shed, as it is at the moment. Much of the timber of the sub-frame, including that carrying the wheels is in a pretty bad state. The rear wheels have now been removed and restored and the axle carrying the rear wheels replaced. This will allow us to remove the hut to a more suitable place in order to carry out work on the sub-frame and front wheels.

The Cow Shed has always suffered from wind-blown dust entering under the eaves. This gap has now been bricked up and the walls behind the stalls cleared of the old whitewash, ready for painting. Whitewash was a common treatment of interior walls on farms and it was a disinfectant as well as just looking clean but being just water based it readily flaked off and had to be redone on a regular basis. We are hoping to repaint the wall with something more permanent.

The old Carpenters Shop, vacated when we built the new one, is undergoing a complete refurbishment. Lack of display space is an ongoing problem at the museum and hopefully when this is up and running it will ease the situation. We have yet to decide what we will use the room for, we have several uses in mind but the decision will be taken at a later date when other problems have been resolved. Space problems are greatest for the larger items of farm machinery however and the availability of this room will not solve that problem.

Work on cataloguing and photographing all the artefacts on site is still an ongoing task although 90% has now been completed. This has been going on for well over twelve months and several thousand artefacts identified and photographs taken, all entered on our database. Our deadline for meeting our Accreditation requirements in this respect is this coming autumn, so we should achieve that date easily.

For some time I have thought that the word 'Museum' may not be as attractive to visitors with children as other event names that one sees. Although our existing name Pitstone Green Museum will continue as our name we have preceded it on our advertising as 'The Heritage Park' hoping that this will attract more visitors.

Leaflets and Posters for 2014 are now available and if you know of anywhere that these could be displayed they are available at the museum on any Tuesday, Thursday or Sunday. This is the first year we have produced all the artwork ourselves rather than give the printers a draft and allow them to create the final version as in previous years. As they require a 'print ready' pdf format, this did involve some complications in its preparation but it was a learning exercise and as they say, all knowledge is useful knowledge.

It is horrifying to think that we are now over halfway through the closed season with only just over a dozen full working days to go before the first open day. We have lots of work planned but what we achieve before Easter is anyone's guess.

HELP!

We are in need of members who would be prepared to help on some open days in our catering area. This need not be all day, perhaps just a morning or afternoon. We hope to have a catering meeting with a small buffet afterwards to discuss catering matters for 2014. If you think you could help then please come along. It will be in the next few weeks on a Saturday about 11.00am. Please contact Anne Ball Tel No 01442 822672 if you think you could help.

Norman Groom Museum Manager.

A chance meeting.

In August of last year I was walking in the Ivinghoe churchyard and I came across two ladies, one being from Farnham in Surrey and her sister from Milton Keynes. They said they were looking for the grave of Fred Heley, who lived in Stone House Ivinghoe, who was their Mother's brother.

I said I did not know where this grave was, but I remembered him and in the village he was known as Freebie. I also remembered his daughter Monica and mentioned we hold photographs of the Ivinghoe & Pitstone Dramatic Society at the Pitstone Museum and Monica was often in these productions. As we had an Open Day at the Museum the next day, I mentioned to them if they wanted to come to this, I would willingly show them the photographs. She also told me she had a

photograph at home of her Uncle Fred Heley and Aunt Lizzie which she would send me.

In September I received a very interesting letter from Margaret with the promised photograph of this Fred Heley and his wife Elizabeth, and she said he is shown to the far right of the photograph as the Ivinghoe Scout Master and his wife is the Cub Mistress. She also said in the letter that unfortunately they could not make the visit to the Museum that day but hoped to come in 2014.

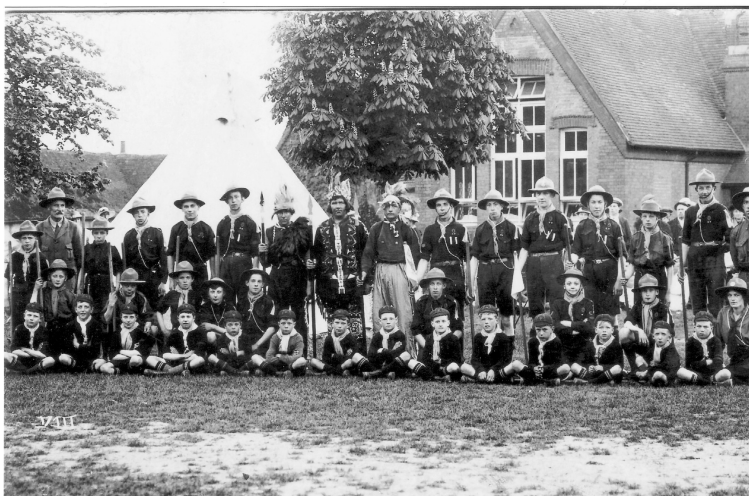
As you see the photograph is showing the side of the Ivinghoe School with the group of Scouts and Cubs, a tent behind the group and showing a very small horse chestnut tree.

In the centre of the photo she mentions in her letter, she understood it to be Buffalo Bill, William F Cody (1846-1917) and his two companions. We have been doing some research into this. Buffalo Bill with his Show is shown on a website as being in Luton in 1903. His last visit to Britain was in 1904.

We now feel this photo may have been taken around the late 1920's as Fred Heley was born in 1897. Do we also think that Lord Baden-Powell is in this photo?

If anyone has any information about this event or knows of family members who were in the Scouts or Cubs in Ivinghoe, please contact me. (01296 668167).

Ivinghoe Scouts and Cubs



Brenda Grace

Spring Cleaning!

If when you are doing this task this year you find you are turning out any covers,sheets, particularly single fitted, could you please think of us at the Museum as we need this type of material to cover the tables in our Big Barn, between Craft Shows/Wedding Receptions etc.,

Thank you Brenda

Membership

The final number of PIMS members for 2013-14 is 178. Membership renewal for 2014-15 will be on April 1st. As this will probably be before the production of the next newsletter, you will be able to use your 2013-14 membership cards on the Museum's Easter Open Day. The membership renewal slips will be sent out in the next newsletter. Please do not send any monies before 1st April.

Bill Barnard Membership Secretary

Pitstone Masters

Extracts from our historical documents held on our computer at the Museum.

This long report was prepared from a WEA course-project on local history in Pitstone, 1971-72. (See Summer 2013 issue)

Sandra Barnard Editor

Pitstone 1800 – 1850 a Report by WEA...

Part 3 Continued from last Newsletter.

INDUSTRY: STRAW PLAITING

General

A very helpful survey of the industry as a whole is given in **A History of the Straw Hat Industry** by J.G. Dony (1942). The following notes should be read in the light of Dony's general findings. Pitstone was on the fringe of the main straw plaiting area which was orientated towards the hat making centres of Luton and Dunstable. The industry was carried on mainly by women and children, and although adult male straw plaiters are found, it seems to have been most usually on a casual basis.

Numbers engaged

Analysis of the 1851 census returns for Pitstone gives a total of 161 straw plaiters comprising 95 adults (34m. 51f) and 66 children under 15 (27m. 39f.).

Thus about half of the adult working population (including 10 male heads of households and over half of all children over 3 were plaiters. In the 1841 census, only 14 plaiters, all females are listed, but no occupations are given for married women or children under 15. In 1861 a rough count gives a total of 69 straw plaiters of whom 53, all females were adults. The large proportion of male plaiters in 1851 must be treated with some reserve; it may be explained by seasonal slackness in agriculture.

Dealers....1841	John Mark	(plait dealer)
.... 1851	John Short	(plait dealer)
	John Short	(straw factor)
	Humphrey Short	(ditto)
	Rebecca Edwards	(plait dealer)
	Henry Bovingdon	(straw cutter)
..... 1861	none	

Materials and Costs

Straw for plaiting was obtained from local farmers and was a useful source of extra income for them. There are numerous references (not yet examined in detail) to sales of 'straws' in the Hawkins farm accounts. In 1840, 7/6d seems to have been a usual price for 100 lb. straw. The straw needed some preparation before use and according to Dony (p.62) the cost to the plaiter (presumably if purchased of a straw dealer) was reckoned to be 20% of the selling price of the finished article. 1 lb. of split straw would produce 80-100 yards of plait, sufficient for 2 bonnets (Dony p.162)

Market and Prices

Plait was sold in 21 ft lengths called 'scores'. Market prices fluctuated both seasonally, prices in spring and summer might be double those in autumn and winter (Dony p.47) and according to distance from principal markets. The nearest market to Pitstone was that at Ivinghoe held weekly on Saturdays. The pattern of market trends during the period is obscure as no formal record of prices appear to have been kept. The war years prior to 1816 saw high prices up to 2/6d. a score. (Dony p.62) caused by exclusion of foreign competition. In 1837 a price of 1s score for "common plait" is quoted (Dony p.69). The same price has been noted in a reference to Drayton Beauchamp in 1854.

Earnings

(No information for Pitstone.) Earnings fluctuated with prices and also according to area. It was frequently alleged, however, that wife and children could earn as much as the husband by this means. In 1843 when trade was said to be depressed it was stated that Bucks plaiters had to work 12 - 14 hours a day to earn 3s - 4s a week. Average children's earnings were estimated in 1837 at 9d. at age 8 rising to 3/6d at 16 and over. (Dony p.78).

Plait Schools

For details of this phenomenon see Dony p.93 ft. The existence of a plait school at Pitstone is attested by a County Directory of 1847 but no details have so far been found. In the 1861 census Ann Norwood aged 67 is described as "a plait school keeper". The Hawkins farm accounts of 1840-43 record 'almost daily sales of straw to Francis Norwood and William Corkett, both of whom were employed on the farm. These accounts have not been examined in detail but the amounts are so large (100 lb. of straw a week and over to each man) that the supply of one or more plait schools is a likely explanation. *Continued on page 14*

Programme 2014

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

ALL VISITORS VERY WELCOME. Fees £2.00 members £3.00 visitors.

Those of you who did not attend the AGM last November at the museum may not know of the decision which will affect the monthly meetings. A member pointed out that the third Thursday of the month was difficult for some since it was always shared by the Aylesbury branch of the National Trust. There was a general feeling that we should move our monthly meetings to the fourth Thursday of each month and this was agreed. I do hope that this will not inconvenience any of my regular supporters and of course I hope it will attract newcomers to our talks. Since the fourth Thursday of December 2014 happens to be Christmas Day - December will always be the exception to our new rule and we will revert to the third Thursday just for that month.

The dates for next year are clearly shown on the programme in the centre pages (detachable) of this Newsletter

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

23.1.14 The Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway

An illustrated talk to look at a railway from its 1869 origins to its life as a modern heritage railway. A country branch line from Princes Risborough to Watlington, it carried passengers until 1957, then freight until 1989 when British Railways closed it. A group of enthusiasts successfully took on the challenge of finding the funds to purchase some of the track and since 1994 have been running trains at weekends. The railway is run entirely by volunteers. Our speaker, Roger Fagg has been a volunteer for 13 years and Chairman since 2006.

27.2.14 What really happened at Bletchley Park?

After a variety of careers our speaker, Rob Johnstone is a volunteer guide at the Bletchley Park Museum when he is not trying to sail round Britain single handed in a 23ft boat. This talk will be a non-technical introduction to codes, ciphers, enigmas, bombs and lots more.

27.3.14 Latimer: Listening to the Walls

Latimer and nearby Beaconsfield were chosen for use in the second world war for the interrogation of German and Italian P.O.W'S from 1941-1945. The work was highly secret and widespread knowledge of what went on did not come out until 1997, 23 years after the news of Enigma came out. On the talk we hear what went on in the camps, why it remained a secret so long and how your speaker tried to find out more before the details came out officially! 1947-1994 the Latimer site was used for other secret uses and nearby was the "rotor base" and these two uses will be looked at as a coda. Colin Oakes

24.4.14 The History of the Tring Silk Mill

Wendy Austin, our speaker has always been interested in Tring, having been born and brought up there, as were both her parents and three of her grandparents. The Silk Mill has a varied history, being built in 1823, and after closing as a mill in 1898, being put to different uses. The talk embraces aspects of local, industrial and social history, from the beginnings in 1823 to the present day.

22.5.14 Another Evening of Music

After the success of last year's May Meeting Ron and Barbara Hartwell will once again be hosting this event in their home (16, Ridgeway Road, Chesham HP5 2EG). It will need to be pre-booked using my email Sue.Lipscomb@btopenworld.com. Those attending will see a unique collection of Player Pianos and a Roll playing Reed Organ. After a brief talk on the history of these instruments and how they work they will be demonstrated, after which you will be encouraged to have a go yourself. **Please note the start time will be 7.30pm.**

26.6.14 Bygone Implements of Home and Farm

A light-hearted look at a Buckinghamshire family's collection of rural bygones, both domestic and agricultural. Sara Oliver is our speaker this evening.

24.7.14 Cheese Wine and Antiques

Our very popular evening at the museum with Stephen Hearn is appearing once again in our programme. The museum will be open from 6.45p.m. to allow members and their friends to walk around the exhibits, and then the refreshments will be served at 7.15p.m. The evening will cost £6.00 for members and £8.00 for non-members and will include a ploughman's platter and complimentary glass of wine. Please do not bring more than two items for Stephen's comments and valuations. We hope you will park in the orchard. You will need a ticket for this event and a booking form will appear in our newsletter nearer the time.

28.8.14 Hobbies Evening and Supper

This is a great occasion for putting yourself and your hobby on display! All are welcome however quirky and unusual your collection (nothing has been censored yet!). If you have brought a display to a previous hobbies evening, please don't let that stop you from coming again and if you truly have nothing to bring, then do come and learn more about other people's hobbies. If you have friends who would like to show us their hobby or simply enjoy the evening, please bring them along. This year we are again including a supper, details of which will appear in a newsletter nearer the time.

25.9.14 An Introduction to the Cook Collection with Buffet

In a break with tradition we are invited to visit the Cook Collection in its newly created exhibition space in the loft above our Meeting Room. The late Colin Cook accumulated an enormous collection of artefacts which he carefully restored and which his wife has donated to the Museum. Norman Groom our Museum Manager and his team will be on hand to show us the items in this collection and answer our questions. A finger buffet and drinks will accompany this evening; details to follow.

23.10.13 The Lee in the First World War

Mike Senior lives in The Lee and is a local historian and author of a book, 'No Finer Courage' about the impact of war on his village. He has had a life-long interest in the First World War and, since his retirement, he has devoted much of his time to research, lecturing and writing about aspects of the Western Front. Although this talk is about The Lee in the First World War, the same basic story would apply to thousands of villages around the UK. It is about village men who went to war together and died together in 1916 and it is about those who remained at home.

23.11.14 AGM + It's sedimentary, my dear Watson! (NB 7.30 start)

Dennis Trebble has been persuaded to return after his short debut talk a year ago. After this AGM he is returning to talk about why we have gaps in the Chilterns and how they relate to past geomorphic processes. The escarpment between Princes Risborough and Wendover is a classic location that displays many of the usual landforms together with one or two surprises. The chalk scenery, whilst seemingly simple, depends in its current form upon the passage of geological time and the slow processes of weathering and erosion under different climatic conditions.

18.12.14 Christmas with Films from the Archives (NB 3rd Thursday)

Frank Banfield will be returning once again with his amazing film archive. He has a vast collection of 16mm cine films, and will choose a selection, mainly of local interest, dating from the 1930s to the 1970s. These films will be interspersed by our usual mince pies and mulled wine.

Visits I hope to organise during 2014

Bletchley Park, Matthews Brickyard, Fawley Museum and Railway

Look out for details of these in the forthcoming newsletters.

Pitstone & Ivinghoe Museum Society

Programme 2014

All meetings are held in the Meeting Room in the Pitstone Green Museum at 8pm. Members pay £2.00 and non-members £3.00. Refreshments are provided.

ALL VISITORS VERY WELCOME



Sue Lipscomb, Programme Secretary

The article below was found by **Norman Groom** in the archives. We think this may have been written by the late Jeffrey Hawkins. This will be published in instalments.

PITSTONE GREEN FARM AND THE HAWKINS FAMILY PART 1

On the 22nd June 1751 "William Hawkins the Elder" of Edlesborough, a village some three miles north-east of Pitstone, describing himself as a Yeoman (a man farming his own land) signed his Will.

A copy of it is kept in the Bucks County Record Office. an extract reads:- "I do give Will devise and bequeath unto William Hawkins my Son his heirs and Assigns for ever All that my Messuage or Farmhouse wherein I now dwell situate standing and being on Edlesborough Green in the County of Bucks together with all and singular Outhouses Edifices buildings barns Stables Yards Gardens orchards and backside thereunto adjoining and belonging And also all my sever all pieces and parcels of Arable land Ley Meadow and Sward ground lying and being in the fields and precincts and Parish of Edlesborough aforesaid or elsewhere in the county of Bucks and in the Kingdom of Great Britain".

Jeff and Leonard Hawkins on the Farm (c.1952)



The family had acquired the farm, about fifty acres belonging to them and as much rented, in about 1700, and were to keep it until 1810 when Samuel, grandson of "William the Elder", sold it to the Earl of Bridgewater for £1,400. Another document at the County Record Office written by a lawyer employed by the Earl of Bridgewater to verify Samuel's title to the

land, shows that "William the Elder" died five years after making his Will" at the advanced age of 84 years". William's personal effects were valued at under £20 when he died.

The family were nonconformists. Another part of the Will reads:- "And also I do give and bequeath unto my poor Brethren belonging to the Meeting at Thorn whereof I am a Member Twentye Shillings to be distributed among as many as my said son William Hawkins shall think hath most need."

It was a time when nonconformists had to worship at an out of the way place like Thorn, a small hamlet to the north of Dunstable, if they were not to be molested. A History of Houghton Regis Baptist Church published for the centenary in 1964 reads: - "...nonconformists faced many hazards to exercise their right to enjoy freedom of worship". In those difficult times they had to worship when and where occasion served, often travelling long distances to worship with like minded Christians.

Thus it was that the secluded hamlet of Thorn, some one and a half miles from Houghton Regis, became a centre of Baptist witness with worshippers travelling from Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Tilsworth, Woburn, Toddington, Chalton and Leighton. Records show that a meeting was established there as early as 1720, an offshoot from Park Street, Luton, although a building was not erected until 1738."

"William the Elder" also remembered two grandsons in his Will. One, Joseph was to have £5 when he was twenty-one. Then the Will goes on to say: - "Also I do give and bequeath unto my Grandson Samuel Hawkins the Sum of Ten Pounds of Good and lawful money of Great Britain.....to put him out to apprentice if he shall choose a Trade and if not then the said Ten pounds to be paid unto the Samuel Hawkins when he shall attain the age of One and Twenty Years". But if Samuel, who was the elder son and fourteen years old at the time, did choose a trade, it did not prevent him from inheriting the farm.

The name Samuel was to be given to the eldest son for the next three generations. The next Samuel (Born 1775) was helping his father on the farm when he married Sarah and they had six daughters while living in Edlesborough. The first named Sarah after her mother was born in 1799.

Samuel continued to work with his father on the farm for a further nine years during which time he and his wife Sarah had six children - all girls. Then in 1808, when his father was over seventy, he moved from Edlesborough to Pitstone Green as tenant of the Earl of Bridgewater. The farm at Edlesborough was formally conveyed to the Earl some two years later. It is likely that the two transactions were part of a single arrangement. Samuel had chosen to abandon his birthright as a Yeoman and to become, at the age of thirty-three, a tenant farmer on a great landed estate. At Pitstone Green during the next ten years he and Sarah had six sons and two more daughters and there his descendants were to live and farm to the present day when the farm is occupied by the writer, his great-great grandson.

The move of Samuel Hawkins to Pitstone was connected with the extension of the Ashridge estate by the Earl of Bridgewater who had inherited it from his relative the Duke of Bridgewater, 'the father of inland navigation'. The Duke had made a large fortune building and running the canals that provided the development of the

industrial revolution in this country. At the beginning of the 19th Century Lord Bridgewater was using money made on the canals to buy up land in the villages surrounding Ashridge. It has been suggested that this buying up of land was to make the estate large and thereby suitable for the Dukedom the family wished to re-acquire. No doubt the prices paid were good and it was of benefit to Samuel Hawkins that the small family farm be sold and he become tenant of the larger farm at Pitstone.

In 1807, Lord Bridgewater had bought a farm of 57 acres from Thomas Birdsey that we know was occupied in 1798 by Thomas Eustace. The homestead of this farm was sited where Pitstone Green Farm now stands and is shown on a map dated 1755 from the Ashridge collection in the Herts County Record Office entitled "a farm lying in the several parishes of Pitstone and Marsworth in the county of Bucks and of Tring and Aldbury in the county of Herts being the estate of Mrs Ann Astley".

The farm was made up of eighty- three separate strips in the common fields and three enclosed pieces of land. To this farm was added another bought by Lord Bridgewater in 1804 from Thomas Kerr, occupied by 1800 by James Burt and another bought in 1806 from Billington, occupied in 1798 by William Poulton. Land from these farms together made up a holding of 112 acres, with one or two areas of enclosed land and many strips in the various furlongs of the great open fields of Pitstone.

Although the creation of larger farms must have made sense financially (small farms in France today make food cost more there) the fact that the land was split up into so many small scattered strips must have made farming in larger units more difficult. The small strips were necessary when most farms occupied no more than one or two of them in each of the open fields. So; no wonder that there was some consolidation of them in 1829. Strips were exchanged so as to make larger pieces. Strips were exchanged so as to make larger pieces of land under one farmer.

The enclosure act for Pitstone in 1854 finally put an end to them altogether. The farm created by the joining together of these three farms was and still is called Pitstone Green Farm this part of the village was known as Pitstone Green as it bordered the Green, a large open area of common grassland some 100 acres in extent.

This amalgamation of three farms to form one was typical of what was happening in England. The concentration the land into fewer larger holdings was a process that had taken place in the 18th century and was to continue into the 19th. It made for more efficient farming but meant that fewer working on the land were their own master, and accentuated the difference in the financial position of the now

more prosperous farmers and their workers. Also, due to the increase in the population, fewer people were needed to work the land and as there was little alternative employment, there was surplus of labour and people suffered accordingly.

Pitstone Green Farm grew over the years. In 1809 it was 112 acres, in 1841 220, in 1851 250 and 1861 328 acres. Besides the increase in size of farms there had also been a tendency for the farms to be owned by people living out of the village and let to tenants to farm them until at the beginning of the 19th century there was very little land in Pitstone that was owned by the man who farmed it.

to be continued

Pitstone 1800 – 1850 a Report by WEA,Part 3 Continued from page 6

Social Effects See Dony p.67 ft.

Plaiting was said to be the cause of women neglecting the home. Men were supposed to have become indifferent to regular work and dependent on the woman; unmarried women to spend most of their earnings on clothes, to be resentful of control and loose in morals.

LIVING STANDARDS

General

The subject of living standards in this period and especially the question of whether living standards of labourers were rising or falling has excited considerable debate among historians. Information about local prices c.1840 has been extracted from the account books of George Groom, a grocer living at Ivinghoe, and more can doubtless be learned from them about the consumption of individual families. Another interesting set of accounts which offer some clues to living standards in the area in the early years of the century are those of a watchmaker at Tring which record, repairs done for customers in the district. They include an appreciable number of persons identified as labourers. This can probably be taken as an index of relative prosperity which may be explained by the flourishing state of the straw plaiting industry in the war period.

Examples of Prices 1841-42

For comparison retail prices in Manchester in 1841 taken from "Plenty and Want" by J, Bumett (Pelican) are given in brackets.

Rent, cottage property	1s.	(4s.)
Bread, large loaf	8d.	
Small loaf	3 3/4d.	(Not given)
Butter,	1/1d per lb.	(1/- to 1/1d.perlb.)
Flour,	2d. per lb.	(2/4d. to 2/7d. per 12 lb.)
Tea,	1/6d. per qr.	(5s. per lb.)
Cheese,	7d. per lb.	
Sugar,	7d. to 8d. per lb.	(8d. to 9d. per lb.)
Coffee	1/10d per lb.	(2/- per lb.)
Beef & Pork	7d. per lb.	(8d. to 8 1/2d per lb.)
Candles	6 1/2d. per lb.	(6 1/2d. per lb.)
Coal	£1.1.0 ton in Jan 1840	(7d. per cwt.)

Incomes (Labourers)

The average wage for labourers in Bucks is given as 8/6d in 1851. For Pitstone no detailed information has yet been found for the period of study but a wage book for Pitstone Green Farm covering the years 1861-66 has been partly analysed. It shows that in 1864 wages of 11/s. to 13/s. were being paid to adult workers over 21 in regular employment. Harvest earnings took the annual average up to 14/s. from 11/4 (or from £29 – 9s to £36 – 6s per annum).

Earnings of wives and children from straw plaiting, etc. must also be considered and were obviously of critical importance. (See section on Straw Plaiting Industry). In 1851 over 55% of children over 3 years contributed to the family income.

Other Sources of Income or Subsistence

Gardens: All cottages had gardens.

Domestic animals:

The 'Vestry Book records 13 applications from cottagers for permission to run pigs on the common in 1833.

Gleanings: No details but traditionally an important source of grain for poor families, the right to gather furze on the common for fuel was a recognised custom.

Working Hours

A six day week was universal. Hours laid down for road workers in November 1831 were 6 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. (Vestry Book). Straw plaiters are known to have worked up to 14 hours a day.

Housing

Gross overcrowding was common in rural areas at this time. Figures for sizes of household in Pitstone in 1851 are given below. It is hoped to obtain some information about size, etc. of surviving cottages for comparison.

Household size (No. of persons)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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No. of households	-	6	16	10	12	12	6	9	3	2	21
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To be continued

Cover Picture By Bill Barnard

Whitchurch Morris men on a rainy day in May.

Open Days 2014

Easter Monday **April 21st**

Early May B.H.

Monday **May 5th**

Whitchurch Morris Men

Spring B.H. Monday **May 26th**

Sunday **8th June**

Tappalachian Dancers

Sunday **13th July**

Sunday **10th August**

Wicket Brood Morris Men

B.H. Monday **August 25th**

Sunday **14th September**

Sunday **12th October**

Opening times from

11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Admission charges adults £6

children £2. **Adult and child £6**

(Sundays Only). Members free.

Committee Officers:-

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Vice Chairman &

Museum Manager

Norman Groom **01582 605464**

Treasurer

John Youngs **01582 833678**

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Formalities of changes are

currently in progress. Names to be

advised in the next Newsletter

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