



CHILTERN  
OPEN AIR  
MUSEUM

*Where buildings come  
alive through history*

# Museum *Update*

March 2008



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# Chiltern Open Air Museum 2008 Season

## 21 March – 31 October

### Major Events Programme

21 – 24 March (21 and 22 March) (23 and 24 March)	Hands On History <i>Dress up for a Vermeer Painting</i> <i>Vicus – Join the Roman Army</i>
12 & 13 April	18 <sup>th</sup> Century Weekend - Soldiers, Civilians and Highwaymen (Lace Wars)
4 & 5 May	Traditional Light Cavalry Displays (Windsor Light Cavalry)
25 & 26 May	Medieval Pageant (Lion Rampant)
31 May & 1 June	Prelude to D Day
22 June	Heavy Horse Show
26 & 27 July	Vikings versus Saxons
2 & 3 August	Meet Soldiers from the English Civil War (Siege Group)
9 & 10 August	Classic Vehicles Show
16 & 17 August	The Great War (Great War Society)
23 – 25 August	Meet the Roman Army (Roman Military Research Society)
16 September	Antiques Valuation Day (4.00 pm – 8.00 pm)
31 October	Halloween (6.00 pm – 9.00 pm)



**[www.coam.org.uk](http://www.coam.org.uk)**

**Information Line : 01494 872163**

**Museum Office : 01494 871117**

## News from the Boss

Happy New Year to you all and welcome to the 2008 season! As usual, the winter has been a hive of activity as we welcomed record numbers of school children to the Victorian Christmas workshops in November, essential building repairs were carried out, hundreds of new hedge plants were planted, what seems like miles of hedgerows were laid using traditional methods and the new hay rick was crowned with a thatched roof. January also saw the completion of the Ransomes Sims and Jefferies Threshing Machine project.

The artefact team has also been busy cleaning and conserving artefacts from the stores and preparing Gerrards Cross Hut to be the new artefact store in the future. We are delighted to have successfully secured a grant from the Museum Development Fund recently to enable the Museum to purchase new shelving for Gerrards Cross Hut for storage and temporary displays. When this task is completed, it is our intention to provide occasional tours for visitors to view some of the artefacts which are not out on display in the buildings.

The Museum will be applying for the third phase of Museum registration, now called Accreditation, from February to July this year and our application preparations include the development of collections care and

conservation manuals and a disaster plan to cover the procedures for recovery of artefacts in the event of an emergency. The Museum will also need to submit a new acquisition and disposal policy to meet new guidelines.

Education plans are extremely exciting for this year with new workshops covering 1940s topics, video conferencing workshops from within our buildings and grant aided improvements to existing workshops for inclusive audiences. The new Adult Professional Development Workshops continue with further courses on traditional building skills later in the year and leisure interest courses in the summer.

2008 will be another historic year in the development of the Museum's unique building conservation skills as the building of Haddenham Cottage continues and we begin the construction of the walls of the building.



*Chilterns Vernacular Building Skills Course working with Lime, flint and brick*



*BCUC students continued conservation of our toll house artefacts.*

The forthcoming season will offer some spectacular special events starting with the Easter Hands On Spectacular including dressing for a Vermeer painting on Good Friday and Saturday and a chance to join the Roman Army on Easter day and Bank Holiday Monday. New groups this year include Lace Wars 18<sup>th</sup> Century soldiers and civilians in the Easter break (12 & 13 April), a new Roman display group for August Bank Holiday and the Great War Society will cover World War I in mid August. The Heavy Horse Show and the Classic Vehicle Shows are repeated this year and your support for these firm favourites is always appreciated. Our deep gratitude to those of you who have agreed to provide weekend programmes for the Museum to help us

attract more visitors over the season.

You have all made the Museum what it is today – these wonderful reports of our progress and future plans would not happen without the enormous contribution of everyone involved in every aspect of the Museum. This season, more than ever, we need your help and support, and your dedication and commitment to the success of the Museum is hugely appreciated. Thank you all for what you do for us and I hope you enjoy the rich and exciting programme this year. I wish us all a good season.

*Sue Shave*  
Museum Director

## Buildings News

### Gerrards Cross

This is now complete, the interior has been insulated and lined out, and the Artefact volunteers have already started using it.

Some racking has been ordered to hold the vast collection of artefacts currently in Didcot; as soon as they have been assembled and installed, the collection will be transferred.

The original Sunday School sign that hung over the door has been restored and will be re-hung at an opening ceremony later this year.

It's a shame that I thought it would make a good artefact store and workshop, It would have actually been very useful for painting doors and windows in over the winter, and has been a superb place for our coffee and lunch breaks!

### Winter Maintenance

As usual the first school visits are about to start and the essential maintenance work is not finished.

The main task this winter has been to straighten up the front of the Vicarage Room, and replace the broken glass.

Well, it's been straightened up, it's been stiffened to prevent it moving again, and some of the broken glass has been replaced.

However, as usual, the job has not been so straight forward – we have had to replace two window cills, several cover strips, at least one window frame (watch this space) and repair both doors, two window frames, two studs, and several cover strips, not to mention stripping and

repainting as much as possible. The school season will start with the building having temporary doors, but hopefully the real doors will be repaired and fitted before the main season starts.



*Museum volunteers Ted Beeson and Tom Crosby carrying out repairs on Thame Vicarage Room*

We will also sort out the ramp up to the building, making it one continuous slope instead of two, and if time permits – put in a Hopscotch path round the back.

We have also been doing some re-decorating in the Prefab, mainly in the living room, but also to the front and back doors. As usual this drew attention to some repair work - the front door cill needed replacing and the door frames repairing.

This, of course, was straightforward – Remove wall section containing front door; dismantle section; remove door and frame; dismantle door frame; make replacement cill; replace bottom ends of both sides of door frame; re-assemble door frame; re-assemble wall section; repaint; replace wall section; replace interior trim.

Now we can finish off the decorating.

As most of you will have seen, we started a programme of tar varnishing all the tarred museum buildings at the end of last season, This has now been completed.

However, this left the C20<sup>th</sup> side of Leagrave looking a little tired, so the red paintwork has been given another coat, and having done that we realised the inside of the C18<sup>th</sup> side needed some attention. As a wet weather job we started stripping off the old limewash with a view to giving it a new coat, and a new colour scheme. The ceiling and timbers will be white again, but the plaster panels will be yellow. We also aim to re-instate the milk-paint on the stair door and partition.

Brian Hale has been making progress on the Drying Oven for the Furniture

### **PORTAKABIN**

I have changed the lock on the outer door of the Portakabin, so that it is now easy to lock and unlock, I have changed the keys on the various key bunches, but if any individuals have keys, please see me.

Factory. The fire box has been put together, and the flue pipes are under construction. The only drawback is that when he broke into the bottom of the chimney, it was full of rubble and mortar. Hopefully not all the way up! Might even see it burning this year.

Those who came to the End of Season meeting will have noticed the dilapidated state of the doors into the Portakabin. These have now been replaced, courtesy of Peter Quinn, who had a couple of old doors he didn't want.

Needless to say, once we started we realised that it wasn't just the doors but also the frame that needed replacing. The doors still need another coat of paint and some finishing off, but this may just possibly be done by the Pre-Season meeting.



*The Drying Oven for the Furniture Factory*

The main project for this season will, of course, be the continuation of Haddenham, once we get all the maintenance work done.

We should be able to start on the wychert this year, which will be interesting to say

the least. Anyone interested in helping or having a go let me know, but give us time to get the hang of it first.

*John Hyde-Trutch*  
Buildings Manager



*The new acquisition!*

## **New acquisition**

We were recently offered a small wartime Nissen Hut. This is located at Sewell, just outside Dunstable in Bedfordshire. It is a five bay building, 30ft long, 17ft wide and 10ft 6ins high.

We will be dismantling it in February, with a view to using it to replace one of the old storage buildings at Wood End. This will provide much better storage for some of our larger artefacts. The outer skin and frame is in very good condition,

though some of the internal sheeting will need replacing.

This will be part of the ‘make-over’ we are planning for the storage area, a new purpose built building will replace the old “swimming pool” building, and a concrete garage will be erected to house some of the museum vehicles.

*John Hyde-Trutch*  
Buildings Manager

## Site and Farm

### “Let Not Ambition Mock Their Useful Toil”

In the last couple of days before Christmas, as we pushed really hard to get a basic covering of thatch over the hay rick, I remember a conversation had from the top of the rick to volunteer, Pete Childs, who was sharpening the rick pegs on the ground, trying to establish how many rick pegs he had had to make.

We totted up around seven hundred in the end, all to secure the straw on that one hay rick. It's when you count up the numbers on these sorts of jobs, you begin to get some appreciation of the sheer amount of work and man hours that have for centuries. gone into making a farm tick over from one season to the next



*Museum volunteer Pete Childs sharpening rick pegs*

All those hours, all that work, over so long, by so many people. The only testimony that remains of it are the farms we still work and that carefully and slowly moulded landscape that their work and the hand of Nature made, whilst the authors of that landscape are (as Thomas Gray would have it) :

“Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,  
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.”

In an attempt to reign in the flowery and divergent prose on the subject that I feel coming on, I thought I would use some numbers from our work here to add my tribute to all those in country churchyards nation wide, and also to recognise the magnitude of the task that my volunteers engage in, trying to keep alive something of what these people did.

So, what I thought I would give you are some cumulative totals relating to different types of jobs on site here for the last five years (five years as that's what I have records and recollections to work with). It's hard to give you particularly accurate numbers for most of the following; if anyone would like to contest them, I'm open to debate, but I think they are pretty well in the right ballpark for order of magnitude.

**Over the last five years we have (all by hand, except where stated):**

- (Seeing as the whole thought started at this year's rick, we'll start with hay.) Made, carted, pitched and stacked fifty tonnes of loose hay, which, together with around another twenty five tonnes of bought in hay, means all seventy five tonnes of hay

has then all been unstacked and/ or cut out and carried out to the animals.

- Rather frustratingly one would think (but such is the nature of farming), around the same amount (circa seventy five tonnes) of manure and animal bedding has then been forked out and spread back on the land.
- Planted around half a mile of hedgerow (around six thousand hedge-plants)



*Museum Volunteer Sarah Lomas helping with the hedge planting*

- Laid (by the end of this winter hopefully!) around a quarter mile of hedgerow, laying and placing something like two thousand pleachers in the process, secured with around a thousand hedgestakes and a thousand binders.
- Repaired around seven hundred up-rights on various bits of wrought iron fencing and re-erected it (including

the Astleham fence which, though repaired, is not yet all re-erected).

- Cut, carried, sharpened and placed around a thousand stakes for dead hedges (and built dead hedges around them).
- Dug in a hundred or so gateposts and fence straining posts, digging out and replacing a total of around twenty tonnes of soil in the process, together with some three hundred fenceposts driven in the ground to make the fences.
- Cut, split, shaped and jointed some three hundred pieces of ash to make around thirty gate hurdles.
- Cut, carted, stacked, sawn (with chainsaw), chopped, carted, and re-stacked, some twelve tonnes of firewood for the Museum's domestic fireplaces.
- Laid roadstone on the Museum's roads and car parks. Thirty tonnes of which were shovelled twice, entirely by hand; twenty tonnes of which was loaded by the tractor and laid by hand and then another hundred and twenty tonnes were laid by contractors with machinery.
- Spread chalk on the Museum's fields (to help correct the acidity of the ground), thirty tonnes of which were spread by hand and then another forty tonnes spread by contractors using a machine.
- Of course, before and after all this every day, there are the animal husbandry rounds. Every day of the year, come rain, wind, shine or snow. All of which means we have checked and attended to all the animals some three and a half thousand times, clocking up at a guess around two to three thousand miles of

walking in the process. And, if anyone wondered why we always seem to be trimming sheep's feet, it would appear it's because we trimmed about one and a half thousand individual feet over the period.

- All this and many more but less quantifiable things add up to around twenty five thousand hours of work, all of which were sustained by the essential lubrication of nearly four hundred gallons of tea!!

Well, having got to the end of all that, I think it's time to put the kettle on!

But, for those of you with a disposition for enjoying these sorts of calculations,

an interest in local history and your own inclination to add "the passing tribute of a sigh" (Gray again) to history's common labourer, can I propose some conjectural calculations as to how many of Gray's "rude forefathers" are actually buried in a typical English Parish churchyard? Suggestions, with workings and assumptions 'on a postcard to this address' please, and we'll see if they'll let us squeeze the most engaging answer into the next issue of Update.

*Conway Rowland*  
Site and Farm Manger



*John Hoar diligently works on the new garden over the winter*

**Bird Watching Day**  
**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April**

Several volunteers have approached us during the last year about what birds we have on site. Although we know we had a healthy population of bullfinches near the pond last year and redwings are visiting us this winter, and not forgetting the

kestrels, we have never undertaken a survey of the bird populations. Therefore, we would like to invite you to join other like-minded volunteers in a day of bird watching at the Museum.

If you are able to come along please let Melissa know on 01494 875542 or by email at [educationcoam@btconnect.com](mailto:educationcoam@btconnect.com).

## The Plan

*Bryn the Bard*

The garden it is taking shape, the borders are all dug;  
With volunteers from near and far, with shovel, fork and trug,  
The place for paths is marked with paint, the gates and entries  
planned,  
The fence is growing link by link enclosing all the land.  
With bricks and setts and paving slabs the outline will grow clear,  
A solid base, a winding path, to last throughout the year.  
An arbour in the corner complete with welcome seat,  
Will view the hopscotch square where little ones compete.  
And through the arch a picnic site for children, Dads and Mums,  
Quite close to a bird-table, (They pick up all the crumbs!)  
A pergola is up and set, from rabbit place to wall,  
To enclose the cottage garden plants; to keep them safe from all  
The vagaries of weather when it comes in from the East;  
In the cold and dreary winter - it's the time they like the least!  
Then on into the Orchard with its variegated trees,  
Its flowers and meadow grasses, its sounds of birds and bees.

As yet the plants are far away, the final plan a dream,  
But up beyond the present state, the vision is still seen,  
A progress here a movement there, the items they appear,  
The arbour sits within the forge, the seat is waiting near.  
The ground it has been fertilised, the flints and stones moved out.  
Shrubs and flowers are catalogued, (some references in doubt?)

It well behoves our garden boss to go that extra mile  
(For Gertrude was particular, she had a certain style.)  
He works towards perfection in melding every part  
Making Gertude Jekyll's Garden a proper work of art.

## Restoration of the Ransomes Threshing Machine

Over the past eighteen months a volunteer team, consisting of John Smithson, Chris English and Keith Baggaley has renovated the Museum's 1947 Ransomes Sims & Jefferies 54 Tractor threshing machine. Enquiries have revealed that no other museum has an example of this

and pink.

Unusual aspects of the project were the sourcing of unique items such as new belts and a new canvas for the self-feeder on the top of the machine. Fortunately the Museum had some old reaper-binder canvases. These were used to prepare patterns that enabled a long established tent-making firm, Carters & Son (Thatcham) in Reading to make a new feeder canvas for the thrasher. Other special items included particular copper rivets and leather to repair the feeder drive shaft, a large metal pipe and several



*The restored Ransomes Threshing Machine*

actual model of a once common agricultural machine.

The renovation involved partial dismantling of the machine, repairing wooden parts with imperial size tongue and groove boarding, replacing worn metal parts, a lot of paint stripping, treatment against insect and fungal infestation, and repainting in the traditional colours, red

pieces of shaped metal sheeting. A traditional sign-writer renewed the RANSOMES lettering on the guard boards.

The running instruction diagrams on the side of the machine were badly degraded. Some replacements were obtained from the Museum of English Rural Life at Reading and digitally modified by Chris Maynard of COAM. Belt diagrams were

redrawn.

The machine was brought to working condition for the Harvest Festival event held on 29/30 September 2007 and demonstrations run for the visitors, using the Farm's Fordson tractor of the same age. Since that event the remainder of the painting underneath the machine has been completed. Only a new set of unusual tyres need to be found for the original wheels.

## New ~~toy~~ vehicle at the Museum

The museum has just acquired an automatic Mitsubishi Shogun with four wheel drive. A suitable vehicle was needed to provide good off road capability, and be able to tow out vehicles stuck in the mud – a vehicle that anyone would be able to drive.

Conway was also looking for a road

In order to celebrate the completion of the project, all Museum volunteers are invited to join the external sponsors and supporters of the project to a celebratory running of the thrashing machine in the farmyard at 11 am on Saturday 8 March.

*Keith Baggaley*

Museum Volunteer and Project Leader

worthy vehicle for towing the new livestock trailer.

The Shogun will be eminently suitable for all purposes, and although elderly is in very good condition. It has a powerful engine, high and low ratios and comes complete with altimeter, inclinometer and compass!

Before you all get too excited - its use will be at the discretion of the Farm and Site Manager, Buildings Manager and/or the Director, and only Named Drivers will be allowed to take it on the road.



*The Museum's new toy*

## Artefacts

Hello everyone, Jennie with a B here! I'm pleased to let you know that we have been successful in securing a grant from the Museum Development Fund for some racking for the new stores in the Gerrards Cross building. We couldn't afford the wooden racking we would have liked, but we have ordered some nice galvanised racking instead. As soon as it has arrived it will be all hands on deck to get it erected. Hopefully Chris will not be on holiday, as he has volunteered to help put it up! We will then have to organise the stores, so no "dumping" please. This will only be possible if we can move the building volunteers out of their new tea room! When it is all organised, we will be able to open the stores at certain times to the public and explain some of the artefact conservation to them. It may even be possible with new steps, to have the stable door at the side open all the time, so that the stores can be seen.

Although much of what we have done is behind the scenes this winter, we have been working hard on cleaning artefacts that have been moved from Didcot cart shed into Gerrards Cross. All the horse harnesses have been cleaned along with assorted farm tools. The harnesses will eventually be moved into the saddlers shop in Marwood Yard. Thank you to all those volunteers that have helped throughout the winter.

Although I haven't had anything to do with the restoration of the thrashing machine other than to stand and admire the sterling work that Keith, John, Chris and all the helpers have done, I do wish to add my thanks. Their next project is a

reaper binder that hopefully doesn't need as much work.

Some of the artefact volunteers also decided to carry on painting the Toll House, which we started last year, completing the office and the kitchen. This year the bedroom, scullery and if we have time the privy, will all be smelling of distemper! Jill Broad is one of the painters, so don't be surprised if there is a mural on any of the walls when she has finished.

We are checking our paperwork for accreditation requirements at the moment. As I write this, Aileen is slaving over a hot computer assessing the backlog of non accessioned items, while Joy is checking the cataloguing sheets we made out in 2004/5 to see if any are missing. Thank you ladies, this is a great help, as it would have taken me weeks to do on my own.

As always, thank you to all my volunteers that have worked hard all winter.

*Jennie Booth*  
Museum Assistant

## Marketing

*Is this a Museum Leaflet that  
I see before me? .....*

Another year, the start of a new season and as always, I need your help with Museum publicity.

Our 2008 season leaflet has been in circulation for about a month now. Our major distribution contract with Brochure Connect Ltd started in mid February and

will run until the end of September. Brochure Connect are placing COAM leaflets in over 1100 outlets across the region, including a very local community presence in about 80 outlets in South Bucks and East Berkshire. We will be "visible" but won't be everywhere - we do still need your help. If you know somewhere where you can get leaflets distributed/displayed take a bundle from an already opened box which you'll find in the volunteers' room - don't forget to sign on the list saying where you're planning to use them. **PLEASE DO NOT** take a full box without talking to me first.

If you have access to areas where posters could be placed, either advertising the Museum in general (reasonably long term presence) or advertising a specific Museum event (possibly shorter term presence) - let someone in the office know as I will be producing different types of posters throughout the season. Copies of what's already produced will be in the volunteers room - if you don't see any around, ask in the office and someone will print one off for you.

Also this year we have our A5 yellow Events Leaflets in circulation - this time before the start of the season. I need your help with distributing these too.... although supplies of these are limited (there won't be any re-prints), they are very useful for handing out to individuals at fetes or meetings etc. A stock will be going to the Friends for distribution at the summer fetes that they attend.... if you can help with the distribution of these let me know.

If you'd like to contact me about this or any other publicity matter, I'd be pleased

to hear from you. As I'm not in the office all the time and if we miss each other on site, there are 3 options;

1. leave a message in my pigeon hole on the first floor landing in Astleham.
2. e-mail me - marketingcoam@btconnect.com or
3. phone me on 07811 174 425.

Thank you – in advance, for your help

*Phil Holbrook*  
Press & Marketing

### **WANTED**

Volunteer to help in the production of Museum displays. Please let Melissa know if you are interested.

### **Update Editors**

Chris Maynard has kindly agreed to take over as technical editor for Update. We are very grateful to Alastair Alexander for all his hard work in producing the last few editions of Update and creating the new format. There will be two full editions of Update in March and October in future and a short newsletter with details of summer activities in June or early July. A proofing and text editor is still required – please contact Sue Shave if you can help.

### **Update Online**

Museum update is available online so please help to save paper and register by email at webmaster.coam@btconnect.com You will then receive an email alert when the full colour version of update is available on the museums web site to download.

## Education

**MYTH - the winter is long and with no schools visiting everything stops in the Education Office!**

**FACT – I wish!!!!!!!!!**

So November finished with over 1000 school children wrapped up warm and visiting us specifically for the Victorian Christmas event and then the proper work started before the schools came back in February!

**Last year we were very lucky with some grant funding applications.**



**The Heritage Lottery Fund Awards for All** supported us this year with just over £6,000 [which never goes that far!]

for the development of some new 1940s activity workshops for schools (£2000) and also for some training sessions for staff, volunteers and anyone else who was interested (just over £4000).

So this winter staff and volunteers have taken part in a highly enjoyable Food Hygiene training day with Ashtree Management Ltd. – I think the trainer really got us ladies (plus David and Chris) discussing different topics and using sarcasm as a valuable training tool! Thank goodness we have all passed the difficult exam at the end!

Just recently many of us took part in a Child Protection Awareness training day run by the NSPCC – which, to sum up, means if you are suspicious about some-

thing let me know or if I'm not available let the Duty Staff know!

*Please note - the child protection policy has been revised and ratified by the Board of Trustees. A copy of the policy and appendices are in the Duty Manager's pigeon hole.*

This funding has also paid for a disability audit of the education and customer services and a training day which is on **Saturday 26 April on Disability Awareness Training, 10 am until 4 pm**. This day will be split into 2 halves – the morning will concentrate on customer service and communication, whilst the afternoon will concentrate more on ways to facilitate activities and access to the buildings. If you would like to come along there is a signing up sheet on the Volunteers Notice Board.

I must say thank you to those who have come along to support these training sessions as they enable the Museum to both increase the level of services that we offer to the visitors and also to show *due diligence* that all organisations have to undertake under the law. (And not to make the training seem trivial it was lovely to see everyone again and have a chat!)

The new 1940s activity workshops have been trialled with some schools and are being launched for all school visitors this spring. They include: Evacuee! (preparing to be evacuated by packing their suitcase and making their gas mask box), Make do and Mend! (making some simple toys using re-cycled materials – who ever said that re-cycling is new concept was an idiot!), Defend the Home



*Evacuees at Arborfield Adventurers!*

Front! (with Home Guard drill, decoding special messages and practicing putting out fires with the stirrup pump) and Dig for Victory! At this point I would also like to thank **The School Shop** in Beaconsfield who has kindly helped us buy traditional school caps and pinafores at wholesale prices for the Evacuee workshop.

We have also been supported by the **Museums, Libraries and Archives Council** for the development of video conferencing workshops for Key Stage 2 and 3 students. This project will help us to deliver activity workshops to schools who do not visit us, for a wide variety of reasons including distance, cost and time-tabling problems.

So instead of Museum teachers running a workshop for a group of children you may see them talking to a camera in one of the buildings. We hope to start video conferencing to schools from April with the following workshops: The Victorian Schoolroom in Thame Vicarage Room, The Victorian Blacksmith in Garston Forge and Medieval Food and Farming or the Manor Court in Arborfield Barn.

To aid us in this, we now have a wireless network with a link to the Education Network internet server for the Village Green area and I hope that this will help us to develop both video conferencing and other technological educational skills in the future.

We are also supported each year by the **Chalfont St. Giles Show Committee**. The year before last they helped us to provide proper gates and fences in the Forest School area (erected by Bristol Myers Squibb volunteers). Last year they helped us to buy tools and equipment for the Young Volunteers Club, and this year they are kindly funding visits from Chalfont St. Giles Junior School to take part in our education service.

**Mars UK Ltd.** are also supporting our work in the coming year with a kind donation of £600 for additional new tools for the Young Volunteers Club (due to its success in 2007) and also for the development of an Iron Age garden, which I hope the Young Volunteers and the American Boy Scouts will help us to create this year.

**And don't forget the ongoing work**  
**Risk assessments** etc. all needed  
updating – yet again!

## **Arborfield Adventurers**

**Arborfield Adventurers Holiday Club** was lots of fun last year, and we also raised £1,400 towards new doors for Northolt Barn (about half the cost!). This year, we will be running an extra week in April and, hopefully we will again have lots of fun (this is the main point of the club!) and also raise the rest of the money for the barn doors.

**5 to 7 year olds** - 9.30 am until 12.00 pm  
each day: £10.50 per child

**8 to 12 year olds** - 1.30 pm until 5.00 pm  
each day: £12.50 per child

This year the dates and themes are as follows:

**Monday 14 April** – Wildlife Wonderland including mini-beast hunting and pond dipping.

**Tuesday 15 April** – Outdoor Pursuits including building shelters in the woods and cooking over an open fire.

**Wednesday 16 April** – Child Labours looking at the work children did in the past.

**Thursday 17 April** – Traditional Toys and Games. Make your own toys and games.

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**Monday 18 August** – The Romans and Celts including looking at the crafts and patterns of Celtic life.

**Tuesday 19 August** – The Saxons including everyday life.

**Wednesday 20 August** – The Vikings including stories of heroic deeds.

**Thursday 21 August** – The Normans including pastimes and games.

And don't forget if you are able to help us at the club please contact me on 01494 875542.

## Children's Courses

We are also running some **children's craft workshops** again this year for children aged 8 years plus. £22.00 per child and 4 places are available on each workshop!

### Light and Candle making workshop:

Create your own range of candles and lights to take home with you.

Friday 18 April 9.30 am-12.30 pm or  
1.30 pm-4.30 pm

### Pole lathe turning and green woodworking:

Try your hand at cleaving green wood, shape it with axes and drawknives. Learn to use the pole-lathe and make a simple turned item to take home with you!

Tuesday 5, Wednesday 6 or Thursday 7 August.

9.30 am-12.30 pm  
or 1.30 pm-4.30 pm

### Become a Victorian blacksmith:

Heat and mould the metal to produce a simple object to take home with you!

Thursday 7, Friday 15 or Saturday 16 August.

9.30 am-12.30 pm or  
1.30 pm- 4.30 pm



*Toby shapes the hot metal under Bernie's excellent tutelage*

## Forest School

**Forest School** has now been going for over 4 years and we have gone from strength to strength with the support of volunteers, parents and most especially Chalfont St. Giles Nursery School. For the last two winters we have had to call in help from our tree surgeon Andrew, and have unfortunately seen two of our lovely oaks felled, and some hefty work carried out on one of the remaining oaks that can be seen behind the Toll House. So the children from the Nursery have helped us recently plant a few oak trees, which will hopefully grow for many years to come, and we have also put up a bird box and a couple of insect boxes to encourage the wildlife in the area. As a reward for all of this work one group of children received a visitation from a Coal Tit at the start of the session which was watched with awe by the children for several minutes.



*Forest Schoolers experimenting are let loose with finger paints*

## Adult Courses

**Still we mustn't forget the grown ups - we all deserve some fun as well! We continue to offer a variety of adult craft workshops this year including the following:**

### Celtic Remedies for Today.

The factual evidence from archaeology revealing health, herbs and living conditions provides a sound background for considering possible applications of herbs in Celtic medicine. We will be looking at those treatments with a long history of use and known therapeutic potential for today.

Gathering and identifying native British herbs in the woods and valley close to the round house will be part of the day led by qualified medical herbalist and herb historian, Christina Stapley. Herbs from other areas will also be supplied for discussion of their possible and known uses across time. Practical experience of making a poultice, teas, ointment, an infused oil, a plaster and pills make this a day of experience invaluable for safe home medicine.

**One day course:** Saturday 17 May

**Cost:** £40.00 per person

### An Introduction to Pole-lathe Turning and Green Woodworking

Lois Beakhouse will illustrate how to cleave and shape wood with hand tools, and teach you to use a pole-lathe to make several turned items to take home.

**Two day course:** Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 August or Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 August

**Cost:** £90.00 per person.

### Victorian Herb Favourites to Enjoy

Dipping into Victorian books and records enables a deeper look at the world behind the popular image of violets, lavender, moth balls and chamomile tea. We will be looking at Victorian problems and celebrations and making herbal recipes for rich and poor. Country cures and cookery add a homely hedgerow atmosphere. We will be making drinks to soothe and refresh and stock the winter store cupboard ready for colds and coughs.

#### **One day course:**

Friday 7 September

**Cost:** £40.00 per person

### Hedgerow Basketry

Using material gathered from the Museum's site create your basket under the expert tuition of Joy Viall.

#### **One day course:**

Date to be confirmed

**Cost:** £40.00 per person

### Light and Candle Making

Create your own lights, lamps and moulded candles.

#### **Half day course:**

Saturday 18 October

**Cost:** £35.00 per person

### Rag Rug Making

From the social history of rag rug making to designing and starting your own rug.

#### **Half day course:**

5 July or 30 August

**Cost:** £25.00 per person

**Don't forget that if you are a Volunteer or a Friend of the Museum we offer a £5 discount on the above courses!**

### **And I haven't even got time to say about the school holiday activities!!!!**

Needless to say, if you can help run activities during the school holidays and events then please let us know, but if you can't, then bring your family and friends along to have some fun!

### **Full details on everything that we are doing during 2008 is on our website**

**www.coam.org.uk or email me at educationcoam@btconnect.com.**

*Melissa Maynard*

Education Officer

## **Heritage Building Skills**

### Working with Lime

The course includes a short lecture on the uses of lime in traditional buildings and practical sessions and demonstrations including the lime slaking process, mortar mixing and brick laying. Further practical sessions include re-pointing techniques, plastering and rendering of walls and the application of lime wash.

#### **One day course:**

Tuesday 2 September

**Cost:** £95.00 per person

### Working with Brick

The course includes an introductory lecture on historic brickwork repair, demonstrations of brick making by one of the Chilterns brickyards and the mixing of lime mortars, as well as practical sessions on brick laying including traditional bonding arrangements and re-pointing technique using the Museum's historic buildings.

#### **One day course:**

Friday 5 September

**Cost** £95.00 per person

### Working with Flint

After an introduction to working with flint, the day will consist of demonstrations and practical sessions on lime mortars, flint knapping, laying flint and brick and flint walls and re-pointing flint work.

#### **One day course:**

Wednesday 10 September

Cost: £95.00

### Thatching Awareness

Master Thatcher Keith Quantrill will lead an introductory lecture and demonstration into the importance of traditional thatching techniques in building conservation, using his work on the reconstruction of medieval thatching on the

Museum's late medieval barn from Arborfield. The day will also include practical sessions learning thatching techniques and traditional thatching methods.

#### **One day course:**

Friday 3 October

Cost: £95.00 per person

### Historic Restoration

This course will examine the conservation and maintenance of historic buildings constructed of timber, brick and cast iron. There will also be practical sessions on construction and repair techniques.

#### **One day course:**

Date to be confirmed

Cost: £95.00 per person

## **Young Volunteers Club**

The **Young Volunteers Club** went from strength to strength last year but even so we've made a few changes this year. This club is open to anyone aged between 10 and 16 years old and meets on the second Saturday of each month from February until November, to assist with many different jobs around the Museum. We hope to take part in the building of Haddenham Croft Cottage, developing an Iron Age garden and many other jobs that will benefit the Museum.

### **2008 DIARY**

Saturday 8 March  
Saturday 12 April  
Saturday 10 May  
Saturday 14 June  
Saturday 12 July  
Saturday 9 August  
Saturday 13 September  
Saturday 11 October  
Saturday 8 November



*Young volunteers help in the allotment*

Parents will be asked to complete a consent form before anyone can take part in the activities.

All young people taking part in this activity will be supervised by a Museum volunteer.

We would like to ask for a small voluntary contribution of £2 per child to cover a snack from the Museum café (to include a soft drink; a packet of crisps & a chocolate bar or fruit & biscuits) and other equipment.

## People News

### Alan Cornell

We are all deeply saddened by the death of volunteer Alan Cornell in October last year. Alan was a volunteer at the Museum for many years, mainly as one of the farm and site team. One of his last jobs with the team was the landscaping of the High Wycombe Furniture Factory, particularly the moving of the very heavy setts and the construction of the cobbled ramp. In addition to his farm and site work, Alan also helped John Hyde-Trutch in the planning stages for the re-erection of Marwood Yard and Haddenham Cottage. His role in carrying out the technical drawings for these buildings was invaluable and it was Alan who created the artist's impression of how the area would look once the buildings were up. He also helped to research materials

and sponsorship for the grumplings and one of his contacts, Jewsons, Amersham, have since donated a ton of flint for our building skills courses. In recent years he also took on the project of researching a new storage building to replace the swimming pool building behind the Kabin. He left us with a clear choice based on his experience and expertise and none of these projects would have progressed very far without him. He is remembered with gratitude and affection and is much missed.

### Audrey Payne

We regret to announce the recent death of Museum volunteer Audrey Payne, wife of Bob Payne, former Enterprises Book Keeper.

*Sue Shave*  
Director



*Alan Cornell's artist's impression of Marwood Yard.*

## New Staff

### **Douglas Green**

This is a brief introduction, written on my first day, so I've only met a handful of you so far, and know little of the Museum yet.

I was born near Crystal Palace in 1946, a demob baby, and only child. My father went into the Civil Service after he came out of the Navy, and was moved a couple of times with the job. I finished my schooling with 'O' levels at Bletchley Grammar School, living in North Bucks for 10 years altogether. I did the pre-diploma course at Northampton Art School, worked for a year or so at temporary jobs, then trained as a teacher. I taught in Special Needs and Primary schools for about 13 years, in Bucks, Devon & Dorset. After giving up teaching, I ended up working for IBM at their Portsmouth HQ, as a computer room operator, and later as an instructor in their Customer Education centre in London.

I tried self-employment following redundancy, as an artist & potter and later

### **Jenny Cassidy**

I trained as a legal secretary and worked in several solicitors offices after qualifying, spending the longest period of time in a city law firm specialising in commercial conveyancing where I was PA to one of the partners in the practice.

I then took a career break to have children, and when the children reached school age returned to work part time as an administrator in a busy firm of estate agents in Rickmansworth.

Having achieved all I felt I could in that

running a bicycle shop, but could not make a living, failing badly with the latter. Returning to the Portsmouth area in 1999, I became a volunteer at Weald &

Downland Open Air Museum, doing various volunteer roles, and was trained to become one of their millers, still one of my favourite occupations. I was appointed as a part-time Visitor Services Officer there 7 years ago, but continued milling on the side!

I very much enjoy the open air museum environment, and working with volunteers and staff to ensure visitors have an enjoyable and rewarding experience. I am very pleased to have been appointed to the Chiltern OAM team, and look forward to meeting you all over the next few months.

*Douglas Green*  
Visitor Services Officer



office, I looked for a new challenge, and now very much look forward to working in a new environment, meeting new people and utilising my existing skills and enthusiasm to the role.

*Jenny Cassidy*  
Administration Officer



## Volunteering

### Last Year – Next Year

Last year was a funny one – glorious weather at the start of the season, lousy in May and June, then it picked up towards the end. The result was that to the end of October, attendances were about 2000 down on the previous season, though within that, the numbers for general attendances (i.e. excluding special events and Education) were actually up.

As ever, where would we have been without our Stewards and Volunteers? The short answer is: closed! To all those who manned (womanned, personned?) the Toll House, the Prefab, the Ticket Office and occasionally even the Farm: thank you. We couldn't have done without you. Sadly, we had to be without two or three stalwarts, due to illness or other commitments, and we hope to see you back in 2008. And for the first year since we opened in 1981, we were without Gladys, "square-wheeled" by her doctor.

How can we describe Gladys? Tea lady until 1995, in the days when teas and superb home-made cakes were served from the end of a decrepit old caravan, and consumed out of doors because Elliotts was still a dream. Then a twice-a-week steward, whatever the weather, until this year. Until 2005, she provided the refreshments at our auctions at Chalfont St. Peter. And then there were her sponsored walks, which raised thousands for the Museum, and only ceased in 2003, because (she said) her dog couldn't keep up. Anyhow, one thing is fixed: if Gladys can keep going till she's 96, that's the official retirement age for Stewards. So there!

Now to 2008: with Easter as early as it can be, and Halloween as late as it can be, the season is three weeks longer than last year. So you know what's coming ... in the words of the recruiting poster, "Your Museum needs you!" It needs more of you: it needs those of you who have not yet taken up the challenge of spending the odd half day in the Toll house or in the Ticket Office, once a week, once a month, or whenever you can. There was a list of dates attached to last October's *Update*, if you've mislaid it I've got plenty more. Or if you prefer I can ring you on spec. when there is a gap. Give it a try – you'll enjoy it.

*Tom Crosby*  
Volunteer Co-ordinator

WANTED  
Volunteers need to help with the spring clean of the buildings in early March.  
Please connect Jennie Booth.



*Museum volunteer Gladys Taaffe*

## Friends News

I have just looked at last year's Spring copy of the Museum Update when I said that I would be resigning as Friends Chairman. Correction; I carried on for another year. **This year it is my intention to definitely resign at the AGM on 2 April 2008.** Two candidates both from the Committee, Anne Ratcliffe and Bernie Shafe are contesting the election. I hope sincerely that one of the two will be the new Friends Chairman, so that I can do other things. The election will be held at The AGM and will be by secret ballot. Any members who would like to vote and are unable to attend can obtain a voting paper by writing to the Secretary, Mrs Tricia Phillips, The Friends of Chiltern Open Air Museum, at the Museum enclosing an SAE.

Can I ask you again to support the Museum by giving your time as volunteers; to come as visitors during the year, and to help us at some of the many events which are held at the Museum during the season? Above all I would ask you to help the Museum by publicising it. Talk to your friends about us, bring them to visit; there is something happening every weekend throughout the season. If you have time to pick up some leaflets on your next visit give them to neighbours and work colleagues. Sadly, many local people do not know where the Museum is. As Friends you can help to put that right by talking about the Museum as a wonderful place to visit.

We hope to introduce another change later this year. The Friends hope to have their own email address very soon. This will help in communication with our membership Secretary, and for events

bookings. By the way, a reminder that our annual Quiz is on Saturday 5 April.

Finally, to all my colleagues who have helped me over the last few years, thank you for your support, companionship and working so hard to raise money for the Museum. It has been a privilege to work for such a worthwhile cause and Good Luck to my successor.

*Gill Cassidy*

Chairman of the Friends

## Friends Events and Talks

### Talk About Turning

Wednesday 26 March

### Friends Quiz

Saturday 5 April

**The Colne Valley Park Historic  
Landscape Characterisation Project**  
Wednesday 23 April

**For more information go to  
[www.coam.org.uk/Friends/friends.htm](http://www.coam.org.uk/Friends/friends.htm)**

### 200 Club

Mr W Dykes (January) and  
Mr P Webber (February) each won £32

### **"Lifelong Friends"**

Is your life membership card (the orange/salmon coloured one) getting a bit tatty through years of use or inadvertent washing?

I can supply you with a new card if you send me the original – I am intending to laminate the life membership cards in future to add to their staying power.

*Beth Neill*

FCOAM Membership Secretary

## Fundraising in 2007

The tombola raised £372 at the Christmas Fair in aid of the re-erection and fitting out of Gerrards Cross Hut.

The new Ram has been named Gerard Majella Giles, with the associated competition having been won by volunteer, Mrs June Beecham. Many thanks to all who contributed names which varied from the sublime to the ridiculous. This competition raised £64 for the Farm Equipment Fund.

In 2008 – please watch out for the ‘Name the time and date of the first lamb at the Museum’ with that happy event anticipated in mid April.

It’s 50p a go and the winner receives a £10 Marks & Spencer voucher. All proceeds go to the Farm Equipment Fund.

## Volunteers Social Evening

This will take place for the 5<sup>th</sup> year in succession on Saturday 7 June from 6.15pm until 9.00 pm. Therefore please mark your diary and come along and meet others who work on different days of the week. Invitations will go out in April and we will be asking those excellent cooks to help provide a suitably splendid buffet yet again. Donations of £6 per head will be sought and the proceeds will go towards the Haddenham Cottage project.

We look forward to seeing you then.

Hazel Howe & Verena Clark

The tombola will be at the Country Show on 19, 20 April and then out and about in the summer representing the Museum, under the auspices of the Friends, at, amongst others, Chalfont St Peter Feast Day and Uxbridge Auto Show.

*Verena Clark*  
Vice Chairman



*The Museum's new Ram Gerard Majella Giles*



*Len Baker Fundraising with hoop sales*

## Acknowledgements

### Building Skills Courses:

Lime Technology – lime products  
Dunton Brothers – Bricks and clay  
HG Mathews – Clay and special bricks  
Jewsons, Amersham – Quarried flint

### Road/Event Signs and Banners:

Wilson Heal Estate Agents  
WR Becks Estate Agents  
Ashington Page Estate Agents  
Integra Estate Agents

### Education Grants:

Chalfont St. Giles Show Committee  
Funded visits from Chalfont St. Giles  
Junior School - £300

Mars UK Ltd.

Tools for the Young Volunteers Club and  
development of the Iron Age Garden -  
£600

Heritage Lottery Fund Awards for All –  
New 1940s activity workshops and training  
for staff and volunteers. - £6300

Museums, Libraries and Archives  
Council

Video conferencing workshops for Key  
Stage 2 and 3 schools - £7500

Arborfield Adventurers Holiday Club  
and Craft workshops 2007 -  
New doors for Northolt Barn - £1400

### Other Projects:

Museum Development Fund  
Artefact shelving - £1600

GE Healthcare  
Main Leaflet and Special Events - £3000

Bucks Building Society  
Events Leaflet—£500

The Tanner Trust  
Astleham Garden - £5000

Black Horse Pub - Fulmer  
£60 in donations

Farm Equipment Fund - stands at  
£3650 having grown by £1100 since  
April 2007 through donations and com-  
petitions with expenditure of £900 which  
covered the purchase of the Shogun, elec-  
tric fencing for the animals & repairs to  
the horse drawn roller casting.

Astleham Garden Fund—stands  
at £8000 having grown by £350  
since April 2007 from the sale of scarves,  
with expenditure amounting to £2200  
related to gateposts and iron work for the  
garden.



*Dress up for a Vermeer Painting 21 and 22 March!*

**Who's who at  
Chiltern Open Air Museum**

**Patrons of the Museum**

Lord Carrington - President  
Cheryl Gillan MP  
Eric Knowles  
James Elles MEP  
Lady Wilson  
Paul Daniels  
Sir John Johnson  
Sir Frank Gibb  
Sir William MacAlpine  
Viscount Norwich

**Museum Board Chairman**

The Reverend Derek Upcott  
01494 837505

**Vice Chairman and Company Secretary**

Verena Clark

**Treasurer**

Sarah Fitzpatrick

**Additional Board Members**

Cic Upcott  
Cris Claxton Stevens  
Gill Cassidy  
Jenny Mulholland  
Lawford Thomas  
Tom Crosby  
Peter Quinn

**Museum Director**

Sue Shave

**Buildings Manager**

John Hyde-Trutch

**Farm and Site Manager**

Conway Rowland

**Visitor Services Officer**

Douglas Green

**Education Officer**

Melissa Maynard

**Catering Manager and IT Manager**

Chris Maynard

**Press and Marketing Consultant**

Phil Holbrook

**Administration Officer**

Jenny Cassidy

**Museum Assistant**

Jennie Booth

**Volunteer Co-ordinator**

Tom Crosby  
01923 774637

**Hawk and Owl Trust – Education Officer**

Rhona Taylor  
01494 876262

**Friends of COAM Charity no. 286534**

**Chairman**

Gill Cassidy  
01844 344461

**Treasurer**

Dick Lister  
01494 675419

**Membership Secretary**

Beth Neill  
(Contact through COAM)

**Update Editor** Christopher Maynard

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Charity no. 272381