

CHILTERN  
OPEN AIR  
MUSEUM

*Where buildings come  
alive through history*

# Museum *Update*

Spring 2009



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FULL COLOUR ONLINE VERSION**

# What's on in 2009

## March

28 - 29 Campaign '44 - Meet 1940s  
Soldiers and The Great Penny  
Trail

## April

4 - 5 Grymms Tooms Museum of  
Victorian Curios

10 - 13 Easter Family Fun Days

18 - 19 Chilterns Country Show  
Oakleigh Event Management  
Ltd.

25 - 26 Vikings and Saxons in Training  
*The Dark Ages Society*

## May

2 - 4 For King or Country  
*English Civil War Society*

9 - 10 Join in on the Farm -  
Lambing as it used to be

16 - 17 Traditional Toys and Games

23 - 25 Romans vs. Britons  
*The Vicus*

30 - 31 Flappers, Frolics and Fun in  
Metroland

## June

6 - 7 Join in on the Farm -  
Horse vs. Tractor vs. Man

13 - 14 Medieval Cooking and  
Weaponry  
*Pelican in her Piety*

21 Heavy Horse Show

27 - 28 Meet the Napoleonic Soldiers

## July

4 - 5 Join in on the Farm -  
Harvesting the Corn

11-12 Saxons vs. Vikings  
*Valhalla*

18 - 19 Meet our Norman Conquerors  
*Conquest*

25 - 26 Classic Vehicles Show

## August

1 - 2 Meet Sharpe's Rifles  
*The Sharpe Appreciation  
Society & 95<sup>th</sup> Rifles*

8 - 9 Work, Rest and Play with the  
Tudors  
*Hungerford Household*

15 - 16 17<sup>th</sup> Century Crime and  
Punishment  
*The Siege Group*

22 - 23 England vs. Scotland - Red  
Coat Soldiers Dragoons and  
*Jacobites - Lace Wars*

29 - 31 Meet the Roman Army  
*The Roman Military  
Research Society*

## September

5 - 6 Join in on the Farm -  
Cultivating the Fields

12 - 13 Traditional Crafts

19 - 20 Traditional Toys and Games

26 - 27 From Sheep to Jumper -  
Knitting Weekend

## October

3 - 4 Harvest Festival &  
Join in on the Farm

10 - 11 The Big Draw

17 - 18 Traditional Toys and Games

24 - 25 Be a Traditional Builder!

30 Halloween Spectacular  
(6.00 pm - 9.00 pm)

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

Information Line : 01494 872163

Museum Office : 01494 871117

Meet Sovereign, our resident Shire  
horse, at most Farm weekends. Carriage  
rides available some Sundays.

## News from the Boss

From time to time it is necessary for the Director to escape from the confines of her office and venture out into the beautiful landscape of the Museum site. On such journeys in the winter period in rain, sunshine and of course several inches of snow, she usually encounters various traditional building and farming activities in progress, or frantic conservation activity in the warmer environment of Gerrards Cross Hut. Sometimes, when time permits, she joins in some of the activities and learns new skills. For example, the ancient art of hay trussing has been practised over the last few months on the first glorious hay rick in Thomas's Field. It was rumoured that the Director even attempted to cut and tie some hay bales from the rick under the supervision of the Site and Farm Manager. Fortunately, the official photographer had already left site and did not capture this moment on camera for posterity.

The winter is always a very busy season for the Museum, with school programmes and special events such as Victorian

Christmas or new Invaders and Settlers workshops continuing throughout November, February and March. In the very short space of time in December and January when there are no visitors at all, the buildings team and site and farm team get on with a list of repair and maintenance jobs and undertake new projects to enhance the Museum site and landscape.

Two such new projects have been generously funded by the Chilterns Conservation Board to enable the creation of a new lambing fold next to the second hay rick in the arable fields, and a new interactive building construction workshop for families in Northolt Barn. The grants amount to over £14,000 for this work and we are indebted to the Board for their generosity in supporting these two projects, which will greatly enhance the visitor experience in the 2009 season.

Another project, Astleham Garden, is really taking shape now. With the support of H.G. Matthews Chiltern Pavers, staff and volunteers have laid paths based on "period" designs and it is hoped that the planting of the borders will take place just before the Museum opens to the public



**Museum Update**  
*The Museum in the Snow*



**Spring 2009**  
*Work progresses on Astleham Garden*

again.

Thanks to the generosity of a private donor, to whom we are extremely grateful, the Museum roads and car park have had professional repairs carried out by Agripower using over 180 tonnes of material. Large stretches of the spine road through the Museum and the car park were repaired and a new path constructed from Skippings Barn to the lambing folds. The large pot holes at the entrance were repaired using hot Asphalt. The gardening team have also been working hard on trimming the foliage around the car park to enhance the entrance for visitors.

The season opens with a bang. Our regular 1940s soldiers bring there Campaign '44 and the Friends hope for a fantastic "Great Penny Trail" over the weekend of 28 & 29 March. The season is packed with exciting special events which are not to be missed, including the Easter Family Fun days with an opportunity to dress up for Holbein portraits on Easter Sunday and Monday, the Country Show entertainment in April, and the soldiers from the English Civil War Society and the Roman British group, the Vicus, in May. Established favourites such as the Heavy Horse Show and the

Classic Vehicle Show are eagerly awaited, and do not miss the summer holiday line up of soldiers, civilians, mounted dragoons and of course the Roman Army over the August Bank Holiday.

We welcome several new staff to the Museum including our new Admin Officer, Gail Mold, a new book keeper Chris Layzell and our new Marketing Consultant Jacky Brookes. We are delighted that they have come to join us and look forward to working with them.

During these difficult economic times, the main priority for the Museum must be fundraising and income generation. We are very grateful to all those individuals who so readily responded to our fundraising appeals, or give to the Museum enabling particular projects to come to fruition. Our need now is to work hard to increase our revenue and we welcome your help with marketing the Museum as widely as possible. But we also need assistance to broaden our income in other ways. If you have contacts with local businesses or filming companies for example, please help us to promote the Museum as a venue or film location.



Conway hay **Museum Update**



**Spring 2009**

*Campaign '44 Soldiers in action!*

## Museum Accreditation

Chiltern Open Air Museum has now been awarded its new status as an Accredited Museum by the national Museums Libraries and Archives Council.

Our application for this third phase of Museum Registration (now called Accreditation) was submitted in July 2008 and was been awarded in February 2009.

This is a quality “kite mark” to indicate that our Museum meets and surpasses national standards in governance, visitor services and collections care.

We have also been working towards establishing a Fundraiser as a member of staff, responsible for both the strategy and the co-ordination of staff and volunteers in raising funds for projects. We are very pleased that a recent application to the AIM Sustainability Fund was successful in allowing us a grant for a temporary part time fundraiser for 10 months to help us with this goal.

You all do so much to support this wonderful and unique Museum and we fully recognise the vital importance of the contribution provided by everyone. There are great challenges ahead and we have the best possible collective team to meet them. I wish us all a happy and successful 2009 Season.

*Sue Shave*  
*Museum Director*

## LOtC Quality Badge

On 4 March, the Museum was one of the first venues in the country to receive the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, promising to engage in the ongoing process to sustain high quality learning outside the classroom and to meet all of the LOtC Quality Badge indicators.

Quality Badge awarded by



*Karim the Fire Eater will perform on Easter Sunday and Monday.*

**Museum Update** Spring

## Buildings News

We finished working on Haddenham Cottage at the end of October last year, having got all the ground floor partitions in and the floor timbers inserted. Though I have to say that one floor beam is supported on a block of wood on the chimney breast – we didn't quite get the whichert up to the same level all the way round. The weather was so wet that we just couldn't continue, in fact the last section of wichitt still hadn't dried out at the time of writing.

Work will resume in the spring, when we will remove its plastic wrapping and give it a good airing while we try to remember how to build it.

This year we are going to need some scaffolding, and the height we will be working at will probably slow things down a little, but I do hope to get up to roof level this season.

Meanwhile we haven't been idle over the winter. The main aim was to get the Nissen hut from Sewell erected – well ---- not quite. The repair work took longer than

expected, but we did get the foundations prepared for the concrete – then it snowed.

This however turned out to be a blessing in disguise as we may be able to get some extra bits to add the missing sixth bay, in which case the foundations will need to be extended.

A lot of work has been done in repairing the wooden end sections, making new cills and purlins and constructing a pair of doors to go in one end.

The second aim was to empty and demolish the “swimming pool” building behind the Kabin, to clear the site ready for a brand new storage building.

This is still going to happen; hopefully progress will be visual by the time of the Pre-Season meeting. There have been tremendous delays in getting Planning Permission and Building Regulation approval, but I can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel. Although this is, of course, an oncoming train.

Before we can do this the rear car park needs to be cleared of building materials, so that there is room for the contents of the



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*Progress on Haddenham Cottage reached first floor level before work stopped last year.*

building. This has been started so we should be able to start emptying the building soon.

Towards the end of the last season one of the vault bricks in the bread oven in Leagrave Cottage fell out. On inspection I could see that most of the mortar had degraded, and that the whole vault was likely to collapse. Unfortunately it proved to be impossible to repair from the inside so we had to dismantle it. We took the whole of the top off and then rebuilt the vault and the upper layers. It should be good for another twenty years at least.

While we were in the cottage, we did a bit more lime washing, and we have constructed some banisters at the top of the C18 stairs. This is the first stage in opening up the top of Leagrave to visitors, albeit on a limited basis, and strictly under supervision.

Doors are being made for Northolt Barn. We had hoped to have them fitted by now, but unfortunately the work has been delayed.

Some of Jennie Booth's stalwart band of

volunteers have re-stained the floors in the Prefab, and the Young Volunteers have distempered the front rooms.

I have fitted new lights in the cupboards in the back bedroom; they are brighter and hopefully should last longer than the previous ones.

Haversham Toilets have had some plumbing work done; the W.C. cisterns have been connected directly to the main and now fill in seconds instead of minutes.

All the radios have had a 'health check' and some new batteries have been obtained. Two radios have been repaired so hopefully, this season we should have fewer problems.

The Fact Pack has finally been revised and is bang up to date, anyone who wants copies please contact the Office. I promise to try not to let it get so out of date again (honest).

*John Hyde-Trutch  
Buildings Manager*



**Museum Update**  
*Newly lime washed walls in Leagrave*



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*Pointing work in Leagrave.*

## Sewell Nissen Hut

A recent trip to the Imperial War Museum produced some more information on this building.

Nissen huts were invented in 1916 by the then Major Peter Nissen, a Canadian serving with the Royal Engineers. At least 100,000 Nissen huts were produced during World War 1.

They were produced in three widths – 16ft, 24ft and 30ft, and had a standard bay length of 6ft 1/2 inch.

Although they were altered and modified over the years the basic design stayed the same – that is a series of steel ribs of ‘T’ section bolted to a wooden cill beam and held in place with wooden purlins, all surmounted by curved sheets of corrugated iron. Most had an internal lining of corrugated sheets as well, sitting between the ribs.

Some, particularly the older ones sat on wooden or brick piers and had wooden floors, others sat on a concrete slab, and

some were constructed straight off the ground.

Our hut appears to be a ‘between the wars’ model. It was designed to sit on a concrete slab – as such the wooden end sections were taller by the thickness of the floor joist and boards – but the door was hinged to open inwards. Later versions had outward opening doors. The windows were also of an earlier pattern, hinged at the bottom rather than the top.

Our hut will be both an exhibit and a functional building. The front will be used as an exhibit and furnished accordingly, but the majority of the building will be used to store our larger artefacts.

On dismantling, the rear end had been cut down and two large doors inserted – very badly. We have rebuilt part of this end but have put in two large doors for access; and done in a much more professional way.

*John Hyde-Trutch  
Buildings Manager*



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*Sewell Nissen Hut construction underway.*

## Visitor Services

Well, hasn't it been nice and quiet for the last 3 months? (Don't tell John or Conway and their teams I said that!) I've been using some of my quieter time to check through and revise where necessary our volunteer training and other documentation.

Some of you have been coming in during the winter to continue your regular roles in such areas as: buildings, farm & site, gardening, artefacts & archives, office reception etc. Your efforts are vital, and much appreciated. For those normally involved in front of house roles, working in the ticket office and shop, building stewarding or as weekend duty managers, now, refreshed, it is time to prepare for the new season starting on 28 March.

You may have already had a call from Iris Thomas or received an e-mail about the dates of the Pre-season meeting, Winter Projects tour, and training sessions for specific roles. The table of dates is included below. Please telephone reception (**01494 871117**) or send an e-mail to me at: [visitorcoam@btconnect.com](mailto:visitorcoam@btconnect.com) to let me know which, if any, training session(s) you would like to attend and also let me know if you are coming to the pre-season

### Training Dates 2009

#### Stewards Training

8 March at 10.30 am, 10 March at 2.00 pm & 20 March at 10.30 am.

#### Duty Managers Training

14 March 10.00 am & 17 March 10.30 am.

#### Tickets and Tills Training

11 March at 10.30 am, 14 March 2.00 pm and 19 March at 2.00.

#### New Projects

24 March at 2.00 pm.

meeting and/or the Winter Projects tour. If you're new to COAM, or only get in occasionally, the latter is a useful walk round, led by John H-T, to look at what is new for this season, and to tell you of progress on building projects.

Fairly early in the season, on a weekend day - date yet to be fixed - we are going to have a "Bring a friend who'd like to become a volunteer" day (or bring one who might give in under pressure!). The idea is that you may bring someone you know, or a member of your family who has not been involved in the Museum in the past, but might **genuinely** be a potential volunteer, for a look around, free of charge for that visit. I will be on hand that day to talk to your new recruits. Perhaps we could even have a mass induction! Talk to your friends and/or relations, and see if there's anyone who you could bring along. We'll publish a date soon.

Thanks again, on behalf of all at COAM, for your time and effort. I look forward to seeing many of you at the Pre-season meeting, or back in harness once we reopen.

*Doug Green*  
*Visitor Services Officer*



*Museum Volunteer Len Bake*

# Arborfield Adventurers Holiday Club



Join us this year for activities, trails and lots of fun.  
Each day there will be a different theme so choose a day or come to all.

**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**

**Tuesday 14 April - Friday 17 April**

**Tuesday: Easter traditions**  
**Wednesday: Wildlife Wonderland**  
**Thursday: Life in Regency Chilterns**  
**Friday: Have a go at traditional crafts**

**Tuesday 17 August - Thursday 20 August**

**Monday: The Tudors at home**  
**Tuesday: Tudor explorers**  
**Wednesday: Tudor life**  
**Thursday: The Tudors have fun**

Melissa Maynard, Education Officer, Chiltern Open Air Museum, Newland Park,  
Gorelands Lane, Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks. HP8 4AB  
Tel: 01494 875542 Email: [Educationcoam@btconnect.com](mailto:Educationcoam@btconnect.com)

# Young Volunteers Club

## 2009 DIARY

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

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

Melissa Maynard, Education Officer, Chiltern Open Air Museum, Newland Park,  
Gorelands Lane, Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks. HP8 4AB **10**  
Tel: 01494 875542 Email: [Educationcoam@btconnect.com](mailto:Educationcoam@btconnect.com)

## People News

### DUDLEY MICHAEL



Dudley and Janet became Friends and Volunteers at COAM nineteen years ago and it is difficult to think of the Museum without Dudley. His cheerfulness and kindness will be greatly missed.

Dudley was a Steward in the Iron Age House, the Toll House and the Prefab. It was while he was stewarding in the Iron

Age House that he persuaded a visiting American that the balls of woad for dying were actually Celtic onion bhargis.

As the inventor of Mr Potts, the flowerpot man outside the Friends Centre, he brought fun for younger visitors. When taking Mr Potts home for servicing at the end of the Season Dudley would put him in the passenger seat with a seat belt on.

Dudley was also a valued member of the Gardening Team, and I know that this Winter he was treating artefacts for woodworm.

For many years he served on the Friends Committee and also on the Events Sub-Committee, working hard for the Museum both on and off site. We could not have asked for a more supportive Friend.

The death of such a lovely, talented, kind man is a great loss to us all.

*Anne Ratcliffe and Friends*

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### DAVID PALMER

We are saddened to hear of the death of David Palmer, who worked as a much valued ticket steward in Blythe Road Ticket Office for much of last season. David had been a volunteer at the Museum around eight years ago as a ticket steward before taking a break from the Museum to work in a small charity shop in Chalfont St Peter. He returned to help us for the 2008 season for the vital role of greeting

visitors and selling tickets and we were very pleased to see him back. David was a quiet and pleasant man, who was always willing to do anything to help out and he will be missed.

*Sue Shave & Hazel Howe*

**Gail Mold**  
**Admin Officer**



After spending 8 years in retail I trained as a Private Secretary and have worked in an office environment for over 20 years. I have worked in a psychiatric hospital, a junior school, a sales company and recently for a further education college. I believe that all this experience will stand me in good stead for what I might encounter here. I am really delighted to be offered a position at this wonderful Museum, which I have visited many times over the past few years. I have already met a few of you, apologies if I forget your names, and am looking forward to meeting and working with you in the near future.

I live in Denham, having moved from the Watford area about 5 years ago. I have many varied interests to keep me busy and I love sport, aerobics, tennis, skiing and waterskiing are my main passions. Since reaching a certain age – I set myself a goal of trying something new each year, learning French, making jewellery, flamenco dancing, qualifying as a ski instructor to name a few. Some I carry on with and some go by the wayside, like the abseiling and my terrible attempts at cooking! I have set myself a goal for this year – so all suggestions would be gratefully received.

**NEW MARKETING AND PR  
CONSULTANT JOINS THE TEAM**



Jacky Brookes joined the COAM team in February 2009 and is an experienced tourism marketing and PR professional with significant industry experience operating at senior levels. Jacky's experience includes Head of Marketing and PR at the Heart of England Tourist Board, five years as manager of VisitBritain's flagship Visitor Centre (Britain & London Visitor Centre) in London, and VisitBritain's overseas representative in the Brussels office covering Belgium and Luxembourg. She set up her own marketing and PR company five years ago, and her clients base includes organisations such as VisitKent, East Midlands Development Agency, Shropshire County Council and the Scottish Government. Her experience spans working internationally and domestically with government agencies, commercial and strategic partners and the media at all levels.

Jacky Brookes began her role as Marketing and PR Consultant at the Chiltern Open Air Museum in early February, with her first main project being the development of a marketing strategy and PR plan. This will be presented for approval to the Board at their March meeting. Jacky is confident that the new

strategy and plan will help to raise the profile of the museum locally, regionally and nationally to ensure more visitor numbers. She is delighted to be working with such an enthusiastic group of dedicated staff, volunteers, Friends and Trustees. Following the initial 'Brainstorm of Ideas' meeting organised in early February, which was attended by around twenty of the COAM team, she was even more convinced that the museum has a great future.

'The ideas and enthusiasm shown at the Brainstorm meeting recently demonstrated the strong support given to the museum from all concerned, be they staff, volunteers, or Trustees. The ideas put forward to help me develop the museums marketing strategy really impressed me – there is such a breadth of knowledge, depth of enthusiasm and a great team effort all round.'

'I am keen to ensure that all concerned keep in touch with me with any ideas for reaching more potential visitors and strengthening the promotion of COAM' says Jacky. She can be reached on her email [marketingcoam@btconnect.com](mailto:marketingcoam@btconnect.com) or leave a message in her tray at the Museum office.

**Chris Layzell**  
**Bookkeeper**

My name is Chris and I am the Museum's new book-keeper. I live in Chalfont St. Giles where we moved to from Ealing in February 1988 when our two sons, Alex and

Tom, were aged three and two respectively. I have been doing book-keeping and



secretarial work ever since I left college. At the time we were living in a very small village just outside Bury St. Edmunds where I spent most of my childhood. After two years of working for a local firm of agricultural dealers, I braved a move to London, where I worked as secretary/book-keeper to firstly an Advertising Agency in Piccadilly, and then onto a firm of Quantity Surveyors in Holborn.

My husband, Vic, retired from the Metropolitan Police Force at the end of 2006 two year contract with the Government of St Lucia in the Caribbean to restructure the local Police Force. Naturally, I moved out there with him and we both had a wonderful time living and working in Paradise. So, now I have just completed my first day as book-keeper for the Museum where I have already met some very lovely people and am looking forward to sharing a very enjoyable future working in such a picturesque and interesting environment.

**Casual Café Staff Wanted**

The Museum urgently needs several paid relief staff to help run outlets for the café in the Village Green area and assist in the café when required on busy days such as Sunday and Mondays on Bank Holidays and occasional Sundays and weekdays during school holiday periods.

Flexible hours and availability required, previous experience an advantage but not essential. Ring Museum Office on 01494 871117 or email [directorcoam@btconnect.com](mailto:directorcoam@btconnect.com) for an application form.

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## Stewards Wanted

### Tell me the old, old story...

I've been looking through the back numbers of Update, and realise that I say the same thing every March!

So I'm going to say it again... Welcome back, and yes, the winters are getting shorter. As a member of the building team, I curse the short time we have for doing the jobs that cannot be done when visitors are around. On the other hand, as a trustee I know that we need the income from every school that Melissa can get in, so bang goes November and half of February.

What will 2009 bring? Will the "credit crunch" bring us less visitors even than last year (numbers have gone down progressively during the past three years) or will more people come because they cannot afford foreign holidays? Will we have something worth calling a summer this year? We'll have to wait until October to know.

But whichever way the numbers go, we still need to steward as many of the buildings as possible: we certainly need people in Blythe Road or the rest is academic, help is urgently needed to support Chris in the Café. So welcome back all you good people who we rely on year after year, and "hello" to all you new volunteers joining us for the first time. We really do need more stewards so that we can give visitors the best possible experience of the Museum. A day a week, or a day a month, all are valuable, so please think about joining the team – my number is on the back page.

*Tom Crosby*  
*Volunteer Co-ordinator*

## Artefacts

Although the volunteers on the artefact team have worked extremely hard this winter putting in well over 200 hours between them, we still have much work to do. The majority of the artefacts stored upstairs in Didcot Cart Shed have been transferred to the Gerrards Cross Hut, although there are still a number of items left in Didcot.

I was hoping to clear the old stores in Didcot before the beginning of the season but I think I'm going to be beaten as we are running out of time. This seems to happen every year to all of us and we are constantly apologising to you all for not being as far forward as we would have liked.

We have also been carrying out woodworm treatment on artefacts in Thame, Henton and the Shepherd's Living Van. This was done by the young volunteers and Janet and Dudley Michael. The shepherds hut had to be emptied in readiness for the move to the arable fields and the new lambing folds so those artefacts were woodworm treated and cleaned in Gerrards Cross Hut.

All the artefacts moved into Gerrards Cross stores have also been woodworm treated and we are hoping to complete the rest of the items in the other buildings soon. I wish to thank all the volunteers that have helped this winter including those who come on a regular basis and those who just come when they can; it all adds up to a lot of hard work.

We have some new artefacts going on display this year - a traditional teacher's desk with inkwells, slates and school

related items displayed inside is now in the Thame Vicarage Room. The fire dogs are back in Leagrave and I hope will be used to good effect to show off the large fireplace.

As usual two of my volunteers went painting as Jill Broad likes to paint and Val Western is coerced into helping. This year they have painted the floor in the prefab and what a good job they have done. Thank you girls! They were going to distemper the walls but the young volunteers beat them to it. As we had to move all the furniture out of each room so that the painting work could be done, Angie and Maureen helped me to spring clean as we put it all back in place, so the Prefab is looking spick and span for the start of the season.

I will have a list up in the Volunteers' Room for spring cleaning the other buildings so don't think you have missed

out on all the fun. Still lots to do!

As I think I mentioned in the last Update very few artefacts are taken in by the Museum because of a lack of storage space, but there are some things that we would like to acquire:

### A Shepherds Crook

#### 1830s furniture for Haddenham Cottage

We are also looking for a set of flying ducks for the Prefab as the ones that we have really need to be retired, because they are very damaged from when they have tried to fly off the wall. So if anyone knows of the whereabouts of three ducks that would like a new home, please let me know.

*Jennie Booth*  
*Museums Assistant*



*Gerrards Cross Artefact Store full of artefacts*  
**Museum Update**

*Funds for the brass plaque now in place*  
**Spring 2009** *Gerrards Cross Hut were donated by Elvia Wright, St James Church, Gerrards Cross.*

## Friends News

### Message from the Chairman of the Friends

“May you live in interesting times” is said to be an ancient Chinese curse, suggesting that only major political events are of interest. Now we accept that the lives of ordinary people are as interesting as great events. Where better to see History being “lived” than at COAM? The 2009 Season has re-enactors from over ten different times: from the Romans to the Flappers - as well as our fascinating buildings. With a bit of good weather this should be our best ever Season.

The popularity of the Victorian Farm on BBC2 recently proved that people want to know how our forebears lived and meeting

re-enactors in the flesh is obviously much more fun than seeing them on the television. You get the smells for a start: no one who has smelt a fired musket is going to forget the “fogs of war” in a hurry. You also get the chance to ask questions. Make sure you take advantage of all the different events on offer both at the Museum and off site. Don’t forget the opportunity to visit the gardens of Lord and Lady Carrington on 4 July.

It is with great sadness that I mention the death of Dudley Michael who worked hard to support the Museum as a Friend for nineteen years. Our thoughts and prayers are with Janet and the family at this time.

*Anne Ratcliffe*  
*FCOAM Chairman*

## Adult Courses

### **Celtic Remedies for Today**

Tutor: Christina Stapley

**One day course:** Saturday 16 May 2009.

**Cost: £45.00 per person.**

Up to 12 participants per day.

### **Rag Rug Making**

Tutor: David Linsey

#### **Half Day Course:**

Saturday 13 June (10.00 am until 1.00 pm)

**or** Saturday 12 September  
(1.00 pm until 4.00 pm)

**Cost: £20.00 per person.**

Up to 12 participants per day.

### **Victorian Herb Favourites to Enjoy**

Tutor: Christina Stapley

**One day course:** Saturday 4 July 2009.

**Cost: £45.00 per person.**

Up to 12 participants per day

### **Victorian Blacksmith**

Tutor: Brian Hill

**One day workshops available by  
pre-arrangement.**

**Cost: £40.00 per person.**

Up to 2 participants per day.

Melissa Maynard, Education Officer, Chiltern Open Air Museum, Newland Park,

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Tel: 01494 875542

Email: Educationcoam@btconnect.com

## Heavy Horse Experience Days - an unforgettable Day!

Sovereign (and Robert Mackenzie, his owner) invites you to come and join him for 6 hours of unparalleled interest and fun learning to 'work' with a Shire Horse!

Your day starts at 9.45am with a briefing session, followed by an introduction to Sovereign, who will be delighted to consume a carrot or two at this point. You will experience grooming & harnessing up Sovereign ready for a day's work, followed by handling tuition. You will then get the chance to long rein Sovereign around the fields in preparation for a variety of other working activities, which, after a break for lunch, will probably include harrowing the fields. (These will be weather and ground condition dependent). The day finishes about 4.15pm by which time Sovereign will have been fed and watered after his day's work.

Cost is £95 per head ( full price) to include light refreshments.  
£5 discount for Friends of the Museum. Minimum age 18 years old.

Ideal as a birthday present for the person who has everything and loves horses.

Please register your interest with Gail Mold, Admin. Officer either by email [officecoam2@btconnect.com](mailto:officecoam2@btconnect.com) or ring 01494 875542 from Tuesday to Thursday to sign up for course details to be sent to you.



### **Horse Experience Trial Day on Saturday 3 April – Guinea Pigs required**

Robert would like to trial the Sovereign Experience Days on 4 April from 9.45 am with a maximum of three people at a reduced cost of £40 (lunch not included).

Please contact Gail Mold as above if you are interested in coming along.

## The Sketches of Alice Young

These fascinating drawings appear in a tatty sketch book owned by a descendent of Alice Young, although the owner knows very little of the artist. The address in the book is Crouch End but it appears that there were relatives living in both Hastings and Penn in Buckinghamshire.

Hastings and the wider area around Penn feature almost exclusively in the book but it is the observations in Penn and the surrounding villages that are of particular interest to the Museum. Alice was staying with relations close to Dog Hill, Tylers Green, part of Penn village, during the months of August and September 1883. Judging from her sketch book Alice spent a lot of her time travelling the locality with pencil and paper. Her perambulations took her to Hazlemere, Penn Street, Totteridge, High Wycombe and Flackwell Heath, some four miles distant from her lodgings at Penn.

Alice Young had a good eye for detail and the skill to transfer these to paper without, as far as I can tell, feeling the need to use 'artistic licence'. I have compared her sketch of Sir Philip Rose's lodge at Penn with the existing building to confirm this. So when we look at the two cottage interiors at Penn we can feel confident that we are looking at exactly what the artist was seeing.

There are only two interiors in the book and in both we see the ubiquitous local scroll back Windsor chair, the work-a-day mainstay seating of many a farm house, and cottage. In one drawing we also witness a more interesting Windsor Chair of an

earlier Chiltern type. If you study the two illustrations carefully you will discover that this is the same room recorded from each end and full of lots of interesting contemporary detail.

Firstly we can see that this is the kitchen, the range tells us this much, the size of the inglenook, the well-worn ambience and the exposed beamed ceiling and simple doors indicate an early building of at least the seventeenth century. Fig. 1 shows a flagstone floor, a much used brick step leading into a scullery where we see the fire-heated 'copper' where on a Monday the water was boiled to wash the household's clothes and linen. I still remember my mother washing our clothes in the same way, stirring and prodding the contents with a long 'copper stick'.

There is a set of hanging wall shelves containing what might be some prized family china and containers. The longcase clock may have been a hand-me-down from an employer; there seems to have been a close family working connexion with the local lord, Sir Philip Rose (he filled the family's well from a horse-drawn bowser in times of drought) and the clock would have been considered old fashioned by 1883. On another wall is a weight driven 30-hour American clock and a few framed pictures. Standing against the same wall is either a table, or possibly a chest of drawers, covered with a cloth on which are a few books and a box, maybe for writing, and what looks like a tea caddy. Beneath the window, with its early latticed glazing with small panes of glass, is a tantalising glimpse of an interesting Windsor chair used with a seat cushion.

Fig. 2 clearly shows the kitchen range that has been installed into the old inglenook recess and a rug, maybe a 'rag rug', lies in

front of the hearth. Above this to the left is the wooden door to a salt cupboard, kept dry by the warmth of the chimney. On the mantelpiece are various containers including one that may be a 'spill' vase. The plank door with its wooden latch may lead to the staircase and bedrooms: a common feature in the Chilterns.

A shot gun can clearly be seen lodged along a ceiling beam and a cage holding a bird is hanging teasingly in front of the window. Goldfinches were a popular choice, noted both for their beauty and song, and found abundantly in the local countryside. The scene is completed with a warming pan conveniently hung from a wall and a scroll back Windsor chair standing by a typical Victorian table. This table could have been made of pine and used for preparing food as well as for

eating from.

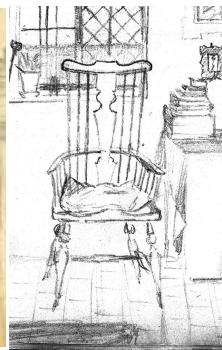
Included in the sketch book is a very rare depiction of what probably started life as a tiny squatter's two-room cottage built on Totteridge Common: a very isolated community at this time. It is brick built with a simple thatched roof instead of the more usual local clay 'peg tiles'. A wood house ('wood-us') for storing firewood is built as a lean-to on the left, and a privy is attached to the right. How tantalizing that there is no depiction of the interior!

*Article written by Stuart King,  
Wood Turner*

*(Contribution provided by Cris Claxton  
Stevens, Museum Trustee)*



*Interior of a Penn Cottage 1883*



*Windsor Chair Sketches*

**Alice Young's  
Sketches**

*Squatters Cottage  
-Totteridge  
Common*



*Wycombe scroll back windsor chair 1883*

## Education News

Several of you, I know, have recently watched a TV series called 'The Victorian Farm', which has sparked a remarked interest in the Museum's own farm and the types of activities that we offer to our visitors. I know this as many of you have come up to me and other members of staff to talk about it all. Whilst the High Farming of the Victorian age is very interesting it could not have happened if the preceding Regency age had not seen huge changes in agricultural practices and of course the political and industrial upheavals that it produced. (Some of you may be aware that the Regency is one of my favourite periods of history quite possibly due to my introduction to authors such as Jane Austen, Georgette Heyer, Baroness Emmuska Orczy and Bernard Cornwall at a relatively young age).

This all ties into a project, funded by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, that I have been working on since last October in partnership with Ashley Shepherd, Director of Social Sciences at The Amersham School, concentrating on the impact of the Enclosures and new farming practices on the local area for their Year 7 (11 to 12 year old) students. *Did you know that the Riot Act was read at High Wycombe in 1830?*

Focusing on our buildings and collections in the farmyard, many of which are Regency or very early Victorian (before the true High Farming era) we have worked hard all winter to create a new range of activities for the secondary school, with a combination of work in school and at the Museum. If you are interested in finding out more about

farming during this time let me know and I will be happy to share the information with you (apparently it was too long to go into Update).

Well this February (with some delays and rescheduling due to school closures because of the snow) I have managed to spend 3 days at the school (150 students later) with a brand new loans box that we have developed with the students investigating farming artefacts and introducing the idea of the impact of the changes to the lives of everyday people between 1795 and 1830 and we have also trialled a day visit to the Museum for just a handful of students. Spending the morning in the farm allowed the students to have a go at threshing using the flail, winnowing using a winnowing basket and then exploring the *new* machines that were going to take their jobs, including the winnowing machine which was previously hidden in the corner of Hill Farm Barn. We then had the chance to investigate Captain Swing using source material



(courtesy of the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies and The Times Archives) as well as looking at local cottage industries which could help to supplement the family's income. Ashley and I are hopeful that we will be able to build this work into the school's curriculum each year and that there are other areas in their new social sciences curriculum that we can help with.

I couldn't have done this without Jennie Booth and her wonderful volunteers – thank you for the work that you have done with our reserve collection of artefacts which has enabled me to produce a loans box and the new projects that we will be doing in the next few years using the now accessible collection.

**If you know a secondary school that might be interested in working in partnership with us to develop a learning experience for its students please feel free to pass them one of our new education leaflets and my contact details.**

**On other education news –  
Forest School celebrates it's  
5<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

That's right Forest School is now older than the children that join us for their lessons each week from Chalfont St. Giles Nursery School. Leanne Thomas introduced the idea to me in early 2003 and then we started our training in that June with our first sessions starting in April the following year. Since then it has gone from strength to strength and, when Leanne moved to Norfolk in 2005 our Forest School team was joined by Rhona Taylor, the 'new' HOT Education Officer.

We plan to celebrate our birthday with a party, with the over 350 local children who have now been through Forest School

being given a free family ticket for Saturday 25 April.

**The education programme gets more awards**

In March 2009, we were one of the first venues to gain the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge, which you have read about earlier. We are also in the process of re-applying for the Sandford Award for Heritage Education, which the Museum has held since 1994.

**What's On throughout the year**

Throughout this Update you will see adverts for lots of education, learning experiences, and events which I hope you will come along to, that my team I have been working on since last summer – and of course we always need help to run these activities so if you are interested in helping give me a call on 01494 875542 or email me (which is usually the best way to contact me these days) at [educationcoam@btconnect.com](mailto:educationcoam@btconnect.com).

*Melissa Maynard  
Education Officer*



## Hawk and Owl Trust

### LIFE BEGINS AT 40 FOR THE HAWK AND OWL TRUST!

This year sees the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Hawk and Owl Trust.



The Trust was originally founded in order to campaign for one specific bird: the peregrine falcon had reached the brink of extinction by 1969 due to the effects of organo-chlorine fertilisers in the food chain. Female peregrines were laying eggs with no shells, and were therefore unable to incubate their clutch. In the late 1960s many native British birds of prey were in trouble because of both deliberate persecution and unintentional damage from agro-chemicals. The peregrine falcon, an extremely fast and spectacular hunter, caught the imagination of the public and helped to highlight the plight of other British raptors.

Since then the Trust has worked hard to protect all birds of prey and their habitats through research and conservation projects and education programmes. It opened the Conservation and Education Centre here at the Chiltern Open Air Museum in 1995, based in Skippings Barn, a beautifully restored building from Chalfont St Peter. The six paintings which show man's effect on the British landscape over the last 2000 years are particularly popular with visitors

and tie in nicely with the buildings and landscape of the Museum site.

Over the last few years the Hawk and Owl Trust has developed a community nature reserve at Sculthorpe Moor, near Fakenham in north Norfolk, where Leanne Thomas is now based. The natural wetland habitat, once lost to intensive farming, has been restored at Sculthorpe and the site is now a rich environment teeming with plant and animal life including marsh harriers and hobbies. If you are holidaying in Norfolk, do go and visit Sculthorpe Moor if you can. You will be able to use state-of-the-art hides to observe some amazing wetlands life – and say hello to Leanne, of course! When I was last there, I was lucky enough to see a water-rail probing around in the mud.

A second reserve is being developed at Shapwick Moor on the Somerset levels, where the aim is to create a diverse habitat from an area of intensively-farmed land. With both the reserves, the Trust hopes to enrich the natural environment as well as setting an example to other landowners. (If you would like more information on either of these reserves, please ask me or pick up a leaflet in Skippings Barn once the season starts.)

There will be various events this year to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Trust will be focusing on kestrels, which now seem to be in decline country-wide. As well as carrying out research to try to discover why this is happening, we plan to install nest-boxes along roads across the country to encourage these popular little falcons to breed. On a positive note, the COAM kestrels seem to do very well in the gable end of Northolt Barn.

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I am hoping to organise some special study

days this year (probably in the autumn) on specific species. Colin Shawyer, a national expert on barn owls, has agreed to come to COAM for a day devoted to this beautiful bird. Watch this space for more information.

As the new season approaches let's all cross our fingers for some good spring and summer weather in this anniversary year.

*Rhona Taylor*  
*Hawk and Owl Trust Education Officer*

## “Building Blocks”

### **A family interactive building construction exhibition in Northolt Barn**

We have long wanted a set of traditional building activities for visitors to experience a range of materials and techniques involved in the construction of vernacular buildings in this region and at long last we are delighted that our wish has been granted.

The new Exhibition comprises of a set of traditional building activities and equipment all kept in a brand new traditional style oak cabinet, located in Northolt Barn. The cabinet has been built by joiner Tim Hallewell, who has taken traditional oak chest designs as his guide for this work. The cabinet contains the materials, tools and eight 2ft X 3ft trays which will be laid out on trestle tables for the activities.

- ◆ Brick laying – laying different brick bonds using briquettes donated by H G Matthews
- ◆ Laying small grumpling foundations for wychert wall construction
- ◆ Constructing a small timber frame model of Arborfield Barn

- ◆ Constructing a small timber frame model of Northolt Barn
- ◆ Piecing together a wooden block model of the Toll House

Museum Teachers and volunteers will run these activities during the holidays and weekends on an occasional basis. We do need more people to help make this available more regularly for visitors so please do consider if you can spare some time to volunteer. If you are interested in helping to make these new activities available for our visitors, please contact Melissa Maynard.



*Director's son learning about brick bonds!*

## A Traditional Lambing Fold

Every year visitors are enchanted by the birth of Oxford Down lambs, and Hill Farm Barn becomes a temporary maternity ward for a month or two. However, in 2009, lambing will take place in a newly constructed traditional lambing fold in the arable fields beside the second hay rick. This project is part of the new Farm Plan to develop the traditional Chilterns character of the farm and will be a fantastic new addition to our agricultural exhibits to demonstrate traditional lambing practices; a once common, but now vanished feature of the Chilterns landscape.

### *Contemporary Description of Lambing Fold:*

"...a temporary lambing yard built with straw and hurdles is universally adopted. Around the inside of the enclosure small coops or compartments are hurdled off. The shepherd will remain night and day with his flock during this time, and a hut will be provided for him with stove and firing. The shepherd brings all forward ewes into the lambing yard at night. As soon as a lamb is born, it and its dam will be removed into one of the coops, and there remain for three to four days until the lamb is able to follow its mother without difficulty and until they know each other thoroughly. In the lambing yard the ewes receive some cake and corn, with roots and hay. After two or three days in the coops the ewes and lambs will be transferred into one of the bigger yards of the lambing pen, and from thence, out into the open fold at from four to seven days old, depending on the weather and

the strength of the lamb..."

*Extract from 'Fream's Elements of Agriculture', Twelfth edition, 1932.*

We are very grateful to the Chilterns Conservation Board for a generous grant of £8300 to fund the construction of the lambing fold.

The fold is being constructed in the arable field and incorporates the second hay rick, which is being thatched as part of the project. Wattle hurdles mounted with thatch are being used to make the roof and chestnut poles and gate hurdles to create the walls. The site and farm team volunteers have been hard at work over the winter helping to thatch the second rick and to construct the rest of the lambing fold. The shepherds hut from Wing Paddock is being moved to the Lambing Fold site to provide shelter and living quarters for the lambing team and to provide this exhibit with better context. We are grateful to Robert Mackenzie and other volunteers for their assistance in its relocation of this exhibit.

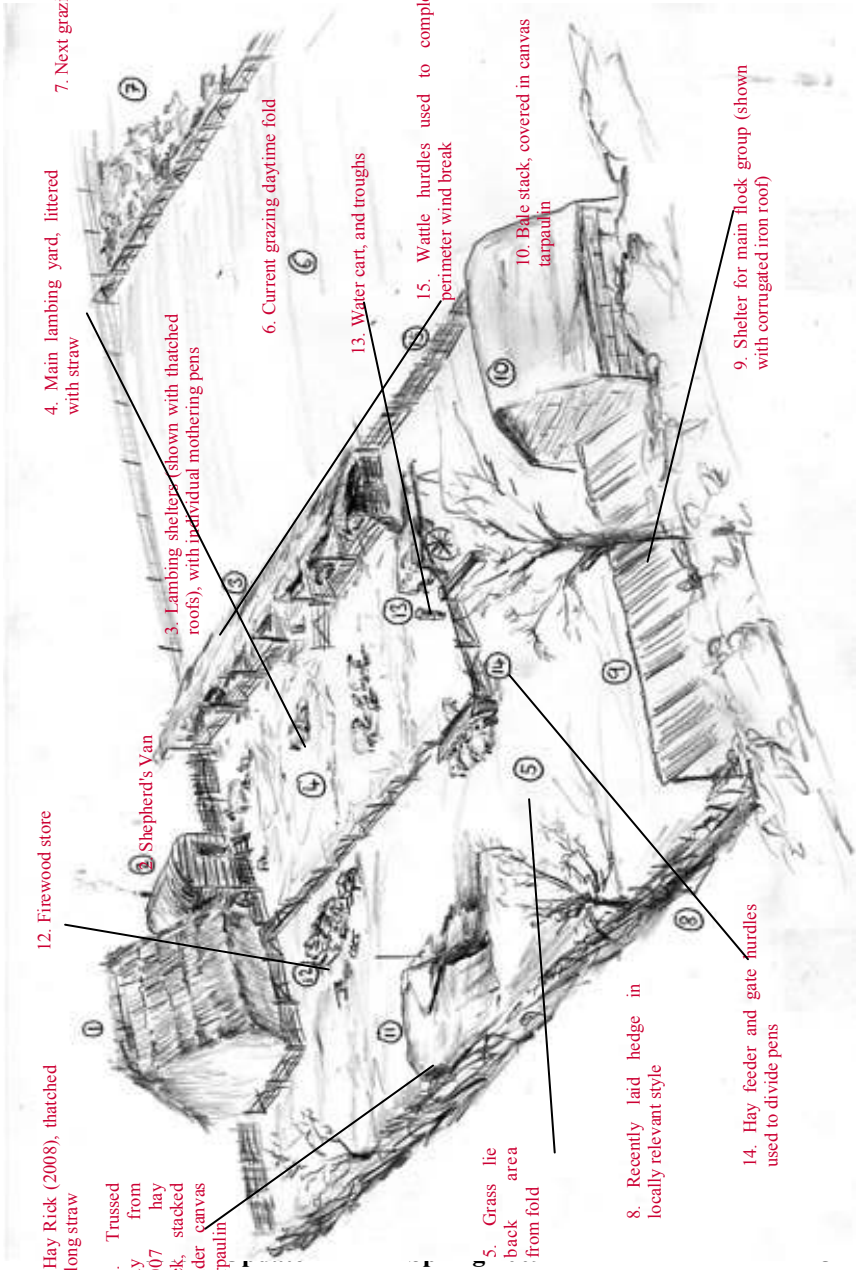
*Verena Clark  
Project Leader*



Museum Update

Spring 2009

Museum volunteer Sarah Lomas thatching hurdles for the roof of the lambing shelter.



1. Hay Rick (2008), thatched in long straw

11. Trussed hay from 2007 hay rick, stacked under canvas tarpaulin

12. Firewood store

2. Shepherd's Van

3. Lambing shelters (shown with thatched roofs), with individual mothering pens

4. Main lambing yard, littered with straw

7. Next grazing fold area

6. Current grazing daytime fold

13. Water cart, and troughs

15. Wattle hurdles used to complete perimeter wind break

5. Grass lie back area from fold

8. Recently laid hedge in locally relevant style

14. Hay feeder and gate hurdles used to divide pens

9. Shelter for main flock group (shown with corrugated iron roof)

10. Bale stack, covered in canvas tarpaulin

## Volunteers Social Evening

This will take place for the 6th year in succession on Saturday 6 June from 6.15 pm until 9.00 pm. Therefore please make a note in 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 per adult (£3 per child) will be sought and we will be supporting Astleham Garden this year.

It is also the nearest Saturday to what would have been Phil Holbrook's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, so we will also be marking that occasion. Melissa is arranging to raise monies for a 'bench' in his memory to be located at the Museum and we hope to unveil it on that evening.

We both look forward to seeing you all then. Please would someone ensure the weather is dry!

*Hazel Howe & Verena Clark*



**Museum Update**

**Spring**

## Fundraising in 2009

Please watch out for the usual 'Name the time and date of the first lamb at the Museum Competition,' with that happy event anticipated in the latter part of April in the traditional Lambing Fold. 50p a go and the winner receives a £10 Marks & Spencer voucher and 6 farm eggs. All proceeds go to the Farm Equipment Fund.

The Competition to 'Name the time and date of the topping out ceremony for Haddenham Cottage' is still doing the rounds and certain people are taking a very long dated view. Amongst the building volunteer fraternity current estimates range from June 2009 to September 2011. This will turn out to be the longest running competition at the Museum.

The tombola will be at the Chilterns Country Show on 18 & 19 April at the Museum, and then out and about in the summer representing the Museum, under the auspices of the Friends, at, amongst others, Chalfont St. Giles Show, Bushey Museum Garden Party and Uxbridge Auto Show. We will be raising funds for Astleham Garden this year.

*Verena Clark*

## Standing Orders for the Museum

Thank you to those of you who have kindly completed standing orders to support the Museum as introduced in the October Update.

Please note that this is NOT for the Friends for Membership and is a separate scheme to support Museum revenue and projects directly.

## Fundraising and Acknowledgements

<p><b>CCB Lambing Folds</b>                    £8,300</p> <p><b>CCB Building Blocks</b>                £5,600</p> <p><b>AIM Sustainability Fund</b>            £4,800</p> <p><b>Roads</b>                                    £4,000</p> <p><b>GE Healthcare</b>                        £3,000</p> <p>Sponsorship of the leaflets and special events</p> <p><b>Astleham Garden</b>                    £1,000</p> <p><b>Bucks County Council</b>               £1,000</p> <p>Sponsorship of school special events</p> <p><b>MLA Skills for Learning</b>            £500</p>	<p>Discounts on Chiltern Pavers</p> <p>Donation of 200 briquettes for “Building Blocks” project.</p> <p>Donation of 200 tiny bricks for education</p> <p><b>Agripower</b></p> <p>Discounts on contractor’s labour</p> <p><b>Bardon Aggregates</b></p> <p>Discounts on roadstone</p> <p><b>O’Hara’s</b></p> <p>Discounts on road planings</p> <p><b>Black Horse Fulmer</b></p> <p>£40 - donation box</p>
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**H.G. Matthews**

## HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT THE MUSEUM

### Leaving a Legacy – Remember the Museum in your Will

### Payroll Giving:

<b>Pecuniary Gift</b>	A fixed sum of money
<b>Residual Gift :</b>	The whole or part of your Estate, after all your specified wishes have been allocated (“the Residue”)
<b>Specified Named Item</b>	A piece of jewellery, shares, bonds etc.

If you earn a salary, or if your pension is paid via PAYE, payroll giving is one of the most simple and tax effective methods of making regular charitable donations.

Your donation will be taken before tax and therefore you can give more money to the Museum without it costing you more.

For more information or to find out whether your employer currently offers payroll giving go to [www.giveasyouearn.org](http://www.giveasyouearn.org). If you are an employer you can register your company for payroll giving by going to [www.hmrc.gov.uk/payrollgiving](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/payrollgiving).

You may want to specify how you would prefer your gift to be used, ie building projects, improving facilities or education. Alternatively you could just leave the Trustees to decide how best to use your bequest.

We would strongly advise that you have your Will drawn up by a solicitor to ensure your wishes are carried out.

**The Museum is very grateful to you for offering us your invaluable financial support. Your donation will enable us to re-erect the historic buildings in store and develop our traditional Chiltern landscaping plans.**

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

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Eric Knowles  
James Elles MEP  
Lady Wilson  
Paul Daniels  
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**Vice Chairman and Company Secretary**

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**Hawk and Owl Trust – Education Officer**

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