Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum



Newsletter No. 19 March 2015

A Note from the Editor

A Happy New Year to you all, though when you read this we will be well into 2015 and our thoughts will be focused on the new season which starts on April 1st..

Firstly, though, we need to put right a couple of errors in the last issue. John Crosson, one of the Arnhem Veterans has been in touch as we left a line out of his poem. The correct version is printed on page 8, with our humble apologies. He also pointed out that in our report on the winner of the Lancaster Taxi Ride we referred to "the 2320 parachute troops stationed in and around Woodhall", whereas they were actually glider-borne troops, comprising the 1st Air Landing Brigade. Thank you John for putting us right.

A new venture for the museum was opening up over one weekend in December for a Victorian Christmas event. This created a lot of interest and is to be repeated next year - report on page 11.



A whole series of family activities are being planned for the coming year and details of many of them are on Poppy's Page in this issue.

When we first started the Newsletters Paddy O'Neill did an interview with Desirée Carlton, a great niece of John and Asenath Wield. This month our Chairman, Gill Noble, has had a further talk with Desirée and the result is the fascinating article on the opposite page.

I do hope you enjoy this issue, coming as it does at the beginning of another exciting new season for the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum. This year the museum will be open from April 1st. so let's all make this another year to remember!

Philip Groves

Cover Picture

The Wield Room in the museum decked out with Christmas decorations for the special December Victorian Christmas opening of the museum.

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Further Recollections of an Early Childhood An interview with Desirée Carlton, great niece of John and Asenath Wield

Last summer I was lucky enough to meet Desirée Carlton and her husband, Peter, when they revisited the museum. Since then we have met several times. Desirée explained her relationship to the Wield family. Her grandmother, Grace Mary Lee, was the sister of Asenath Wield.

Although she and Peter now live in Metheringham, Desirée was born in Woodhall Spa in 1941, in

Toronto House, which is now Boots the Chemist. Her mother, Zena Parker, née Lee, would take Desirée and her sister Jennifer to visit John and Asenath Wield at the bungalow.

The interior has undergone some changes, but the original room layout is almost the same. Desirée said it was like being transported back in time; she could picture each room as it looked nearly seventy years ago. Asenath, known as Auntie Sean, welcomed all her visitors with tea and cakes. There was always a green treacle tin on the table, full of homemade toffee for the children to devour. Nowhere was off limits and both Asenath and John were happy for the piano to be "played" with gusto. John's studio and the garden workshops were often explored. Desirée recalls that glass plates were lined up against the walls of the studio and some wicker bath chairs were stored inside the workshop, but there were no donkeys in the stable by this time.

At Christmas time there was a small tree in the corner of the front room, covered in "snowballs", small pieces of cotton wool were rolled into balls and thrown onto the tree, which was also draped in tinsel.

As a child who loved being outdoors, Desirée longed to be able to roller skate at speed down the Broadway. Sadly this was not Lee, aged 5 taken by John

allowed, especially on a Sunday!

The steam trains that ran on the track adjacent to the bungalow were slowing down as they were either approaching or leaving Woodhall station, but the contents of the bungalow still rattled as the trains passed by. A favourite pastime was to wave to the drivers.

When she was four or five, Desirée went with her family to Petwood House for a celebration event, possibly V.E. Day. She vividly remembers that everyone was dressed in their Sunday best. Sir Archibald and Lady Weigall arrived in a horse-drawn coach. Lady Weigall was dressed in a cream outfit with a very large hat. All the boys and girls lined up to greet her. She was handed a basket of small silk pouches, containing sweets, which she gave to the children, pink for the girls and blue for the boys.

Desirée has some cherished photographs, taken by John Wield, of her mother as a child. One was taken in his studio when she was five; the other shows her on the stage at the Kinema, dressed as Jackie Coogan. She has kindly agreed for these to be reproduced for this page.

> **Gill Noble** February 2015





Desirée's mother. Zena

Wield in his studio

the Kinema, dressed as Jackie Coogan, taken by JW.

Presentation to Jackie Goodall

Jackie Goodall, who stood down from the chairmanship of The Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum last year, thought she was running a "wash up" meeting of those involved in the highly successful day of Commemoration for the 70th Anniversary of The Battle for Arnhem Bridge – Operation Market Garden. However at the end of her meeting Jackie discovered that Pam Cowlishaw, together with friends and colleagues from the Museum, had organised a presentation, to say a big thank you for her enormous contribution to the museum during the eleven years or so she was involved.

As Chairman, Jackie raised the profile of Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum in the wider museum community, but probably her greatest achievement during her term as Chairman, was to lead the team that successfully applied for and won a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £677,600 to



Gill Noble presents a bouquet to Jackie

refurbish the somewhat dilapidated building and old fashioned displays.

To acknowledge the enormous debt of gratitude the museum owes to Jackie, a series of gifts were presented, led by Gill Noble, Museum Chairman, who gave flowers and a card signed by all Jackie's supporters. A bottle of Champagne and £60 of wine vouchers were presented by David Radford, founding Chairman of the museum, a copy of John Wield's map of Woodhall Spa, by Anne Houlton, an Album of photos depicting Jackie's various achievements by Philip Groves and finally a shrub and a substantial voucher to purchase plants etc., by Carol and Roger Webb, for her garden, which is her current project! The museum has been very fortunate to have had Jackie's contribution over the past ten years. Her achievements have been immense and her efforts on behalf of Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum will be sorely missed.

A Thank You Letter from Jackie

Dear All

The 18th October 2014 seems a long time ago. Unfortunately it was shortly after the museum's last newsletter had been published, so this is the first opportunity I have to thank you for your generosity and support. The 18th was the memorable day when the Arnhem 70th Commemoration film was viewed for the first time; it was always the intention that those who turned out on the day should have a lasting memory of that occasion and the film company certainly produced an excellent record of the event. It was also the day when friends and supporters gave me such a lovely send off. I'm writing to thank you all for the generous gifts and lasting mementos of my time spent with volunteers at the Cottage Museum. I have always valued and appreciated the enthusiasm, hard work and loyalty of friends and colleagues during my ten year involvement with the museum and I thank those who have continued to support and help me throughout 2014. Particular mention must be given to Pam Cowlishaw, Roger and Carol Webb, Phil Groves and Marjorie Sargeant for their time, inspiration and hard work in the organisation of such a memorable send off.

I wish all at the museum a happy and successful future.

Best wishes

Jackíe



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Meet the Directors - Michael Wighton

I was born in RAF Wroughton, near Swindon in Wiltshire and lived in Swindon for three months until my family moved to Germany, as my father had been posted by the RAF to Berlin. We came back to the UK, due to my father being posted to RAF Digby and we lived in Sleaford, until my father passed away.

After my father's passing we moved to Slough and then to High Wycombe, where I worked in retail until, we moved again to Weymouth in Dorset. It was here that I went to college and acquired my A-Levels in History and Sociology. This enabled me to attend Bath Spa University to read History. I attained a 2:1 in BA Hons History.

During my time reading for my first degree, I undertook work experience at The Tank Museum in Bovington Dorset and it was here that I decided to pursue a career in the Heritage



sector. Therefore, I went to Bournemouth University to study for a Masters Degree in Museum Studies. I achieved my goal of completing my Masters Degree with Merit in Museum Studies.

My museum work experience includes a five month University work placement with the South Heritage Team. It was here that I learnt about Documentation, MODES and collections care. Moreover, I spent eighteen months at The Dorset County Museum, working with their Social History Collection and from there I worked at Nothe Fort in Weymouth, undertaking Collection Care, Documentation and MODES work.

My Mum and I moved back to Lincolnshire 4 years ago to be closer to my nephew and niece. I have been a volunteer at Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum since 2011 and worked for Lincolnshire County Council as Relief Cultural Heritage Advisor.

During my time with the museum, I have written a research paper on evacuees in Woodhall Spa during the Second World War. This research obtained a grant for the museum from the Archives and Record Association in London.

Late last year, I was invited to join the board of directors for the museum and I happily agreed to become a director of this amazing museum. I feel honoured to be part of a dedicated team who desire to preserve the heritage of Woodhall Spa and bring to life the story of the village.

Michael Wighton

Woodhall Spa and A Bridge Too Far

Airborne troops from near and far, prepared for war in Woodhall Spa Monty and his big idea, although intelligence was clear An airborne armada of monstrous size Flew in quest of Monty's prize into Holland, gun for gun, our mission was to fight the Hun and fights were fought but seldom won. Yet I survived, and fought no more.

I might have died in forty-four Free of anguish and of pain home in Woodhall Spa again, to a welcome I shall e'er remember, good folk of Woodhall, each September

John Crosson

Ex 7th Galloway Battalion The Kings Own Scottish Borderers and veteran of the Battle for Arnhem Bridge



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The Victorian Christmas Event

Last December members of the Education Team fulfilled a long-held wish. With the help of other volunteers the museum was decorated for a three day Victorian Christmas event. Garlands made from evergreen plants, holly, ivy, conifer and of course mistletoe, were placed in every room. The Christmas tree had pride of place in the Wield Room. It was festooned with authentic decorations, which were mostly hand-made. Traditional unwrapped toys were placed beneath.

The display cabinets were filled with a selection of Victorian Christmas fayre, including a cake, sweets, sugar plums and chestnuts. These were complemented by examples of kitchenalia and rare cookery books, kindly loaned by Mrs.Sadie Hirst. Having been greeted by "Victorian ladies", visitors were transported back in time as they toured each



Mince Pies form part of the traditional Christmas fayre in the display cabinets

they toured each room or sat and watched the Magic Lantern Show created by Dr. Nicholas Duke-Cox. He



Jane Hodgson, in Victorian costume waits to greet visitors

used early photographs from John Wield's archive depicting Woodhall in the snow, accompanied by traditional carols.

Many volunteers helped and supported the team with this event. Very positive feedback was received from visitors so we hope to organise this event again next Christmas.

BELL AWARD PRESENTED TO YOUNG VOLUNTEER

A special presentation of the Bell Award was made by Gill Noble, Chairman of the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum, at the Christmas Coffee morning in St. Peter's Hall, to young volunteer Jenny Baker. Jenny has been a volunteer at the museum for almost two years. During this time she has worked with different teams, the Education team, Gardening team and now she works every week with the Administrator, honing her IT skills. She is always willing to take on any task she is asked to do. The directors were very happy to present her with the Bell Award.

The Bell Award is given from time to time to a young person who has done something of merit for the Museum. The award came about as a result of a burglary at the Museum when the Bell Cup,



Gill Noble with Jenny Baker

which belonged to the Woodhall Spa Agricultural Show Society, was stolen. The Bell family, who had donated the cup had retained the rights to it and donated the insurance payment to the Museum, but asked that the memory of Joseph Bell be maintained. The Museum Trustees at the time agreed to do this through the Bell Award.

1986 and All That.....

You may remember that 1985 was the year in which I began the task of ensuring that John Wield's historic material stayed in the Victorian Spa where he had lived for some 88 years.

From 1985, a year in which I had been virtually alone in this endeavour, to 1986, a year in which the "troops begin to amass" was as you will understand, inevitably busier than ever! There was never a moment to spare! My working day was taken up by my teacher's post at St Hugh's, that well respected local preparatory boarding school, which had brought me to Woodhall Spa in the first place. The following is a short resume of the frenetic time from February 1st to April 8th 1986.

Preserving local memories while still possible, persuading 'the powers that be,' saving the bungalow, John Wield's home, all factored in the days from Feb 2nd to Feb 9th! There was Les Chapman, much respected manager of the long established Hundleby's grocery store. He was a repository of so much information and a true gentleman. Then there was Mrs Allport, wife of Major Carleton Cole Allport, owner for so long of the Kinema in the Woods. Her fascinating memories of 'The Flicks in the Sticks' warranted more visits!!

Next came The Parish Council! How important it was to get its members' blessing on my proposals to save Woodhall Spa's heritage. You see, this had never been recorded in detail or fully researched and there were, at that time, folk about, whose recollections could still add so much to the sketchy information available.

A landmark! On the 22nd February 1986, at 6.30, the first meeting of that small group of heritage enthusiasts as a Charitable Trust took place: Bill Skelton, local reporter, Amarylis Midgely (née Kocbuch), local business promotion expert and myself, teacher! We were on our official way!!

History was not only being made in Woodhall Spa at that time!

Amongst many worldwide events, high above the clouds in outer space, Giotto, the European robotic spacecraft was approaching the nucleus of Halley's Comet at a distance of 596 kilometres, the closest approach to Halley's Comet ever!

As exciting as founding the Cottage Museum perhaps!!!!

(For quiz enthusiasts, the space vehicle was named Giotto after Giotto di Bondone, an early Renaissance painter who had observed the comet in 1301.)

Back to the Cottage Museum's progress.

An important addition to the Founding Trustees was made on the 15th of March, with the arrival of Stuart Treharne, solicitor, whose advice, encouragement and practical support proved such a bonus to our project.

Further Trust meetings were held on the 17th and 24th of March. We had a presence at a Craft Exhibition held at the Coronation Hall on the 29th and a further meeting on April 1st with the Parish Council. No April Fool this time! We were in great earnest!

All this led up to the public meeting on the 8th of April at St Hugh's School. It was here the Trust was to make a presentation to the people of Woodhall Spa to explain the project and. ask for their backing. Aided by James Green and Sheila Bycroft, with their original carbon arc projector and John Wield's historic slides, there was a palpable atmosphere of excitement and a love for community. The Trustees met with a resounding vote of support from pensioner to businessman! They were all behind us!

David Radford, Founding Chairman

DICK GRIFFIN (1948-2015)

It is with sadness we record the death of Dick Griffin who was a local amateur photographer. When he was asked how to identify negatives his reply was "contact prints." He offered to develop the extensive collection of John Wield's glass plates. These date from the early twentieth century and Dick's work has revealed the life and times of both Woodhall and the wider community. He has given the museum a wonderful archive and a lasting tribute to Dick himself.

Ann Houlton February 2015

Cottage Museum Woodhall Spa receives Co-op Community Champion donation

The Cottage Museum at Woodhall Spa was the Co-op Community Champion for the last quarter of 2014. It benefited from a magnificent donation of £871 from local Dividend holders which the Directors of this community-run charitable museum are pleased to accept. A replacement wicker bath chair was purchased last year to replace the one that suffered in the arson attack of December 2010 and this is now on display. The museum opens its doors to the public on April 1st. with new temporary displays and will remain open until the end of October.



Deputy Chairman, Patricia Duke-Cox, accepts the cheque from Alan Bent, manager of the Woodhall Spa Co-op store.

Rodger Pickavance Retires from the Board

Rodger resigned from the Board of Directors at the November meeting and Patricia Duke-Cox made a presentation on behalf of all his friends and colleagues at the museum.

Rodger's contribution to the museum over the last few years has been immense. He has overseen the cataloguing and scanning of the vast collection of glass slides and photographs left by John Wield and project managed the capital works for the redevelopment of the museum, working closely with the Heritage Lottery Fund representatives. As we all know the project was fraught

representatives. As we all know the project was fraught with unforeseen problems, which Rodger handled with



Patricia Duke-Cox making the presentation to Rodger Pickavance

great skill. He is moving to Anglesey as soon as his house is sold. We wish him well in his new venture. In the meantime he continues to work as a volunteer for the museum.

AUSWERS TO THE VICTORIAN GAMES QUIZ Drum Tin Whistle Solifaire Marbles Whip and Top Dominoes Doll Noah's Ark Puppet Rocking Horse Five Jacks Toy Boat.

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum



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Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

From the Collection

PH00658 – As thoughts turn to summer, well, spring at least, I thought that I would put in a scene of games of tennis. The Spa Baths are to the left of the picture and the Victoria Hotel is shown to the right of the picture. The area of the tennis courts is now scrub and woodland. This early sepia, albumen print has to be pre 1920, when the Victoria Hotel was destroyed by fire.





GN03910 – Continuing the theme of trying to identify local individuals, we have a couple of pictures of the distinguished gentleman shown with Thomas Wield (He is the one holding the camera). If you know who he is, then we would like to know.

If you have any local pictures that we can add to the museum's visual assets collection then please get in touch. We are at the museum every Tuesday morning or you can leave a message on 01526 352456 or info@cottagemuseum.co.uk and we will get back to you. We can scan in pictures whist you wait and our new accommodation is far more pleasant that the old 'back room'.

Rodger Pickavance

150 Club Winners

 Oct:
 £20 [31] Roger Papworth

 £15 [34] Terry Ranshaw
 £10 [23] A Brass

Nov: £20 [68] Bob Fletcher £15 [73] Cliff Harding £10 [30] Sally Fletcher

Annual Draw:

£150 [95] Rowland Ward £70 [85] David Hill £40 [1] Wendy Radford

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POPPY'S PAGE

Did you all have a great Christmas? It seems a long time ago now! We can all look forward to the better weather. How about trying Effie's Easter Egg Trail over the Easter Holidays. I am banned as I can sniff them out! The quiz is all about Victorian children's games so do have a go at that. Bye for now. Poppy

Effie's Easter Egg Trail

Effie Wield was born in 1904. She lived in the bungalow that is now the museum. I am sure she liked Easter eggs. During the Easter school holiday, come and follow "Effie's Easter Egg Trail." Find the Easter eggs hidden in the museum cabinets and answer the questions on the quiz sheet. There will be a chocolate egg for every completed sheet.

Forthcoming Family Learning Events

There are some exciting activities planned for you to come and take part in at the museum.

Monday 30th. March 10.00am - 12 Noon

Easter Craft Activities

£3.00 per person. All materials included.

Thursday 16th. May 7.30pm - 10.30pm

"Night in the Museum," come and enjoy a Victorian Miscellany.

£5.00 per person including a drink.

Thursday 28th. May 10.00am - 12.00pm.

Decorating Victorian Tiles

£3.00 per person. All materials included.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Gill Noble

Edwardian Games Quiz

Here are some of the toys and games that Effie may have played with. Can you unscramble the letters to discover what they are. Some words have a capital letter in them. This is the first letter you need to start with.

mrud	int tiswhel	atiriSole	
sraMebl	phiw dna otp	sonimDoes	
ldol	shoan rka	tupepp	
noRkcig sheor	evif cajsk	oyt tabo	
Answers on Page 13			



The Friends of the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

Committee Members:

Chairman:	Roger Webb	01526 353029
	Carol Webb	01526 353029
	Elizabeth Leech	01526 352595
	Vacancy	

Hello Friends,

Those of you living in Woodhall Spa will have received the Friends application form with the Parish Newsletter. This is just one part of a recruitment drive to increase our numbers. We all know that our household bills seem to increase every time we get them. It is just the same at the museum and we need to meet those costs. Spread the word and get your friends to become our Friends.

Last summer we ran some table-top sales on the Museum lawn at weekends. We are repeating that this year so please think of us when you spring clean or tidy the garage. Will that item be welcome in a new home and bring in money for the Museum? If you want to drop things off before Easter then telephone me to arrange a time when someone will be at the Museum.

The back-bone of our Museum consists of volunteers and Friends. One section of our volunteers has seen numbers dwindle from 80 to around 18. These are our Museum Guides, our meeters and greeters. They are the people who, along with others, create that all important first impression. Can you help? Can you give us a few hours a week? We do offer training, so no excuses. Just think about it please. We even need guides during the winter when we do take pre-arranged visits. You could book one for your club or society.

Our annual dinner is on the 24th of April at the Abbey Lodge. Tickets prices have been maintained at £17.50. We have changed from March to see if we can increase the numbers. Our guest speaker is Andy Mason, who will be telling us about the weapons systems developed for the Vulcan during the Cold War. Andy was a Vulcan navigator during that period. The annual dinner is not restricted to Friends, volunteers and their partners. You can bring along friends and family. To book your places or any information please telephone me on 01526 353029.

Roger Webb



Woodhall Spa Forthcoming Attractions of a museum-orientated nature:

Coffee Morning Saturday 18th of April at St. Peter's Hall 9.30 am start

Annual Dinner at the Abbey Lodge Friday 24th of April 7.00 for 7.30 pm

"The Great British Bake-Off" A comedy presented by Cutwater Productions Saturday 30th. May 7.30 pm at St. Peter's Hall

See also www.cottagemuseum.co.uk & www.woodhallspa.org

