

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum



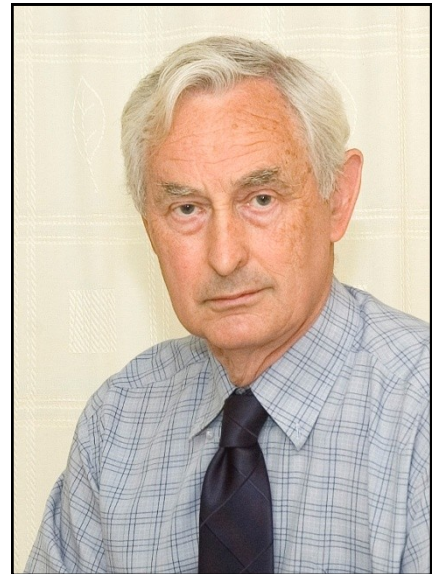
Newsletter No. 20
July 2015

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

A Note from the Editor

We are approaching the main part of the season and already the museum is seeing good visitor numbers. Our Activity Manager, Kathy Holland continues to come up with imaginative ideas to engage with the public at large and children in particular. The Victorian Miscellany evening, for instance, was a great success, with the museum opening "after hours" for this special event.

Three of our long-standing Directors retired at this year's AGM. Between them they had 54 years of outstanding service to the museum and all will be greatly missed. They are David Radford, founding Chairman of the Museum, Marjorie Sargeant and Pam Cowlshaw. All three have made a huge contribution to the success of the museum. David's contribution is immeasurable. Without his inspiration and unbounded energy the museum would not exist. He is going to continue to write for the Newsletter about those early days from 1986, when the museum was in its infancy. A full report on the presentations can be found on page 4 and David has written an open letter, printed on page 13 to all the supporters of the museum.



Congratulations are in order to the TIC staff and all museum Meeters and Greeters, for enabling the museum to win the award for Customer Care at the recent East Midlands Awards evening. Mystery visitors came to the museum to judge the way in which we deal with our visitors and were sufficiently impressed to judge us the best in the East Midlands. This is a considerable achievement and one of which we can be justly proud - well done! We were also shortlisted for the Award for Engaging Children and Young People and The Wendy Golland Award for Quality Research, for the research by Nicholas Duke-Cox into the history of The Petwood Gardens. The results of this research are to be published in a book, later this year or early next, under the title "The Petwood Gardens: a pictorial history".

Philip Groves

Cover Picture

Colin Holland plays the Squeeze Box for the Victorian Miscellany Evening held In May.

In this Issue

Page 3	Victorian Miscellany evening	Page 12	1986 and All That.....
Page 4	Presentations	Page 13	Letter from David Radford
Page 8	Temporary Exhibition	Page 16	From the Collection
	East Midlands Award		150 Club Winners
Page 11	What Our Visitors Are Saying	Page 18	Poppy's Page
	Unexpected Visitors	Page 20	The Friends' Page

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Victorian Miscellany

"Museums at Night" is a national event which takes place in May. Many museums and heritage sites open their doors to visitors after they would normally be closed. Special tours and activities are offered and these have become very popular.

Museum volunteers decided to participate for the first time this year. On Thursday May 14th, the front door of the bungalow was opened to welcome our twenty-three guests to come and enjoy an evening of Victorian pastimes and refreshments.

The rooms were lit with candles and oil lamps, (sadly not real but very good imitations!).

Volunteers were dressed in Victorian costume. They showed visitors round the displays and encouraged them to play some of the games that were laid out in the parlour.

Judith Haddock and Jane Hodgson demonstrated two crafts that were very popular a century ago, namely how to make hairpin lace and a rag rug. Several visitors tried their hands at these activities.



Colin Holland plays for an old fashioned sing-a-long



*Left to right: Carol Webb & Judy Everitt
Dressed as Victorian housekeepers*

One of the highlights of the evening was the musical interlude provided by Colin Holland. Everyone was invited into the parlour to join in with the Victorian ditties. Even a French family, who came with their English friends, were able to join in. Colin is one half of a duo. They have a wide repertoire including folk songs. They are coming to perform at the museum, hopefully in the garden, on August 9th.

Guests were invited into the Community room for refreshments. Small tables were arranged round the room, decorated with jars of wild flowers and candles.

Judy Everitt and Carol Webb, dressed as Victorian housekeepers, hosted the guests.

Delicious fondant fancies and macaroons were offered, provided by Lynne Fitzpatrick who runs a business in Coningsby called "The Cake Fairy". These were very well received, particularly as they were accompanied by cups of tea poured through a tea strainer in true Victorian style.

The whole evening was a great success, an event we shall repeat in the future.

Gill Noble

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

Retirement Presentations

A presentation was made at the recent Annual General Meeting of the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum to David Radford, Pam Cowlshaw and Marjorie Sargeant, who were retiring from the board. Presenting the gifts, Museum Chairman, Gill Noble thanked them for all their hard work and pointed out that they represented 54 years of service as Trustees or Directors – an amazing achievement and that they will be greatly missed.

David Radford co-founded the museum in 1986 and served as its chairman until 2010. His contribution to the success of the museum is immense; indeed there would not be a Cottage Museum in Woodhall Spa had he not had the vision to seize the opportunity of acquiring the bungalow and its priceless collection of photos and artefacts left by the Wield family when it came onto the market back in 1985. He has worked tirelessly ever since to promote the museum at every opportunity with his almost legendary enthusiasm.

Pam Cowlshaw joined the museum as a volunteer in 2004 and in 2006 became the first chairman of the newly formed Friends of the Museum, a post she held until last year. She worked tirelessly for the Friends during this period both in organising the many fund-raising events, lectures and recruitment of new members. In 2008 she took over the position of Treasurer, a position she has ably held until she handed over to Judy Everitt in January of this year.

Marjorie Sargeant is well-known locally for the series of books she has written on the history of Woodhall Spa, the proceeds of which continue to help raise funds for the museum. She became a Director in 2000 and has assisted the museum in all sorts of areas with research work into various aspects of local history. She will continue to work with the museum as suitable opportunities arise.



Left to right: Pam Cowlshaw,, David Radford and Marjorie Sargeant

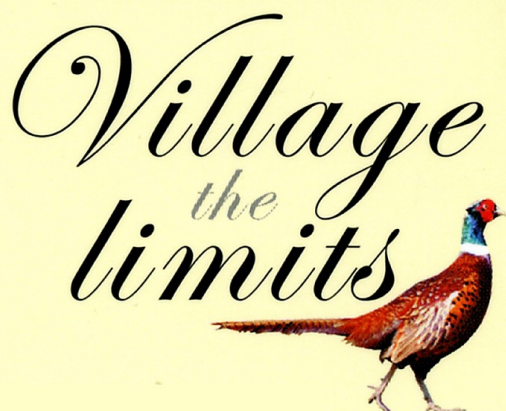
Christine Sharp

Friday 24th. April saw the end of an era as due to ill health Christine Sharp had to leave her job in the Tourist Information Office. Christine had completed eight years of service. Throughout this time she proffered help and advice to hundreds of visitors. Her responsibilities included overseeing admissions to the museum and selling merchandise in the shop.

At 4.30 pm on her final day, twenty museum volunteers and several of her colleagues from Compass Point, gathered in the community room for light refreshments. The museum Chairman thanked Christine for all her help and support. She was presented with flowers, a card and a rose bush for her garden.

We are very pleased to learn that following surgery, Christine is making an excellent recovery and we all wish her well in the future.

Gill Noble.



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Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

The Temporary Exhibition Room - “Past and Present Display”

For the first temporary exhibition of the new season The Display Team wanted to create an exhibition that would engage with the local community, so what better than to use a selection of images taken from John Wield’s archive showing domestic dwellings that were built in Woodhall around the turn of the twentieth century.

The exhibition consisted of illustrated boards mounted on the walls and a digital display with artefacts in the display cabinets plus a quiz sheet to identify objects. Alongside each original photograph, one of the same house was superimposed, thus showing how much, if at all, the buildings had changed.

The response from local residents has been very pleasing. Many have visited the museum to see if their property was one of those on display. If it was they have had an opportunity to request a copy of the original for a fee to the museum. Several people have come to do some research on how the front of their house looked when it was “new” so that they can replace fences or hedges that have long since been removed.

The Wield archive contains many more photographs taken at this time. If a particular dwelling was not displayed then residents were encouraged to come to the museum and ask a researcher to check the entire collection. This has also produced some positive results.

Visitors to Woodhall have also found this display interesting as there is such a range of different styles of architecture within the vicinity.

The written feedback from visitors, both young and old, has prompted excellent responses, including, “An interesting and beautiful display”, and “I loved the pictures on the walls.” The next display in the Temporary Exhibition Room will centre on Jubilee Park.

Gill Noble

Another Award for the Museum!

The Cottage Museum, Woodhall Spa won an Award for Customer Care at the East Midlands Heritage Awards at a ceremony held on 9th. June. These awards showcase inspiring and innovative work at East Midlands’ museums. The museum was also shortlisted for The Award for Engaging Children and Young People for the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum’s Young Person’s Museum Guide and the Wendy Golland Award for Quality Research, for its research into the history of The Petwood Gardens.



Chairman Gill Noble receives the award from John Holmes, East Midlands Today presenter



Left to right: Gill Noble, Judith Haddock, Patricia Duke-Cox, Carol Webb and Roger Webb with the Award & short-listing certificates

The Customer Care Award was judged by a team of Mystery Visitors. The museum was judged to provide a welcoming environment, with staff on hand to help and inform visitors. The displays were well presented and labelled and a hands on approach is encouraged, allowing the visitor every opportunity to have a really enjoyable experience.

Very well done to everyone involved in looking after our visitors. Your efforts do not go unnoticed.



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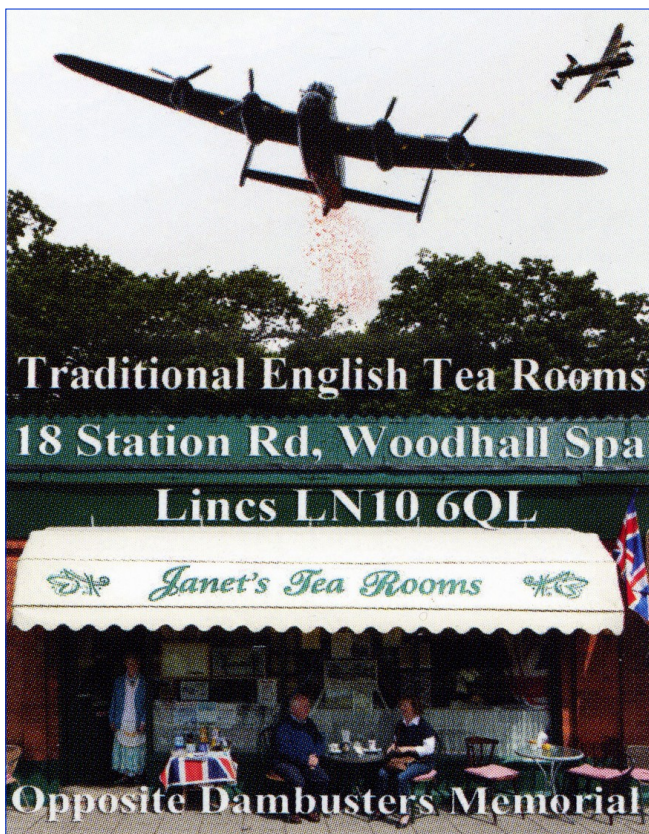
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What Our Visitors are Saying

Since we opened in April, 668 seniors, 432 adults and 150 children have visited the museum. This is up on the same period last year. The following is a small selection of their comments as recorded in the Visitor's Book.

<i>PH</i>	<i>Market Rasen</i>	<i>A hidden gem - well worth a visit.</i>
<i>TW</i>	<i>Eros, LA, USA</i>	<i>Wonderful museum - Took a short tour, but would love to visit again. Amazing amount of information in a relatively small space.</i>
<i>SG,S &D</i>	<i>Grimsby</i>	<i>Thoroughly enjoyed our visit - We will be back to finish the jigsaw!</i>
<i>D,</i>	<i>Woodhall Spa</i>	<i>I like the fishy game as I "cort" number 4!</i>
<i>Maria & Helen</i>	<i>BBC Lincs.</i>	<i>What a wonderful museum. Helen wants to live here!</i>
<i>F & N</i>	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>Fantastic museum</i>
<i>G & K H</i>	<i>Waterlooville</i>	<i>Nice to be able to have hands on in a museum. Brings back some happy childhood memories.</i>
<i>K & little black dog</i>	<i>Maya Bournemouth</i>	<i>Such a joy - What an amazing place and so lovely that my dog can visit. Thank you.</i>
<i>J L</i>	<i>Grimsby</i>	<i>Really enjoyed my visit here. Lovely museum with concise Information and well displayed.</i>

Once again the hands on experience and the games are a great hit with our visitors.

Philip Groves

Unexpected but welcome visitors!

It was the closed season for the Cottage Museum, Woodhall Spa but two Directors were working late one January afternoon. As one was about to leave there was a face at the window.

A local man asked when we would be open the next day. The response was that the museum was closed until Easter. Disappointed, the visitor explained that he was escorting the niece and nephew of Guy Gibson (of Dambuster fame) around local places of interest and that the niece was returning to Spain the next day.

With a brief explanation that many displays had been dismantled, the offer was made for the party to come into the museum to see the existing permanent display in the War Room that has images of Guy Gibson and they accepted. So, as dusk fell the party came into the museum and spent almost half an hour in just that one room. They agreed to sign the visitors' book and were fulsome in their thanks for a special opening.

It is not always possible to accommodate visits out of hours, but Directors do try to accommodate special requests, and this was certainly one of them. One of the party took a photo and this shows Michael and Wendy Gibson with Deputy Chairman, Patricia Duke-Cox. The museum is open now for the 2015 season from 10.30 am until 4.30 pm (last admissions at 4.00 pm) and you will be made just as welcome as the niece and nephew of Guy Gibson were back in January.



Michael and Wendy Gibson with Deputy Chairman, Patricia Duke-Cox at the front

Patricia Duke-Cox

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

1986 and All That.....

Hi everyone! It's that time again and wow, time does fly!!

This episode contains some further extracts from my first AGM as Chairman, held on the 2nd of March 1988 which covered 1987. I hope you don't think it's the same old story, but some of the points made by me then seem to hold true today with the challenges ahead to retain our precious village's individuality.

Many hours were spent by the Trustees and helpers in trying to achieve what was a quite complex operation... provided we could make our payments to the bank of approximately £2,600.00 per annum in repayment of the loan. This is calculated, by the way, as £6,226.00 per annum in 2014 real term values!! It is a tribute to our treasurer and volunteers that we were able to achieve that and own the site by 1993!

BUT we were now in existence and the heart of our project was ours.... A piece of the old Woodhall Spa, right on the Spa Trail, just off the elegant Broadway near the old Cottage Hospital (Rose Cottage), near the railway line which brought more visitors to the Spa, beyond which lay the quaint Tea House in the Woods, the grand Victoria Hotel plus its grounds with the Spa itself and what was to become another of today's gems: The Kinema in the Woods.

The Cottage Museum is a building, which symbolises to me that the spirit, shape and form of our village can be retained if there is the will to do so.

It is no use complaining that the unique atmosphere of our village is being lost, if nothing is done to protect those aspects of Woodhall Spa which make it what it is and so attractive to the many visitors who come here because "its like just stepping into the past." as they so often remark. Not that I do not want Woodhall to go forth to the future, to be hidebound by its past, but I would like to see that progress continue to be directed with loving care. It is essential that those unique frontages still remaining on The Broadway and Station Road be preserved, the garden quality of the woods and of the centre and outskirts be protected from too much infilling and overcrowding, something that could easily lose that gentle feeling of relaxation our Spa possesses..... original....this is the secret. Once we begin to lose originality and all that can be associated with it, then we begin to make do with copies which, however much effort is put into them, are NEVER the same. People will flock to see the original gold mask of Tutankhamun, the original Chinese Warriors, the original Woodhall Spa well mechanism working, as it sometimes does at The Museum of Lincolnshire Life, but will cast only a passing glance at a copy!"

So I wish every success to those who are taking the torch forward with Petwood Gardens and the Spa Baths and our woods but please beware unintentionally trading the long-established and fought over Spa's original 'garden atmosphere' in return for achieving those laudable goals.

I ended with "It has been an exciting and rewarding year- I trust that 1988 will show it can be improved upon! Thank you so much." In 2015 the reality of those dreams has been realised but the work goes on!

David Radford, Founding Chairman

Dear Supporters of the Cottage Museum, Woodhall Spa

As you may have read in the local newspaper, I have recently tendered my resignation as a Director on the Board of our Cottage Museum. This project has been so close to my heart since I originally proposed it in 1985 and it will always be so.

I have considered it a great privilege, supported by such an able band of volunteers over the years, to be involved in helping to save as much as possible of the heritage of Woodhall Spa whilst in living memory and before it was lost forever.

We know from little acorns great oaks grow.

The result you see today is a Cottage Museum, nationally praised for its excellence; the DVDs featuring contributions by members of the community; the books of treasured memories housed in the magnificent British Library for posterity as well as upon local shelves; the opportunity to research or add to the core photographic and document collections using modern technology; the up-to-date storage and display facilities and a site which is treasured by new generations of supporters from the community: all these make up a vibrant aspect of Woodhall Spa which I liken to a great oak, growing strongly in the 21st century and for many centuries to come.

My sincere thanks go to volunteers and supporters, past, present and future.

It would be invidious to name names apart from John Wield who had the foresight at the turn of the 20th century to say, "One day folk will ask, 'Why Woodhall?'" Little did he think the answer would be exhibited in his own home!!

Suffice to say that this gem of a museum would not exist without the dedication and effort of those volunteers and supporters together with a valued contribution from The Heritage Lottery Fund.

A community's success depends upon an understanding of and fighting for its heritage. I trust there will be many more volunteers of all talents to come forward and 'do their bit' in the future as our Spa progresses through the century. There are so many fascinating aspects to running a museum! I know the present Directors would value your contributions of time and dedication immensely and perhaps legacies, no matter how big or small. My special thanks go to them for their continuing efforts and dedication to the cause.

Of course, my wife Wendy and I shall continue to be interested in the work and successes of the Cottage Museum and hope to see everyone from time to time, especially with such interesting Friends' events on offer through the year and the changing exhibitions in the museum itself.

Our very best wishes to you all,



David Radford

David

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From the Collection

PC04798 – On a summery theme I have put in a Martineau postcard of people fishing on the River Witham in the 1950s. The old swing-bridge and railway level crossing is in the background. Any idea as to who the fishermen/boys are?

PC01959 – Summer in a more gentle age, it must be very hot in those clothes but the hats would have provided shade. Ladies listening to the band playing on the bandstand.



The Cricket Pavilion/Pavilion Cinema (Now the Kinema in the Woods) is in the background. I was unsure as to the date of this sepia card, probably early 20th century. The Spa Baths would be to the right of the image.

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 whilst you wait and our new accommodation is far more pleasant than the old 'back room'. We do need images of the 1940s – 1960s as well as earlier pictures.

Rodger Pickavance

150 Club Winners

Feb:	£20 [149] Mrs J Hillsmith
	£15 [64] Bob Fletcher
	£10 [104] Nigel Webb
March:	£20 [11] Judith Haddock
	£15 [100] Mrs Lilley
	£10 [102] Lee Gilbert
April:	£20 [139] Phil Groves
	£15 [146] Jackie Mills
	£10 [100] Mrs Lilley

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POPPY'S PAGE

The summer is just round the corner again and I expect you are looking forward to the holidays. This time we have chosen summer holidays as the theme for the page with a fascinating article by Marjorie Sargeant about Edwardian summer activities and also a Join the Dots puzzle to do.

Bye for now. Poppy



Hello everyone,

I love summer, don't you?

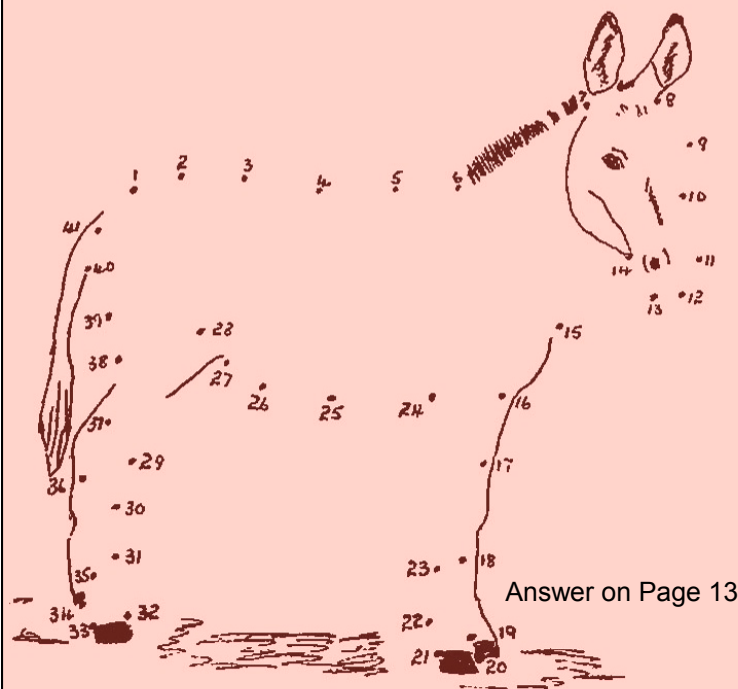
Snow in winter can be fun and winter evenings are cosy with the hiss of gaslight and a roaring fire to gather round but I love to be outside in the street with my friends in summer time, skipping, or playing with our hoops or marbles.

I have had two treats this summer already!

First, Papa and Mama, my brother, Thomas, and myself walked to a lovely big house, called Petwood. It was built for a very rich lady and visitors are allowed to see her gardens between 3 o'clock and seven on the first Wednesday of every month. Oh, the garden was huge! There were lawns and trees, shrubs shaped like peacocks, a pretty round pool, lots of flowers especially roses, and great avenues of big blooms of red and pink, called rhododendrons. What a difference from our little patch of vegetables with the hens strutting about and Percival our pig!

Another treat was an outing, with about a dozen other people in Mr. Dickinson's charabanc. Grandma came with us but she complained about the hard seating in "this confounded new-fangled invention." My brother, of course, did not care where we went because he was only interested in the ride; now he wants to own a charabanc, instead of being a train driver.

Join the dots to find out what I am



We went all the way to a town called Boston. We crossed dykes and the river and big fields of corn and when we neared the town we saw a huge church tower, which people call "the Stump" because of its shape. There was a marketplace with pens of animals being sold and lots of stalls but Papa would not let Mama stop at them; he said we could get everything in Woodhall Spa. Then we went into a very old building and saw two prison cells where hundreds of years ago, some people who wanted to escape to what is now America were locked. It must have been dreadfully dark and cramped in those cells.

Outside in the sunshine again, Mama persuaded Papa to let her buy a Lincolnshire Plum Loaf to save her baking every day and then it was back to the charabanc for the fun of the bumpy ride home!

Marjorie Sargeant

Young Children's Painting Class

Toni O'Neill, Member of the Society of Floral Painters, will be hosting a painting class for young children with Autumn Leaves as the subject. The class will be held in The Community Room at the Museum on Wednesday, 28th October from 2 to 4pm. All materials will be provided.

Toni looks forward to seeing you all.



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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,

In the last Newsletter I mentioned our Friends recruitment drive. I am very pleased to report that this has resulted in over 20 new memberships. That is an increase of over 50%, so it is a very warm welcome to all our new and returning members. We value all your support.

The guess the number of Easter eggs competition was won by Mrs. G Massey. The winning number was 42. This number was selected by three people so a draw was held in the Museum and Mrs Massy won. When I delivered the eggs, the door was answered by two smiling grandsons who were very pleased to see me! £260.75 was raised for the Museum on some very cold Saturdays! The money came from those guessing and also people who generously just wanted to make a donation.

Due to a lack of support the Annual Dinner was cancelled this year so the team is looking at arranging an informal evening meal at the Tea House in the Woods on the 13th of November to celebrate the end of the season. More details nearer the time but make a date in your diaries.

The Cutwater Production play, "The Great British Bake-Off", was very well received by all who saw it. It was very funny in places. Once again a little more support would have been good but at least we made a profit on the evening.

We have had the first table-top sale of the season and thanks to all of you who donated items for sale. We have got plenty to sell so try and come along next time, you may get a great bargain. We are selling some items before they even reach the table-top! The last sale netted over £100.

Roger Webb



**Woodhall Spa
Forth-coming
Attractions of a
museum-orientated
nature:**

**Woodhall Spa
Forties Weekend**
18th & 19th July

**A guided tour
of Wainfleet,**
focusing on its days as
a thriving port.

Date to be confirmed

**Trip to the
Frame Knitters
Museum at
Ruddington,
Nottingham.**

Date to be confirmed

End of Season Meal
Tea House in the
Woods
Friday 13th November

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

