Newsletter No.13 March 2013









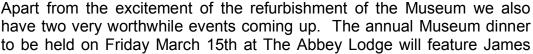


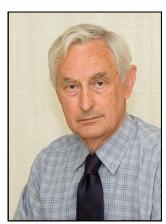
Development Progress



#### A Note from the Editor

Here we are with the first Newsletter of 2013, which promises to be a momentous year in the history of our Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum. Plans for the opening of the fully refurbished Museum towards the end of April are coming together, with an official opening to be arranged later in the year - watch this space! Rodger gives us an update on the museum development progress which is now at fever pitch, Jackie has written an article on page 3, giving us an insight into the planning of the new exhibits and Sarah Richards gives us her take on development of the Spa Baths on page 8.





Green, from The Kinema in the Woods, as the guest speaker. He was originally scheduled to be guest speaker two years ago but was prevented by the volcanic ash dust cloud which left him stranded in the United States for some days. We trust there will be no further natural disasters to deprive us of what promises to be a fascinating talk. In May we are having a special lecture to be held at The English Golf Union Conference Centre. This is being given by Jim Shortland who will be talking about the Dams Raid, as May 2013 is the 70th anniversary of this famous event. More details are on page 20.

We are very pleased to welcome back our printer, Martin Taylor, who has returned to work following successful heart surgery. Our last issue was printed by Cupits for which we are very grateful, but we are delighted to be back in the capable hands of Martin.

It hardly seems possible that next time I put pen to paper the museum will be up and running, and we will all be enjoying the new exciting facilities. All the trials and tribulations of the development phase will be over! Did I hear a hurrah from Jackie and Rodger?

#### Philip Groves

#### **Cover Pictures -**

<u>Main Picture</u> - The Museum covered by a plastic tent to allow removal of the roof. Small pictures clockwise from bottom left :- 1.Rear or museum after tent removed.

2. Under the tent with roofing removed

3. Wooden framework of outbuildings

4. Community Room with walls in place.

5. Community Archive & Bathchair store

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#### **The Newsletter Committee**

Chairman - Paddy O'Neill Editor- Philip Groves Pam Cowlishaw David Radford

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Reg. Charity: 1114268 Reg. Museum:1929

### The New Displays

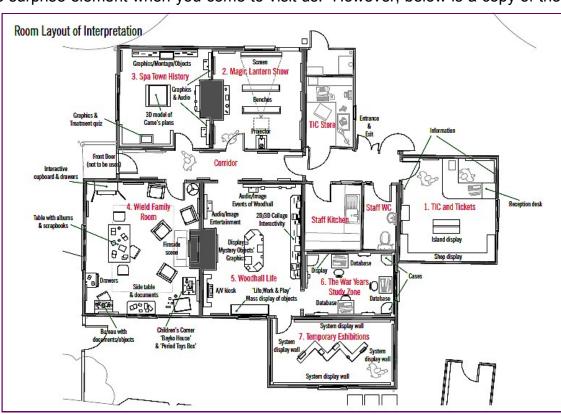
The Bungalow refurbishment has reached the point where the interior can be accessed by the interpretation team. There have been an enormous number of volunteer hours spent in order for this to be achieved and credit must be given to Rodger Pickavance for his management of the capital work aspect of the development.

The interpretation team have not been idle. Over the past 12 months they have been working closely with Michael Oakenful from Querceus to design and plan new exhibition spaces. This hasn't been easy since the artefacts and photographic archive have been difficult to access.

We don't want to give you, the reader too much information about the new look museum since that would spoil the surprise element when you come to visit us. However, below is a copy of the

working exhibition plan so you can get a flavour of what awaits the visitor. There have been some modifications, one of which is TIC that the storeroom and 'kitchen' have now swapped places, you'll see why when you visit!

The museum has a new entrance, the old disability ramp has been removed and access for all



visitors will be through the side door. The museum continues its partnership with ELDC's Tourist Information which will now be sited in our visitor reception area at the rear of the Bungalow., which will also house our small retail area.

The exhibitions and their interactive elements have been developed as a result of extensive consultation with community groups including schools and youth groups as to what they would like to see in the museum. Much of the written information for the graphic panels has been sought from individual residents who have particular expertise and knowledge of their subject and we really appreciate the time and effort they have taken in supporting us.

There continues to be much work to be done but the Directors look forward to welcoming you when the museum reopens in April.

#### Jackie Goodall

#### **Art Exhibition**

There will be an exhibition of work by Toni O'Neill at the Museum during the summer months - July to September Look out for details

### Development Update

We are now on the home straight as far as the building work goes, although the cold and wet weather as well as the snow, has caused some further delays and it will probably be spring before some of the outside coatings can be applied, due to temperature constraints. Additionally, plaster and paint don't dry too well when it's -4 deg C!



Insulating the Bungalow Roof

Towards the end of October the bungalow disappeared under a plastic tent and has remained there until about a week ago. All the corrugated iron was removed and, where necessary, replaced. The wooden soleplate was replaced and the brick plinth that the soleplate sits on redesigned to improve the removal of water. All the other timbers were assessed for rot or damage and it was a good news/bad news story. The external timbers were in a better condition than we had expected; the counter to that was a number of the internal timbers were in a worse state than we had expected. The plasterwork was worse than expected and

the chimneys also needed more extensive repair than had been forecast. All the insulation has been fitted to the roof and walls and the new heating system installed. At present, the decorators have nearly completed the internal decoration and the final fix of the electrics is well underway, with completion imminent.

The outbuildings have risen like a phoenix from the ashes and are well on the way to completion, with the internal decorators now moving in and the fixtures and fittings being installed. The new corrugated iron roof is also starting to mellow. The storage roller racking is in and the new



Roller Racking in the Artefact Store

furniture and computer systems will be arriving over the next couple of weeks.



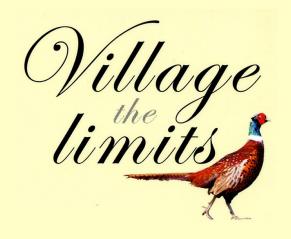
Interior of the Community Room

The clearance of the site and the landscaping of the courtyard area will run on for another couple of weeks and we hope that Mother Nature will cooperate to allow the contractors to finish. We also hope that Mother Nature will allow the front garden to recover, although she will probably need a helping hand.

The build side of the project has run late unfortunately, which has had a knock on effect on the display team's work, compressing their timeline, more on that from Jackie.

As in every other Newsletter, I put out a request to please continue to raise funds for the development appeal. We have had a couple of 'Why didn't we think of that when we were costing the project?', plus the 'gotcha's, and we have had to find funds to

pay for those items. On reflection, would we do this again?.....



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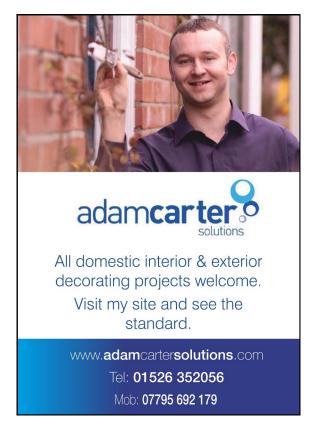
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or email: oaklandsgrange@live.co.uk

or just "drop in"





## Historic Double for Spa's Cottage Museum!

Woodhall Spa's Cottage Museum volunteers were overjoyed to hear that their dedication to the preserving and sharing of the Spa's fascinating local heritage has recently been recognised by Arts Council England.

The renewal of Accreditation Status means that for the second time, the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum is the first small independent museum in Lincolnshire to have been awarded this coveted status following the Arts Council's rigorous upgrading of the scheme.

The recognition of the volunteers' professionalism and high standards is an authoritative benchmark which all museums in England must achieve, if they are to keep pace with the times and be responsive to user needs and expectations.

Following closely on its award by the Heritage Lottery Fund of a grant towards the development of the site and its facilities, the Spa's historic Cottage Museum is looking forward to the reopening at Easter and for its improved heritage resource to Patricia Duke-Cox & Jackie Goodall become available for the local community and its visitors from



With the Accreditation Certificate

afar to enjoy. Jackie Goodall, The Cottage Museum's Chairman commented, "What a wonderful Christmas present to know that our efforts have met national standards and, what is more, to have secured for Woodhall Spa and its community, a small portion of the two and a quarter billion pounds allotted by the Government and the Heritage Lottery Fund for the support of the Arts and Heritage." David Radford

#### Model Aircraft Presentation



Mrs Wiseman with the model Aircraft

A die cast model of a Mosquito aircraft has been donated to the museum by Mrs Wiseman. The model was originally given to her by her brother. Amongst their many other tasks Mosquitos were used by the Pathfinder Squadrons and may well have operated from RAF Woodhall Spa, though more research needs to be carried out to establish this.



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### Development of the Spa Baths

In 1821, John Parkinson, a Land Agent for Sir Joseph Banks of Revesby, sank a shaft to find coal in Woodhall Spa. He was unsuccessful in his quest but struck a spring of salt water in the process. Local Squire Thomas Hotchkin heard rumours about the curative properties of this water and found it helped his gout. He built a small bath house, which was enlarged as the news spread, and also a hotel. The hey-day of the spa was from 1890-1914 but water was used for rheumatic treatments until the middle of the twentieth century. In the 1980's, under the National Health Service, the Baths were under threat of closure when catastrophe occurred and the matter was decided. For on September 21st, 1983 a wall of the well collapsed, causing immense damage and the end of Woodhall Spa Baths

Thirty years on, the building remains neglected, within an idyllic setting of woodlands. Many have expressed interest including Sir Richard Branson who visited on one occasion, however, as yet, regeneration has not been achieved. There would, of course, be substantial costs involved, whatever the change of use of the site; and it's location, tucked away in woodland behind a small village in deepest Lincolnshire, makes it a very challenging opportunity for any business venture. Woodhall Spa already has a wide range of facilities, with established hotels, schools, a library, nursing homes and apartment facilities, so there may be no real village amenity left for a redeveloped Spa Bath building to fulfil.

In my opinion a more appropriate solution may be in turning the former baths into a facility of multiple uses, incorporating memorabilia of John Parkinson, the catalyst for Woodhall Spa, and artefacts of the town's railway days with even broader aspects of the county's history. This would attract visitors from outside Woodhall Spa and possibly lottery funding.

In addition, another use for the area could be the creation of independent coffee shops, or some form of communal area for parents, perhaps mother and toddler groups and an after school go-to place for school children, as well as a cosy retreat before a matinee showing at the nearby Kinema in the Woods. Despite the current dilapidated state of the Baths, Woodhall Spa would not have achieved such popularity in the 19th century, which led to the growth of our well kept and highly regarded village today, if John Parkinson had not drilled for coal and uncovered the spring of water almost a century ago.

#### Donations to the Museum

Donations continue to flow in towards the Development Fund and these include a very generous gift of £1000 from the Olive Union Lodge of the Masons. £500 was donated by the Ballroom & Sequence Dancers from Coronation Hall, £500 from The Round Table, £250 from the Woodhall Spa Flower Club and £50 from Witham Ladies. The Directors would like to thank everyone who has donated to the Development fund. Contrary to belief that the museum is "awash with money" since receiving the grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, a condition of the grant is that we have to provide matched funding of 10% - a target we still have to meet, so every penny counts.



Jackie receives the cheque from Robin Goodyear, Worshipful Master



Rodger Pickavance (right) receives the Round Table cheque from Peter Lee, Chair



Jackie Goodall accepts the cheque from Delia Groves & the Dancers from Coronation Hall



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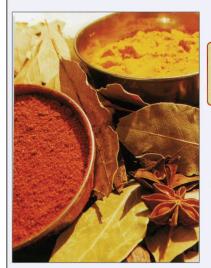
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#### Meet the Directors - Tom Johnson

The year 1970 played a large part in my life, providing two challenges. Firstly, I changed Government Departments, leaving the Inland Revenue and joining the Social Security. Secondly, and more rewardingly, I got married in the October to Christine!

We lived in East Grinstead where we both worked in Redhill. My job in the Social Security Department was as a National Insurance Inspector investigating those employers and self-employed who did not comply with the N.I. Acts, along with other related issues including investigating fraudulent misuse of National Insurance benefits. I remember one particular day, which covered the broad spectrum of the job, when I had a morning visit to the home of the Earl of Munster following the theft of his staffs' National Insurance cards and in the evening, visiting the Surrey gypsy camp, where I was known and never welcomed! For some years I worked as a trainer in the Guildford and Worthing offices.



My final 12 years were with the Social Security Appeals Tribunal where I latterly became the Property Director responsible for 80 offices around the UK. One of my last projects was acquiring and fitting out an office in Salford for the administration of Appeals for the Child Support Agency. The introduction of the C.S.A. necessitated me to revamp many of the Tribunal venues and one such visit was to the Lincoln property!

My office base at the time was off the Tottenham Court Road and living in Storrington, West Sussex, close to the south coast, meant a round trip to London on the days I was in the office of over 4 hours. The advent of a Public Finance Initiative (PFI) scheme for the whole property portfolio of the Department of Social Security relieved me of my journey to London!

Following a few years working in the Housing Department of Crawley Borough Council we decided to call it a day and move to Woodhall Spa. Why Woodhall Spa?

Many of you know Christine and we have a married son and three grandchildren living in Perth Australia, having recently moved there from Cardiff. We also have a married daughter and another grandchild living in Surbiton.

My involvement with the Development Committee and the care of the museum artefacts has greatly helped us to integrate into one of the friendliest places you could find to live. That's why Woodhall Spa.

Tom Johnson

#### Rescheduled Opening of the Cottage Museum

The Museum will re-open to the public following the refurbishment program towards the end of April. The various delays which have occurred, due largely to the unforeseen problems with the foundations, has meant that the display team have not had access to the Museum until the end of February, instead of the beginning of January. In order that this very important phase of the development program should be completed to the highest standards, the decision was taken to wait until the end of April before opening to the public. The Tourist Information Centre however, will open from Good Friday as originally planned.

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## Young Volunteers

As part of the volunteering section of our Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award, we have recently been working at the Cottage Museum. We have written this article to give you an idea about what it is like to be young people forming a part of a volunteer-run organisation in Lincolnshire.

Having lived in Woodhall Spa since we were very young, we have both visited the Cottage Museum on previous occasions. However. we were introduced to the idea volunteering there by our neighbour, Mrs Gill Noble, who is a dedicated volunteer at the museum. She helped to set up



Grace Hillsmith left and Hannah Bass in the Museum garden

some of our first volunteering opportunities and we were at once drawn in by the museum's unique and friendly atmosphere; it being entirely volunteer run means all the staff are there because they want to be and are clearly enthused by the fact they are helping to bring the history of our village and surrounding area to life.

So far we have been involved with a range of activities and projects which include redesigning the children's quiz, clearing areas of the garden, analysing data from the previous year's questionnaire, improving the questionnaire for this year, and even using hand-held cameras to film parts of the Woodhall Spa Pageant last summer: the sheer diversity of these activities has meant that each day at the museum is never the same and you can always find something interesting to get involved in.

Looking to the near future, we are currently making Victorian money that will be used in children's activities as we feel having more child-friendly parts of the museum would help to attract more families. This means the history this wonderful little museum preserves is sure to be passed down to younger generations.

In the more distant future, we both intend to go to university but are looking forward to visiting the museum when we come home to see how it has evolved.

It has been a real privilege to be involved with helping to improve the museum and to be part of some fantastic community events: these opportunities have made our volunteering experience both highly enjoyable and fulfilling.

#### Grace Hillsmith and Hannah Brass

#### 125 Club Winners

#### November

£20 Roy Goodall (70) £10 Nigel Bush (20) £5 Carol Webb (105)

#### <u>Annual "Big Prize"</u> Winners

£125 Josie Selby (86)

£60 Nicholas Duke-Cox (25)

£30 Sam Leggate (39)

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## Ian Whittle's Visit to Woodhall Spa

Last year's excellent Memorial Lecture entitled "Genesis of the Jet" was presented by Ian Whittle, the son of Sir Frank Whittle. The lecture was delivered at the Conference Centre of the English Gold Union on the afternoon of Saturday November 10th. But his visit to Woodhall Spa began the previous morning. He flew in to the former RAF airfield at Wickenby where he was met by Pam Cowlishaw and Phil Groves.



Ian Whittle arrives at Wickenby



His first port of call was a visit to the Aviation Heritage Centre at East Kirkby, where David Hill was on hand together with the museum owner Fred Panton. Following coffee and a lively exchange of aviation stories lan was taken on a guided tour of "Just Jane", the Lancaster Bomber where he was delighted to sit in the cockpit of this iconic aircraft.

Following lunch in the NAFFI the whirlwind tour continued with a visit to the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight at RAF Coningsby. He was given the full VIP treatment and taken on a guided tour

of the exhibits. He also had an in depth discussion on Jet engines with the Flight's Engineering Officer.

On Saturday morning he was picked up from the Petwood and taken for a visit to the museum at RAF Metheringham before returning to deliver the lecture on Saturday afternoon.. A large audience had assembled and were enthralled by his stories of his father's exploits and some fascinating film of early experiments with which his father had been involved. A dinner followed on Saturday evening in The Squadron Bar of The





Sunday morning was Remembrance Sunday attended the lan services held at the village War Memorial and afterwards the Dambusters Memorial. Following a spot of lunch it

was time to drive back to Wickenby and fly home.



Philip Groves

#### Grand Draw for Snowy the Aviator

Snowy, the white Teddy Bear, who was flown by the BBMF last summer on most of their prestigious flights, was handed over to Ian Whittle during his visit by Yvonne Masters, BBMF Public Relations Officer. The draw was launched by Pam Cowlishaw at the Memorial Lecture the following day. Snowy, complete with his log book, will be at the Annual Museum Dinner on March 15th. and at the Museum once it re-opens. Tickets cost £1 or £5 for a book and the draw will take place at the Dams Raid Lecture on May 11th.



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The Petwood is a friend and supporter of the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum.



#### POPPY'S PAGE

I hope you enjoyed Christmas and all the snow in January - I did! In this issue Marjorie Sargeant has written about Easter and how it would have been for children in Woodhall Spa back in 1913. We also have a Missing Word Puzzle for you set by Gill Noble.

Enjoy - See you next time.

#### Easter in Woodhall Spa 100 Years Ago

Hello Everyone!

Easter is almost here!

I am glad because I stopped eating sweets for Lent! I love Liquorice Allsorts -especially the pink, coconut ones!

Pancake Tuesday was fun. I helped Mama mix a batter of flour, salt, eggs and milk and then we poured a little into hot fat in an omelette pan and tipped it round before flipping it over. We each tossed a pancake, to see whose went highest. My brother's missed the pan and fell on the floor!

Before Easter we hard boil eggs with onion skins to make them an orange colour and then we paint faces on them. On Easter Sunday we have fun with an Easter Egg Hunt for Fry's chocolate eggs, hidden by Papa in the garden.

We have new clothes to wear for church on Easter Day and Easter bonnets, of course. Grandma's is always huge and decorated with flowers. I am glad we live near church because some of our footpaths are in dreadful condition (there have been complaints to the Council) and holes are filled in with gravel which would ruin my new, shiny black shoes.

Grandma will be visiting us and telling us about Fabergé eggs – again! I have seen pictures of them made by the Russian royal

jeweller and they are very beautiful but I hear the story every year and we won't know what this year's egg is like until much later.

Easter is early this year. There will be lots of day trippers on Easter Monday, with ladies in beautiful long gowns, strolling in our pinewoods, taking tea at the Teahouse and listening to the Spa Band playing near the Baths, with little red squirrels scuttling around. Papa is looking forward to seeing the motor cars in which more and more visitors are arriving.

Happy Easter!



A Fabergé Egg - A very expensive jewellery Item often given at Easter

## A Missing Word Puzzle

Set by Gill Noble

В	F	J	P	W
Q	T	V	Z	С
R	X	D	Н	L
О	S	Y	U	G

Find the six missing letters from the alphabet and re arrange them to make the name of a well known attraction in Woodhall Spa.

Answer on Page 8

Marjorie Sargeant



### The Friends of the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

#### Committee Members:

Chairman: Pam Cowlishaw 01526 352112

Ann Houlton 01526 352323 Paddy O'Neill 01526 354982 Roger Webb 01526 353029

Hello Friends.

This year promises to be an exciting one for all of us associated with the Cottage Museum. The capital works and the new and innovative displays are now nearing completion and a programme of activities designed to train volunteers and aimed at involving members of our community in the day to day life of the museum, will be well under way.

As Friends we have a role to play too. The museum is providing more and more facilities and so our running costs are increasing proportionately. As members of the Friends we contribute with our annual subscriptions and for those that help at events or even just attend them we contribute with our time too. But we can do more.

There will be lots of publicity surrounding the reopening of the museum in the Spring and here we can play a part by spreading the word, letting our friends, neighbours and relations know about the museum. A little encouragement can go along way towards increased Friends Membership, or just a visit to the Museum.

If you have any ideas for fundraising schemes, or would like to help at any of the ones already organized, please contact one of the committee listed above.

We have a busy year of events planned for this year and would be pleased to see as many of you as possible at any or all of them. Details of each event are on our website <a href="www.cottagemuseum.co.uk">www.cottagemuseum.co.uk</a> so take a look and select the ones that you are interested in.

Finally, Ann Houlton has decided to retire from the Committee of the Friends at the AGM in September and a replacement will be needed. Please give this opportunity to join an enthusiastic and vibrant team serious thought. If you would like to ask about the role of a Friends Committee member and what you have to offer please give me a ring.

Best wishes for 2013.



Woodhall Spa
Forthcoming Attractions of
a Museum orientated
nature:

#### **Museum Dinner**

Abbey Lodge Speaker James Green from The Kinema March 15th 2013

Special Lecture "The Dams Raid" Jim Shortland 11th. May 2.30 pm at the EGU

#### Woodhall Show 19<sup>th</sup> May 2013

Stall selling memorabilia and playing of games

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum Market Day 25<sup>th</sup> May 2013

Events in Coronation Hall St. Peter's Hall and museum garden. Stalls, some commercial and some local charities and groups selling and displaying their activities.

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

