Newsletter No.14 July 2013

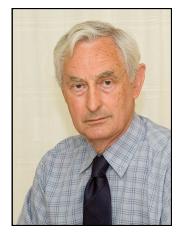


A New Beginning SOUVENIR EDITION

#### A Note from the Editor

I have called this bumper 24 page souvenir issue "A New Beginning" which indeed it is. The centre pages tell the story of the development of the site in words and pictures, giving an interesting overview of the whole project so far. But the project is not over yet, as the Heritage Lottery Fund Grant provides for the employment of an Activities Manager, Rebecca Bewick, who is overseeing a whole range of activities and publicity initiatives to promote the image of the museum and improve its profile in the area. A number of these are listed on page 17.

The development has seen the old Boulton and Paul building stripped down, rotting wood replaced, thermal insulation installed and then rebuilt. Brand new display cabinets replace the old and more rooms are available in the bungalow now for displays. The main entrance has been moved to the side, providing a very welcoming entrance area, housing the Tourist Information Centre and displays of souvenirs, postcards etc. for the visitor to purchase.



Outside, the dilapidated fire-damaged outbuildings have been replaced by a splendid suite of wooden buildings, providing a Communal Meeting Room (available for hire), a temperaturecontrolled store for artefacts not currently on display, an Information Technology Room fitted out with computers enabling access to the Museum's database of photographs and videos, as well as paper archives. A further room provides a general storage area for use by the various teams of volunteers. Finally there is a room set aside for the display of a donkey-drawn bath chair.

All this, of course, has been made possible by the generous grant provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund, but the icing on the cake has been provided by the tireless efforts of the many volunteers and benefactors who have helped in so many ways. Internal decoration of the bungalow. provision and fitting of the fireplace in the Magic Lantern room, provision of top soil for repairing the Museum Lawns, which was moved and spread by members of the "Build a Future". Also the many individuals and organisations who have donated so generously to the development, which has enabled us to provide the match funding, that was a vitally important part of the terms for receiving the Heritage Lottery Funding.

It really goes to show what a group of motivated and dedicated volunteers can achieve for the greater good of the village of Woodhall Spa. Well done to all involved!

#### Philip Groves

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#### **The Newsletter Committee**

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

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## Dreams, Desires and Determination

Since 2004 members of the display team have worked towards the refurbishment of the Cottage Museum, affectionately known to us as 'The Bungalow'. 2013 has seen this achieved and we hope that you like the results. Certainly our visitor book and exit surveys indicate this to be the case.

The title of this article says it all, Dreams, Desires and Determination. This 'strap line' was developed through working with a freelance Museum development officer to produce the Interpretation Strategy,



The Wield Family room

underpinning all the internal and external interpretation (displays to you and me)!



A corner of the War Study Room

It sums up the people who shaped the history of our village from its early beginnings through to current times. Consider, the dreams of John Parkinson, the business acumen of the Hotchkins who spotted the potential profits when building a Bath house and hotel. There then followed the syndicate and a rush of smaller entrepreneurs to service the needs of the visitors in this rapidly expanding resort. Woodhall Spa has been the scene of many dreams, desires and determination to succeed ever since.

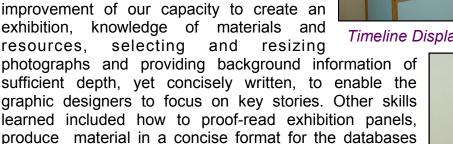
The same spirit has driven volunteers at the Museum to ensure its survival and sustainability for over twenty five years and I hope that you will bring friends and family to visit the newly refurbished building.

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, all the new exhibitions have been developed as a result of extensive consultations with people of all ages, both visitors and non-visitors. We have tried to create space for visitors to spend time to relax and have fun in, whilst exploring and learning about the village. The two themes running throughout all the exhibitions are: the Bungalow as a family home, lived in by John Wield the photographer, and interpretation of the history of the village from its early beginnings to the present day.

Continued on page 4

### Dreams, Desires and Determination - continued

The team have worked tirelessly, with professional expertise guiding and directing us. During the process we have realised how much knowledge and skill is needed to produce an exhibition, and there has been the desire and determination to get things right and within budget. The display team have had setbacks. That was to be expected with a project of this magnitude, throughout it all there has been a tremendous team spirit and support for each other. Some essential skills learned improvement of our capacity to create an exhibition, knowledge of materials resources. and resizina



Would we do it again? You bet we would, but not just yet!! Woodhall Spa still has determined dreamers with the desire for excellence.

and provide audio material. The list goes on but there isn't

enough space here and you might be losing interest!



Post 1920's Timeline board

#### Jackie Goodall

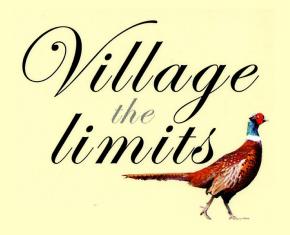


Display cabinets & display boards in the Woodhall Life Room



Location of key buildings in the village

I think it is so wonderful to see the original dream, as intended by myself and the founding trustees, being made reality by the hard-working and dedicated community volunteers of today. My heartfelt thanks go to them as they continue to secure, in the brand new displays, our heritage for future generations. David Radford (Founding Director)



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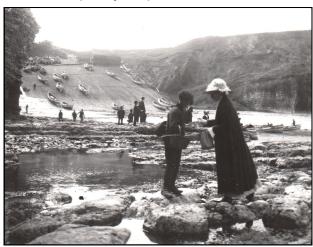
or just "drop in"





#### From the Archives

With thoughts turning to summer holidays, I thought that I would show you a couple of holiday pictures from the early 1900s. These 2 pictures are probably of the same location and are 2 of a series of 6 that we have. We are unsure as to the location, but believe that they may be somewhere on the Yorkshire coast. If anyone is able to identify the location then please let me know - the slip way is quite distinctive. The boats are, I am led to believe, Yorkshire cobbles.





Now that we are back in business again, can I once again ask for local pictures to add to the museum's visual assets collection? We are at the museum every Tuesday morning, or I can be contacted on 01526 353184. We can scan in pictures whist you wait and our new accommodation is far more pleasant than the old 'back room'.

Rodger Pickavance

# February £20 (73) Prof Jeffrey Ridley

£10 (19) Mr Ian Ramsay £5 (25) Dr Nicholas Duke-Cox

March

£20 (89) Mrs Janet Thorpe £10 (86) Mrs Josie Selby £5 (37) Mrs Pam Cowlishaw

April

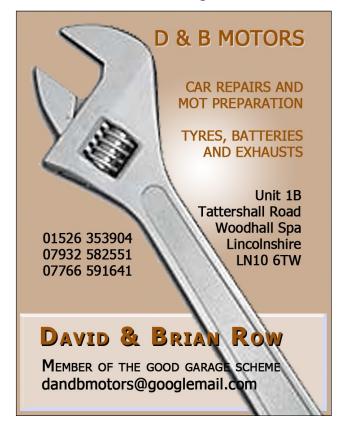
£20 (103) Mrs Amaryllis Midgley £10 (28) Mr Roger Papworth £5 (50) Mr Rodger Pickavance

May

£20 (37) Mrs Pam Cowlishaw £10 (40) Anne Dowland £5 (9) Mrs Jeanne O'Brien

June

£20 (45) Mrs Anna Peacock £10 (32) Dr John Lunn £5 (46) Mrs Julie Czajkowski



## A Personal View of the 70th Anniversary of the Dams Raid

As the roaring Lancaster and Tornados soared over Woodhall Spa to commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Dambusters raid, our often forgotten county Lincolnshire, received the media limelight, due to it's connection to the 1943 'Operation Chastise'.

With two surviving veterans present, the new 617 Squadron Memorial, designed in the shape of the Vulcan and Tornado aircrafts flown in the years after the war, was erected as a tribute to all post 1945 Squadron members, alongside the dedicatory second World War monument.

Known as Bomber County, due to the largest number of RAF stations in WWII of any county, thanks to its flat terrain, England's Eastern county is linked to the Ruhr Valley through the daring Dambusters raid that took flight to Germany on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 1943 from Scampton airfield, led by the young Guy Gibson, aged 24, to destroy a series of dams in Germany.

Referred to by the Germans as the 'Mohne Catastrophe', the purpose of the raid was to weaken Germany's defences by destroying the industrial epicentre through bombing the Mohne, Eder and Sorpe dams, disrupting transport, demolishing homes, farmland and infrastructure.

19 aircraft left Lincolnshire on May 16<sup>th</sup>, with Lincoln Cathedral being the last familiar landmark, before entering foreign territory. Each aircraft carried one bouncing bomb, designed by Barnes Wallis, an idea that came to him after skimming stones on Chisel beach. Barnes emulated the bouncing form and based his creation around bombs that would avoid barriers by bouncing; with instructions to fly low in order to avoid radar, the pilots would travel at speeds of up to 240mph and a height of 60ft to successfully destroy the dams, and they did.

Of the 133 men that took part, 53 were killed and the flooding of the Ruhr valley killed 1300 people with subsequent ramifications to last for years.

Scampton airfield was the temporary home for the 617 Royal Air Force Squadron for four months and Petwood Hotel became the Officers Mess as depicted on Dan Snow's BBC2's Dambusters: "70 years On". The Tudor style hotel's Squadron Bar remains a shrine dedicated to the 617 Squadron and even has a Bouncing Bomb prototype in the car park. Grantham also played a vital part, being the operational hub for receiving codes and relaying messages to the aircraft.

Although there was speculation about how successful the raid was, it is undisputed that 617 Squadron brought a much-needed morale boost to allies still under German occupation and those in the UK affected by the blitz. The recent nationwide media coverage portrays the profound effect of this war-time event and exemplifies the significant role Lincolnshire had in the Dambusters raid, bringing a deserving sense of pride to our green and pleasant land.

Sarah Richards

# New 617 Squadron Memorial Unveiled

May 19th saw the unveiling of the new Memorial to members of 617 Squadron killed since the end of the Second World War. The shape of the memorial is reminiscent of the Vulcan and Tornedo aircraft flown by the Squadron since the war. Two of the three surviving members of the Dambusters and the daughters of Barnes Wallis were present.



The new 617 Memorial







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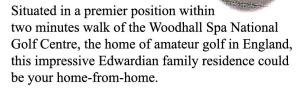
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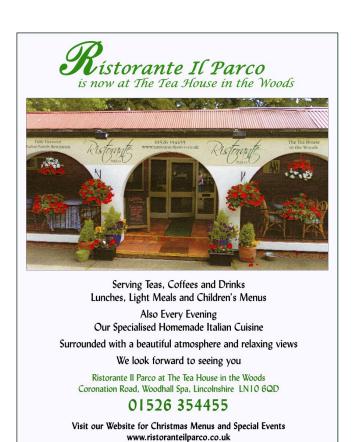


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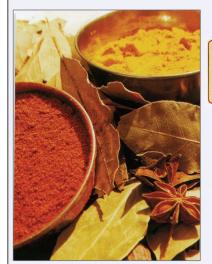
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# A New Beginning - the Story of the Museum Development

For many years the need to refurbish the old Boulton & Paul Museum building and to develop the



outbuildings has been a cherished dream. In 2009 a bid was put together to The Heritage Lottery A successful Round 1 bid enabled the Cottage Museum to put together the detailed Round 2 bid. The amount of work required to put these bids together cannot be overemphasised and the Museum owes a great debt of gratitude to Development Team, led bγ Pickavance for their dedication in making it happen.

The original Outbuildings

A most unwelcome complication to the project came in the form of an arson attack in December 2010. This left the outbuildings damaged beyond repair and had dramatic consequences on the bid and the planning implications, as we were now talking about a new build, with more stringent building regulations being applied and an inevitable effect on costs.



The fire in the Outbuildings

The Round 2 HLF Grant was submitted and on 23rd November 2011 Directors and Volunteers assembled in the Museum to await the phone call which would tell us if we had been successful. The delight and relief is obvious from the photograph on the left when the call came through - we had won a grant of £677,600. Now the real work could begin!



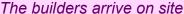
Celebrations as the news breaks - We have won!

On 24th. January, 2012, a group of volunteers, organised by Matt Tuck from RAF Digby, assembled to demolish the outbuildings. It is a sobering thought that these buildings, which had been the workshops and stables for the Wield family for over 100 years came down in a couple of hours. The bricks which formed the floors of the buildings were lifted and



stacked for re-use, together with any other material that was considered usable.







The footings are poured



Sinking the piles



On 7th June 2012 the building contractors took possession of the site and work began in earnest. However almost immediately the project ran into problems, as the builders discovered clay whilst excavating the footings. Work was stopped as the way forward was discussed with the architects and the Building Inspector. After some considerable delay it was agreed that the new Outbuildings would be built on concrete rafts supported by small piles driven into the ground. The picture on the left shows the machinery for sinking these supporting piles.



Above: Building the plinth

Left: After the second pour of concrete for the plinth

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Having sorted out the problems caused by the footings, work continued on the construction of the wooden frameworks for the Community Room, Archive Store, General Store the Office/IT Room and the Bath Chair Store.

In the original plan the outbuildings were to be completed before the Museum closed at the end of September, 2012. The contents of the Museum would then be moved across to allow work to start on the refurbishment of the Museum building itself. It was soon clear this would not happen and plans were made to put the contents into storage, while work continued on both buildings

The knock on effect of this meant that the Collection Teams could not work on the collections in order to plan for the new displays. This work would have to wait until the Museum building was complete and handed back from the Meanwhile a scaffolding was built contractors. over the Museum building to support a polythene tent. This would protect the bungalow from the elements while the roof was removed. to allow for work on the wooden rafters etc.. Thermal insulation was also installed. Meanwhile the wall panels were removed to allow the wooden support structure to be inspected and replaced as



The Polythene Tent covers the Museum





Working on the Outbuildings



Work continues on the Outbuildings as the scaffolding is constructed for the tent over the Museum building

necessary. By now it was January 2013 and we were in the grip of a very harsh winter, which caused further delays.



Under the tent the roof rafters are exposed for inspection/replacement



The Museum was finally handed back on 15th February 2013, giving very little time to have the display cabinets etc. installed. Then the company doing the installation of the displays had to delay due to previous а commitment - a conflict caused by the slip to our programme. The decision was made to delay the opening of the museum until May 3rd. Finally the refurbished Museum and its outbuildings were ready. This is not the end of the story

Working on the entrance hall

though, as the HLF Grant also provides for an Activities Manager, Rebecca Bewick, who, for three years, will oversee a range of activities designed to promote the image of the Museum - so watch this space!



# The Final Result











#### Meet the Directors - James Ritson

At 24, I'm the youngest person to be made a Director, and as such I don't have many life stories to tell you just yet! I began volunteering for the Museum in late 2010 doing video production, teaching and website design, which then led to me starting a small media production business and becoming a Director. Since then I've worked part time in the Tourist Information Centre adjacent to the Museum and concentrated on my business. I'm incredibly thankful to the Museum and its volunteers for providing me with opportunities to take on work and gain experience.

I grew up in Woodhall Spa, going to St Andrews Primary School before moving on to Horncastle for secondary school education and then went on to study a BSc in Media Production at Leicester's De Montfort University, where I also joined the student television station and took on other responsibilities. I thoroughly enjoyed my time in Leicester and worked hard at developing my skills before returning home and beginning the job hunt.



Finally, as of June this year, I will be enjoying a new phase in my career, as I'm starting a job as a cameraman and video editor in Newark, which is the best possible outcome for me as I enjoy those two aspects of media work more than any other. I'm really looking forward to seeing what the job will bring and being able to work with like-minded people again (self-employment was rather lonely!).

## The Cottage Museum Market Day



Stalls at St. Peter's Hall

The Museum held its annual Market Day on May 25th. This year stalls were set up at Coronation Hall and St Peter's Hall and the Museum provided barbecue, musical entertainment and games for children. The weather was kind which tempted a good crowd to attend the event. The Museum had stalls at both halls and the day made around £300 for Museum funds.



Your Editor tries his hand on the Barrel Organ

#### Art Exhibition - Say It With Flowers

The exhibition of art by Toni O'Neill has been rescheduled and will now be staged at the Museum during September and October. More details will be available nearer the time so do watch out for these.

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#### SUMMER AND AUTUMN FUN DAYS TO ENJOY AT THE MUSEUM

These events have been organised for both children and adults to enjoy, so children don't forget to bring the adults along as well.

#### Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup>. July 3.30-6.30 p.m. "Clowning Around"

As part of the Skegness SO Festival some clowns are coming to the museum. Learn some circus skills, create some pavement art, and make some circus related items to take home.

#### **Events for all the family, Every Wednesday in August:**

Drop in workshops 11.00 am.-3.00 pm

7<sup>th</sup>. August Evacuees day,

14<sup>th</sup>. August Crazy Clay day

21st. August Minibeasts /Wriggly day

28<sup>th</sup> August Victorian Costume dressing up day.

There will be a charge of £3.00 per person per session to cover cost of materials.

Heritage Open Day 15<sup>th</sup>. September Free Entry Drop in session 11.00 am.- 4.00 pm Come and help to create a big collage of the bungalow which houses the museum.

The Big Draw Event Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup>. October Drop in session 11.00 am.-3.00 pm. Come and create a large picture. The theme is, "The Woodhall Wonder Garden" and is free to all who come.

# What Our Visitors Are Saying

In just under 7 weeks the museum has attracted 934 adults and children through its doors - a record number since Pam started keeping records in 2001. As always our visitors have come from all parts of the globe, including Australia and the USA. The following is a sample of some of their comments as recorded in the visitors' book. I think we can be reassured that the development hasn't lost the charm of the museum as far as our visitors are concerned.

D.R.	Woodhall Spa	What a fantastic asset to W/Spa. Congratulations to all who made it happen - you must be very proud.
EF&D	Hull	Enchanting, interesting and welcoming.
W	Australia	Well done. A great step back in time.
R	New Zealand	Beautiful - what a treasure.
Н	France	Very inspiring.
D M	Stockport	Extremely interesting and very well presented.
GC	Derbyshire	Beautiful and gorgeous museum
C.B.	Versaille & London	Congratulations on fabulous refurbishment.
S.S.	Oregon, USA	Wonderful exhibits.
D & C B	Stamford	Fabulous example of a local museum.
J	Woodhall Spa	A magnificent culmination to all the years of effort.
В	East Yorkshire	Lovely cosy museum
E.B.	Wales	Enjoyed the experience. Well worth a second visit.
D & B H	Northampton	Wonderful use of modern technology to enhance the old.
E.L & A	Anderby Creek	Beautiful, will come here again.
		Philip Groves

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### The Annual Museum Dinner

The annual Museum Dinner was held at the Abbey Lodge on Friday March 15<sup>th</sup>. This year the theme was Hollywood and after eating an excellent meal and grappling with a film quiz set by Matt Tuck, we all settled down to hear the history of The Kinema in the Woods from James Green. He began by explaining how the grounds of the Victoria Hotel, which was destroyed by fire in 1920, were bought by Sir Archibald and Lady Weigall. Included in the sale was the Pavilion which Lady Weigall converted into a Kinema. It opened in 1922



James Green delivers the after dinner talk on the history of the Kinema in the Woods

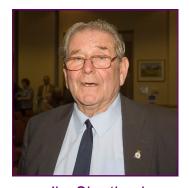
and has never closed since. He explained that the projection system has been back projection from the very beginning due to the low ceiling of the auditorium. James Green acquired the building in 1976 and in 1986 installed the Compton Organ which has become such a popular attraction. In 2011 the Kinema was converted to show digital films, so ensuring its continued success into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Philip Groves

## Special Memorial Lecture - The Dams Raid

A special memorial Lecture was given on Saturday 11th. May by historian Jim Shortland, to coincide with the 70th Anniversary of the Dambusters raid in 1943.

A large audience gathered at the English Golf Union to hear Jim's very interesting and extensively illustrated talk. Even if you thought you knew all there is to know about the raid, Jim's anecdotes based on conversations he has had over the years with the survivors of the raid brought home the human side of the events. He was also able to correct any misconceptions people may have had, caused by the many inaccuracies in the epic film of these heroic events.



Jim Shortland

Jim Shortland's association with the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum goes back to the very early years. He gave the first half dozen or so of the Memorial Lectures, which have always been a major fund raiser for the museum. He has always been very supportive of the museum and has, over the years, lent many artefacts for display.



#### Friends Visit to Cranwell

The Friends of Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum had a very enjoyable and interesting visit to the RAF College at Cranwell in February.

Despite the bitter cold we all assembled on the steps in front of the main door for a group photograph. Details of visits organised by the Friends can be found on the back page-

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



#### POPPY'S PAGE

The nice weather is here at last and the newly-refurbished Museum is open. Bring the family down to see it and play the games that Gill Noble has written about. Watch out for the Summer and Autumn Fun Days. What ever you do, enjoy yourselves. See you next time.

Teddv

and were

asked to

Poppy

#### Poppy's Report

On Saturday 11th. May I said goodbye to Snowy. He had been staying in our spare bedroom while we sold tickets for his raffle. He had flown last summer with the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and had photos and a log book to prove it. Lots of people had bought tickets and he raised a total of £213 for Museum funds. Mr & Mrs Potton originally gave us





Left Snowy with friends as Tail End Charlie. Above at controls of the BBMF Lancaster!



Delia Groves receives Snowy from Helen Potton. Phil Groves (my master & the Editor ) right

make the draw at the Special Dambusters Lecture. Imagine our delight and surprise when our name was called. Snowy now has pride of place back in the spare bedroom. I was very pleased to see him safely home and to know my pal is still with me, just in time for my 3rd. Birthday. Poppy

## For SUMMER AND AUTUMN FUN DAYS TO ENJOY AT THE MUSEUM see page 17

#### The Games that Grandma Used to Play

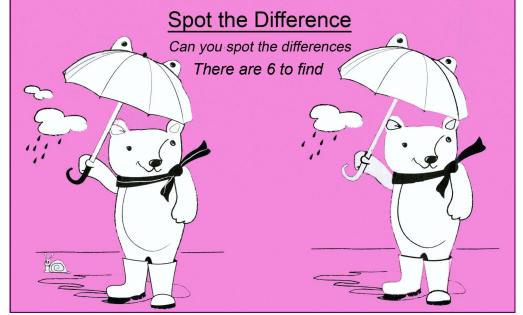
When you come to visit the museum you will find lots of exciting indoor games to play. For many years these have been enjoyed by generations of children and they are still popular now.

Look in the box or on the big table in the Wield sitting room and choose something that interests you. Why not bring Grandma along and you can challenge her to one of the board games. Some you may know such as draughts, chess and Ludo. There are also some more unusual games, like Coronation Scot, that it will be fun to try. Don't forget there are also some card games that

Grandma would have played when she was a child. You could challenge her to a game and see if she can remember the rules.

You can ask her what other toys and games she played with when she was growing up. Maybe she has kept some of them. Grandad will also have lots of memories of his childhood. It will be fun finding out.

Gill Noble





### 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.

After all of the hard work put in by the many members of the development team, the museum is now open to the public. If you have not been to review the displays, community archive and community room then please do so, it is well worth the trip.

The increased facilities at the museum mean that our overheads like electricity, gas, rates and insurance will increase considerably, so our fund raising activities must move up a gear to cope. I have started by organizing an additional lecture this year and next. If you have any ideas for additional fund raising activities and would like to share them with us then please get in touch or bring them up at the Friends AGM.

The AGM this year will be held at 2.30 on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September in the Community Room at the Museum. Your membership form for next year is enclosed. Please return it to the museum on or before 1<sup>st</sup> August 2013. If you are not already a member, the form can be used to join for the first time too. Additional forms can be obtained from our web site or the museum. Cheques should be made payable to Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum.

As you are aware Ann Houlton is stepping down from her membership of the Friends Committee and the hunt is on for a replacement for her. If you would like to join us and help organize activities and events then please get in touch with me at the number listed above.

There are still seats available on the coach to Cambridge on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2013. It costs £14 per head for the coach only. The trip is open to members and non-members.

I look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible.

#### Pam Cowlishaw

# ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES AT WOODHALL SPA COTTAGE MUSEUM

With the opening of the renovated museum there are new volunteering opportunities. If you would like to help with general admin, community room bookings and arrangements, handyman duties and light cleaning duties or any other aspect of running the museum please contact Pam Cowlishaw 01526 352112 in the first instance.



# Woodhall Spa Forthcoming Attractions of a Museum-orientated nature:

W/Spa 40's Weekend
3<sup>rd</sup> – 4th August 2013
Activities appropriate to a
40's theme in the museum
garden. Dig for victory
garden, scarecrow, educa-

tion project and games.

**Trip to Cambridge 5**<sup>th</sup> **September 2013**Coach trip using local commercial coach company. Open to members and non-members.

Friends AGM 17th September 2.30 pm at the Museum

# Shuttleworth Collection 10<sup>th</sup> October 2013

Coach trip to vintage aircraft collection using local commercial coach company. Open to members and non-members.

Annual Lecture 9<sup>th</sup> November 2013 Lincolnshire Defences in World War II Dr. Mike Osborne

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

