

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum



75th Anniversary of Arnhem
Wreath Laying at the Memorial in the Museum Garden

Newsletter No. 33
November 2019

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

A Note from the Editor

It really doesn't seem possible that another season for our museum has been and gone. All the usual ingredients of the annual social calendar were there. We played our part in the annual 1940s weekend activities. We hosted our most successful season yet of "Music in the Garden" concerts. The Friends of the Museum are gaining momentum once more under the superb leadership of Martin Fearn. Gill Noble and her Education Team continue to run highly popular and successful family and children's activities. The various teams of volunteers who look after the museum collections and photographs have worked tirelessly in the background throughout the year. The gardening team keep the lawns and gardens looking superb all year - the list is endless and is a tribute to the enthusiasm and energy of the lifeblood of the museum; its volunteers. We are very fortunate to have volunteers with such a diverse set of skills and it is certainly something that is not taken for granted by the Directors. Having said all this we are always looking to find new volunteers at all levels. The Board would very much like to attract more members and so take the diversity of skills available to the museum right into the Boardroom.



This Newsletter sees the interesting story of the wartime bombing of Woodhall Spa told in pictures from the archives. Marjorie Sargeant takes us for another fascinating trip down memory lane with her true stories of life in Woodhall Spa one hundred years ago, through the eyes of Bertha. There are more comments from our visitors as we take a look through the Visitors Book and a full round up of all the various events that have taken place through the summer, as well as a preview of the Memorial Lecture which explores Operation Market Garden and the events leading up to Arnhem and poses the question was it worth it..

Philip Groves

Front Cover Story

Part of the Arnhem 75th anniversary commemoration took place in the gardens of the museum where wreaths were laid at the Arnhem Memorial.

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The Newsletter Committee

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or email phil.delia.groves@btinternet.com
Reg. Charity: 1114268 Reg. Museum:1929

Arnhem Remembered 75 Years On



August 18th was very busy for Woodhall Spa, being the day that Woodhall commemorated the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Arnhem - Operation Market Garden. A commemorative window was dedicated in St Peter's Church, following a march past from the British Legion along the Broadway to the Church.

After the service the ex-servicemen and members of the public processed across to the Museum gardens where wreaths were laid on the Arnhem Memorial.

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum was invited to participate in the village's 75th Arnhem Commemoration event. As ever we rose to the challenge and as a result had a very successful day.

The Arnhem steering group had requested that, together with the Tea House in the Woods, the museum would host the 250 invited guests for morning coffee and biscuits on arrival. Amongst these were the deputy Lord Lieutenant, the Dutch Defence Attaché, the Polish vice-consul and most importantly three Arnhem veterans and three Chelsea Pensioners. As part of our contribution the directors decided to provide refreshments free of charge, which was very much appreciated by the steering group.

The museum volunteers turned out in force and through their friendly welcome set the scene for a very successful day. In addition to refreshments Ann Houlton had ensured that the memorial looked its best with two lovely flower arrangements. The museum opened its doors early so that the guests were able to view exhibits free of charge.

There were three veterans of the Arnhem Operation present. The gentleman in the wheelchair is Frank Ashleigh. He was the youngest Horsa glider pilot in Operation Market Garden. He was in The Army Air Corps at the time and was captured after landing his glider. Sitting on the seat is Geoff Roberts, who was stationed here in the village. Frank and Geoff were both interviewed for BBC's "Look North" in the grounds of the museum. Larry Martin, the third veteran, was a very shy man who shunned attention, so he quickly disappeared via the back gate!

The Arnhem steering group have formally shown their appreciation to Martin Fearn, who met with the group members regularly and ensured the successful outcome of the partnership.



Arnhem Veteran Frank Ashleigh



Arnhem Veteran Geoff Roberts



Wreaths are laid at the Memorial

Jackie Goodall & Philip Groves

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum



This Year's Memorial Lecture

In recognition of this auspicious year, which marks the 75th anniversary of the Arnhem Operation "Market Garden", the Annual Memorial Lecture will take place on 9th November in the Golf Hotel starting at 2.30 pm.

The lecture is called 'A Risk Worthwhile or a Bridge Too Far'. The lecturer is Brian Stevenson who currently lectures at the Military College of RAF Cranwell and has also lectured at the University of Hull. Brian has a great depth of knowledge of the history of Britain's Parachute Forces.

This lecture promises to be fascinating given the very close ties between the village of Woodhall Spa and the Airborne troops who were stationed here in the months running up to Operation Market Garden.

Tickets at £7.50 can be obtained from the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum shop. After the end of October please phone 01526 352456 or send an email to info@cottagemuseum.co.uk to reserve tickets.




**Woodhall Spa
Cottage Museum**
Annual Memorial Lecture

ARNHEM 44
**A RISK WORTHWHILE
OR
A BRIDGE TOO FAR?**

**A talk by
Sqn Ldr Brian Stevenson**

Saturday 9th November 2019
The Golf Hotel
2.30 pm (doors open 2.00 pm)
Raffle and Refreshments
Admission £7.50
Tickets from Museum Reception in Iddesleigh Road
or leave message on 01526 352456



SRACC 75th Anniversary Ride

The Staffordshire Regimental Association Cycle Club is affiliated to the Regimental Association and is made up of veterans and friends of the Regiment.

A Cycle ride was organised to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Arnhem, in which the Staffordshire Regiment (2nd South Staffords), as part of the 1st Air Landing Brigade, were heavily involved.



The ride was planned to follow the original route, as best they could, that the 2nd South Staffords took to Arnhem from their home in Staffordshire to their Base in Woodhall Spa and then on to Arnhem. The ride took place between the 18th to 23rd September and the team consisted of 18 riders and their support staff. When the team reached Woodhall Spa on 19th September, there was a small act of remembrance at the 1st Air Landing Brigade Memorial, in the garden of the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum. The ceremony included the Ode of Remembrance, Last Post, 2 minute silence and then Reveille, followed by some photographs. After the ceremony the riders proceeded to the Hull Ferry Terminal and took the overnight Ferry to Rotterdam. From Rotterdam they rode to Arnhem, some 100 miles away. They stayed 2 nights in Arnhem, where there were further commemorations at key sites. They then rode back to Rotterdam, travelling back to Hull overnight and then back to Lichfield and home.

Volunteer Coffee Mornings

A coffee morning is held bi-monthly to enable volunteers from the various teams to meet each other and to meet some of the Directors. The next one will be held on November 6th. starting at 10.00 am in the Community Room. It is a great opportunity to exchange ideas and make suggestions, or just have a general chinwag!

Why not come along and give it a try? If you can attend please let us know, preferably by email to info@cottagemuseum.co.uk.

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£20 [24] David Wikeley

£15 [119] John Miall

£10 [13] Lucy Hibberd

September 2019

£20 [67] Pidge Wood

£15 [34] Janet Thorpe

£10 [147] Marcus Williams

October 2019

£20 Jayne Starling

£15 Eric Sargeant

£10 Cassandra Hewson

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Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

From the Collection

At this time of Remembrance Sunday, it is fitting to recall that fateful night of August 17-18th 1943, when two uninvited guests literally descended on Woodhall Spa. Many readers will know of this event but for those who do not, here is the tale of when WW II came to Woodhall Spa.



It was a clear moonlit night when, shortly after midnight, two parachute mines fell on Woodhall Spa. These were bombs attached to parachutes, (illustrated left). When detonated at roof level, rather than on impact, the aerodynamic effects of their blast were maximized. Instead of the shock waves from the explosion being cushioned by surrounding buildings, they could reach a wider area, with the potential to destroy a whole street of houses in a 110-yard radius and windows being blown in up to a mile away. It is thought that the intended targets were Woodhall Spa or Coningsby airfields.

The bombs fell on No. 1 Cornwell Terrace on Tattershall Road and Tasburgh Lodge, Dr George



Armour's residence. They are circled on the map. Four people died in the Cornwell Terrace area. At Tasburgh Lodge, Dr Armour was in Scotland but his wife was rescued from the ruined house and survived. However, there was considerable collateral damage and injury, as intended, from the blast. The effects in the Cornwell Terrace area were so great that the adjacent Royal Hotel had to be demolished and Cornwell Terrace was re-constructed. Tasburgh Lodge was also demolished and re-built as a new house. Tasburgh Lodge and the Royal Hotel, after the bombing, are seen below.



Nicholas Duke-Cox

Newsletter 33 - November 2019

The 1940s Weekend

Once again the museum had an enjoyable and successful 1940s weekend. The garden was packed with visitors for most of the time and the Courtyard Café did a roaring trade as usual.



Rachel Bee entertains

The weather was kind with just a hint of rain on the Sunday. "Montgomery" paid a visit on both days and delivered one of his wartime speeches to the assembled throng. It turns out we were lucky to have him for the weekend as he had been in hospital the week before and was still on antibiotics, but he said there was no way he was going to let people down - the real wartime spirit showing through!

Besides Montgomery's visit there was plenty of entertainment provided by the organisers and our picture shows singer Rachel Bee performing songs from the 1940s era, which went down very well with the visitors.



Patricia Duke-Cox greets "Montgomery"



Louise Bullen's "Make Do and Mend" Stall

Louise Bullen's "Make Do and Mend" stall created a lot of interest in the garden, where she was helping visitors with their sewing, craft and needlework skills.



As always the Courtyard Cafe went down very well and did a really brisk trade over the weekend. The weekend made well over £1640 towards museum funds, including the joint effort with the Methodist Church in staging the Military Wives concert on the Friday night, for which the museum provided the refreshments at the interval.

An enormous vote of thanks is due to all the museum volunteers who rigged stalls and Gazebos, manned stalls, made and served the refreshments etc. A really great effort by all.

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

India Village

15 The Broadway
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Lincolnshire LN10 6ST
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5.30pm - 11.30pm
7 Days a Week

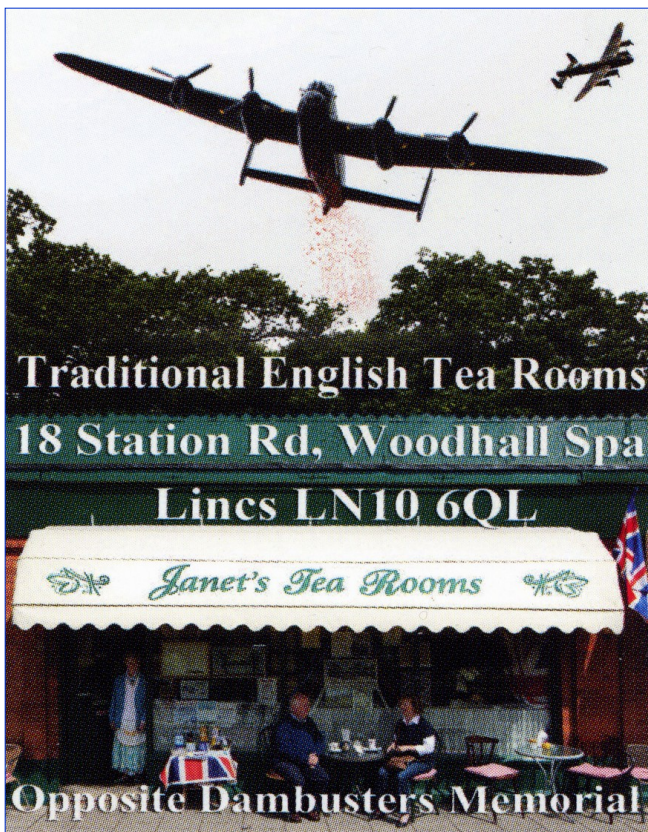
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Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

What Our Visitors Are Saying

Besides the Visitors Book our visitors are invited to leave feedback using a form they can fill in. One such form was left by a group of visitors from a Care Home in Boston.

The most liked "Memories" which the museum evoked:- Jean loved the old dolls, which reminded her of her childhood. Kath loved the puzzles - she said she hasn't seen one like that since she was little. Linda was reminded of her Mum because she had similar things. Tony loved the books and Tim the little play house - he had one like that as a child.

They went on to say what a lovely place it was to bring the residents as it has reminded them of their childhood and made them very happy.

It was really nice for them to be able to see new things they don't see everyday and also it brings back happy memories for them.

Amazing you can support wheelchair users too. Thank you for a lovely time.

As always there are some great comments in the Visitors Book, some of which are reproduced below.

*Peter Parkinson
Wrotham, Kent*

Came to find John from 1887 - finder of Spa

*C & S C
Chilwell Notts*

*Each year we visit and find some new thing of interest.
Could we move in? Lovely homely Sitting Room*

*R I Burton
Gwent WI*

*Lovely place to visit. Brings back many memories of my Grandma's
items and I think you keep everything beautiful. Well done to all of
you.*

*B R J & M
Horncastle &
Langham, Norfolk*

*What an amazing transformation from a few years ago! Well done to
all the volunteers.*

Philip Groves

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Woodhall Spa in November 1919

Dear Readers,

Praise be! Woodhall Spa is returning to happier times.

After uncertainty at the commencement of the year, with high prices for commodities and few reservations for boarding houses like ours, a better summer ensued.

Visitors began to arrive again, so traditional festivities of the Season - sports in the Spa grounds, concerts and dances in the Winter Gardens and several sunny garden parties, happily resumed.

It was like old times when lilies of the valley flowered in the summer. For years local nurserymen have grown the dainty flowers and when they come into bloom they are made into pretty posies, displayed in shops and if taken to the Post Office before 7 o'clock in the evening, they are delivered to any part of the country next day. Recently, for our convenience, routine postal deliveries here were changed to 8.15 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.

Traders, such as Sleight and Crookes, the upholsterers and undertakers and Rose, the baker, have resumed business, now their men have returned and 13 new business concerns opened here in the spring. The railway station has been painted and 25 new street lamps have been erected around the village. The Treasurer of the Housing Association has £745 10s available for repairs to cottages and provision of working class dwellings.

Sport flourished during the year. Capt. S.V. Hotchkin M.C. is home from Mesopotamia and captain of his Golf Links once more; the Cricket Club was able to resume matches with men returned from the hostilities and vanquished Bardney in their first confrontation.

We would like to forget the war years but there is to be a remembrance service on Armistice Day this month, with church services, bells ringing and a bomb exploding at Petwood. Perce and I feel the latter is an unfortunate choice of reminder.

Marjorie Sargeant

Bertha

November 1919



The Winter Gardens in The Royal Hydro Hotel

Victorian Christmas at the Museum

This November sees the return of our very popular Victorian Christmas weekend openings (23/24 November and 30 November/1 December).

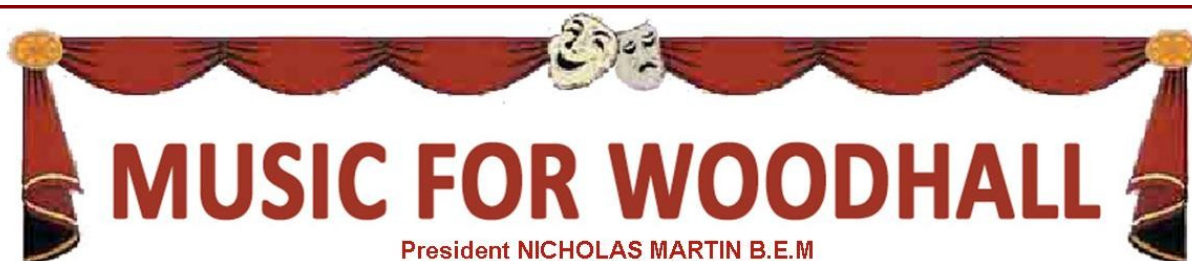
This year there will be a Winter Wonderland to explore, a beautifully decorated Victorian styled Christmas tree, floral arrangements, a lighted dolls house, scenes from bygone Woodhall, simple crafts and an assured warm welcome from costumed characters. Added to this some naughty penguins are hiding around the museum and need to be found! There is also an invitation to take part in sing-along sessions round the Christmas tree on both Saturday afternoons from 2.15pm and on Sunday, 1st December, also at 2.15pm, there will be Christmas stories, songs and rhymes for children with Mother Hubbard.

Usual entry fees will apply - children 16 and under FREE
Museum openings times will be 1pm - 4pm (last entry 3.30pm)



Joy Bolt

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum



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Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

Music in the Garden

This year's series of "Music in the Garden" events were an outstanding success. The weather was reasonably kind to us and the audiences steadily grew through the series, culminating in a crowd of over 100 at times for the Coningsby and Tattershall Strummers (CATS) on the 15th September.

The Courtyard Café did remarkably well over the series contributing £754 to the overall total of £1104.



CATS play to a capacity audience



Appearing through the summer were Colin & Gerry (Trad Jazz), Mike Warwick (songs of the 50s to 80s), Between the Lines (a popular Lincolnshire Folk Band), Sing it Loud (a local singing group), Alan Bolt (Guitar and vocals) and CATS the Coningsby and Tattershall Strummers. It was a great line up and left everyone asking for more next year.

The Cafe in full swing

Philip Groves

Work Experience at the Museum

I spent a week at the Cottage Museum for my work experience and it was a really enjoyable and pleasurable week. During the week I was in the museum meeting and greeting visitors with other volunteers, but I was also offered other opportunities to look behind the scenes at the Cottage Museum. I was allowed to see the archives that all the pictures were stored in and also help to try and find the images on the computer system. I also helped to make sure the books in the storage of the museum were also on the system. One afternoon I got to help do a bit of gardening which was really calming, but it also made me see how dedicated the people at the Cottage Museum are to make it a welcoming place for everyone who visits.

On top of having a delightful week, it was made even better getting to know some of the volunteers and their interests and knowledge. They were all very welcoming and approachable. They helped to expand my knowledge about the museum and helped me have a memorable work experience.

As well as spending a week for work experience at the Cottage Museum, I helped at the 1940s weekend which was also very enjoyable. I helped in the end of the garden with the children games and also met many more volunteers and saw their dedication to the museum; many dressed for the occasion, which helped to attract people to look around the stalls and objects they had. Everyone was always smiling and kind. Their commitment to the museum showed during both days and whether there was a spot of rain or it was sunny, they were always smiling.

My time at the Cottage museum was memorable and fascinating. It also helped me to see that it's not just a museum that runs itself, but it's the hard working people behind the scenes and the volunteers that help to make the museum to be an enjoyable place and do things within their power to make the museum the best it can be.

Ellie Gilbert QEGS Student

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POPPY'S PAGE Another year has gone by with lots of opportunities for young people to enjoy themselves at the museum. As always Gill has organised numerous family activities which have been enjoyed by a great many people. Do try and come in for the Victorian Christmas weekends with singing round the Christmas Tree and lots of fun activities for you all. Happy Christmas! Bye, Poppy 

Activities for Children

The museum will be open for the Victorian Christmas experience on Saturday 23rd/Sunday 24th November and Saturday 30th November/Sunday 1st December from 1.00 pm – 4.00 pm.

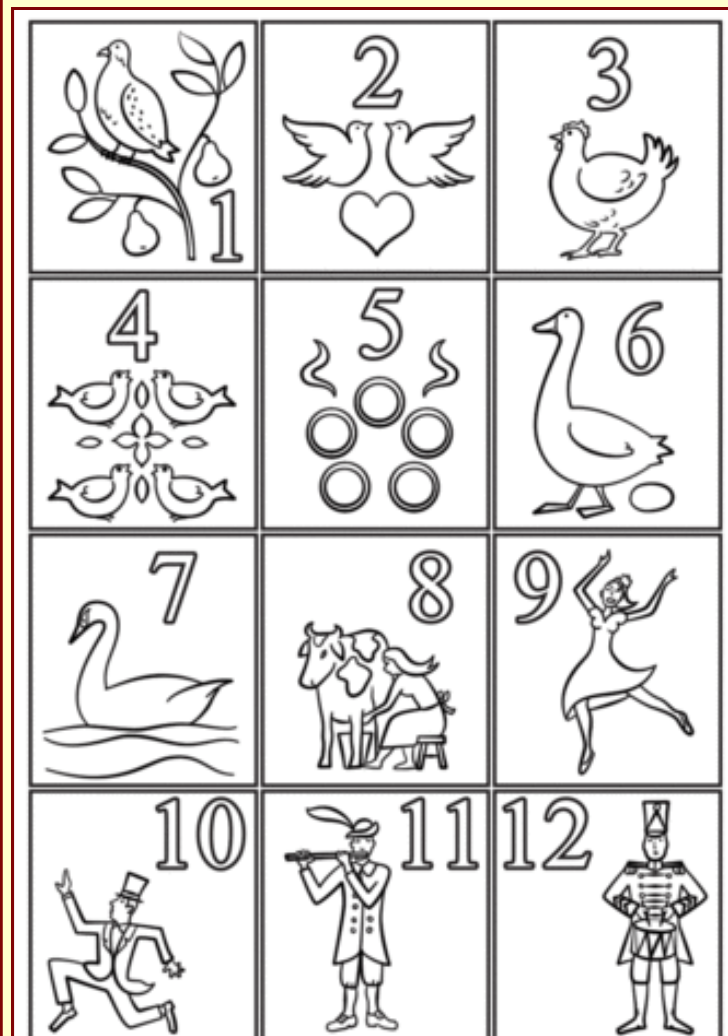
The theme for this year is “Winter Wonderland” with displays that will hold some surprises. Costumed characters will be on hand to welcome visitors and there will be craft activities for children to enjoy.

It is hoped that Colin Holland will lead a sing-song on the first Saturday and Alan Bolt will play Guitar and sing seasonal songs on the second Saturday

Normal museum admission charges will apply.

Gill Noble

12 Days of Christmas Colouring & Quiz Sheet



We hope you will enjoy colouring the picture depicting the “12 Days of Christmas” and that you will also have a go at answering the little quiz as well.

12 days of Christmas Quiz

1. How many birds did my true love send altogether?
2. How many people did my true love send altogether?
3. Which day is the odd out and why?

*Answers to the quiz
are on page 8*

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Newsletter 33 - November 2019

The Friends of the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

Friends Committee

Chairman: Martin Fearn

Secretary: Judy Everitt

Membership Secretary: Margaret Reed

Committee Member: Gill Noble

Dear Friends

As we approach the end of the Museum year, it is worth reflecting on some of the highlights of the year so far and looking forward to a few of the forthcoming events. The museum's growing number of Friends is encouraging, their support cannot be over stated, and we hope that this continues into the future. In addition, the number of volunteers who selflessly give their time and skills is commendable and should be acknowledged. Since the last Newsletter we have supported the 75th Commemoration of the Arnhem Operation by providing refreshments for veterans and offering free entry into the Museum, where we had a display depicting part of Woodhall Spa's role in the event. I was fortunate enough to meet Mr Frank Ashleigh, an inspirational veteran, who, as an Army Air Corps Pilot, was the youngest glider pilot in the Operation. He was proud to tell me that he was just 19 when he flew into Arnhem but was captured and spent his 20th birthday as a prisoner of war. Listening to his story made me reflect on myself as a 20 year old and led me to wonder if I could have contributed to such an event at that age.

Either side of the Arnhem commemoration, the Museum held a very successful, six event, Music in the Garden. This annual event was well supported by visitors and volunteers alike and once again underlined the spirit surrounding the Museum. We would like to thank all the performers for their contribution to the event, without whom this would not have been such a success. Finally, the next two confirmed events will take place in November when, on the 9th, we will hold the Annual Memorial lecture in the Golf Hotel and on 16th we will hold the annual Coffee Morning. This year's lecture is entitled 'A Risk Worth Taking or a Bridge Too Far', and will be our final acknowledgment this year to the events surrounding Arnhem. Tickets are available from the museum office or by calling the museum number and reserving tickets. The cost will be £7.50 and will include light refreshments. The coffee morning will be held at St Peters Church Hall commencing at 10 o'clock.

Martin Fearn

Come and Join Us

The backbone of the Cottage Museum is our volunteers and some of them are putting a lot of hours in and could really do with a hand. Can you help? Do you have a few hours to spare in the month? It does not have to be a massive commitment. There are numerous opportunities to suit most interests. If you would like to find out more without committing yourself then please call us on

01526 352456



What's On Guide

Annual Memorial Lecture

"A Risk Worth Taking or a Bridge Too Far"

Lecture by Brian Stevenson
Sat. November 9th
2.30 pm at Golf Hotel
Tickets 7.50

Friends Annual Coffee Morning

Saturday 16th November
St. Peter's Hall
The Broadway
10 am to 12 noon
Admission Free

Victorian Christmas Event

Come and see the museum
decked out for Christmas
and join in the fun.
Weekends of Nov 23/24th
and Nov 30th/Dec 1st
Normal Admission charges

Woodhall Spa Christmas Fayre

Friday evening Dec 6th
From 6 to 9 pm

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

