



FULBOURN VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY

"To save Fulbourn's past for the future"

NEWSLETTER NO. 23

SPRING 2006

THE FULBOURN CENTRE - REPORT ON OUR NEW VENUE

Fulbourn Village History Society have by now held four meetings, as well as "manning" twice-weekly the Archive Store, in our new venue at The Fulbourn Centre, and are able to reflect on how the move has affected members. Annual membership has remained constant, at around 145, for the past three years. There had been concerns that the location of The Fulbourn Centre would be too far for some people, but the transport arrangements, efficiently coordinated by Gill Bradford, have allayed that fear. If you would like a lift, and are not yet on her list, please contact Gill on **01223 (880783)**



Your secretary sprouted antlers for the Xmas event !

Attendance at meetings during 2006 has also been very good, helped no doubt by the excellent reputation of our first speaker, local historian Mike Petty (who, incidentally, was very impressed with our new facilities). There were, however, initial problems due to overcrowding caused by the audience sharing space with mobile stacking stands! This has hopefully been resolved by moving out the superfluous furniture and re-arranging tables.



No wonder this visitor kept saying Ho! Ho! Ho!

It has been recognised that the acoustics in the large meeting room are not perfect, and at the User Group held on 18 December 2006 I was reassured insulation for the ceiling has been purchased, though not yet installed. Meanwhile, the portable PA system purchased from our Lottery Grant can be used to assist those speakers at History Society meetings who require it. Admittedly, some technical difficulties were experienced at the second lecture by Sarah Poppy, mostly due to unfamiliarity in operating the equipment. The microphone etc. posed no such problems at the Christmas Quiz – and participants certainly did not complain they could not hear Clint's excellent brain teasers! (Many thanks again to Clint and Viv for their hard work in devising the questions.)

Setting up the Townley Hall for the December meeting proved much easier than before, with modern folding tables and chairs easily accessible (those who in the past tried to squeeze precariously balanced plastic chairs into the former store-room/cupboard will know what I mean!) Owing to Health & Safety regulations, kitchen facilities were limited but the decision to dispense with mulled wine and instead

serve it unadulterated seems to have met with general approval. (There were no bottles left over!) Again, with some lateral thinking, catering restrictions were overcome and the delicious home-made mince pies, kindly provided by Linda Halton (she was baking 150+ all day Friday – that’s dedication for you) and Pat White were still brought to tables warm, even without the use of an oven!

The other major commitment of our Society at The Fulbourn Centre is, of course, our ongoing presence in the Committee Room, on Monday and Wednesday mornings from 10.00 a.m. ‘til noon, when the Archive Store is opened and research opportunities encouraged for all who are interested. It receives its funding only from YOUR subscriptions and is an important resource for the village community. But running this service also requires volunteers, so why not devote an hour or so a week assisting with record

keeping etc. (more information can be obtained from Pat White on the kind of tasks required ?) Or perhaps you know of someone who might benefit from using the Archive Store? Pass on its details to friends, neighbours, relatives; impress them with the bright, warm and modern room in which they can browse through old photographs of Fulbourn places and people, or scour newspaper clippings for references to past events, etc.

So, on balance it would appear our move to The Fulbourn Centre has been a success. The “settling in” period still continues, however, and your committee is anxious that members feel empowered to make suggestions and comments relating to its use, where appropriate. Please contact Glynis Arber (01223 570887) and she will raise such issues at the next User Meeting on 1 May 2007 or before, depending on the urgency.

OLD FRIENDS IN NEW PREMISES

On Wednesday, 13th December. I was kindly invited to represent Fulbourn Village History Society at the official opening, in Bar Hill, of the new premises for our old friends, Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit, formerly of Haggis Gap, Fulbourn. From the beginning of our Society’s formation, eight years ago, there has been a mutually supportive relationship with C.A.F.U. now ‘re-branded’ as CAMARC. Members of our Society have volunteered their services in many ways, including clearing undergrowth in areas of Fulbourn prior to the onset of archaeological training digs, washing finds from excavations, assisting with research and recording etc. In return, the ‘professionals’ have willingly offered advice and expertise when requested, and of course, the ‘History Hut’ storage facility was made available for our use, even when space was at a premium for the archaeologists. There is fortunately, no such restriction at their new location, organised within a generous open plan layout. for our use, even when space was at a premium for the archaeologists.

As I was admiring the exhibits on show at the reception, it was gratifying to find that the medieval stained glass found at the site in Hall Orchard, and whose conservation was paid for by the L.H.I grant obtained by the History Society, was amongst items that had pride of place. The Medieval Handling Packs, also produced by the Fulbourn Village Research Project, were again evident in the Education Section. I am moreover, assured that the artefacts relating to the excavations in Fulbourn, presently stored with CAMARC, are still available for us to photograph with the specialist digital camera also purchased from the grant. They will then be entered onto our database, where interested persons can access the information without the need to travel to Bar Hill. However, should any member wish to avail themselves of the opportunity to visit CAMARC, either for research purposes or out of general interest, the address (conveniently near to the Tesco superstore) is as follows: 15 Trafalgar Way, Bar Hill, Cambs, CB23 8SQ.



FVHS MEETINGS AUTUMN/WINTER 2006

Our speaker for October was the ever popular local historian Mike Petty who proved that the traditional art of oral story telling was alive and kicking! This is especially true of those themes associated with Hallowe'en, and the audience was enthralled by tales of missing children, murderers, executions, haunted houses and witches. Many of these subjects were drawn from local newspaper accounts, and the buildings and places evocatively illustrated through the medium of old photographs. It was a very entertaining and informative evening.

In November Sarah Poppy gave a powerpoint presentation about the work of Cambs County Council Historic Environment Record Office. They are particularly interested in assisting research into local archaeology, and have all recorded sites of finds within the County on their database. From personal experience while collating 'In Search of Fulbourn', I found the department extremely helpful, especially when compiling the section on artefacts discovered within the Parish of Fulbourn, either by metal

detecting, field walking or excavation. If you are interested in obtaining more information, her contact details are as follows: Sarah Poppy, Cambs Archaeology Historic Environment Record Box No. ELH1108, Castle Court, Shire Hall, Cambridge, CB3 0AP

Our December 'Social' event was a great success. Questions set for Clint's Christmas Quiz were both challenging and amusing, and the categories cleverly designed to test participants knowledge of general and local history. A judicious use of Joker rounds, and running score board, encouraged good natured competition throughout the evening, while the convivial atmosphere was aided by generous amounts of wine, nibbles and a seemingly unending supply of mincepies! The very special appearance by Father Christmas, who helped draw the Raffle, was an apt start to the Festive Season. Incidentally, the raffle earned £126 and our overall profit, which has brought a smile to the Treasurer's face, was £325.97. Many thanks to all who kindly donated prizes and helped to set up, serve refreshments and clear the room.



FARMING WITH STEAM - Reported by Glynis Arber.

At the first meeting of the New Year, on Thursday 18th January, 60 odd members braved the windy conditions and attended a talk by Tom Doig entitled 'Farming with Steam'. Their courage was rewarded – the presentation was fascinating and interposed by amusing anecdotes recounting the speaker's experiences as a traction engine driver.

Initially, we were given a brief background history to the use of power within farming, starting with the muscles of man and beast, then onto that of water/wind and finally, to the application of steam. The rise and fall of steam in agriculture was subsequently illustrated by old photographs and technical drawings.

It seems that Victorian engineers were enthusiastic and creative about the new technology – **but** perhaps rather too quick to put theory into practise! There were some spectacular failures, including the Derby Walking Digger which was supposed to do the work of ten men using Rotovators (it didn't!), and the Romain Croskill cultivator. The latter never moved under its own steam other than vertically downwards and indeed, many of the early machines quite literally 'dug themselves into the ground'. The science or physics behind the engineering problems that were eventually resolved (or not!), was helpfully explained in terms that could be understood by laymen (even by the ladies in the audience - apologies to any female engineers who

may have been present). But my personal favourite section of the talk dealt with accounts of the dramatic accidents. Health and Safety was not an issue to our ancestors – one operator was instructed to just use a hammer to break crucial valves if the boiler began to ‘bulge’ under pressure, while explosions were frequent. Uncontrolled reverse, down hills, was another cause of many crashes. Again, a lack of common sense seems apparent in some incidents, such as that showed by a photograph depicting a steam engine’s nose- dive into a river, having tried to cross by a wooden bridge. (The bridge was not in good shape, either!)

Aspects of social history also emerged throughout the evening, with the eventual decline of steam as a viable power source in farming being dated to the First World War. Apparently the largest traction engines were requisitioned for haulage etc at the Front, and later abandoned (those that survived) at the end of the war. Heavy Horses had also been taken and used but did not survive the carnage. Eventually, the niche left by this ‘power vacuum’ on farms (and elsewhere) was of course, filled by the internal –or

even infernal- combustion engine and names like Massey Ferguson. The rest is history. But perhaps not – with the current interest in green energy it seems a Research and Development project in Ireland is at present working on ‘steam’ tractors. So watch this space!

P.S. Many thanks to all who brought and bought items for the Bring and Buy stall. We made a profit of £16.00 (every little helps).



FROM THE ARCHIVES - Selected by Mrs. Pat White

A Recipe from *The London Art of Cookery and Housekeeper's Complete Assistant On a New Plan* by John Farley, Principal Cook at The London Tavern (published 1787 and priced at 6/- bound)

Yorkshire Goose Pie

Split a large fat goose down the back and take out all the bones. Treat a turkey and two ducks the same way and season them well with salt and pepper and also fix woodcocks. Lay the goose down on a clean dish, with the skin side down and lay the turkey into the goose in the same manner. Have ready a large hare, well cleaned and cut in pieces, and stewed in the oven, with a pound of butter, a quarter ounce of mace beat fine, the same of white pepper and salt to your taste. Stew it till the meat leaves the bones and skim the butter off the gravy. Pick the meat clean off, and beat it very fine in a marble mortar with the butter you took off, and then lay it in the turkey. Take twenty-four pounds of the finest flour, six pounds of fresh rendered suet. Make the paste pretty thick, and raise the pie in an oval form. Roll out a lump of paste, and cut it into vine leaves or what form you please; then rub the pie with the yolks of eggs, and put your ornaments on the walls. Then turn the hare, turkey, and goose upside down and lay them in your pie, with the ducks at each end and the woodcocks at the side. Then make your lid pretty thick, and

put it on. You may ornament the lid in what manner you please but make a hole in the middle of it, and make the walls of your pie an inch and a half higher than the lid. Then rub all over with the yolks of eggs and bind it round with three-fold paper and lay the same over the top. Bake it four hours and when it comes out, melt two pounds of butter in the gravy that comes from the hare, and pour it hot into the pie through a tin-dish. Close it well up and do not cut it in less than eight or ten days. If your pie is to be sent to any distance it will be necessary, in order to prevent the air getting to it, to stop up the hole in the middle of the lid with cold butter.

THE LAST WORD

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