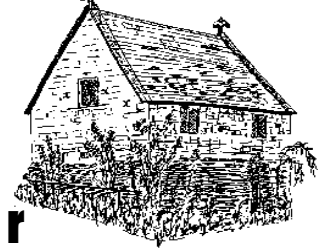


TOM BROWN'S School Museum

The Friends Newsletter

MAY 2010



TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL MUSEUM

Inside this issue:

Museum Launch by
Councillor Alison Rooke

Page
1

Scouring the White Horse

Page
1

St George's Day and
The Dragon

Page
2

Visitors to the Museum

Page
3

The Betjeman Festival

Page
3

Oxford Preservation Trust

Page
4

Peggy Phillips

Page
4

Museum Launch 2010

We were pleased that Councillor Alison Rooke was able to open our exhibition on "The Uffington Parish Trail – a walk in the countryside" on the 30th March. Alison has been a great supporter of the Museum and attended quite a few of our events. Although the weather wasn't encouraging, we had a good number of Friends turn out on the night and who were interested in seeing what we had been up to during the winter months. Jo Marshall has arranged all the information and photographs in an interesting and infor-

mative way and John has put the same information and photographs onto the computer on the ground floor so that visitors who can't get up the stairs can still see the exhibition. The exhibition details a walk which can also be downloaded via the Museum and Village web sites – museum.uffington.net – publications and uffington.net – visitor information – local walks.



Councillor Alison Rooke

Scouring the White Horse

Uffington White Horse is getting it's annual chalk and everyone is invited to come along and help out. The chalking is being held on Saturday 29th May and Sunday 30th May from 10am until 5 pm. Booking is essential.

Please ring 01793 762209 or email uffingtonwhitehorse@nationaltrust.org.uk to book or to find out more information. All equipment will be provided. On Sunday we will be entertained by the Icknield Way Morris Men

at 12 noon. Even if you do not wish to chalk do come along to enjoy this historical occasion.

Caroline Searle
Warden, National Trust

St George's Day

During recent years in Uffington we have been celebrating St. George's Day at the Fox & Hounds with Morris Dancing but I was asked at the Museum who St. George was. This made me look up the facts!

Every nation has its own 'Patron Saint' who in times of great peril is called upon to help save the country from its enemies – St. George being the patron saint of England. Very little is known about St. George's life, but it is

thought he was a high ranking officer in the Roman army who was killed in around AD 303.

It seems that the Emperor Diocletian had St. George tortured to make him deny his faith in Christ. However despite some of the most terrible torture even for that time, St George showed incredible courage and faith and was finally beheaded near Lydda in Palestine. His head was later taken to Rome where it was interred in the church dedicated to him.



St George slaying the dragon.

Stories of his strength and courage soon spread throughout Europe. The best-known story about St. George is his fight with a dragon, but it is highly unlikely that he ever fought a dragon, and even more unlikely that he ever visited England, however his name was known there as early as the eighth-century.

In the Middle Ages the dragon

was commonly used to represent the Devil. Unfortunately the many legends connected with St. George's name are fictitious, and the slaying of the 'Dragon' was first credited to him in the twelfth-century.

St. George, so the story goes, killed a dragon on the flat topped Dragon Hill in Uffington, and it is said that no grass grows where

the dragon's blood trickled down!

It was probably the 12th century Crusaders however who first invoked his name as an aid in battle.

HYPERLINK "<http://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/England-History/KingsandQueens.htm>"

King Edward III made him the Patron Saint of England when he formed the Order of the Garter in St. George's name in 1350, and the cult of the Saint was further advanced by King Henry V, at the battle of Agincourt in northern France.

Shakespeare made sure that nobody would forget St. George, and has King Henry V finishing his pre-battle speech with the famous phrase, 'Cry God for Harry, England and St. George!'



Mythical dragon

Visitors to the Museum

We had a very interesting visit from James Hampson who very kindly gave the Museum two 'Love Hearts' from the Royal Berkshire Regiment made during the 1st World War, along with other artefacts from the Royal Berkshire Regiment. James has also written down, for our archives, the history of 'Four Love Stories' in which he narrates the history of his family. A brother and sister (Breakspear) married a sister and brother (Hampson) thereby uniting the Hampson and Breakspear families. Following on from these two love matches, in the same generation, another Breakspear brother married a Hampson cousin and finally, a generation down, cousins; James Hampson married Elsie Breakspear thereby uniting the families again.

James has also given me photographs of the Breakspear family outside their cottage in Woolstone, which lies at the bottom of the road going up to the hill and now known as Breakspear Cottage. He has also given me more information that we can add to our computer presentation 'People from the Past' as well as correcting the information on one of our pictures! The photograph that we thought was Mrs. Emily Turner was in fact, Mrs. Ada Mary Breakspear with her granddaughter Anne Copeland. It is very helpful to have our photographs identified as we can only go on any notes that are written on the back!

We will add all this information to the Family History archives that we hold in the Museum.

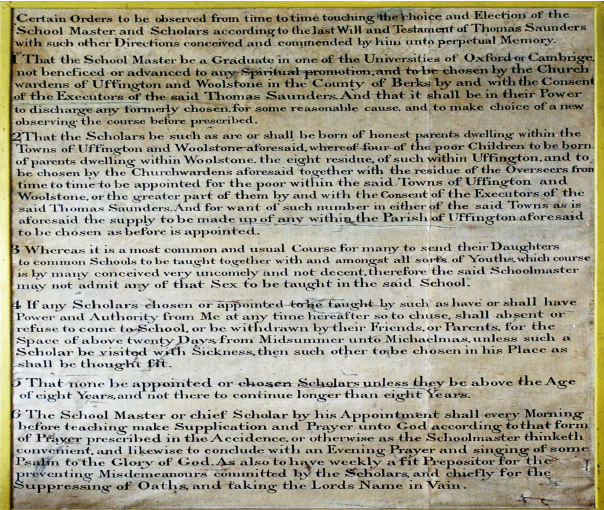


Mr. Charles Breakspear (Gaffer) in the flat cap and Mrs. Ada Mary Breakspear in the dark dress and apron (nick named Polly) with some of their family of 11 children outside their cottage in Woolstone.

THE SCHOOL RULES

When you have been in the Museum, you may have been asked about the rules which hang on the wall above the cupboards. Following several requests for copies, we have decided to have a postcard of the rules

made which we can sell and Maurice has photographed them for me.



The Betjeman Festival

The Wantage Betjeman Festival is being planned for September, 2011 with several exciting Pre-Festival events between now and then.

Sir John Betjeman and his family lived for many years at the Mead in Wantage and several of

his poems and a childrens' book 'Archie and the Strict Baptists' are based in and around the town.

The Festival will not only celebrate Sir John Betjeman and his work other well known authors with local connections will be

included in addition with literature, music and the visual arts. We hope to arrange something in Uffington to join in with the celebrations – more details later! More information can be found on www.wantagebetjeman.com

If you have any questions about the Friends please contact one of the committee members. All phone numbers have the prefix 01367.

Jane Cooper (Chair)	820207
Sharon Smith (Museum Curator)	820259
John Davis (Treasurer)	820318
Brian Short (Secretary)	820347
Pamela Preece (Newsletter)	820251
John Henville (IT)	820411
Lucy Dillistone (Rota)	820493
Bill Mitchell	820693

The Museum's address is Broad Street, Uffington, FARINGDON, SN7 7RA

The Friend's web site is <http://www.museum.uffington.net>

Oxford Preservation Trust – Oxford Open Doors
Oxford Preservation Trust organises Oxford Open Doors in partnership with the University of Oxford and in support of Heritage Open Days. The event has become quickly establish in the Oxford Calendar and last year 37,200 visits were made to over 130 different spaces and places making it the third largest Heritage Open Day event in the country. Oxford Open Doors encourages local people to explore their city and encourages free access to all kinds of spaces – Oxford's oldest and newest buildings, little known corners and unusual places. The event takes place over the weekend of 11-12 September.

Rota

Lucy Dillistone has kindly taken over the running of the rota so all queries and alterations should please go direct to her. Tel no 820498 or e-mail lucy@pimlicowest.com. The black bag will still be using the newspaper box in my side porch.

New Arrivals to the village

A number of houses appear to be changing hands at present so if you come across any new owners please do talk to them about the museum and encourage them to become Friends. We have plenty of leaflets about the Museum which are in the Museum or can be collected from Sharon or Jane. We find new people are nervous that they do not "know enough" to be on the rota in the Museum so perhaps suggest that they could just support the Museum with a subscription until they are settled in. In fact they do not need to know about the village to welcome people into the Museum but you could

encourage them to buy the book that Sharon and Jane wrote on the village history, available from the Shop or the Museum for £5-00!! There is nothing like personal contact to increase the number of people supporting the Museum.

Peggy Phillips

We are sorry to have to report the death of Peggy Phillips on March 29th at 94 years of age. Although she had recently been living in a home in Wantage I am sure many of you will remember her walking around Uffington. Except for two years she had lived all her life in the village, coming from a family that was very much part of the history of this village, of which there are so few people still left. Her father, Mr Wheeler, lived at Grounds Farm and actively farmed. I remember asking Peggy one day, when we were preparing an exhibition on agriculture, about her memories of farming practices. She firmly replied that she knew nothing of

such things as she had been too busy hunting and dancing. I realised I had asked the wrong question of a successful farmer's daughter growing up in the interwar years. Mr Wheeler was John Betjeman's land lord at Garrards Farm and John has written of the annoyance of his landlord when the rent was late.



Peggy outside her cottage