

SEPTEMBER 2011

TOM BROWN'S *School Museum*

The Friends Newsletter



TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL MUSEUM AUTUMN EDITION

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WHITE HORSE SHOW 2011



Thank you to the volunteers who manned our stall at the White Horse Show this year, and also to those who looked after the museum the same weekend. Although our reason for being at the Show is mainly publicity, we were able to bank £95.00 after the event.

TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL MUSEUM

WILTS AND BERKS CANAL TRUST

Whilst at the White Horse Show this year, we were pleased to be visited by the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust who invited us to see their stand and to see pictures of Uffington that they had. We were thrilled to see a new picture of the Wilts & Berks Canal at Uffington Wharf.



The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust gave us the following information:

“The Chairman of the Wantage Branch of the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust conducts regular walks along the canal route during the summer. During one such walk he was talking to Graham Edwards of Oxford who mentioned seeing a picture in an American edition of Tom Brown’s School-days. He later emailed Brian and after thanking him for an interesting walk he went on to say:

“Here is a scan of the photogravure of the canal at Uffington from "Tom Brown’s

Schooldays" published by Porter and Coates of Philadelphia in 1893 together with a list of the other photogravures that were commissioned for the book. I read somewhere (I could probably rediscover where) that a photographer was sent over especially from Boston, Mass., for this, so the date must be early 1890s. There is a handwritten dedication inside my copy dated Christmas 1893.”

This was the picture of the canal boats at Uffington Wharf. For us this was an amazing discovery coming out of the blue. For many

years we have been looking for a picture of real working boats on the Canal, and now we had one. Two loaded boats, with horses attached, with the bonus of all the extra detail of the wharf as well.

Graham has since lent us the book and we have made copies of this picture and all others relating to Uffington.

Photogravure of the canal at Uffington



An added bonus was the use of these pictures at the White Horse show where they attracted a lot of attention, allowing us to explain Uffington's connection with the canal and our plans for restoration.

The Wharf buildings in the picture are still there and the canal line is still easily traceable.”

Another photograph that the Trust gave us was of The Craven. These photographs will be added to our collection.

We are very grateful to The Trust for letting us have these pictures for the Museum. We were able to give the Trust a copy of the photograph that we have of Mr. Bingham sitting on a draw bridge over the canal between Common and Moor Mill Farms.

VISITORS TO THE MUSEUM

We have had 954 visitors to the museum up to the end of August bringing us within the magic number of 1000 so if you haven't visited the museum yet – please come along before we close at the end of October.

We have had a number of groups visit the Museum during the year and have been pleased to welcome :

Didcot Literary Group

WI from Radley

WI from Botley

University of the Third Age

Friends of the Ridgeway

The Betjeman Society from Oxford

as well as groups that have come to the museum whilst it was open – Denman College and a group of Friends of Ashdown House.

THE RESTORATION MAN

Filming for this programme has taken place in the Museum where they were finding out about the history of The Engine House near Uffington Station. Despite all my attempts, the producer was determined to prove 'the sad plight of Uffington's children being forced to work in the brick yard'! I have been told that it will be broadcast in the New Year

THE ROTA

New Friends

We are delighted to be able to report that some new people have agreed to join the rota next year. This includes two new Friends and we extend a most warm welcome to them and hope they will enjoy their time in the Museum.

Please remember your date

Most people are very reliable and the rota works well and we do thank everyone for their part in keeping the museum open. But occasionally we have a "slip up". It is not good news to hear at 3.30pm that there are people outside a closed Museum!

Local History Illustrated talks and guided walks.

Through our membership of Oxfordshire Local History Society we have the details of local history illustrated talks by Liz Woolley. She also conducts walks in Oxford.

She lives in Oxford and has a diploma and MSc in English Local History from the University Department for Continuing Education. She is particularly interested in the lives of ordinary people in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She is a practised speaker.

If anyone is interested in having a talk or a walk could they contact Jane (janemcooper@gmail.com or 820207).

Committee Members

If you have any questions about the Friends please contact one of the committee members. All phone numbers have the prefix 01367. We are very pleased to have Anthony Parsons join the Committee.

Jane Cooper (Chair)	820207	Sharon Smith (Museum Curator)	820259
John Davis (Treasurer)	820318	Brian Short (Secretary)	820347
Pamela Preene (Newsletter)	820251	John Henville (IT)	820411
Lucy Dillistone (Rota)	820498	Anthony Parsons (Researcher)	820433

NEWSFLASH

We have been given a collection of Sir John Betjeman's original letters and postcards which will be placed in the museum once they have been catalogued.