

DECEMBER 2012

# TOM BROWN'S *School Museum*

The Friends Newsletter



## MUSEUM VICTORIAN DAY 2012



Jane Cooper and Harry Cook who took the identity of David Yates—aged 9 yrs a farm worker's son.



Sammy Barnes alias Ernest Henry Packer—the blacksmith's son aged 8 yrs.

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### **Accreditation**

We were anxiously awaiting news of our submission for Accreditation – the results were due in November when I heard that it has been *'held in a queue awaiting assessment. The Assessment Team were not appointed to original timetable and this has resulted in a delay to the assessment of some Tranche 2 museums. The assessment process will now take place from late November to February and the Museum will go to the Accreditation panel at the end of February.'* This is very disappointing news – it seems that we have to stick to the timetable but not the as-

### **The Wantage Betjeman Festival**

Thank you to all who supported our events at this Festival. We had a packed house to the reading of 'The Letters' by Richard Baker. The Geddes Family, who donated the letters to the Museum, were in the audience and were very pleased with the way in which the letters had been presented. The letters will now go to The History Centre in Oxford for safe-keeping and we will have digital copies in the museum for everyone to see.

A good attendance was also present for the Tom Brown's Evening at the Memorial Hall – this took the form of a screening of the film adaptation of Tom Brown's Schooldays with drinks, nibbles and music from the Mad

### **Good News**

We have had good news from The White Horse Show Trust who have agreed to give us a grant of £2000 to go towards the cost of re-wiring and installing a new lighting system for the museum. The Friends have agreed to put £1000 towards the project and will also contribute to repainting the interior of the museum – both monetary and labour! It has long been an ambition of ours to re-design the lighting as I am sure it will improve the ambience of

### **Next Year**

The Alfred Williams Society have asked if they can use our Gallery space next year to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the book 'Villages of the White Horse'. Alfred Williams was known as 'The Hammerman Poet' and was a very interesting man. The exhibition will also tie in with Thomas Hughes and the Worker's Education Association.

This will give us time to look at our displays on the Ground Floor following on from the redecorations.

**Heritage Lottery Award** We are thrilled that Anthony Parsons has received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Award under the 'All Our Stories' scheme. This will allow Anthony to research further and publish work on 'The Uffington Enclosure Award of 1778'.

## Family Ties

I recently received an email from a lady in America (Sharon LMF) seeking information on her ancestors – the Mattingly Family. When I looked in the museum's records I found a similar request from a gentleman (Richard) living in another part of America in 2007. I asked each party if I could put them in touch with each other and after I did received the following reply:

Dear Sharon of the Museum,

Thanks to you, Sharon LMF and I have corresponded and made a connection within our ancestries. Her great great grandfather James Mattingly (b. 1806) and my great great grandfather John Mattingly (b. 1795) were brothers!! Which I believe makes Sharon LMF and myself third cousins! John's and James's siblings of whom there were at least 5 (Ann, Louisa, Lydia, Mary & Thomas), would all be our common great great great aunts and uncles, if I have that right.

John & James' father, John Mattingly (b. 1772) would be our great great great grandfather!

His father James Mattingly (b. 1738) would be our great great great great grandfather!!

I'm not positive I have this all correct in my mind, so if either of you see a hole in the discussion, please let me know!

This is very interesting and great fun!!

Thanks to both of you.

Regards, Cousin Richard (It was very satisfying to connect these relatives together!)

## Oxfordshire Local History Association Study Day

Three members from our Friends attended this day in Abingdon and came back wiser.

The title was Looking after the poor: crisis and reform- did the workhouse work?

The talks in the morning explained that in 1601 The Poor Law had made the parish responsible for its poor and destitute. The poor rate was levied on all residents which meant that the very low paid often found it difficult to pay their share of the rate, which was in effect a tax. This more or less worked in the 17<sup>th</sup> century but by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century many parishes were in crisis.

The Poor law Amendment Act of 1834 introduced a new system of workhouses which it was hoped would be a more efficient way of dealing with an increasing problem. These buildings were grim and bleak with men and women segregated even in the exercise yards.

The workhouse for Uffington was in Faringdon although a cottage was designated in the village where children were left whilst their mothers went to work.

In the afternoon the group visited the Christ's Hospital Hall at the Long Alley Almshouses where the Archivist and Governor gave an interesting talk.

## Rota

We really do appreciate the time you give to the Museum which enables us to keep this village asset open for the public.

We know it can be boring if only two or three people come in yet time goes quickly when thirty-six people (our record) arrive – we cannot control the public!

It is very rewarding when people find what they are looking for, such as their grandmother's school record or photo. It can also be entertaining as when a young lad asked where the school kitchen and dining room were. I suggested that a jam sandwich might have been brought from home.

Thank you all so much, please keep coming as we could not manage without you.

Lucy

## HELP NEEDED

There is a vacancy on the Museum Management Committee- could you help? It is not an onerous commitment - 3 meetings a year in the evening in the Museum. The Management Committee is made up of the Parish Council and 3 co-opted members. The vacancy arises from a resignation. The present 2 co-opted members are Jane Cooper and John Henville.

If you might be able to help do contact Jane  for further details. Tel 820207 or e-mail [janemcooper@gmail.com](mailto:janemcooper@gmail.com)

**HAPPY  
CHRISTMAS  
BEST WISHES FOR THE  
NEW YEAR**

The Museum address is Broad Street,  
Uffington, Faringdon, SN7 7RA

The web site is :

[www.uffington.net/museum](http://www.uffington.net/museum),

email: [museum@uffington.net](mailto:museum@uffington.net)

## Events for your Diary

Belshazzar's Feast are playing in the Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall on Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> December as part of their Winter Stocking Fillers Tour. Tickets £13.00 from George Reade, 820282.

Advance Notice of AGM - The Annual general Meeting of the Friends of Tom Brown's School Museum will take place at 7.30 pm in the Museum on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

## Oxford Fiddle Group

You may remember that I had hoped to have the Oxford Fiddle Group entertain us this October – this didn't happen because of the 'Allo Allo production and so it has been re-scheduled for Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2013 in the Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall. Please do keep this date free and come and support fund raising for the Museum as well as having a great evening.