

# HISTORY WAS UNFOLDED AT WHEATLEY

There could be a wealth of history in all those old books, photographs and other odds-and-ends gathering dust in your back room or attic.

This was the lesson of a local history exhibition at Wheatley primary school on Saturday.

For the residents, young and old alike, the village contributed its own little pieces of history to produce a fascinating record of Wheatley's past.

The exhibits covered primarily the period from the 17th to the 20th century, Wheatley has almost doubled its population in the last 20 years to the present figure of about 3,500.

The exhibition, which raised £58 for the church restoration fund, was the idea of the Wheatley parochial church council and formed part of a two-day festival to raise funds for the village church, which was filled with flowers, arranged by the Thame Flower Club.

## Link with past

"The aim of the exhibition was to get people of Wheatley together by means of a link with the past and to make them aware of the history of the village where they live," explained 21-year-old Mr Ian O'Reilly, who helped compile a section of the exhibition and a pamphlet on the history of bell-ringing at the village church of St. Mary's.

Exhibits included railway photographs from Mr Robert Avery, records of an 1860 census compiled by students; from Lady Spencer-Churchill College, a Victorian music box, parish records and coins, pottery, and knives dating back to the bronze age.

With the help of Dr. William Hassall, who works at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, old manuscripts concerning Wheatley were displayed.

## Church builder

These included a manuscript autobiography by the Rev- Edward Elton, vicar of Wheatley in the middle of last century who built the present church and founded the primary school.

Other exhibits included auction notices of last century, documents from the Civil War, reminiscences of village life and a large map, produced by pupils at the school, showing the original homes of present Wheatley people.

More than 500 visitors toured the exhibition and about 70 attended an organ recital on Saturday evening, given by John Palmer, organist of Lady Spencer-Churchill College.



*Mine-year-old Suzy Flury makes a few historical dotes as she inspects an 1897 Victorian pram, One of the many exhibits at the Wheatley local history exhibition at the village primary school on Saturday.*