

February/March 2021

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

Firstly, a Happy (and healthy) New Year to everyone and the answer to the mystery photo in the last issue. The gate can be seen to the left of the Wheatley Tyre Centre's workshop on Holloway Road and was made to commemorate a silver wedding anniversary.

A plea for help next please. We are lacking the names of the licensees of most of Wheatley's pubs from 1950 to date. We have a very good history for many years even stretching to John Leavers in 1684 at the Bell Inn but we would like to complete the list with the more recent names, especially those from 1950. Please e-mail names of past licensees to michael@wheatleyarchive.org.uk.

We are working with the Parish Council to recognize the original purpose of the Old Burial Garden/Memorial Garden where the names of the fallen in the two wars are recorded on the Cross. A new interpretation board, to match the others on the Heritage Trail is planned. Following the building in 1795 of a new chapel of ease to replace the dilapidated medieval one, a special licence was granted in 1813 to allow burials to take place here instead of at the parish church of Cuddesdon. The chapelyard had to be extended in 1830 and, by 1840, when there had been 170

burials, it was reported that 'The Church yard is so full that there is no room to dig another grave in it'. However many more burials of Wheatley residents took place here until our own parish church of St Mary's was built in 1857 and Ann Edmonds was the first to be buried there in July of that year.

In 2006, John Prest published a book called 'The Most Difficult Village', the title taken from a quote by Bishop Wilberforce describing Wheatley to a prospective vicar. This very well researched book is a fascinating insight to this period of Wheatley's history. Now out of print, it has been agreed with the Prest family that pdf copies of this book will be shortly available free by application to the above e-mail address.

In 1845, and presumably following a disagreement over how much villagers should pay towards the Poor Rate (the fore-runner of social security), the value of all the property in the village was re-assessed. This details the owners and occupiers of every square inch of Wheatley at that date. If you want to know more, search "poor rate survey and valuation" ON www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk.

Steph Cox

April / May 2021

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

Wheatley Village Archive were thrilled to be awarded a runner-up certificate in our category of 'Landscape and Public Realm' in the annual Oxford Preservation Trust awards for a 'really beautifully produced' Heritage Trail. The chairman of the OPT said the judges were 'terrifically impressed'. Perhaps those of you who haven't followed the Heritage Trail around the village will take the opportunity of the finer weather to see for yourselves, or perhaps will do so again with visitors along with the long-awaited easing of government restrictions. The archive team would like to thank all those involved in its creation and everyone in Wheatley too as over 2,500 leaflets have been used from the dispensers. The recognition by OPT is for all of us in the village. Two other projects with Wheatley connections won as well. A talented village! One of these involved a one-time gardener at the Manor House who modelled for the image of God on the award-winning All Souls College façade!

On a similar theme trails have been devised for the youngsters in the

village and it was great to share the photos from the website with this brilliant new initiative in the village that started over the February half term. Trails around the village for children (and parents!) who are suffering lockdown fever keep people busy spotting fairy doors, pirates or spies! Thanks to Laura and Sophie. Details of the trails can be found on Facebook's WalkWheatley page or on www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk and search WalkWheatley.

Have you seen the revamped Wheatley Archive Facebook page? This has recently become very active – have a look!

Lastly an appeal for photographs of the village taken since 2006 to add to the archives. The last 15 years of history of the village in the archive is rather lacking. We would be grateful if you would send digital images to michael@wheatleyarchive.org.uk along with some indication of date and any names etc. Actual photos can be dropped off at 48, High Street and can be returned once scanned if wanted. Future generations need your input now!

Steph Cox

June/July 2021

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

Living History...

Every day something happens in our world which will eventually end up in the annals of history. In Wheatley, we have had our own 'history' over the Covid period and here is some of it. On the Mayday Monday, Jack Turner decided that 2021 could not pass without some recognition of its Mayday tradition. Here he is singing a Mayday song!



The face of Wheatley is also ever-changing with a new pharmacy under conversion at Morland House, to replace the one in High Street, and the development on Parkhill of a new Care Home, raising to the ground three erstwhile houses.



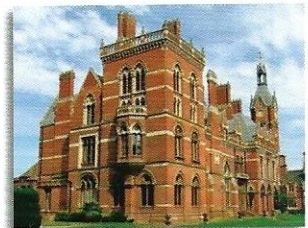
The archive constantly seeks to add to its store of Wheatley history by recording this 'living history', but it is a sad fact that, with more photos being taken than ever before, less and less are being kept to record the current passage of life. The archive welcomes any contributions by e-mail to michael@wheatleyarchive.org.uk.



...and a bit of the past



The archive is constantly seeking photos of Wheatley's older history and has recently added a photo of the 'Kelham Hall' locomotive (5904) which used to run over our railway tracks. Kelham Hall Drive was named after it and the loco was named after Kelham Hall, Notts.



If anyone has a photo of the last station-master, Mr. Kimber ('Kimber Close') please send this to Michael.

Steph Cox

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

At last we are almost back to normal life living with the virus whilst exercising care to restrict infection. With this in mind Wheatley Village Archive's room will re-open from Thursday 2nd September at 2pm. We will ensure that the room is well ventilated and as spacious as possible for visitors and volunteers alike. We look forward to welcoming you back. Do bring any thing you have found out about your house during our lockdowns which you would share with the village archive.

Many of you have followed our Village Heritage Trail since its launch in November 2019 and some 2500 leaflets have been used. You may have noticed a new blue leaflet in the pamphlet dispensers around the village. We have now devised a 3 mile Greater Heritage Trail which covers a larger area of the village and takes about 2.5 hours to complete. It traces the industrial background to the village from one of the Oxfordshire's wealthiest in the 14th century due to its stone quarrying for Windsor Castle and Oxford colleges to its importance as the main route from London to Oxford as a coaching road, to its brick industry started in the mid-18th century. We do hope you enjoy it.

See you soon in the archive room.

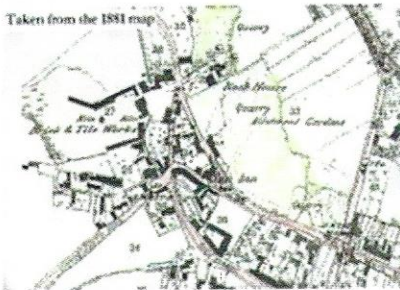
Wheatley Greater Heritage Trail

A 3-mile walk tracing the industrial background to Wheatley's successes and its locational importance.

Its earliest wealth came from stone quarrying for Oxford Colleges, such as Merton's chapel in the 14th century.



Brickworks



On the route to Oxford



A longer walk exploring Wheatley's industrial past

GREATER HERITAGE TRAIL

Wheatley VILLAGE ARCHIVE

Steph Cox

October/November 2021

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive is open again in the Merry Bells with appropriate social distancing, of course, on Thursday afternoons from 2 to 5 and on the last Saturday of each month from 10 to 12. Do visit and see what is stored on your behalf.

The AGM of Wheatley Village Archive will be held on Tuesday 5 October in the Coffee Room of the Merry Bells at 7.30 p.m. All are welcome.

Like every other group or society, this has been an extraordinary 18 months with the village in and out of lockdown, However, and despite a lack of visitors to the archive room, it has also been a very successful time and much has been accomplished along with opportunities taken to sell our two new books when relaxations of lockdown permitted. WVA's major publication 'Bygone Wheatley' was commissioned before Covid struck and an incredible 265 copies having been sold. The memories of Christine Jackson (nee Tombs) from about 1939-1957 were converted into a book and had 100 of these printed and 71 have been sold. Both fascinating books to read.

Following on from the very successful Heritage Trail (green leaflet) of which over 2500 leaflets have been taken by residents and visitors to the village, the recently devised Greater Heritage Trail (blue leaflet) has proved very popular

too and followed by many people already. It is a 3-mile walk covering a much larger area and based on Wheatley's industrial heritage. Several guided walks of this trail have taken place, and there has been strong interest in this aspect of Wheatley's history from two other Oxford history organisations, Oxford Preservation Trust and Oxfordshire Architectural and History Society.

During the year, the records on the computer in the archive room have been extensively trawled, discovering a large number of images which have, as a result, been added to the hard copy and website archives. Some 350 completely new images have been added with a further 425 images added to or revised in previous records. 365 new or modified pdfs have been added or revised. About 90 completely new records have been added. The overall tally of over 1100 records, added or modified, shows that the archive has had a major make-over with now over 2500 records. Reports, of various lengths and complexities, have been written on some of the older houses in the village broadening our understanding of Wheatley and the inhabitants from almost 200 years ago. Do check out the website on www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk it's always growing!

Steph Cox

December 2021 / JANUARY 2022

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

Our last entry for 2021 and it's been great to be able to open the archive room. This can be made easier with the kind co-operation of the library staff, who will give access to the archive room through the library. A warm welcome awaits you all on a Thursday afternoon or the last Saturday of the month in the morning. One visitor was an ex-resident of the children's home (Morland House) who popped in as he was retracing his childhood in Wheatley after over 40 years.

Several years ago the Archive was given two enlarged photos of Wheatley that used to be in the registrar's office – the Merry Bells and Harris' Stores. They are now displayed in the upstairs corridor of the Merry Bells, do come and see them.

Like most villages, Wheatley has a number of surnames which have been around a long time. Although the family trees in the archive can be found on www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk/genealogy.php they have been painstakingly reproduced and added to the main part of the website under the 'General' tab linking their ancestry with relevant village history from the 1700s, 1800s and a small part of the 1900s.

Wheatley Village Archive would like to try to connect these trees to members of the same family still living in the village today. So, if you recognise any of

the following names as being a branch of your Wheatley family from earlier times, and would like to help create more current links, please contact Michael Heaton at michael@wheatleyarchive.org.uk.

Armborough, Avery, Chapman, Clements, Cooper, Crick, Cripps, Cullum, Dover, Edwards, Gomm, Goodin, Gould, Hanks, Hinton, Hunt, Knight, Meloney, Merritt, Messenger, Miles, Munt, Nixey, Putt, Robbins, Rose, Sheldon, Shorter, Thornton, Tombs, Turner, Washington, Webb, Weller

Finally, we have a number of (school) village studies, mostly done early in the 2000s and we would like to offer these back to those who wrote them, as they do not form part of our historical archive. These were written by P. O'Sullivan, Dean Evans, Anna Clements, James Currie, Conor Anand-Shaw, Laura Heap and Lauren Hanks. Please contact the same e-mail address if you would like to be reunited with your study.

Do check out the website on www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk it's always growing!

Steph Cox