

February / March 2022

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

Our first contribution to 2022 must include a wish to all our friends in the village for a happy and healthy new year and we hope to see you in the archive room or at one of our talks planned for the year. The next one is on Monday, 14th February at 8pm entitled "Early professional gardeners, including the founders of Waterperry". It is open to everyone in the village.

At the beginning of January, the census from 1921 was made available online to the public in a limited way by FindMyPast.co.uk (FMP) who had undertaken this for the National Archives at no charge.

Since the release, Wheatley Village Archive has explored this census to see what could be made available free to our community. It has grouped the 65 pages recording the 1281 residents in six batches of pdfs on the archive website,

www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk. They can be found by using the words "1921 census", (the speech inverted commas must be used) in the search box. You can then select the appropriate pdf from the surname range shown against the file. You will only see the individual's surname and first name(s), date and place of birth but unfortunately no details of relatives, occupations etc.

The more-detailed information in this public document can only be accessed through FMP through a 'census paywall', so described in the national press with increasing furore by the archive community, as FMP need to recover their costs from the National Archive.

This information can be obtained by paying FMP £2.50 per transcribed entry/person or £3.50 for a copy of the original. Wheatley Village Archive does not intend to do this for

the entire population of working age in Wheatley as the outlay would be very considerable. Disappointing transcriber results have been cited in the press alongside the charge per entry.

We already have an extremely comprehensive file on the 1911 census and know where everyone lived and details of their employment. We have already started a comparison between names in 1911 and 1921 and it looks as though there was a massive change in population in the village, with many names disappearing and many others coming into the village. This was probably the inevitable result of the disruption caused by the war.

Unfortunately, the 1931 census records for England and Wales were destroyed by fire in 1942 and there was no census in 1941 (although there was a National Register taken in 1939 for the purpose of identity cards issue). So, sadly there is a very big gap in census records and the absence of this public information being free for 1921 is the more regrettable. This census should be in the Oxford History Centre and county libraries later in the year but, possibly, only the files already on our website.

Many thanks to the readers who collected school projects from the archives. We still have those belonging to Conor Anand-Shaw, Lauren Hanks, Anna Clements and P. O'Sullivan. Please contact michael@wheatleyarchive.org.uk to arrange their collection.

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

Steph Cox

April / May 2022

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

Since the last issue the Village Archive has been given many photos of Wheatley and its residents taken in 1950s which are displayed on several boards and acquired at an auction in Swindon by a family in Holton! They have now been scanned and over 50 new images of the village and its residents added to our constantly growing website. Any photos and information of the village that you may have would also be most welcome. There must yet be more information out there in lofts, auctions or even in cases under a bed! Contact michael@wheatleyarchive.org.uk if you have anything to add. Do remember to keep investigating our website for new additions www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk.

Work has also been finalised on another publication entitled "Wheatley 1890-1910" which has brought together reminiscences that were collected on cassette tapes (remember those?) and transcribed, also in the 1950s. The fully illustrated book, in A5 format, will be on sale for £7.00 in the Archive, outside the Merry Bells on Saturday mornings and elsewhere in the village. We are amazed at the activity that seems to have taken place in the 50s on the local history front and we wonder who the driving force behind these endeavours was, as there appears to have been an active archive decades before the launch of the current Wheatley Village Archive in 2003.



One photo shows the village cricket team, with an intriguing background, from 1907 with several familiar village names – Shepherd, Tombs, Munt, Gould and Sheldon. Another photo shows haymaking in the orchard of Rectory Farm from 1916 (now part of Beech Road).



An advance date for your diary is the next talk (in conjunction with the Wheatley Society) to which all are invited at the Merry Bells on 19th September at 8pm entitled "Scandal in High Society Oxfordshire: selected Tales of Toffs in Trouble" a talk by Julie Ann Godson.

Steph Cox

June/July 2022

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

Welcome additions to the archive continue to be donated and following a talk, in April, on entertainments in Wheatley over the years to the British Legion, some photos were kindly received illustrating their activities. We are also now the proud custodians of the first log book of Wheatley Secondary School from its beginning in 1950 until Fred Anson's retirement in 1972 when the primary school took over the premises and the secondary school moved to Holton Park. Kevin Heritage's book about these 22 years can be obtained in the village.

A walk around Holton Park led by Kevin Heritage has been provisionally booked for all those interested on the afternoon of Sunday 3rd July at a cost of £2. If you are interested do contact michael@wheatleyarchive.org.uk or phone Steph on 07979 867014 for more details.

We recently welcomed Helen to the archive team. She has started a "One Place Study" on Wikitree based on Wheatley which is a world-wide family tree with contributions, like Wikipedia, from individuals. Additional contributors (there are already some) are welcome but it is very important that any family tree additions are robust and well supported by sources in order to

maintain the integrity of these trees. Do check it out on the link at the bottom of the page.

The archive team have chosen photos of celebrations in Wheatley over the years for a village calendar for 2023. Our calendars in 2019 and 2020 were very popular and the new one for next year will be available later in the year. It will go well with a copy of "Wheatley 1890-1910: Reminiscences of the Turn of the Century and a Snapshot of the Village in 1910" which is a popular new addition to the village bookshelves for £7.

Soon after I joined the archive team, I was volunteered to transcribe local parish registers onto an Excel document to help searchers. These transcriptions, baptisms 1851-1963, and burials, 1813-1985, are now complete. As we are uncertain as to whether these might be copyright or publication might infringe GDPR, they are not available on the public part of our website. We can, however, answer any enquiries, please email:

michael@wheatleyarchive.org.uk. There are some interesting facts including the incidence of two unrelated babies being buried in the same coffin!

August/September 2022

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

In the issue of the newsletter a year ago the WVA shared the Greater Heritage Trail leaflet. Due to its popularity in the village (thank you) we have just ordered a reprint. The eagle-eyed amongst the villagers will have spotted the addition of QR codes to the leaflet dispensers around the village allowing, via a QR app on a smart phone, the downloading of both trail leaflets for use without the hardcopy leaflets.

We have been busy talking to a milestone expert about Wheatley's own milestone on the London Road which can be found just past the last 'Tudorbethan' house on the right of London Road. Although not included on the heritage trails the milestone is Grade 2 listed by Historic England and it could be restored.



This photo which we believe was taken in 1927 shows the milestone a lot taller than it is now! on the London Road but from where was the picture taken? Any ideas welcome please.



The milestone reads 'XLVI miles from London Oxford' with a carved benchmark on the reverse. The milestone has sunk and will most likely have, below ground level, the additional 'VI' i.e. 6 to Oxford.



Benchmarks are used by the Ordnance Survey to record height above sea level. There is another one at the Littleworth end of Old Road on the mounting stone.

The WVA has planned a self-drive trip for any interested villagers to North Leigh Roman Villa, near Witney (14 miles away) on **Wednesday 10th August** to arrive at 11am when a volunteer guide will be in attendance.

Please contact Steph on stephjcox@btopenworld.com or 07979 867014, or Michael on michael@wheatleyarchive.org.uk or 01865 425909 to arrange shared transport.

A reminder of our next talk (in conjunction with the Wheatley Society) to which all are invited at the Merry Bells on **19th September** at 8pm entitled "Scandal in High Society Oxfordshire: selected Tales of Toffs in Trouble" a talk by Julie Ann Godson.

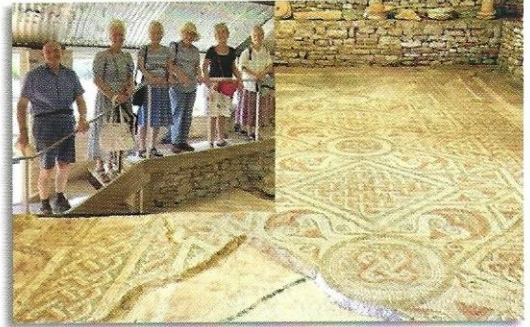
As there is unlikely to be another Royal Platinum Jubilee the WVA would welcome any photos taken in the village that you would share for the future archives. Please email them to Michael.

Steph Cox

October/November 2022

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

Our trip to the Roman villa at North Leigh, near Witney, was very successful with most helpful volunteers on site to explain its history to us. The whole site was much bigger and supported many more people in its prime than we imagined. This mosaic floor is just a very small part of it.



Your Wheatley Village Archive has moved to the library now so that we are much more accessible to the village with everything being available for inspection during the library opening hours. It's all online too at www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk of course.

Volunteers will, routinely, be on hand in the library to help with genealogy and history of the village on Thursday afternoons between 2-4.30 and also at other times by contacting **Michael Heaton (01865 425909)**, **Steph Cox (07979 867014)** or, for genealogical matters, **Pam Reay (07505 735105)**.

The archive has been fortunate in being able to display some of our local artefacts in a window of the CES language school which is illuminated each evening. We thank them very much and many positive comments have been received.

With autumn now here thoughts may turn to Christmas presents – we have published a village archive calendar for 2023 showing a selection of celebrations in the village through the years. The price - £10 – is the same as our last calendar in 2020. Ideal for posting to Wheatley friends and relatives far and wide. Calendars are on sale in the Library on Thursdays (2-4.30) and outside the Merry Bells on Saturday mornings when the weather is fair!

Our next talk to which everybody is invited on Monday, 17th October entitled "Oxford: town & gown: to lick a Lord or thrash a cad" by Mark Davies. This will be followed by a talk on Monday, 28th November - "Morris' Motopolis: the motor works and the transformation of Oxford" by Simon Wenham. Both talks are at 8pm in the Merry Bells and are in conjunction with the Wheatley Society. Add them to your diary, they should be very interesting. There is no charge, but donations are always welcome towards the cost of the hall and speaker.

See you there.

Steph Cox

December 2022/January 2023

YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

Our move to Wheatley Library has been a great success. Wendy, Charlie, and the volunteers have been most welcoming and it's good to have easier access to the people of Wheatley.

There is an archive volunteer there each Thursday afternoon and at other times a volunteer can be reached by phone by the library staff. It all seems to be working well – thank you Wheatley Library.

By the way did you know that the 1921 census is now available to view for free on the computers in Oxfordshire Libraries?

The archive is forever growing, and errors corrected. www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk It really is like the Forth Bridge! Here are some of our latest additions for you to view:

- Search “View rich”. This is a short, interesting article by the historian Bill Hassall (ex-Manor House owner) which has recently come to light and well worth reading.
- Search “The Racks”. A hundred years ago villagers would have talked about the Racks. Find out precisely where they were (and still are!)
- Search “Cornfield’s celebration”. Photographs of the business’s recent 50th anniversary with displays, talks and goodies in the Merry Bells have been added to the archive.
- Search “Royal window” For those who missed it, Turner Properties devoted their entire window to a very patriotic display of photographs of the late Queen.
- Search “WW2 records” With Remembrance Day just gone, many of you will have seen the wonderful display of poppies at the entrance to the Merry Bells. Amongst the poppies was a sparse list of names of people who took an active role in the Second World War. The village is keen to try and emulate its book from WW1 “They were a Wall” with a similar one for WW2. Details of such villagers are sparse, and we would be very pleased to hear from anyone with any information on a family member from Wheatley who was involved in WW2.

In the issue from Aug/Sept it was hoped to be able to restore Wheatley’s milestone (on the London Road). Unfortunately, having met the “milestone expert” it was found that



Wheatley’s milestone was set in concrete when it was moved to its current position from Old London Road in the 1920s and some of the details have been buried. So sadly, no hope!

Copies of books, and the 2023 calendar, for sale are now in the window of the Language School and can be bought from the staff in the adjacent building.

Steph Cox