

Newsletter

DUNSTABLE & DISTRICT
LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

N°19

March 2003



The Chairman's Report

Having now written several of these reports, I find they fall into several distinct sections. There is the thanks expressed to all who have made the Society the success which it undoubtedly is; there is a review of activities since the last Newsletter and there is the appeal to members concerning current issues.

Being Chairman of our Society is a great privilege. I would like to thank all our members for making the Society so successful. Several of our speakers have commented on the number of people who turn up to hear them. We are often the largest audience they have ever spoken to. They are complimentary about our meetings and are impressed by the questions they are asked.

I would like to thank, on your behalf, all the members of the Society's committee for their faithful service and stewardship during the last year. I am particularly grateful that we now have a Vice-Chairman and I would like to thank Gordon Ivinson for undertaking this role. Joan Curran, our Secretary, continues to keep us all in order; Cynthia Turvey maintains our finances in good order and Omer Roucoux does excellent work as editor of this Newsletter. Lydia Raby ensured the success of the refreshments at the Christmas Social; Ron Frith sorts out our audio-visual problems; Bernard Stevens is, as always, a fount of good counsel and Peter Boatwright keeps us informed about the deliberations of the local Councils. I would like to thank them all for these and for other services which they have rendered to our Society.

I would like to thank Tony Ward for the diligent way in which he writes up our meetings for the Dunstable Gazette. My personal thanks also go to those who have proposed votes of thanks to our speakers. I would also like to thank our President, Colin Bourne, for the keen interest which he takes in our activities.

In September, Ann Ward gave us a moving and personal account of the founding of the Globe Theatre in London. Our speaker in October was Angela Hillyard who told us of the history of Offley Place, near Hitchin. In November, Jeremy Sutton was to have given a talk on the development of the Downs, but was indisposed at the last moment. I hope to include this talk in a future programme.

Norman Holding came, at short notice, and gave a fascinating account of the war-time activities at Maryland in Woburn.

Our Christmas Social was a great success and we were entertained by the Chiltern Singers. The ticket sales were below expectation, however, and we used the Methodist Parlour instead of the school Hall. This was a disappointment to the Committee. We need feed-back from the membership to establish why we were only able to sell just over half the expected number of tickets for this event. Those who did come thoroughly enjoyed the evening.

In January, Joan Schneider gave us a scholarly and entertaining talk on Roman Dunstable. Our February speaker was Jim Knight who talked to us about the transport of yesteryear, in particular the Dunstable Dasher and the Skimpot Flyer.

Your committee is in the process of finalising details for our Summer Outings. These are usually a great success. My one concern is the timing of the June outing and I feel we need feed-back from you as we often fail to meet our costs on this one.

The Society is contributing to a County display of material based on a 1950's theme and following the success of last year's History Week, more events are planned for this in 2003.

The Town Council is engaged in talks to bid for a Lottery Grant to purchase Priory House for the town. This is an exciting prospect as there are many local Societies and Clubs who would benefit. Such a site could provide opportunities to display and celebrate the variety of activities which already take place in Dunstable and to foster even greater diversity.

The current news on John Lunn, our Vice-President, is that he is much the same as usual. John is still a resident in Capwell Grange Home. He enjoys hearing about our activities and I always take him greetings from all his friends in Dunstable. He is well cared for and enjoys the chocolate we take him.

Hugh Garrod

A VOLUNTARY VISIT TO BEDFORD GAOL.

Published in "DUNSTABLE BOROUGH GAZETTE" 7 January 1871.

Frederick Howell, at one time Manager of the Bedfordshire and Leighton Buzzard Bank (Bassett's), was an occasional contributor to the Dunstable Gazette and other publications. His book 'Out of Office Hours' was published by James Tibbett in 1872. It appears to consist of reprints of articles and reviews written and published at intervals over the previous few years. The following article, first published in the Gazette, describes a visit to Bedford Gaol in 1870, when Mr Howell served as a juror in the county town.

It happened that the writer was recently called to assist in vindicating the majesty of the law, by serving upon a grand jury at the county town. After duly discharging ... [their duties, the jury] were informed that they had earned "their country's best thanks" – a very unsubstantial recognition of their services, at least one of their number thinks.

It was suggested that a visit to the gaol would prove interesting, and permission having been readily obtained from the governor, we proceeded to present our passports at the gates. The signature of Mr. Roberts was an "open sesame" at which the bolts were drawn, and we found ourselves in the temporary custody of an obliging and intelligent officer of Bedford Gaol. Imagine a long corridor, intersected by two smaller ones, with light iron galleries running round its whole length – one above the other, leading to two upper stories of cells; fancy a tessellated pavement beneath you, on which every footstep seems to resound again; then fill in the hideous details of the cell doors on either side of you, and above you – seeming to make a gigantic chessboard of the white walls – and you may make a mental picture of the county gaol. Plenty of light comes from the open glass roof and the windows at either end; the iron galleries are polished until they reflect like burnished steel, and the brass shines like gold. Everything is scrupulously – painfully – clean; there is no noise, except that made by our party, and, if you should come upon a prisoner doing any work about the building, he turns sharply round, and hides his features from your gaze.

The cells at the left hand of the entrance are reserved for prisoners under punishment. Inside is a crank, which they have to turn an allotted number of times per diem, or their food is partially withheld. Outside the cell door is an arrangement not unlike a gas meter, with a gauge to regulate the pressure put upon the crank, and a piece of clockwork

mechanism, to register the number of revolutions. In the centre is a little revolving disc of polished iron: it is the end of the crank, which the prisoner inside is turning, and we, who are outside that thick cell door, enquire of our conductor what use that labour is put to. Answer – "None !" We know the crank is turning; there is the register of the pressure, of the number of revolutions, and all for *nothing*.

To the spectator, with a laudable horror of all involuntary labour, it seems little short of a farce that such motion should be unproductive of some good result. Why should it not turn a coffee or flour mill? The labour would then be punitive and self-supporting, instead of being wasted, as it is now. True, all the prisoners' work is not lost, for we saw some splendid specimens of prison made mats and coconut fiber matting, and we were assured that the necessary clothes and requirements for prisoners, were, for the most part, made on the premises. But that crank ! – well, we have no desire to work it, but it might turn to some purpose !

We were taken to see some other prisoners, at a different punishment, and we looked at them through the bars of a cage (like very amiable bears) into which we were engaged in the perhaps profitable – but certainly very dusty – occupation of beating oakum. A powerful warden was trying to keep himself warm by watching some dozen men under a shed, (each in a partitioned place by himself), vigorously stirring themselves in their work, and so keeping up their circulation, if not earning their living. In the open yard, too, we saw some cannon balls placed on flower pots (or something the same shape) at intervals, and our courteous guide informed us that this was the "shot drill" punishment and consisted of prisoners amusing themselves (!) by carrying the balls from one stand to another for a specified time. *Cui bono?* What does an enlightened community get out of that in £ s. d.? What use is it to ratepayers that a man should qualify himself for a rupture by carrying heavy weights in an unmeaning manner "so many" paces, "so many" times? It's a hard punishment, we know, and it's very unprofitable. Cannot some of our prison reformers find some punishment at once hard and *profitable*? The problem surely ought to be, not how to knock a prisoner up with hard and useless punitive work, but how to make him *pay* while he is incarcerated. This is doubtless a vexed question: we candidly confess that, previous to entering a gaol for the first time, we had never given it any consideration.

In the "jewel room" were ranged various handcuffs,

links, and chains, looking as bright as silver. Out of a capacious box the officer produced the "cat" which has lately become an adjunct to our instruments of punishment, being used upon the dorsal portion of offenders who have been convicted of personal violence in their crimes. There was a cruel look about the black handle and knotted lashes which made one shudder at the thought of having such a visitor to one's epidermis; probably had we suffered from the unpleasant embraces of a garrotter, we should have viewed it with a feeling of satisfaction. In this room, likewise, are some old blunderbusses, which would be likely to cause considerable damage if discharged at two or three yards' distance, that is, if they did not burst in the operation.

For refractory criminals a "dark hole" is provided. There is an inner and outer cell; into the former we did not penetrate, the blackness of the latter being quite sufficient to convince us that nothing could be invented more likely to send a nervous person mad. The ordinary cells are dimly lighted with small barred windows having thick glass in them; the bed hangs across - on staples driven in the walls-hammock fashion, and the bedding consists of a sheet, two blankets, and a rug; the whole being rolled up during the day. A glass in the cell door enables a warder to exercise constant supervision, but an attempt at an amateur overlooking on the part of one of our party, was very promptly forbidden by the officer in charge, and we had to content ourselves by looking in at an empty cell, and taking the life in one, for granted.

Our steps were now turned towards the kitchen of the establishment, where the chief interest seemed to lie in the contemplation of the enormous boilers or coppers, in which various culinary operations, on a gigantic scale, took place, and profound investigations were made, also, into the working of a capacious steam-chest, fitted with wirework shelves from top to bottom, in which a thousand or two of potatoes could be cooked at one time. Our friend who had us in charge recapitulated the various items of the prison dietary table, but, as we have a very confused recollection of the number of ounces and pints of food given daily, and

could not distinguish the liquid from the solid constituents thereof, we reluctantly withhold the information from our readers, inasmuch as we don't imagine our knowledge upon the point would be of much use to them. We attribute much of our ignorance in this matter to the number of corkscrewy stairs we ascended and descended during our visit - the sensation of winding round and round which produced symptoms of a kind of mental vertigo, which was not found conducive to that concentrated attention which we should have given our guide, and we are afraid we must apologise for not hanging upon his words with that breathless attention the subject deserved. In this place he will learn how it all came to pass, and we protest that we could not be put to harder labour than to have a certain number of serpentine steps to ascend in an acrobatic fashion daily. We should want a lesson or two from "Ethardo, the Spiral Convolutionist," or some other professor of the art.

A look in at the chapel completed our survey. It is of horse-shoe shape, each prisoner having a box to himself; he cannot see his neighbour, and as, throughout the prison, the silent system is rigidly enforced, one can imagine with what heartiness the prisoners give the responses on the only day of the week they have liberty to use their voices. Perched aloft, like sailors in the sky-scrapers, two or three warders overlook the congregation, and, in a gallery above the pulpit, are two pews, for the families of the chaplain and governor. The curtains of these are drawn, so that no prisoner can feast his eyes on "female forms divine" even on that day of all others sacred. So the dull monotony of prison life goes on and on, and we can well imagine that, to many, its very sameness is the hardest part of the punishment. Truly, a terrible thing for respectability to contemplate, is incarceration in such a place as an expiation for misdeeds!



Sally the Dunstable Witch and the Bottled Curse

by Rita Swift

THE ORIGIN

Although Sally is a fictional character the story surrounding her creation is none the less an interesting one. She was created in order to shame the rector of Dunstable into repairing the Priory Churchyard by offering a humorous reason why it had perhaps become so dilapidated. Written in 1875 the ballad appears to have been forgotten until 1932, then lost and found again in 2002. Exodus 22 verse 18 says *Thou shalt not let a witch live* but Sally, being fiction, is one witch who really should survive.

THE FACTS

The good people of Dunstable were very distressed about the state of the Priory Churchyard. In vain they pleaded with the Reverend Frederick Hose rector of Dunstable to clear the weeds and repair the fences, which would then stop the cattle and pigs foraging amongst the gravestones.

At this time the north aisle of the Parish Church was in ruins and the Reverend Hose was anxious to have it carefully restored, but it was proving a very costly business. As he never disclosed the church accounts it was assumed the real reason for his reluctance was insufficient funds. By collecting subscriptions the Churchwardens raised enough money for the work to be completed, however instead of being grateful, the Rector was furious and returned it all. So the churchyard continued to deteriorate even more.

The Reverend Hugh Smyth rector of Houghton Regis and the Reverend Hose were both on the board of trustees of the Ashton Elementary Church Schools and in 1875 appointed Mr Alfred P Wire as schoolmaster. Mr Wire soon became acquainted with the problem of the churchyard and wondered how he could assist but was warned the rector could be very vindictive if anything was done without his consent. A warning that later proved correct. Although the Reverend Hose was very clever and a good preacher he is also described as selfish, unscrupulous and unpopular, so church services were poorly attended.

In the centre of the High Street and in front of the west end of the Church there was a rusty iron pump with a chained handle surrounded by a rusty iron fence. Underneath the roadway were large storage tanks that were now obsolete but originally had been constructed to hold the gallons of surplus rainwater coming from the Chiltern Hills. The location and pump inspired Mr Wire to compose a story about a witch's curse as a possible reason why the churchyard was not being repaired. The result was a poem with 81 stanzas plus all the right

ingredients, including a touch of humour. Friends were very enthusiastic on reading it and Mr W. J. Smith, 14 High Street, Dunstable offered to print and publish the ballad free of charge. The author stipulated his name went on the title page not for credit but as a precaution against it being attributed to anyone else.

Boys being boys quickly learnt the poem and took great delight in shouting it about the streets. The Rector was not amused. In fact he was furious and Mr Wire had to resign from his position but quickly found a new post. The Reverend Hugh Smyth of Houghton Regis sent for him and gave him a ten-pound note from the Trustees to help with the moving expenses - but without the knowledge of the Reverend Hose. He explained that having been a pillar of the community Mr Hose's pride had been sorely wounded as the County had condemned his attitude to the churchyard.

After the schoolmaster had left the Reverend Hose wrote to the Education Department accusing Mr Wire of stealing sundry vases and scientific apparatus belonging to the School. Of course the allegations were proved false and the missing items found in Dunstable. The Priory churchyard was eventually put in order and the Corporation removed the rusty pump and fencing from the Square.



Rev. Frederick Hose
Born 9.10.1802 Newington Butts, Surrey
Died 8.10.1883 Dunstable
Rector of Dunstable 1845 - 1883



cold they could not make the stones; and no one for love or money would go near to move the bones. Back at the Church the Prior was cursing old Sally with Holy water and prayers when suddenly the big bell in the steeple began to toll. The priests fell to their knees, as they knew no living person was ringing it. When it stopped Sally's ghost was seen to glide *right up to the Prior's side.* She then set about him sending him sprawling and followed up by attacking the monks, singeing the prayer books and letting out a long, loud, satanic laugh. For months Sally plagued the Priory and as the stones in the Square were still red hot a fence was erected so children would not

THE POEM

According to the poem Sally lived about 600 years ago. At first she just told fortunes and was quite harmless *but as age did creep upon her with bad spirits she did play.* She acquired a black cat for company that taught her the black arts that she used against her neighbours or anyone who offended her. Sickness in children and cattle and mysterious fires were all blamed on the witch. Eventually it became too much and the people went to the Prior calling for Sally to be *tried for witchcraft, and if guilty, to be burnt, or boiled, or fried.* The enterprising Prior though sold them charms to ward off the evil eye but when Sally counteracted them with more black magic he was eventually forced to bow to public opinion. At the trial it was a foregone conclusion that she was guilty and *to be burnt alive directly with her pussy and her stick, and her soul the Church doth banish, to the kingdom of old Nick.*

Preparations were made in the Square with the Prior having his chair placed outside the Priory gateway for a grandstand view. In fact the whole event turned into a holiday with the Mayor and Councillors as guests of honour and the shops closing early at three. Sally was brought forth and *put upon the pile.* And the noise of people shouting I am sure was heard a mile. As the flames burnt around her the crowd suddenly fell silent as Sally, waving her stick, uttered a frightening curse. *Where my ashes sink to day never any child shall play. For the earth that's under me till doomsday shall heated be.* For good measure she also planned to haunt the Priory and be a general nuisance to the Prior and the monks. Right on cue when she had finished her curse, a terrible storm raged with thunder, lightening and hail, which forced everyone to go home. When the men returned to clear the site, although everything was soaking wet, they found the stones still red hot just as Sally had predicted. *Out they could not put the burning,*

play there and get burnt.

The story of the curse soon spread far and wide but nothing and no one could exorcise the spirit until *one night in dark December when the Priory gate was locked, after nightfall came a stranger and for entrance gently knocked.* The stranger was a Palmer, a pilgrim returning from the Holy land complete with scallop, stick, palm leaf and relics, who had come to rid them of their curse. Joyfully he was taken to the Church and as soon as they had entered Sally glided down from the rafters into view, but the Palmer uttered some mystic words rendering Sally powerless. *Holding out the empty bottle, thundered out 'just jump in there'*, an order she dare not disobey. Once she was in the bottle it was corked and sealed and the Palmer buried it in the churchyard with a warning *But if ere this broken be, out the wicked ghost shall flee and shall plague you ten times more than she ever did before.* Stones were placed upon the site and with the spell broken the area on the Square soon cooled down. A deep well was dug for the witch's bones and a pump with a fence around it was erected on top. But of course over the years the exact burial place of the bottle was forgotten and as the residents of Dunstable were afraid of disturbing it the state of the churchyard became a local scandal.

*Thus the churchyard goes to ruin
Graves and fences getting worse:
Everyone devoutly wishing
Not to free the bottled curse.*

Rumour has it that a 'witch's grave' is in the churchyard complete with a spy hole in the gravestone. If any one can add details to this story I would be grateful.

Rita Swift (01582 527790)

I have a photocopy of the original poem if anybody is interested in having a copy.

O. Roucoux

From **The Dunstable Borough Gazette**
March 1903

The Dunstable Gazette of this period is full of international and national news. The local content is quite limited and much of this is taken up with the workings of the Courts and the local Councils.

A short notice states that the Dunstable Town Cricket Club will hold its Annual General Meeting at the Dunstable Dining Rooms, West Street. Does any member know the location of these Rooms?

The 'English Ladies' Choir' gave concerts for five days in Dunstable. One of the supporting acts is described as a 'marvellous Sand and Smoke Artiste' What did this person do in the way of entertainment?

From the March issues, I have chosen two 'Letters to the Editor' which show that, although life was quite different from that which we experience today, people's attitudes were not.

HORTICULTURAL SHOW WANTED

Dear Sir, Why have we not a Horticultural Society at Dunstable? Surely we are not lacking in horticulturalists in Dunstable, seeing the fine exhibits of vegetables, fruit and flowers that are yearly grown here and exhibited by many of this town at various shows held elsewhere.

I am convinced that there are many ladies and gentlemen of this town and neighbourhood who would be glad to subscribe to such a Society if one were formed. I should like to hear what others have to say about calling a public meeting in the Town Hall, inviting the gentry and allotment-holders, so as to get an opinion upon, say, having a good summer show in August in the Park or in some gentleman's grounds. If other amusements were added, this would prove a great attraction.

The perfection to which flowers, fruits and vegetables have already been grown in Dunstable has been due to our exhibitions, which have fostered a keen interest in the allotment-holders, as well as in professional growers. And where a keen interest is excited, whatever be the object, that same must advance by leaps and bounds. If a Society was now formed and subscription lists got out, I feel certain we might have a good show in August. Yours, etc.,

PROGRESS IN AGRICULTURE

THE DUNSTABLE MUSEUM

Dear Sir, I had an opportunity last evening for the first time of examining our Dunstable Museum, in the Court Room at the Town Hall.

There are some exhibits of local interest and historic value, but I must say I was disappointed that more relics of the Roman occupation of England were not to be seen, because it is well known that this neighbourhood has yielded a rich harvest of such treasures, in the way of coins, pottery, etc. Why is it that those promises which several gentlemen made some two or three years ago do not appear to have yet been carried out?

I think one reason, Sir, may be that the 'museum' (if it can as yet so be called) is not as 'get-at-able' as it should be. Unless one cares to attend our Wednesday Courts and listen meanwhile to tales of the very seamy side of life in our town, or, unless one avails himself of the privilege of a burgess and attends the meetings of the Town Council, enjoying or enduring their debates meanwhile, there is little or no opportunity of seeing our museum. I have myself on several occasions found the municipal buildings securely locked up when I had wished to have a look at what specimens had been got together.

A correspondent suggested in this column a week or two ago that a free library should be started in Dunstable. Whether the town is big enough to bear the expense I cannot say, but I would greatly like to see some such movement made, and then these cases which constitute the Dunstable museum might be placed in the public reading-rooms where they could be seen. No doubt those gentlemen who possess historic relics would then be more willing to hand them over.

Yours truly,

CURIOUS March 18th.

None of the letters is signed with the writer's name. They used pseudonyms such as "Progress in Agriculture" or "Curious". Another one is signed "A Man in the Street". The editor wrote the following at the end of the letters section :

We would draw our correspondents' attention in future to our rule requiring full name and address. Ed. D.B.G

Hugh Garrod

Dunstable Bypass 1964 Style!

a film by the Planning Department of Bedfordshire County Council

In 1964 the Planning Department of Bedfordshire County Council commissioned a film to set out the thinking behind a bypass for Dunstable. The film attempts to show how wonderful Dunstable could be by the year 2000. It was obviously an important project as the commentary was spoken by Michael Aspel. The tone is, however, akin to a schools broadcast.

The film opened with shots of a two seater plane taking off from Luton airport. The take off area was just a large grassed area. There were some aerial views of our town, followed by a brief history of traffic through the centre of Dunstable.

There were many shots of a traffic congested town and illustrations of the conflicting requirements of cars and pedestrians.

Then came a very interesting diagram to show traffic flows through the town. Besides the expected volumes up and down the High Street, there was evidence of much traffic between Luton and Leighton Buzzard which had to pass through Dunstable. We were shown the major employers in the town, mostly based on car and lorry production. We also saw the progress which Dunstable had already made in becoming a modern and up to date town. There were views of the Queensway Hall, the Dunstable College, the Magistrates' Court, the Ambulance Station the General Post Office and St Mary's Church. All of these were held up as examples of good practice and there were plans for a new Library. We were shown what Dunstable could look like. Stevenage new-town was held up as a good example and we were assured that Dunstable could be just as good. The film then set out how this could be achieved.

The first requirement was a north - south bypass, running along the foot of Blow's Downs. This would be allied with a link road from Houghton Regis which would emerge into the High Street at Dog Kennel Lane. This would then continue, in sections, to form an inner ring-road which would encircle the town centre, the Priory Church and St Mary's. It showed models of the 'Costain scheme' now the Quadrant. This was based on Stevenage and would eventually fill much of the area inside the ring-road, putting an end to the misery of pedestrians trying to get from shop to shop in amongst all the traffic.

At the time it no doubt looked like a wonderful idea. The 1960's were a time of rising optimism. The

modern viewer will be glad that nothing ever came of this scheme. There was much local resistance to the bypass across the Downs and the demolition which would have been needed if the inner ring-road was to be built. The project lost impetus and eventually fell foul of the budding environmental movement. Looking like Stevenage is all very well if you are starting from a greenfield site. It is not the answer if you are trying to enhance a town which has been in existence for many centuries. The northern bypass will mean that we are at last doing something about the Luton to Leighton Buzzard traffic which was identified as a problem all those years ago.

Hugh Garrod



ONLY the **BEST**
is good enough for
your Suit

We give the Best
Cut, Make, Cloth
and Linings

TAILORED on the
PREMISES

BUCKLE
Tailor & Outfitter

Middle Row
DUNSTABLE

Phone: 170

Advertisement from

"The Official Guide to Dunstable and District"
1940-1941

Compiled, printed and published by
INDEX PUBLISHER (Dunstable) LTD

Post World War II School Building

1952 Beecroft Junior School
 1957 Kingsbury Technical School (Canesworde Road)
 1958 St. Christopher's Infant School
 1959 Downside Junior School
 1959 Queen Eleanor School for Girls (Langdale Road)
 1961 Brewers Hill Secondary Modern School
 1961 Dunstable Further Education College
 1962 Watling Junior School
 1964 Mill Vale Secondary Modern School
 1965 Hadrian Junior School
 1966 Oakwood Infant School
 1969 Ardley Hill Junior and Infant School
 1969 Lancot Junior and Infant School
 1971 Weatherfield Special School
 1971 Manshead Upper School
 1971 St. Mary's R.C. Junior and Infant School
 1972 Glenwood Special School
 1974 Lark Rise Junior and Infant School
 1976 Streetfield Middle School

In September 1972, the new organisation into lower, middle and upper school started.

The old grammar school building, founded in 1888, became Ashton Middle School; Priory, Brewers Hill, Mill Vale and Five Oaks became middle schools.

Northfields, founded in 1936 as a Senior School, became an Upper School. Another Upper School was formed by the joining of Kingsbury Technical School and Queen Eleanor School to form Queensbury Upper School.

The Junioe Schools became Lower Schools.

CHANGING LANDSCAPES, CHANGING LIVES

A talk on the changing landscape and life in Marston Vale, a centre of the Bedfordshire brickmaking industry, and the area bounded by Bedford, Ampthill, Sandy and Milton Keynes. This will follow the AGM of the Bedfordshire Local History Association and will start at 3.00 pm on Saturday 17th May. It will take place in the Village Hall, Stewartby. All are welcome and admission is free.

INDUSTRY AND CONSERVATION IN LUTON

This is the theme of a day organised by the Friends of Luton Museum, Luton & District Historical Society and Luton Museum Service. It will trace the story of Luton from a rural community in the early 19th century, through the development of the brewing industry and the hat industry up to the industries of the 20th century. It will be held in the Pavilion, Bowling Green Lane, on Saturday 14th June from 10.00am to 4.00pm approx. The cost is £12, to include morning coffee, lunch and tea. For further details apply to the Secretary.

Ford End Watermill, Ivingoe

Opening Times 2003

Afternoons 2.30 - 5.30

Admission : Adults £1. 20 Children (5-15) 40p

	21 April	Easter Monday
	4 May	Sunday
(M)	5 May	Bank Holiday Monday
(M)	11 May	Sunday - National Mills Day
(M)	26 May	Bank Holiday Monday
	1 June	Sunday
	8 June	Sunday
	6 July	Sunday
(M)	13 July	Sunday
	3 Aug	Sunday
	10 Aug	Sunday
(M)	25 Aug	Bank Holiday Monday
	7 Sept	Sunday
	14 Sept	Sunday - National Heritage Day

MILLING DEMONSTRATIONS

on dates marked (M) between 3 and 5pm approx. when stone ground wholemeal flour will be on sale.

Ample car parking. No toilet facilities.

Restricted disability access

LOCAL HISTORY WEEK

Exhibitions are being held this year at the Baptist Hall, St Mary's Gate (Wilkinsons car park) from Wednesday 28th May to Saturday 31st May. We shall be needing stewards so please do volunteer at our next meeting, or get in touch with the Secretary. There will also be a talk hosted by the Society on Tuesday 3rd June at 7.00 pm by one of our members, Tony Ward, to launch his book on the bands of Dunstable. 'Strike up the Band' will be a presentation with slides and musical interludes.

Veronica Main will also be visiting Dunstable again and giving a talk on straw plaiting on Friday 6th June at 7.00 pm in the Methodist Hall. On the following day, 7th June, she will be demonstrating straw plaiting in the Priory House from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm.

Full details of the Local History Week will be available in May. To contact the Secretary phone 01525 221963

Articles published in the Newsletter cannot be reproduced without permission of the editor Omer Roucoux