

# Potton History Society



Newsletter Number 46 Spring 2009

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## **Society News**

In **October** we welcomed Chris Walker to one of the best attended meetings in the three decades of the Society. The present golf course at Sutton uses a site that has been the seat of the Burgoyne family from Tudor times to the 1930's. The Burgoyne family acquired the two manors of Sutton in 1529 and 1544 and a Baronetcy was created in 1641. The Burgoynes played a notable role in the British Army into Victorian times. The family connection finished with the death of Lady Burgoyne in 1938. The original house was lost in a fire in 1825 and replaced by the present building now occupied by the golf club. A series of maps and aerial photographs illustrated the changes in the park and its ornamental lake and raised questions about changes in location of buildings and ornamental features. These could form the basis of further research.

At the AGM in **November**, Chairman George Howe reported on another successful year for the society, with a record level of membership and continued progress in developing a digital archive. Ken Lawson and Christine Harper were thanked for their invaluable contributions on their retirement from the committee. After completion of the official business, Barry Woods provided an entertaining talk on the History of Rubbish. After outlining the often appalling and smelly efforts to remove unwanted material from town and city streets he provided a series of slides illustrating the evolution of the municipal dust-cart from a box on four wheels to the latest high-tech vehicles.

For our **December** entertainment George Howe and Peter Ibbett presented an evening devoted to the work of former Biggleswade Chronicle photographer George Skevington, who died in 2005. Biggleswade History Society had provided a collection of Potton photographs mainly from the late 40's to the 60's showing many of the people and events of the time. The demolition and rebuilding of the Potton Shambles, sports and social events were all featured, as well as special celebrations such as Festival of Britain events.

Fashions and hairstyles of the era were on display as well as activities in the Parish room, which also did duty as a small cinema showing films such as 'The Maggie'. The Society would like to add more photographs and documents from the 50's and 60's to its growing archive. Please contact us if you have suitable material.

Stuart Antrobus, the author of a new book on the Women's Land Army in Bedfordshire, was the **January** speaker. An 'army' of Land Girls were called into action to replace men drafted into the services and to help expand agriculture to meet the need of wartime. They worked long hours with little time off and low rates of pay but became a vital part of the war effort. Stuart's research had produced many photographs and memories with Land Girls handling both 'old' horse power and the latest tractors and machinery. Some went on to marry local farmers and became part of the '50's farming revolution. At the height of the war there were over 1000 Land Girls at work in Bedfordshire. Some were lodged in Hostels such as the Hollies (now demolished) in King Street. There was little official recognition for their efforts at the end of the war and most returned to family life. Many look back today on the 'time of their lives'

Ken Page provided a memorable pictorial tour of Biggleswade at the **February** meeting, using photographs from his extensive collection. They revealed a thriving Market Town with many 'traditional' shopkeepers and traders. The Victorian shopper would have needed to take care with the dusty roads and pavements that were only provided on one side of some of the main streets! The photographs showed the wide range of well built buildings stimulated by the booming Victorian Economy and the influence of the railway system. Public buildings, from the Railway Station to those in the new cemetery, reflected pride in replacing old timber with 'modern' brick and stone. The images of a bygone era also revealed a community ready to celebrate by dressing up and putting on a memorable parade and welcoming touring entertainments such as the circus.

At the **March** meeting, Stella Gibbs provided an illustrated history of one of Bedfordshire's treasures. The gradual development of non-conformist worship in homes and barns in the 17th and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries included small groups at Potton. This blossomed out into a patchwork of purpose built chapels across the country catering for at least a quarter of the population by 1800. At Roxton the Metcalfe family were responsible for the conversion of a barn in the grounds of their house into a rustic style chapel with a thatched roof. The little congregation at Roxton took root and a series of Pastors were appointed. The chapel faced hard times after the Metcalfe Family met financial ruin in the middle of the century but revived towards the end of the Victorian Era and became an important social focus for the village. The chapel has survived through the 20th century and now, through grant aid due to its unique design, faces the 21<sup>st</sup> century in first class condition and with a supportive congregation.

### **Can You Help with Family History?**

Among the most frequent requests that land up in the Society 'In-Tray' are requests for family information concerning relatives that once lived in Potton. Founding Chairman Norman Parry used to field these from his own extensive research in the Record Office. It is now much more difficult to know where family information can be found in our ever-expanding archives. For one recent request I looked in:-

Memorial Records (100's pages of work by Ken Lawson & others)  
Trade Directories (1980's photocopies, gently fading)  
Census Returns (1841 to 1901 in a variety of photocopies & databases)  
Occupations lists (Norman Parry's typed lists)  
Wills (Norman Parry's work is on a Word file for easy checking)  
Document files (A start made on digitising but mostly a manual search)  
Church Records (Mainly Micro-fiche but some in word files)

This all takes time! There is an opportunity for a member (or members) to create a PHS FAMILY RECORDS DIGITAL FILE

which would be a database of all the family names and their details that we know of. The work would require working through all our family records and placing names and details on one single Family Index. Computer literacy would be essential! Please let us know if you are interested. Training given; Salary = Pleasure!

## **Forthcoming Programme**

### **May 28th Audio Potton**

This evening will delve into the society audio archives. It will also feature a contribution from Alan Waring on his work with our local station 'Radio Biggles' and his sound archive.

### **June 25th The Listed Buildings of Potton**

Potton has a unique collection of buildings, many of which are listed. A walk will start at 7.30pm while a sit-down presentation will start at 8pm. Both parts of the evening will join up at 9pm. **\*7.30 START AT COMMUNITY CENTRE\***

### **July 23rd Letterpress Printing Reg Brown**

An expert printer tells the story of his craft from Gutenberg to modern four colour printing

### **Aug 27th From Our Archives**

Our Archives, both traditional and digital, are growing fast. Come and see items that illustrate the history of Potton over the last 200 years. Bring a contribution to add to the archives.

### **Sept 24th The Early Years of the Hutchinsons George Howe**

Our Chairman reveals the story of the Hutchinson family in this area using sources from 1816 to 1916.

### **Oct 22nd The 1851 Church Census Sean Hendy**

A census carried out in 1851 reveals the state of churchgoing in early Victorian times in our local area.

## **Colin Buxton - 50 Years Service to Potton United FC**

I first started supporting Potton United in 1957, just before I moved to Potton. Once I became a regular supporter I was asked by the late Eddie 'The Egg' Gurney if I would join the Committee, which I did and here I remain 1958-2008. I soon got involved with the Reserves who were playing in the Bedford League. I was linesman and trainer, sometimes playing if we were short. To further my knowledge of First Aid, I joined Potton St John's Ambulance Brigade (long since defunct) and passed all the examinations.

In the early days I used to come home from away games, write a report to give to the local press correspondent and was paid 2 shillings and six pence. After several years I was asked to become First Team Trainer which involved better grounds to visit, better dressing rooms and a cup of tea at half-time. Also, with the expectation of a more knowledgeable trainer, Charles McCormack, Manager of Wellingborough and Physio to Northampton Town arranged a course at Cambridge. One evening a week for 6 weeks, then an exam.

Off I went on my bicycle after work, thankfully there was very little on the roads in those days. I should not be riding after dark with my poor sense of balance. The final night was held at one of the large hotels in Cambridge with the buffet being provided by the drugs firm whose product we had been using and my wife was allowed to attend. We were given a talk, then a question and answer session to conclude and I passed the exam. In those days I was friendly with the Desborough trainer, who always had some sweets in his pocket. Desborough, however, was the coldest place I had ever been to, even with every item of clothing I had with me was worn under my track suit. Then there was the ride home in the back of Derek Inskip's car with no heat at the back in those days and inevitably 'Skip' having to stop for a 'comfort break'.

Best times were winning the League and the League Cup. Also we won the Beds Senior Cup at Luton Town's Ground and it is extremely disappointing that we have not won it since.

Eventually I got tired of the travelling and being committed to Saturdays and mid-week, often going without a meal after work. So I decided to call it a day at the end of 1978-79 season. At the Annual Dinner I was presented with a tankard from the club and players at that time. I was very proud to receive that and it holds many memories.

I continued as a committee member doing whatever was needed and doing a lot of work on the ground during the summer months. It was, I think, in 1990 or 1991 my wife and I took over running the tea hut, which we carried on for thirteen seasons, rarely missing a First or Reserve team match. We had a good name for ourselves and visiting supporters would tell us they came because they knew they would get looked after.

Unfortunately this had to come to an end as my back problems worsened and I could not carry on with the standing or lifting. Everything had to be taken home for storage, trips to the cash and carry were frequent with a large freezer in use. Two years after an operation on my back I am much improved but still don't want to stand too long and I am also past my active use by date. I am not happy that I cannot do more but maybe I have done my bit. There have been happy times and sad times. Getting relegated was not very good for anyone at the club and getting back was a struggle. Winning cups is always good and perhaps the best was when we won the East Anglian Cup against Stamford, who had just won the League with us in the middle of the table. On the night we felt that Stamford thought they had won before they left the dressing room, however they were in for a shock as Potton were convincing

winners. Stamford's Manager, Steve Evans, was very disappointed but he did give Potton the Champagne that he hoped to be drinking. We have had many laughs including when Percy Beech dived into the bath at Luton Town and also when Terry King went mad when Albert Frost tore a muscle while doing his boots up at Wolverton in the days before substitutes were allowed. These are all part of the game I would not have wanted to miss and I have at least been part of the history of Potton United FC.

Colin Buxton

### From the Archives



## **Provincialisms of Bedfordshire**

Leafing through an old Scrapbook, now in the safe hands of Potton History Society, I found parts of a couple of articles from 1868, provided by John W Burdon of Oriel College, Oxford who proposed to:- ‘ventilate my collection of Bedfordshire provincialisms in the columns of a respectable county newspaper ... Clergymen and laymen ... are invited to discuss freely in the columns of the paper, or if they prefer it to address their communications privately to myself. ...The amount of trouble required in order to ensure accuracy, - is, I suspect, one great reason why collections like the present seldom if ever see the light.’

I trust the modern reader will respond to the efforts of one of our ancestors who did a valuable service for posterity by adding their own knowledge of the richness of local language. Here are five words as a sample of over 400 that were ventilated on Victorian readers.

A is for AGGLE. To cut unevenly:- as a joint of meat or a loaf of bread.

C is for CLUNG or CLUNGY. Applied generally to articles of food when the parts unduly cling together. (eg:- They were very clungy dumplings). I heard in Turvey ‘Clung as liver’

H is for HAM. To ham a hedge is to cut, lower and trim it. (Turvey)

M is for MUMCHANCING Keeping stupidly and sullenly silent. ‘She’ll sit there mumchancing with a book, by the hour together. ‘She won’t speak to her if you don’t to her.’

W is for WEMBLE To ‘wemble a basket over’ is to overturn it. (Thurleigh).

Please let me know of any Potton words you know about and help us preserve the distinctive speech of our ancestors.

Peter Ibbett

**What's in a Name** - (Names of Potton residents in bold print)

Composed by Mr Moses Gibbs at Potton about 1880. Original in care of Stan Gibbs (grandson) Clunes, N.S.W., Australia.

How very queer it does appear  
That many here from year to year  
Should take such a delight  
In running down, with a sour frown  
Our little town of scant renown  
In scorn, from morn to night,  
When if they only think the matter o'er  
And, if my uncouth rhymes are not a bore  
They'll see too in a minute  
That Potton – tho' so very much abused  
Has many wonders in it.

How very few there, I dare say,  
Who dream a **Judge** in full array  
With eyeglass sits from day to day  
Minutely watching cases.  
Yea, oft before his bench there stands  
Offenders old, and fast **Young Hands**.  
The guilty he intently scans  
He knows them by their faces.

*(Mr. Judge was a watch and clock maker, so every pun is exact)*

We too of Royalty can boast I ween  
In a **Young King** who rules without a queen,  
I know not what his age is.  
A few **Nobles** often may be seen  
With **Chamberlains** and **Pages**.  
And all of you may daily view  
An **Abbott** too, as you walk through  
Ev'n this own small locality.  
**Pauls** and **Peters** you may meet,  
And **Virtue-ous Soles** in yonder street,  
Persons all **Head** and Chinn may greet.  
Don't stare – 'tis a reality.

Some morning too, if you go round  
 Our little square, I will be bound  
 Without a doubt there may be found  
 An old **Gray Parrott** talking.  
 And tho' my words may oddly sound  
 Here **Birds** and **Partridges** abound  
 With **Peacocks** slowly walking.  
 And unpursued by man or hound  
 Are **Foxes** daily stalking.  
 Full many **Wits** in Potton dwell  
 An especial **Sharpe** one I know quite well  
 His **Barber-ous** remarks I cannot tell,  
 It would so cut up my rhyme.  
 Another **Milton** lives here too,  
 And one – who when he's sad, 'tis true  
 Is **Merry** all the time.  
 The trade of Potton too will ne'er decay  
 For we have **Tylers** here by **Knight** and **Day**  
 A Fact none can deny.  
 Of **Millers**, **Carters**, **Coopers** we can boast,  
 And **Fishers**, **Smiths** and **Taylor**s – quite a host,  
 With **Masters** standing by.  
 And when we've appetites voracious  
 Potton owns, tho' it is not spacious  
**Jolly Homes** and **Kitchens** quite capacious  
 With **Cooks** who there reside.  
 A few good **Dishers** we possess  
 And **Pepper** too, but what a mess  
 As you will say when I confess  
 No salt we have beside.  
 Don't w**Hine** for here I would assert  
 That we have **Almonds** for dessert,  
 I say it not with pride.

*(Yes, a Mr Salt came to live at Potton shortly afterward. He was a sweep)*

**Flowers** here are not unknown,  
 And all may see a **Rose** full blown  
 Now blooming by their side.  
 For all of you I will be plain  
 That Potton must its **Wiles** contain,  
 Oh yes, and we encounter **Paine**.  
 But still we do not oft complain  
 How strange such words appear  
 Yet show their troubles some would **Fane**.  
 And while they fret with might and **Mane**  
**You'd** scarcely see a **Tear**  
 But such a sight as this is rare  
 One morn I met, it made me stare,  
 A gentleman all **Gore**.  
 Yet farther on I do declare  
 I really saw one **Moore**.  
 Cold wintry weather here is nothing new  
 For we have **Winter's** face all summer through  
 And astonishing to say  
 No matter whether skies be bright and blue  
 We've **Raynes** here every day.  
 That Potton is a seaport town who dare deny,  
 We've **Creeks** and **Kays** and **Bays** hereby.  
 Of ships and boats there's nil:  
 But if you **Hunt** o'er all the **Lee**  
 Some big **Stonebridges** you will see,  
 And with my lines you will agree  
 When openly I state  
 That some **Young** men, how strange, are always old  
 And all the oddities can ne'er be told—  
 Yet still I must narrate for those who for peculiar facts do seek,  
 That we three **Mundays** have in every week,  
 It long has been our fate.  
 Tho' what is that compared to this I say  
 Of all the other sights.  
 For we in Potton only have one **Day**  
 To a great many **Knights**.

## **History of Potton Flower Show (continued)**

After I handed in my first part of this story, I discovered that Janet Norman has kept all the cuttings from the Biggleswade Chronicle. From this she gave me the following names as members of the committee that organised the 1974 show: Mike Carlisle, S Derry, M Robinson, R Boxall, R Bylett, G Culpan, P Edwards, R Coombs, Mrs. A Carlisle, Mrs. P Holt, Mrs. M Johnson, Mrs. Stewardson and A Parker.

Mrs. A Carlisle was Secretary to whom Entry Forms were to be returned. The following cups were to be won and still are today for the most points in each section. Vegetables - The Asmer Cup; Flowers – Boxall Cup; Flower Arranging – Mrs. G Wright Cup and Ladies Section – The Ladies Club Cup.

Vouchers were donated by the following: Suttons Seeds Ltd; R Harkness and Co; Mrs. P Haynes, Waresley Park Garden Centre; Boots Chemist; Michaelangelo Hair Salon; C V Hull. Of these only Waresley Garden Centre have continued to support the show through to the present time.

Prize cards were awarded to the 1st, 2nd & 3rd with prize money of 20p, 15p and 10p. This was doubled for certain classes – collection of 4 kinds of vegetables, collection of salad vegetables 4 kinds, Fruit cakes, Victoria sandwich and a Cherry Cake. (How many cherries] sunk to the bottom, I wonder?)

In those early days of the show with the hall filled with exhibits, Ray Bylett's caravan was used as the office with Ray and Mike Carlisle sleeping in it as security men.

Colin Buxton

*Many photographs must have been taken of the 1974 and subsequent Flower Shows. We would be delighted to accept originals or make copies to add to our archive collection. Ed.*

## **Voyage of Discovery**

It was a glorious autumn weekend when I set off for Bristol and a scenic route via Chipping Norton and Westonbirt Arboretum ensured a colourful drive. I was paying a visit to my daughter and her family and was looking forward to visiting a museum on the Saturday. The day came and we headed for the docks where the steamship 'Great Britain' was to be seen. I'd been to see it several years ago and after much restoration I was eager to step on board once more for my voyage of discovery.

She was designed by I K Brunel and was launched by the Prince Consort in 1843. She weighed 3443 tons and was the first ship to rely primarily on screw propulsion. In 1886 'Great Britain' was damaged and beached in the Falkland Islands and remained there until 1970 when she was towed, supported by barges, from the South Atlantic to the Northern Atlantic and finally into the dry dock in Bristol where she had been built. We were soon parked and heading for the ticket office. Inside we paid our entrance fee and received our ticket copy of a 'Passenger's Contract Ticket' for Melbourne, Australia dated 7th Aug 1869. Having signed it, we were free to board. We entered the dockside museum – the ticket was valid for one year, 131 years later and it was still waiting for us so we didn't dally in the museum but made our way across the gangway to the top deck.

On board we had a panoramic view of the Avon Gorge with I K Brunel's Clifton Suspension bridge spanning it and the bow of the Great Britain pointing under it towards the river Severn and the open seas beyond. Across the docks was the backdrop of the city of Bristol, with its towers and church spires looking down on the harbour with the replica of the 'Matthew', Cabot's wooden sailing ship in which he sailed across the Atlantic and discovered Newfoundland and North America. The replica has also made the same epic voyage and was now moored alongside the dock adjacent to the Great Britain. Our tickets were checked and available was a free audio companion recreating the lives of the passengers and crew. It was

then we heard the moo of a cow and the grunt of a pig coming from stalls on the weather deck. Inside the first stall was a straw strewn sty with a life size model of a tasty looking porker –no doubt the first class passengers would have tasty crackling with their choice cuts of pork. In the next stall a life size model cow stood, with a three-legged stool at the ready to provide fresh milk and cream for those passengers too. Finally, there was a coop with tasty chickens, to provide fresh eggs to dip their soldiers in and southern fried succulent meat later in the voyage.

The galley was situated forward of the engine hold and the captain's cabin and chart room; a buffer zone for the 1<sup>st</sup> class passengers astern of the ship. The galley, also a store area with barrels of salted or dried fish and other such preserved food products, plus all the implements required by the cooks of the day.

Along the gangways, port and starboard of these sections, were cabins for the crew and the marines that were on board for the defence against pirates or trouble on board. In one cabin were two model marines, one an officer in his bunk and the other his batman tending to his uniform. In the Captain's chart room he was consulting a chart with his First Mate. Beyond the galley in the bow section was the steerage quarters with its narrow gangways, along each side were compartments with double tier bunk beds and only a canvas curtain for each door way. On the walls of some were pinned scraps of paper with sketches by some budding artist, depicting scenes of memories of home or other scenes on their voyage. In one gangway two period dressed model women were in an argument, with one pulling the other's hair – we didn't stop to see the outcome of that fracas.

Moving on to another area there was a woman changing a baby's nappy. These all gave a sense of the claustrophobic effect these confined conditions must have had in steerage. Below them in the forward hold in one section you could hear the whinnying of horses; one having his hoof attended to by a marine soldier while its bridle was being held by another. Two other horses

– also lifelike models – were in their narrow confined stalls, small enough to prevent them falling over as the ship plunged or rolled in rough seas, they also had a canvas sling under their midriff hanging by ropes from the deck above. Their stores, bags of oats and other necessities were stacked nearby. It must have been very dismal down there with such a small skylight with its louvre ventilation.

The ship's bell was situated on the foc's'le and the top deck from here was a single weather deck way back to the stern. The funnel was slightly forward of mid-ships and above the galley. With two tall masts forward and four masts aft, it must have looked an impressive sight when in full sail with that tall monolith like funnel (Dare I say, "Looking like Brunel's stove pipe hat").

The weather deck and the ship's wheel were at the stern. The engine hold, from the keel to the top deck, with bulkheads all round was quite enlightening. In it was a full scale rotating model, its huge cylinders and piston rods moving in and out operating a beam that turned the crankshaft, which turned a huge sprocket driving a chain to a smaller sprocket on the shaft turning the screw. Other moving parts were operating the steam timing. Quite an achievement just to do a replica model - - Quite a massive undertaking in the mid-1800s on the real engine.

Of course the 1st class section was the most opulent, with the promenade deck panelling painted with elaborate decoration. The central deck support pillars were painted to look like marble and each carved capital painted in gold and the deck carpeted. Round the sides were cabins with shiny brass hinges and fittings on the decorated wooden doors. There were single and double bunk cabins and the ships doctor had a double size cabin, his model inside attending to a patient with a cut hand. In another cabin a gentleman model was being shaved by a negro servant with a cutthroat razor – surely a dicey task in rough sea? All the cabins had very little headroom and the bunks seemed very narrow and short. My granddaughter hopped into one bunk and drew its individual curtain, however she soon opened it, I guess it was too dark inside. Along

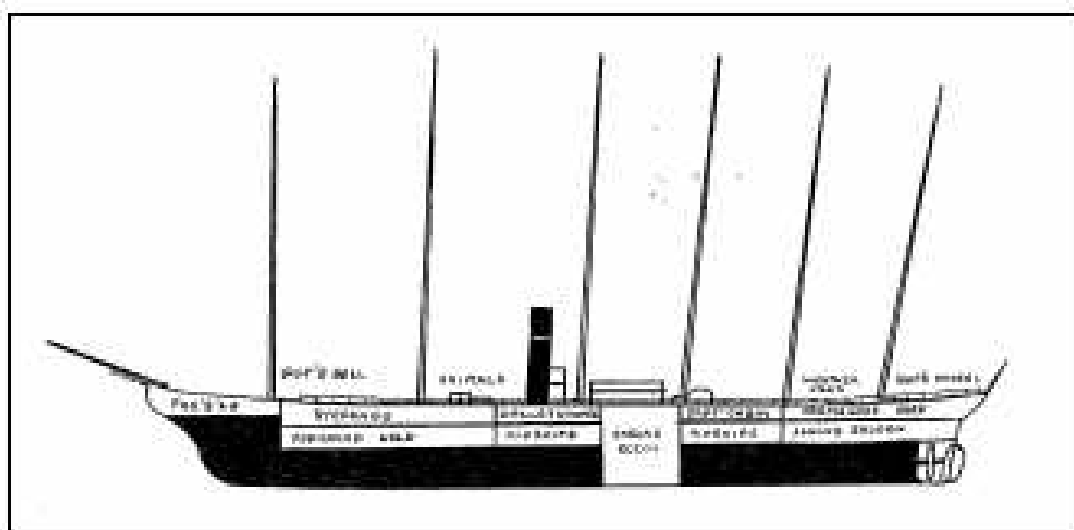
the centre of the promenade deck between the pillars were cushioned benches and windows looking out to the ships wake. Below the promenade deck was the dining saloon with long polished tables on each side which had cushioned bench seats fitted with a cushioned flip over backrest so that the seats could be used at the table then flipped over to face the centre of the carpeted saloon.

This saloon and the promenade decks were restored first, along with the weather-proofed deck above. Many planks for the decking were paid for by the public, each recorded with the donors name on a plan. This allowed functions to be held which enabled an income for the rest of the programme to be completed.

From the dockside the Great Britain appears to be floating. This effect has been achieved by a clear sheet of glass or plastic sealed between the dockside and the hull round the plimsoll level of the ship and water flows over this sheet to create this illusion. Most effective! You can descend beneath this to view the bottom of the ship, its revolving screw and its rudder.

And so our voyage ended, when I stepped on the dockside it wasn't Melbourne, Australia – I was still in Bristol! Ah well, I can but dream. So, next time you're down that way make sure you don't miss it, it's a voyage at the start of the steam age!

K G Lawrence





## **A Little Light Relief**

Beecham's, takes me back to World War One. Their Pill adverts were printed on sheets of toilet paper, 1914-1918 . Originally they were sent to men in the Front Line. These helped to boost morale with their pictorial jokes and the reassuring legend on each sheet, "Printed with clarified ink on non-irritant paper". One cartoon showed an English and a French soldier with the caption "Bonne Camaraderie", "Good Mates and Good Medicine. Take Beecham's Pills for Active Service".

Also to be sung to the tune of "Hark the Herald Angels Sing".

### **Beecham's Pills and Powders.**

Hark ! The jelly babies sing,  
Beecham's Pills are just the thing.  
They are gentle, meek and mild.  
Two for a man and one for a child.  
If you want to go to Heaven,  
You must take a dose of seven.  
If you want to go to Hell,  
Take the blinking box as well !

I don't know what the P.C. people would say to that today, but I'm sure that under such pressures as they were in those times – and the service personnel in the front line today - would have appreciated a little light humour like that!

## **More Provincialisms**

There were countless working donkeys in the 19th century. I remember donkey and carts being used in the late 1930's by the ragand- bone man, 'Bumpsey' we called him, also the local milkmaid, Violet Dawson, delivering milk round our village and to outlying cottages. The English knew the donkey as Neddy or Dickey, the Scottish as Cuddy and the Welsh as Moke.

Cheers, Keith.

## What was the weather like on Christmas day in Potton?

Our Potton weather man, Philip Westmoreland, has been contributing his weather records to the Archives. We have an unbroken daily set of recordings from 1980 through to the present time. 2008 was (on average) the coldest year for some time. Philip has been keeping an eye on Christmas Day:-

1965 Moderate frost	1989 Mild showers pm. 48F
1966 Very mild	1990 Severe gales rain 44F
1967 Rain	1991 Mild sunny 44F
1968 <b>Deep lying snow</b>	1992 Very cold frosty 32F
1969 Mild & dry	1993 Very cold frosty 34F
1970 <b>Some snow at times</b>	1994 Mild rain pm 46F
1971 Mild & dry	1995 Cold frosty 36F
1974 Very mild Gales	1996 Cold dry 39F
1977 Severe gales Christmas Eve	1997 Very mild gales rain 54F
1978 Rain and local floods	1998 Very mild windy rain 55F
1979 Frosty 34F	1999 Sunny windy 46F
1980 Dry sunny 44F	2000 Rain strong winds 48F
1981 <b>Deep lying snow 21F</b>	2001 Sleet am, sunny pm 46F
1982 Very mild 50F	2002 Very mild sunny 55F
1983 Very mild 52F	2003 Mild cloudy 48F
1984 Rain after frost 41F	2004 Cold dry 34F
1985 Mild showers 44F	2005 Cold dry 37F
1986 Mild rain 46F	2006 Cold dry 39F
1987 Cold showers 40F	2007 Fair dry 44F
1988 Very mild 54F	2008 Cloudy dry 39F

What is your prediction for Christmas Day 2009? My money is on wet & mild at 45F!

Peter Ibbett (with thanks to Philip Westmoreland)

*Can anyone supply details for those few missing years – 1972/3 and 1975/6? I certainly spent my Christmas Day in Potton for each of those years but I have no memory of the weather conditions, nor do I remember the snow of 1981. Ed.*

## **NOTICE BOARD**

### **Archives**

The larger our archives become, the more important it is to be able to readily gain access to the information within them. With this thought in mind, why not join our team of volunteers to help with the various ongoing projects. See page 4 for details of the latest project.

### **New publication**

Anyone who was intrigued by our talk on the chapel at Roxton may like to know that Stella Gibbs has written a history of the chapel, details of which can be obtained from the Society.

### **Newsletter no. 47**

Your articles, letters, comments and memories are always most welcome, no matter how short or long. Please pass items to Vera Parry, Mary Leigh or any committee member. The deadline for copy to be included in the next issue is 1st August 2009.