

Chedham's Yard Supporter's Newsletter – April 2014

Welcome to the second newsletter for our supporters, we hope that you found the content of the previous one both interesting and informative.

Winter Progress

We announced in the previous issue that we were working hard to redevelop the drying shed and on the renovation of the tip cart. The wheels of the cart were removed in mid January and taken to Acton Scott in Shropshire to be rebuilt. The wooden rims (felloes) will be replaced whilst the spokes and hubs will be cleaned, preserved and re-assembled. It is planned that the full wooden wheel will be rebuilt at Acton Scott but the rims will be refitted at Chedham's Yard, providing that a method can be found to safely heat the iron rim.

Heating the rim will cause it to expand which is an essential part of the process - the amount it expands is dependent upon the temperature reached.

Removing the Wheels

The wheels are held on to the axle with a single metal pin and the design of the hub ensures that the pin cannot fall out. The rim of the hub has a small gap which is filled by a wooden plug held in place by a simple clip but once the clip is released and the plug removed the pin can be extracted and the wheel withdrawn from the axle. The process is quick and simple.



Retaining Pin



Cut out to allow the pin to be removed



The centre picture shows the pin being tapped out. The RH picture shows the wheel ready for loading and repair.

Assuming that plans can be put in place to heat the iron rim in the Yard we will let you know the relevant date for this very special event by posting the information on the web site. Numbers will be restricted, so early booking will be required.



Two wheelwrights from Acton Scott checking the suitability of the tiring platform sited opposite the Drying Shed

Promoting the Yard

A partnership has been agreed with two other local attractions, both at Warwick, Hill Close Gardens and the Lord Leycester Hospital, to offer a combined tour for groups of visitors to all three attractions in one day. The price will include tours, talks and refreshments for a single price of £16.40. We hope that it will encourage visitors from further afield to make the journey to our area and enjoy what we have to offer.



Chedham's Yard



Hill Close Gardens



Lord Leycester

Group Visits

We had many groups visit during 2013 as a result of adverts and talks given to clubs and societies. Group visits during the week will be a continuing feature of our opening policy during the 2014 season. If you are a member of a group or association who would be interested in a visiting the Yard please e-mail bookings@chedhamsyard.org.uk or call the office on 01789 842770 for details.

We are fortunate with the location of the Yard being close to the Stags Head public house which provides snacks and full meals or, if you prefer, just a drink.

If you would like one of our team to give a presentation to your group please e-mail us at bookings@chedhamsyard.org.uk or call the office with your details.

Finding the Yard

The Trustees have recognised that finding the Yard has been a problem due the restrictions on advertising placed upon the Trust by the planning authorities, but the same regulations allow for AA event signs to be put up on a yearly basis. We are in discussion with the AA for signs to be placed on the approaches to the village and a few within the village showing both the parking area and the route to the Yard itself. This should make the visit less stressful.

The New Web Site

Following comments from users the web site has been redesigned to make to more user friendly. The new site was launched at the beginning of February. It has been designed such that we can update the site easily and quickly enabling us to add pictures and information in a timely manner. We would welcome your feedback.

Merchandise

Not everyone coming to the Yard is familiar with the life, working conditions and processes used by the blacksmith's and wheelwright's and whilst the guides do an excellent job explaining how the Yard functioned we have commissioned two booklets covering the life of the blacksmith and the farm workers. These will be on sale at the Yard.

Wheelwrights

It is a little known fact that the wheelwright trade was classified as reserved occupation at the start of WW2.

Many of the aircraft at the start of the conflict had wooden wheels and wooden structures covered in fabric, it was only much later that aluminium structures and skins became the preferred materials. Heavy landings on rough ground took their toll on the wheels and the air-frame as a whole.

Accidents and battle damage were commonplace and the skills of the wheelwright were quickly identified as being ideal for repairing the damaged craft. Teams of wheelwrights were sent the length and breadth of the UK to repair the planes and to get them into the air again as quickly as possible.

It is not known whether the workers based at the Yard were involved in this activity but it is possible. These workers rarely spoke of their role in keeping the aircraft airborne so little is known of these groups of "essential workers".

Staffing

At the beginning of the year Francesca Service joined the team on a short term contract to develop the educational side of the Yard. She has been actively talking with local schools and businesses to develop a curriculum based programme that will increase the pupils' perception of engineering based projects.

It is with sadness that we will be saying farewell to our Heritage Project Officer, Debs Hext,

who will be leaving us in June. She joined the team almost 12 months ago. Debs took over the role from Emma who had been with the Yard for several years and had done a lot of work setting up the various systems and processes.

It was not an easy role to take on but she coped well with the tasks and has made significant contributions to the overall running of the Yard. Her continuing input will be missed and the team at Chedham's wish her well for the future.



Debs Hext and Francesca Service with one of the carts, made by a volunteer, to support the schools learning programme.

After Debs departure the Yard will be run entirely by volunteers and as such there will be times when there will be no one in the office. More on this in the next issue.

Please e-mail us at enquiries@chedhamsyard.org.uk or call on 01789 842770. We shall have an answerphone / messaging system in place and we will call you back.

Free Tea or Coffee for you and a friend when you visit us during 2014

Cut out the coupon below and bring it with you.

A free cup of Tea/Coffee
for you and friend at Chedham's
when you visit during 2014

Please hand this voucher to the
staff in the Visitor Centre.

CHEDHAM'S YARD

This voucher can only be used once

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The 2014 Programme

Admission Charges will remain at the 2013 rates

Opening times will be 10am – 2pm for normal Saturdays
and
10am to 4pm on Special Event days

- 12th April Pre Season opening Event

The main season starts on 10th May and runs until 27th September. There will be two special events after this.

Special Events

- May 24 *Chedham's Challenge - Cart building and racing*
- June 21 *Tug 'o War!*
- July 12 *Open Studios*
- September 13 *Heritage Open Day*
- September 27 *Village Harvest Day*

Extra Events

- October 18 *Craft Fayre Day*
- December 13 *Chedham's Christmas Celebration*

On all other Saturdays there will be the usual tours given by our knowledgeable guides, demonstrations and displays of rural/rustic crafts and skills for you to see and you will be able to participate in some of the 'hands on' activities.

Details will be published on the web site.

Compiled and Issued by Chedham's Yard Trust
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