

HOW ABOUT HELPING US THIS YEAR?

We have three events in our Calendar this year, the TOWN CARNIVAL on The Green 11th of July, an ARTS AND CULTURAL EVENT in Bedford Square on the 25th of July and on the 19th of September a HERITAGE DAY in Houghton Hall Park. We would like your help at these events, setting up and manning our stand. At all of these events we get the chance to meet the public and promote the society. In addition members of the public love to tell their individual stories. For more information and times email us info@hrhs.org.uk

EVER THOUGHT ABOUT BECOMING A TRUSTEE?

We have vacancies available to join us as a Trustee. We hope you will be able to attend meetings, these are usually in the evenings, and also help man our stands at events plus take an active involvement in the society.

For more information please send an email to David Hill at info@hrhs.org.uk



Houghton Regis Heritage Society
is a registered Charity registered
in England 1174720
Contact: David Hill Telephone
07305 433950



David Hill & Roger Turner at the 2025 Carnival

WHAT WE WILL BE FEATURING AT EVENTS THIS YEAR?

- * TIMELINE
- * 1762 MAP
- * FAMILY ON THE GREEN BOOK
- * UP ABOVE THE STREETS AND HOUSES BOOK

Plus various Literature

WEBSITE ADDRESS & ARCHIVE

hrhs.org.uk

DISTANT MEMORIES



THE VILLAGE BAKER

A reminder of Houghton Regis in a more leisurely era, when bread was delivered daily to the back door. This photograph was taken about 1920, and it shows a youthful Percy Ward driving Mr Bucks bakers van. Originally when he was 13 (c1917), Percy was apprenticed to Mr Sandford, one of the village bakers. He used to sell hot rolls to the soldiers billeted on the Green during World War I, from a magnificent handcart with 'J SANDFORD' emblazoned on the side. By 1919 he was earning 3 shillings a week (a pretty good wage in those days!)

Percy went on to become one of the village bakers himself, and had a shop in Queen Street which may be remembered by readers. Percy was well known in the village, of course; he used to say with a twinkle in his eye " A good baker always has plenty of dough!" He retired in October 1964, and the shop was known as Creamers. One of Percy's interests was playing dominoes, and he was regularly to be seen with his friends George East and Charlie Webb, playing in the Old Red Lion at Bidwell.

Percy Ward died in September 1981 and the story turns full circle as he was a founder member of the Houghton Regis Pigeon Club; the Percy Ward Trophy was awarded each year. One year it was won by his son-in-law Derek Hyde.

THE STORY OF ALE BECOMING FISH SUPPERS

The COCK INN, Houghton Regis, still stands, part of it being the fish and chip shop in Bedford Road, next to the Kings Arms.

The premises (the building next to the fish & chip s The hop) are very old, at least 18th Century especially the upper floor and the basement cellar, which contain the original timbers. The position of this pub so close to the Kings Arms is a fine example of how the beer trade prospered, sometimes as a sideline, and pubs could make a viable living, even when there were two or more close to each other. Back in 1793, the Eames family is first mentioned in connection with the Cock and by 1854,

John Eames was trading from the Inn as a whiting manufacturer and dairyman. In 1860, an inquest into the death of a Farmer E. French was held in the pub. Mr. French who had been visiting the Inn had been thrown from his horse and cart after a steam threshing machine upset the horse. According to the following year's census, John was said to have died from an epileptic seizure. In 1915 both the Cock and the Oddfellows arms - opposite what is now the Townsend Industrial Estate - had their licenses objected to on the grounds that 'these houses are not required, having regard to the character and interests of the localities in which they were situated'. Brewer Mr. J W Green told the Bench "speaking at Edinburgh, Lord Roseberry said his country was spending £10m a week on the war, and I venture respectfully to submit that this is hardly the opportune time to deprive legitimate traders of property." He added "The present tenant has been there since October 1909 and is earning a living. "I submit to the magistrates as common sense then that this isn't the time to deprive anyone of their living. The hearing was adjourned and at the renewed hearing, the Solicitor acting for the Cock put up a strong case for its retention.



PADDOCK & KITCHEN GARDEN,

The whole comprising an Area of

Upwards of One Acre,

To be Sold by Auction, by

THOMAS THORNE

(Thomas Thorne, F.A.I.) & DUFFIELD (W. G. Duffield, F.A.I.)

On the Premises as above,

On Thursday, June 19th, 1924,

At TWO o'clock sharp, immediately preceding the Sale of Utensils, Household Furniture, &c.
The License having been surrendered.

Further Particulars and Conditions of Sale may be obtained of

Messrs. BENNING & SON,

Solicitors, DUNSTABLE;

or of the Auctioneers, 17, Chapel Street, Luton; and at Dunstable. Phones: 28 Luton; 46 Dunstable.

Gibbs, Bamforth & Co., "Larkin Street" Printing Works, Luton.

Cat 394: An important sale of the "Cock Inn" Houghton Regis in Bedford Road, complete with stabling for 10 horses, plus a coach house and its own well. Dated 19.6.1851.
(Bedfordshire Record Office)

Credits:

The Village Baker from the Parish Magazine written by Pat Lovering, Picture credit by Mr & Mrs D Hyde.

The story of Ale becoming fish suppers Written By John Rawlings from The Dunstable Gazette. Picture credit James Warren.