

**Chedham's Yard**  
**Supporters Newsletter No 6**  
**November 2020**



Welcome to the sixth Newsletter from Chedham's Yard for 2020.

This is the sixth and final Newsletter for 2020. We cannot begin to think that this has been a normal year with the coronavirus closing down the whole country and then the steady resumption of some sort of normality.

At Chedhams we have decided not to reopen during 2020 due to the Government guidelines / restrictions which means that the two remaining events the Halloween Pumpkin carving and the Christmas event with Santa and Carols have also been cancelled. The good news is that both of these have been included in the 2021 programme.

We have continued to work behind the scenes to do essential maintenance in preparation for 2021. Even so there has been a sense of disappointment. The whole Team have missed the steady flow of visitors, the interaction within the Team and the flow of questions from the visitors.

During the year the workshops have been slightly changed to suit the needs of the craftsmen but without destroying the sense and ethos of the yard and some additional safety features have been added. We had planned to introduce blacksmith experience days but these had to be put on hold, but it is hoped to introduce some sessions during 2021.

Next year will undoubtedly bring its own challenges as we get the Yard going again in a changed world.

We will still have items for sale that have been made at the Yard using traditional processes plus the specialist items brought in with the external demonstrators. The café layout will remain as before but there will be additional items and information on display. We hope to have an additional outdoor seating area.

**Presentations** about the Yard to outside organisations will remain a significant part of our outreach activity. These events usually consist of a 50 to 60 minute audio / visual presentation supported by a range of products and books relating to the Yard. There is a nominal fee for the presentations, a small mileage fee is added if the distance is deemed to be excessive.

## New Equipment

As mentioned in the last newsletter our refurbishing focus has turned to the shandy barrow seed drill and the treadle grindstone both of which have needed a lot of work.

The shandy barrow has been partially dismantled and a few new parts have been made to replace those which were beyond repair.

The work on the grinder has been completed to enable it to be shown / demonstrated, but not used. The main body of the grinder has been cleaned repaired, new bottom has been added to the water trough and the whole device has been repainted as close as possible to the original colour. We were fortunate in so much that there was a small patch of original paint.

We eventually managed to separate the grindstone wheel from it's spindle to make repair of the wheel itself a little easier. Luckily the son of one of our volunteers who is a stonemason was able to stabilise it so that it can be demonstrated.

A clear safety shield has been made to stop small inquisitive fingers and hands from getting injured.



The work on the main part of the **grinder** has now been completed. The rusty sheet metal has been replaced without needing to dismantle the body'



## **Re-equipping the Yard**

This is an ongoing project and in previous issues of the Newsletter you will have seen articles relating to period equipment that we have introduced to the yard and the renovation work that has been done.

When the Parish Council bought the Yard, in 2001, from Bill Chedham it had lain derelict since the mid 1960s when Bill closed it as an operational site.

All the equipment that would have been made and / or repaired at the Yard had been taken away by the owners and all that remained were those items that no one wanted or that Bill had used for maintaining the vegetable garden.

At that time the only major tools that were on site were the tyre bending rollers and the tyreing platform, both of which have been renovated, these were and are used to make and fit metal tyres to the wooden cartwheels.

A wooden bodied threshing machine which was owned by the Chedhams and was hired out to local farms was a frequent sight at the yard but development of the tractor drawn and later the self-propelled combined harvester had rendered this obsolete and it was dismantled in the first half of the twentieth century. Only a very few parts remained on site.

In 2001 there was a large selection of hand tools on the work benches and hung on the walls and beams. A few additional and relevant hand tools have since been added to the collection.

The workshops were refurbished with guidance from Bill Chedham to show what they would have looked like and what tools would have been there. The hand tools were all cleaned and put back in their original locations but there were none of the farm implements and tools that had been the backbone of the site.

The forge was repaired and is now fully operational so that the blacksmiths can now demonstrate the process of forging. In the wheelwrights there was a selection of hand tools, a treadle wood lathe, which had been modified to make wheel hubs, and a large treadle wet stone grinder neither of which could be made operational.

To demonstrate wood turning we have purchased a wood lathe and have been lucky enough to get a small treadle wet stone grinder dating from the early 1900s which is featured above. Also, within the wheelwrights there were and still are a pair of wooden

vices set approximately 2 metres apart across the doorway these were used for holding wagon shafts whilst they were being worked to shape, the patterns for which are now in the loft space.

Other items that we have procured include a hand pulled furrowing plough, a horse drawn furrowing plough, a hand operated single wheel hoe, a horse drawn hoe and another small treadle grindstone, a hay lifter, a telescopic sack lifter and a two wheeled tip car from a local farm, shandy barrow and the seed fiddle.

The additional items add interest for the visitor and show the sort of tools and equipment that would have been at the Yard during its heyday.

We are constantly on the 'look-out' for appropriate acquisitions, but they must be of the correct period and typical of the range of tools and equipment that would have been at the Yard during the 1823 to 1965 period. But - we are determined not to become a repository of unwanted and or inappropriate items. It is essential to maintain the character and authenticity of the site.

## **Hedgehog Refuge**

Our 2019 Hedgehog Event with the girls from 'Hedgehog Friendly Town'; based in Stratford, highlighted the need for everyone to be aware of the precarious situation for hedgehogs in the UK.

The yard is located on the edge of the village adjacent to open fields and undoubtedly the haunt of many hedgehogs, some wild areas of the site are ideal areas for a refuge. We have been given a small dog kennel which with minimal modification and suitable bedding provides a safe warm place for hedgehogs during the winter months.

## **Tools With A Mission**

We are continuing to support TWAM by collecting tools and equipment that can be repaired /refurbished and then shipped to those parts of the world where there is a shortage and need for **traditional tools**. If you have some tools that you no longer want or need then consider bringing them to the Yard on an open Saturday next year or call [Eric on 01789 555678](tel:01789555678) to arrange for a handover.

## **2021**

We have already started planning for next year 2021, our planned **reopening** date is **Easter Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> April, subject to relevant Government guidance**. On all open days there will be demonstrations by our own wood turners and blacksmiths demonstrating the processes used in the past. In addition, on each Saturday there will be a different theme event plus guided tours and light refreshments. Items that have been made in the Yard will be on sale in the Visitor Centre.

### **Events already planned for 2021 include:-**

20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event, Willow Weaving, Glass workshop Wheel Tying  
Dawn Chorus walk, Children's Crafts, Halloween and Pumpkin Carving  
Christmas with Carols and Santa, Moths and their life, Stone Masonry  
Heart of England Wood Turners, Open Studios, Heritage Open Day  
The Plight of the 18/19<sup>th</sup> century Farm Workers, Wellesbourne Art Group  
Sketching with Audrey, Patchwork & Textiles, Quilting, Spinning and  
Weaving, Bees and Honey

Other options being pursued include - Wood Carving, Falconry, Bats, Wild life.

It will be busy year for all involved.

### **Volunteers**

The Yard is run entirely by volunteers and working as part of the team is both challenging and rewarding. If you have a few hours free and are looking for a new venture, then why not become part of the Chedhams team.

### **Additional Information**

Due to the corona virus we cannot access to the yard office phone so for more information relating to any aspect relating to the Yard call Eric on 01789 555678 or send an e-mail to Eric on [e.lawley@ntlworld.com](mailto:e.lawley@ntlworld.com)

This will be the last Newsletter for 2020 and we would like to take this opportunity, albeit a little early, to wish you and your family

A Happy and Healthy Christmas and New Year



We are looking forward to welcoming you back to the Yard in 2021

We open again on 3<sup>rd</sup> April

Subject to Government legislation