



News and events

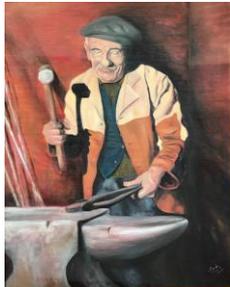
The Old Bakery The work has received listed building consent, with many conditions. The owners have appointed Point Builders, a local firm that specialises in the restoration of historic buildings. This week, Archaeological Solutions are checking that there are no historic artefacts in the ground; this will allow Point to lay a new limecrete floor.

Next meeting All our meetings are cancelled until further notice.

Notes and queries

The Westwoods of Wheathampstead

The Society has this week become the owner of two portraits of members of the Westwood family.



Harry Westwood

Harry Westwood came from a family of blacksmiths and beerhouse keepers. His great-grandfather John and grandfather Thomas Westwood, were blacksmiths in Welwyn and Ayot St Peter in the 19th century; Thomas was also licensee of the *Steam Engine* beerhouse in Welwyn.

Thomas's son James, Harry's father, followed the family tradition. The 1871 census shows him, aged 20, as a 'smith master' in Welwyn employing one man, and head of the household at the *Steamer* beerhouse whose licensee is his brother Thomas. They have a visitor, Mary Ann Gray, daughter of the licensee of the *Red Cow* in Wheathampstead; she married James two months later. His brother William later married Mary Ann's sister Minnie and took over the licence of the *Red Cow*.

James and Mary Ann moved to Wheathampstead in 1874 where he took over the licence of the *Two Brewers* beerhouse, on the corner of High Street and King Edward Place. He carried on his main work as a blacksmith in the smithy behind it.

James was a pillar of the Wheathampstead community. He was a bell-ringer, second-in-

command of the fire brigade and a member of the Ancient Order of Foresters. He was a long-serving (33 years) member of the volunteer battalion of the Herts and Beds militia and served on several inquest juries. When he died in 1906, he was given a magnificent funeral. The *Two Brewers* closed and was sold soon afterwards.

James and Mary Ann had two daughters and six sons, including Harry who was born in 1875. He and two of his brothers became blacksmiths.

Harry was a fine general blacksmith but his great love was wrought iron work; he was a master at making gates. Examples of these can be seen at St Helen's churchyard and at Shaw's Corner in Ayot St Lawrence. He was awarded the Bronze Medal of the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths.



Ted Westwood

Harry married Louisa Howard in 1902. They had six children, two of whom, Alfred (Alf) and Edward (Ted) became blacksmiths. When the *Two Brewers* building was sold, Harry moved the business to Bull Yard where he, and later Alf and Ted, practised their skills until the early 1970s when the owners of the *Bull* demolished the buildings in the Yard to make a car park. Rather than lose the services of the local blacksmith, the Parish Council erected a new building in The Meads; it is now a workshop and storeroom for the Council.

Ted's daughter Sandi, who painted these portraits, has generously presented them to the Society.