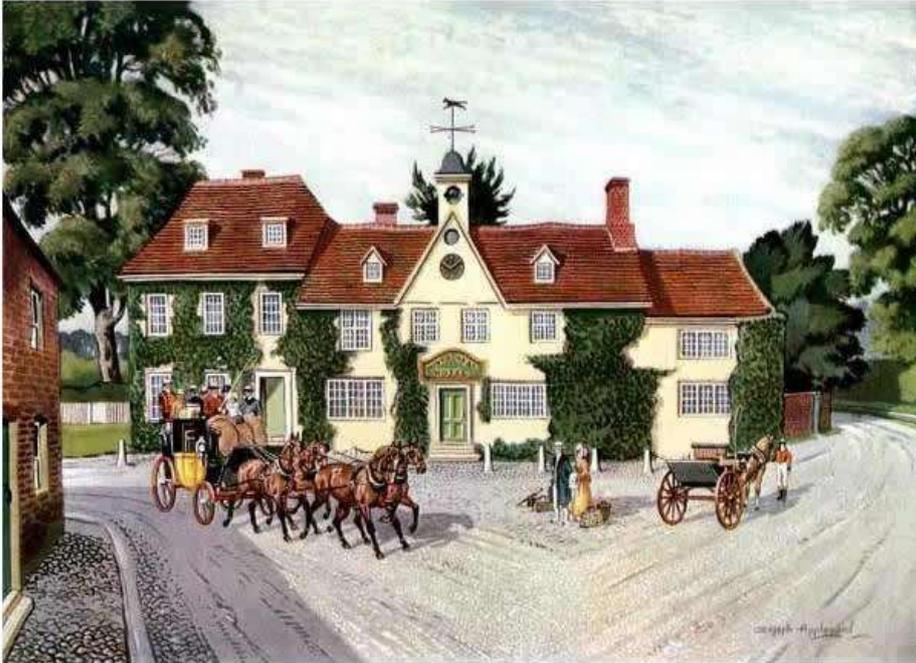


# **Brief History of Aldermaston Businesses**

**Compiled by Ange Boott  
for “Celebrating Aldermaston” Exhibition  
in Aldermaston Parish Hall  
10<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

# The Hinds Head



THE HIND'S HEAD INN, ALDERMARSTON, BERKSHIRE painted by JOSEPH APPLEYARD for "HOLLY LEAVES" 1953

This painting is still in the family, owned by a cousin of mine.

ag017

The local pub is named The Hind's Head in honour of the Forster family crest. Built in the 17th century and originally operating as a coaching inn the establishment was named The Pack Horse during the De La Mare and Forster lordships and The Congreve Arms throughout the Congreves' ownership.

The building has a large black and gold clock set into the gable and a small bell turret upon which is a gilt ox-shaped weather vane the bell was intended to be rung as an air-raid siren. During the Second World War.<sup>1</sup> In the early 19th century the pub's signboard carried the arms of the Congreve family, as well as branding for a company named "Adams". In the *British Parliamentary Papers* of 1817, the Committee on the State of the Police in the Metropolis reported evidence of a John Adams—a Reading-based distiller and hop merchant who competed for business against Simonds Brewery. By 1850, the pub brewed beer on-site; a brewery was built as an out-building behind the main pub building. John Knight produced beer at the pub for 40 years, selling it for 2d. The brewery building is still in existence, with the wooden louvres still operational. The building is now the pub's kitchen. In the 1970s, the pub was owned by Whitbread. In the mid-1990s the pub was taken over by Gales Brewery (having previously been a free house), later becoming tied to Fullers brewery on their acquisition of Gales in 2006.<sup>2</sup> In the 1970s, the pub was home to the Kennet Folk Club. acquisition of Gales in 2006. In the 1970s, the pub was home to the Kennet Folk Club.

The bell in the clock tower was connected and was used as the fire alarm for the village fire brigade which existed up until about 1930.





Jack Owen was on the hall committee and ran the Hinds head pub in 1983



Leigh Phillips has recently taken over the management of the pub and has introduced a number of events, including a cinema afternoon and evening in the garden once a month during the summer

## The Village shop / now the hairdressers (at the top of the village):

A society was formed on December 24<sup>th</sup> 1869 known as the Aldermaston Cooperative industrial and provident society Ltd. This business was continued under the management of Mr Frost, Mr Gillett and Mr Pottinger until it was let as an independent business to Mr York Souce in the 1930's, eventually it was sold to the Basingstoke Cooperative society.



Postcard from 1902 Inscription reads 'HRH looking for customers'



In the 1950's this was the village shop later to become the Co-op:

It was run by Mr and Mrs Evans and Joan Keep from 'The Cobblers' cottage helped in the shop



**The Co-Op**

**The Co-op shop was put up for sale in 1967 and was purchased by Alan Caiger-Smith. Ann-Marie Caiger –Smith went into partnership with Mr Worger and ran a picture framing business. They lost money!**

**Frank Beach then ran a frame shop and did mad money and then needed to move to larger premises.**

**For a while it was a tropical fish shop. Then it open as Aldermaston Audio and it was opened by Terry Wogan**

**Heather Davies Antiques then took it over during 1976 to 1978. Then it changed to Aldermaston Antiques for a while. Sue Alan then rented it as hairdressers in 1989. Alan Caiger-Smith sold the premises to Sue Alan in 2007. Before he sold it he restored the 'Store room' back to the cottage next door (Tile Cottage) and changed the window to be more in keeping with the character of the cottage.**

**It is still being used as the village hairdressers today (Blades)**



## The Forge and the Aldermaston Pottery



The Forge house and the Pottery

The Pottery was the blacksmiths shop and between the two world wars a large farriers business was carried on here to serve the local farms and the court – which at that time had upwards of 50 horses.

On the south side of the house is a brick and tiled workshop and garage which years ago was a carpenters shop. This business was run by Mr H Ford and his brother Mr C Ford owned the blacksmiths shop.



Village petrol pump

The Aldermaston pottery was opened in 1955 by Alan Caiger-Smith. It was closed in 1993 after a final exhibition. It survived until 2006 as 'The Pottery' which was then a shared premises where several potters worked.



## Aldermaston Stores

In 1881 the village shop (at the bottom of the village was a Saddler and Harness shop, it was also the village post office run by Mr David Stroud. It was also a butchers shop at one time and the outline of the butchers shop window can still be seen in the brickwork on the south side of the building from fisherman's lane today.



The house next door was the farmhouse of the Village farm, the milking byres consisting of two sheds on the other side of the lane where an Old Saxon barn still stands.



Mr and Mrs Heighton in the 1970's



**Saying a fond farewell to Sue and Frank Inglut**



**The Post office**

**Over the years the shop has been run by:**

**Mr and Mrs Heighton in the 1970's**

**Mr and Mrs Rickard**

**Ray and Amanda Jones**

**Frank and Sue Inglut**

**Mike and Carol Campbell took over the shop in the 1990's with help from Fran Campbell. After two years Justin and Fran Campbell ran the shop. Angela Woodley ran the post office until 2006.**



**The Aldermaston stores is now run by Mr Patell.**



## The Old Mill



*Aldermaston Mill*

The Old Mill is well known for its function rooms and beautiful gardens. At one time Sunday lunch could be booked and enjoyed in the main room with its low ceiling and the sound of rushing water from the water wheel next to it. Tea on the lawn could also be enjoyed in the summer.

But now the main purpose of the family run Mill is to host functions for such groups as the Rotary Club, Masonic Festive Boards and Round Table etc. and is, of course, a beautiful setting for the many wedding ceremonies and receptions held there each year as well as the annual Aldermaston and Wasing Produce Show.



## Antique shop



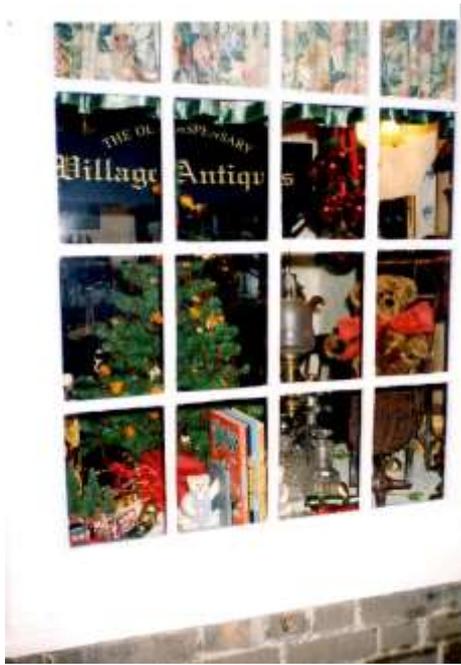
Photo of the antique shop during the Silver jubilee celebrations



Various photos of Christmas windows at the Antique shop



The antique shop Christmas 2005



The Antique shop Christmas 2008

# Aldermaston nursery

In 1990 Crissy and Pete Clemson bought the land on the North side of the Village that now houses White Tower Nursery. They put up the first polytunnels and grew and sold plants and fresh vegetables from the site.

In 1992 they moved into a mobile home on site and started to grow bedding plants etc. They sold hanging baskets, bedding plants, vegetable plants, herbaceous perennials, shrubs trees, seed potatoes and much more that the gardener needs as well as giving sound advice on growing plants and being able to identify pests and diseases as well as plants. Many a local garden and allotment is stocked with plants grown on the nursery.

Crissy and Pete were involved with the medal-winning courtyard garden displayed at Chelsea Flower Show in 1999. A plaque commemorating the Silver Gilt medal is on display in the Parish Hall.

While The Manor House was occupied the nursery had the contract for the flower arrangements throughout the building especially for the many weddings held there.

Talks and demonstrations on various horticultural topics are still being given to local groups in the area and can be booked by contacting them direct.



## **The Shoe Makers shop (now a house called 'The Cobblers')**



**George Harry Keep, was a shoemaker, born 1868 in Spencer's Wood, from a line of shoemakers from Stratfield Saye.**

**George Harry was the son of Henry Keep, born 1844, grandson of George Keep, born 1814, and great grandson of born 1783, all Stratfield Saye shoemakers.**

**George Harry Keep Master bootmaker was running the Cobblers in 1901  
His son took over the running of the Cobblers in 1945 and he and his wife could be heard working in the workshop until late at night. When the AWE was being built a cart came down every week with the workmen's boots to be repaired.**

**The Cobblers closed in 1962 when Mr Stanley Keep died aged 60yrs.**

## Aldermaston Farms



Forster's Farm

Lot 85

In 1939, there were seven farms on the Aldermaston estate

Forster's Farm, Village Farm, Church Farm, Upper Church Farm, Raghill Farm, Park Farm (already described above) and Soke Farm; And these accounted for three-quarters of the total agricultural land. The remainder was farmed in smallholdings, such as the 14 acres farmed by the tenants of The Falcon. Along Raghill there is no mention of Springhill Farm, Court Farm or Wray's Farm, and to the south of the Reading Road there is no record at that time of Strawberry Farm, Circus Farm, Ravenswing Farm or Whitehouse Farm. There was, however, a bungalow called "Raven'sWing", where the farm is today. It was of timber and iron construction and had a sun-bathing tower in the garden!

The largest of the farms was Forster's Farm. This was described as one of the finest Farms in Berkshire and a particularly valuable dairy farm. It comprised 210 acres and was let to Mr A W Bucknell. He was also the tenant of additional land to both north and south of Forster's Farm. This increased the total land he farmed to 329 acres, and of that 75 % was grassland, 20% arable and 5% woodland. There were cowsheds for 60 cattle, stabling for 8 horses, a fine barn, two bull pens, two loose boxes, a cake store, cart sheds, wood shed, an open shed with a granary above it, a cooling house, three pigsties, a forage store and a garage. Sir William Mount of Wasing Estate paid one shilling a year for right of way over part of the farm. The substantial and pleasant farmhouse had seven bedrooms. The

Forster's Farm lot also included two vacant cottages in Wasing Lane (numbers 7 and 8) and two in Fisherman's Lane - number 11, let to Mr W Arlott, and number 12, let to Mrs Winkworth. The tenant of Village Farm was Mr G L Standfield. He farmed 111 acres, of which the farm as advertised comprised only 49 acres, the balance lying in individually tenanted fields to the north of Fisherman's Lane. Mr Standfield's was also a dairy farm, with 80% grassland or meadow, 16% arable and 4% woodland. One of his holdings, three enclosures of "sound pasture", was reputed to contain "the finest gravel deposits in the district", but not thus far exploited. This was a much more modest affair than Forster's Farm; there were stalls for only 14 cattle, stabling for three horses, six pigsties, a barn (now Village Farm Barn), plus an engine house and a cooling house. The farmhouse was a relatively small three bedroom semi-detached cottage. Church Farm had a much grander farmhouse, described by the vendors as "the gentleman's farm house". It had three reception rooms, six bedrooms, a fish pool, orchard and a tennis lawn. The farm was vacant in 1939 and the plot offered for sale was just over 8 acres, but the extent actually farmed by Church Farm would have been closer to 125 acres, all of it grassland. It had stalls for 16 cattle, calf pens, several calving boxes and two barns. On offer with a plot of only an acre and a half was Upper Church Farm, "with the possibility of the modernisation of this fine old cottage into a charming residence". The farm probably originally extended to just over 100 acres, of which 75% would have been grassland with the rest being the woodland of Aqua Vitae Copse. In September 1939 it was occupied by Mr John White, formerly Head Woodman of the estate.

Raghill Farm was a "picturesque old farm house, laden with oak "and comprised two cottages, one vacant and the other occupied by a former estate employee. It came with 19 acres, but the former working farm would have extended to at least 36 acres.

There were extensive outbuildings, including stabling for six horses, a chaff coop, a "remarkably fine brick and slated barn", a cattle shed, five pigsties, and many more outbuildings. The farm pond had been used in the past for watering horses and cattle.

Mr H Helyar was the tenant of Soke Farm. This was described as a smallholding of over 4.5 acres, but Mr Helyar's total tenancy amounted to 24 acres, small in comparison to the farms down in the Kennet valley. Of this three acres was arable and the rest grass. It comprised a modest three bedroom "homestead", stabling for two horses, stalls for two cattle, cattle pens and pigsties.

