

Sarratt Local History Society AGM and Talk on 19 March at the Village Hall.

The talk was given by Catherine Grigg, Curator of Wycombe Museum, on 'The Wycombe Chair Industry'.

Our AGM had to be transferred to this meeting because of the arctic weather conditions on the original date. The Chairman, Pam Turner, and the President, Dawn Pitts, gave their respective reports and the committee members were duly re-elected. The exception was our treasurer, Jackie Boughton, who had to resign some months ago as her husband, sadly, suffered a stroke. Luckily he is now doing extremely well but her support is still needed at home so we are pleased to welcome Jonathan Holmes as her successor. We would welcome anyone else with a love of Sarratt and its surrounding history to join our small Committee. It does not require a great deal of time and is very rewarding.

Nearly all of us would recognise a Windsor chair and many of us own one or more. They are somehow utterly English, unpretentious and look at home in domestic settings, village halls, schools, pubs and cafes. They never seem to go out of fashion. And of course they mostly originate from our Chiltern beech woods and the cottage industry and later small factories of the Wycombe area. Catherine Griggs gave us a clearly structured picture of the history, origins, local skills and later industrial development that developed and maintained the production of these ubiquitous chairs. She taught us how to distinguish the various types, ages and styles of chair. She recalled the original 'bodgers' who worked outdoors in the woods, turning the chair legs 'on site' and she showed us photos of some typical old chair factories in the Wycombe area and across into Chesham and Amersham. She explained that the name 'Windsor' as applied to the chairs was not because they were made there (they weren't) but because they were sent on barges down the Thames from Windsor to be sold and distributed in London.

We all felt a great deal more aware of and informed about these everyday objects that are so familiar that we mostly take them for granted.

A visit to the Wycombe Museum has been arranged on **Sunday 5 May at 2.0pm**. For details please contact Pam Turner (01923 26 7000) or Dawn Pitts (01923 267071)

The next meeting of the Society will be at Sarratt School, Tuesday 7 May, 7.30 for 8.0pm. Bill Templeton, from Chesham Museum will be talking about 'The 13 Mills on the River Chess' (including our own Sarratt Mill!)

Angela Colman