

# Wingrave Historic Buildings Workshop / 9 October 2011

---

## SUMMARY REPORT

### A ONE-DAY WORKSHOP

organised jointly by the Wingrave Archives Association and the Historic Buildings Group of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society (BAS), with support from the Council for British Archaeology



## 1: AIMS

The workshop had four aims:

- To involve members of the two societies in an exercise to date historic buildings in the village of Wingrave, six miles north of the Buckinghamshire county town of Aylesbury.
- To begin or progress detailed surveys of three houses in Wingrave.
- To examine the different ways in which historic buildings may be dated: specifically, by examination of their architectural, decorative and technological features on the one hand and by the science of dendrochronology on the other.
- To consider how these methods might be improved, to make them more accurate, more responsive to local variations in building style, and more widely applicable.

## 2: PARTICIPANTS

The workshop was attended by 25 active participants, with a good mix of Wingrave residents and members of the BAS Historic Buildings Group:

Robin Carr, Rex Carslake, Michael Farley, Alison Farlie, Keith Farlie, Sue Fox, Prudence Goodwin, Sarah Humphrey, Nigel Kennedy, Heather Kent, Pam Knight, Robin Moat, Stewart Moir, Val Moir, Jane Muir, Paul O'Carroll, Vanessa O'Carroll, Mary Saunders, Eric Sewell, David Snoxell, Rosemarie Storr, Heather Wallace, Julia Wise.

The organisers were Andrew Muir (for the Wingrave Archives Association) and Peter Marsden (for the BAS Historic Buildings Group).

Dendrochronologist Andy Moir was the main speaker for the day.

## 3: ORGANISATION OF THE DAY

- Introduction / Peter Marsden
- DATING HISTORIC BUILDINGS by dendrochronology and architectural features / speaker Andy Moir
- Survey briefing / Andrew Muir
- PRACTICAL SURVEY OF TWENTY HOUSES IN WINGRAVE / all participants
- PRACTICAL DENDROCHRONOLOGY CORING OF TWO HOUSES / Andy Moir
- Lunch
- DENDROCHRONOLOGY IN WINGRAVE/ speaker Andy Moir
- SURVEY DEBRIEFING: Report and discussion of the morning's practical survey results and what they tell us / all participants
- WHERE NEXT? / Summing-up by Peter Marsden and Andrew Muir

#### 4: DATING BUILDINGS – A SCIENCE OR AN ART?

This was the subject of the morning's introductory sessions, held in the Methodist Church Schoolroom in Nup End Lane, Wingrave.

The traditional method of dating historic buildings – and the method open to all – is by examination of their stylistic features. These may be:

- Technical: the art or craft of the builder, for example using timber-frame construction in the early centuries, and gradually moving to brick in the later.
- Architectural: the art of the designer, switching for example from the ordered, symmetrical styles of the 18th century to the 'gothic' designs of the 19th.
- Decorative: the ever-changing currents of fashion, from the chamfer stops and wall paintings in the 16th century to fancy plasterwork and wooden mouldings in the 17th and 18th.

These are the 'arts' of building houses, and our interpretation of them today is also an art.

Our interpretation of these stylistic features may be informed by documentary evidence – always more readily found for high-status houses than for the everyday vernacular of our villages – but it remains an art. Can we be sure that the building referred to in the document is the same one we are looking at today? House names are changed; timber frames may even be dismantled and moved.

Interpretation is also informed by an understanding of historical change. The use of slate for roofs, for instance, may be dated by improvements in transport – first the canals, then the railways, bringing it from Welsh quarries, making it cheaper and available in the years either side of 1800.

But this does not work so well for Wales itself, nor for the Lake District, which had its own quarries. And what dates can we deduce when we find slate roofs in Buckinghamshire? Here the south always had access to the Thames, while the north-west got both canal and railway early... but the rest had to wait almost to the 20th century before the trains arrived. So dating slate roofs here is not so easy.

And not only are there local variations, but there are architects who knowingly copy earlier vernacular and historical styles. There are even downright fakes.

So dating buildings by their stylistic features remains an art, the art of interpretation.

Dendrochronology, however, is a science. The growth of trees everywhere is affected by weather and climate, and we can map the pattern of their growth by examining the growth-rings: wider in the good years, narrower in the bad, and with other variations between summer and winter.

All things being equal, the tree-ring patterns between two trees grown over the same period and in the same area of the country will match. If we know the date of one, then we know the date of the other – and by tracing overlapping ring patterns dendrochronologists have dated timbers back to pre-Roman times.

But, of course, all things are rarely equal. Not all trees are affected by climate in the same way: fortunately for the dating of old buildings, oak displays a good, consistent tree-ring pattern – and oak was the timber of choice for medieval builders. For cottages at the lower end of the social scale, however, elm was cheaper and more plentiful; growth-rings in elm do not follow changes in weather and climate.

Even among oaks, not all trees are equally affected. The oak growing beside a stream will suffer less in a drought than the one on the open hilltop; trees in ‘managed woodland’, where competitors are kept at bay, grow better than elsewhere.

And not all timbers in a building are suitable for analysis. To get a scientifically accurate match we need a tree-ring pattern covering at least 40 years. Small timbers such as common rafters and joists contain too few rings. The main posts and beams, principal rafters and purlins offer the best opportunities for dendrochronological dating analysis.

The date when a building was constructed is likely to be within a few years after its timbers were felled. Medieval builders used green oak because it was easier to work; oak hardens with age. To know the felling date we need to identify the last growth-ring of the tree – the ‘sapwood’ – or, better still, the bark layer. Fortunately for us, medieval builders were not wasteful, so house timbers do frequently include samples of sapwood or bark.

Even then the dendrochronologist is not out of the woods (so to speak!). Over the centuries timber frames rot and are repaired, roofs may need to be totally reconstructed, walls replaced with brick. Prosperity may bring a new extension, with a later date. Only when accurate dates can be given to six or more timbers can a construction date be deduced.

But when dendrochronology works, the dates it does give are precise and accurate. Because this is scientific method, and science is exact.

Finally, how can the art and science work together? Not all buildings can be dated by dendrochronology, but where they can, how can the precise results obtained by science be used to improve the art of interpretation?

## 5: TWENTY WINGRAVE HOUSES: THE PRACTICAL SURVEY

The workshop split into five groups to conduct surveys of 20 houses in the village. With the exception of the village pub, all are residential properties today, but several had been workplaces in the past. Five were working farms and three were workshops. In construction date they range from the 15th century to the 1960s.

To aid recording, each surveyor had for each house copies of a ‘Tick-box Survey Form’ produced by the Surrey Domestic Buildings Research Group (see Appendix A). For each architectural feature, this gives a set of alternatives for the surveyor to ‘tick’.

For example:

‘Chimneys: central / end / lateral / smoke bay / smoke hood / half-floored hall’.

Each surveyor also had a copy of the ‘Timber-framed Building Glossary’ produced by Andy Moir (see Appendix B). This illustrates the different features of timber framing.

Three of the 20 buildings were viewed inside as well as out; the other 17 only externally. Each building was viewed by at least ten people, allowing different interpretations to be shared and discussed, both within the group and between groups. These results were reported back to the workshop as a whole during the afternoon session.

The aim of the practical survey session was three-fold. It was an opportunity:

- For participants to test their own interpretative skills on a variety of buildings dating from the 15th century to the 1980s.
- To date some of Wingrave's vernacular buildings.
- To test the 'Tick-box Survey Form' and 'Illustrated Glossary'. Were these useful tools during the survey process? Although developed from survey work in Surrey, could they be used or adapted for use in Buckinghamshire?

## 6: DENDROCHRONOLOGY IN PRACTICE

While the groups tramped around the streets of Wingrave, Andy Moir took core samples from timbers in two houses: Dean Leys and 28 Nup End Lane. A third building, Windmill Hill Farmhouse, had been sampled the previous day.

All participants were able to watch the coring process at first hand – and observe the restricted conditions in which dendrochronologists often work!

After lunch, Andy gave a brief review of the work he had done and set out the process of analysis to which his samples from Wingrave would be subjected, extracting and measuring the ring sequences for each sample, comparing these with known sequences where dates have already been determined, deciding whether the evidence was sufficient to support a precise dating and, finally, assigning felling dates to the samples.

Only then will all the information for a particular building be put together and a decision made about its likely construction date. The alternative might be to return to Wingrave for further core sampling, then going through the whole process again.

## 7: SURVEYING THE SURVEY RESULTS

Having gathered data from all the houses, the workshop reconvened after lunch to pool their observations, compare notes, discuss interpretations, and come to a consensus about the dating of the 20 houses that were viewed.

Participants in the workshop were of varying experience, some beginners, some with local knowledge specific to Wingrave, others with understanding of building styles across the county. Everyone learned something new. Several brought cameras and contributed their photographs to the survey results.

On the following pages is a summary of the workshop survey results for each building. Because most buildings were viewed only from the outside, interpretation was limited to what could be seen and the real character of the buildings masked by later repairs and replacements. This does not undermine the validity of these interpretations – but it does emphasise the need for thorough external and internal surveys.

*[ Where significant further details are known about these buildings, a brief summary has been added in italics in square brackets. ]*

## Church Farmhouse

This is right in the middle of Wingrave, next door to the church. Only the front elevation was viewed, and only externally.

- A four-bay brick-fronted building with central chimney stack, off-centre front door and later porch.
- To the right is a two-bay cross-wing, also built in brick, with front-facing gable and prominent string-course between ground and first floors.
- The base plinth indicates a very old building, but what is visible appears to date from the 17th or 18th centuries.



*[ In fact the rebuilding of the front elevation in brick, partly dated 1793 and 1828, disguises an original building from the late 14th and 15th centuries. Internal examination would have revealed three incomplete cruck trusses and two surviving 15th-century bays, one of which was part of an open hall.]*

## Dean Leys

This was the first house to be viewed internally. Features noted were:

- The chimney on the left-hand gable has a stone base, early brickwork and is built outside the timber frame of the building. This indicates that the chimney is a later addition.
- The stairs are not original, though their original position is uncertain.
- Discussion focused on a possible open space in the centre of the building: did this indicate an open hall with central fireplace? With no smoke-blackening in the roof space this was considered unlikely.
- A wall-painting which included a quotation from the Coverdale Bible of 1535 might indicate a date in the 16th century - for the wall-painting. But the building itself might be earlier.



*[ See summary dendrochronology results in section XXXXXX below. ]*

## Floyd's Farm

- Originally a two-bay timber-framed farmhouse.
- Differences in the timber framing indicate that the front-gabled cross-wing to the right was added later.
- The framing has relatively narrow vertical panels known as 'close studding'.
- Possibly 17th-century?



*[ The listing suggests 16th-17th century, with 18th-century alterations. ]*

## Ivy Cottage

---

In some buildings timber framing can be deceptive, but no one was fooled here: the stone plaque on the front stated plainly 'HR 1876'.

- The decorative style is clearly what used to be called 'mock Tudor', with plenty of vernacular features: black-and-white timbering, but with a couple of brick-infills for variety; 'catslide' roof to the side; multi-paned windows with a square bay on the ground floor.
- In fact the building is a terrace of three dwellings, but built in an imposing style to impress the viewer. These are 'estate cottages' built by local landowner Hannah Rothschild, of the banking family.
- An interesting feature is the capped-off side chimney, an indicator of redundancy caused by 20th-century central heating.



## Little Manor

---

This house confused several people, which is why it was included on the list.

- It has considerable timber framing, a half-hipped tiled roof, a 'cat-slide' side extension and tall chimneys. Might these indicate a 16th or 17th-century building?
- But there are other clues: the even ridgeline, the regularity of the windows, what appears to be an unpegged and rather sparse timber frame for such a large building, and some rather strange corner joints reveal the truth.
- In fact 'Little Manor' is less than 50 years old, being constructed in 1964 by a Mr Marks, a teacher from Amersham who used old timbers and recycled bricks from Whitchurch.



## Mollard's Cottage

---

This is the third Wingrave house that was open for internal viewing during the workshop, and is an example of how external and internal views can differ.

- From outside we see a thatched cottage, but one that appears to be entirely brick-built and with modern wood-framed and leaded-light windows.
- The only immediately visible sign of age is a short, central, tapering brick chimney stack.
- To each side is a tile-roofed single-storey extension, that on the left with a narrow garage door, probably indicating a 19th-century date. The central two-storey porch, in tidier brickwork than the main wall, also appears to be a modern addition.
- Careful examination reveals some thin timbering in the walls to the right of the porch, then the hint of a collar-beam in the left-hand gable.
- Go inside and everything changes. This is a three-bay 'lobby-entry' house, with its front door immediately opposite the central chimney stack.



- Inside, sections of timber frame are visible in the walls. The spine beam is finished and chamfered, with rolled end stops. Curved windbraces date the house as 16th-century.
- The chimney stack to the left is something of a puzzle, as it serves not the main house but the left-hand extension. This probably indicates that this was originally a workshop.

### Thatched Cottage

Unfortunately this cottage was partially obscured by scaffolding as its central chimney was being repaired. Features identified were:

- The central thatched building is symmetrical, with front door and chimney flanked by matching windows on two storeys.
- If there is timber framing, this is obscured by white-painted render. The not-quite-matching tiled-roofed extensions on each side might be 20th-century.



General consensus: little could be deduced from viewing the front elevation alone.

### The Hollies

This was the second building which could be viewed internally. Features noted:

- Symmetrical brick-built frontage with ground-floor bay windows and sashes, indicating a classic Victorian building, possibly 1860 or later.
- Internal joinery and fireplaces are plain.
- The porch is a later addition, but accords well with the original style – perhaps indicating that the building ‘went up in the world’ soon after construction.
- An old photograph in the house shows a pitched-roof single-storey outbuilding at the rear in use as a stable. Today this is two-storey, and its chimney and first-floor fireplace show that it was added for domestic use.



### The Old Post Office

At the heart of the village, this house is the left-most in a row of several formerly separate buildings. (in our picture it is hidden by trees!) The row backs on to the churchyard, so is clearly on an old site, but the buildings themselves have been renovated.

- The house is built of brick in a pattern of red stretchers and blue headers, set on a brick plinth topped by a brick moulding.
- The roof is tiled with a central chimney. The six-panelled door has a flat wooden hood.
- The attached building, now also residential, has large glazed windows, at both ground and first floor levels, indicating a former workshop. In the centre the outline of a brick archway, now filled and with an inserted window, indicates the former entrance archway for a rear yard. Its low-pitched slate roof indicates 19th-century.



[ The house is listed as late 18th-century, the workshop as 19th. ]

## The Old Vicarage

In a comparable position to Windmill House (see below), this house is close to the village centre facing across the main village pond. Although of high status as the vicarage, a comparison of the two houses makes it clear that this is the lower of the two in the social hierarchy.



- A semi-symmetrical brick-built house with plain window and doorframes, but with its front door set to the right with a pillared open porch and unusual narrow windows to each side.
- The slate roof is fully hipped, with a low pitch, and tall chimneys to each end wall.
- To the right is a single-storey extension, whose later addition is made plain by irregular brickwork where it joins the main building. This too has a slate roof, but with a steeper pitch. Its front-facing bay window does not match those of the main house.

## The Rose and Crown

The village pub.

- Partial timber framing, with tiled roof showing an irregular ridgeline.
- Windows in the main building are also irregular; one is a horizontal sliding sash.
- The single-story extension to the side is later, with lower-pitched slate roof.



*[ Listed, with 17th-century framing in the first-floor of the left-hand bay, where the ground floor was rebuilt in brick in the 19th century. The right-hand bay is 18th-century in chequer brickwork. ]*

## Waterloo Farmhouse

This building, like 'Little Manor', was included as a warning, and this time no one fell into the trap. It was noted that:

- The left-hand gable has been rebuilt, with regular windows.
- There are a lot of potentially old timbers, but these display many void slots.
- Was it a former farm building, recently converted?



*[ The truth, revealed at the workshop by local historian Prue Goodwin, is that documents from 1798 show a house on this site, but it was abandoned in the 19th century and a ruin by 1935. The Home Guard used this for training exercises during the Second World War and the rest was demolished by local kids. The present house was built in 1968 using left-over materials. ]*

## Wheelwright's

---

A brick-built cottage with single-storey extension to the left and two-storey workshop to its right. It was felt that:

- The right-hand workshop was probably the oldest part of the range.
- Interesting that the name indicates a certain continuity of use: from the workshop of a wheelwright, maintaining and repairing carts and carriages, the workshop had become a garage in the 20th century. It is now empty, seeking a buyer.



*[ Late 18th and 19th-century rebuilding and alteration to an older building, of which some timber framing remains in the left gable end and to the rear. ]*

## Windmill House

---

A high-status building, built to impress on the main village street.

- A square-fronted, symmetrical brick building set around a central front door with architrave and broken-pediment hood on stone brackets.
- Full-gabled roof with two end chimney stacks. Large windows with decorative, arched segmented lintels and triple sashes.
- Sun Insurance plaque.
- Single-storey side extension with low-pitched slate roof and windows to match those of the main house.
- At the rear, multiple later extensions.
- Style dates the main house to the late 18th or early 19th century, while slate dates its side extension to not much later than this.



*[ The listing says it was built in 1742 and enlarged in 1819. ]*

## 3 Castle Street

---

A cottage, extensively renovated in the 1990s, that is known to have an internal timber frame and old fireplace.

From an external viewing of the front elevation, it was judged that:

- the two front-facing gabled windows were modern insertions,
- the steep roof indicated that earlier thatch had been replaced with tiles,
- and that a division in the brickwork might show that the right-hand section of the cottage was a later addition.

On balance it was felt that the cottage was dated pre-1700.



## 28 Nup End Lane

This small cottage was the fourth to be viewed internally – and cores were also taken for dendro-analysis. It has:

- A thatched roof with low eaves, a half-hip at one end and full gable at the other.
- A single-storey outshut wraps around two sides. This is of brick with a tiled roof and is most likely a 20th-century addition.
- The full gable end abuts on to a public lane, while the fourth side is a shared party wall with the adjoining house, one of a row of small early 19th-century cottages. The two houses share a chimney stack, set into the dividing party wall. This is most likely a replacement for an earlier chimney in the same position.
- The cottage has an oak frame, but the roof is elm. The roof space is open to the thatch, with heavy common rafters and no principals
- At first sight this appears to be a single-bay dwelling, but examination of the framing at the pitch of the full gable indicates that this is in fact the central truss of a two-bay building, which has been infilled with brick. The second bay has been demolished.
- Moreover, smoke-blackening and the lack of principal rafters indicate that it was originally a hall house with central hearth, dating it to before 1550.



## 30 Winslow Road

Sometimes identifying old buildings means eliminating the new. This is the best-preserved in a small row of 1920s/1930s semi-detached houses in Wingrave and exhibits some classic features of the period:

- Pebble-dash rendering.
- Part-circular bow windows on both floors, with multiple 'leaded-lights'.
- Arched open front porch with panelled front door and domestic stained glass.



## 8: DENDROCHRONOLOGY RESULTS

At the time of the workshop sample cores were taken by Andy Moir of Tree-Ring Services from the timbers of three houses in Wingrave: Dean Leys, Windmill Hill Farmhouse and 28 Nup End Lane. These were then subjected to dendrochronological analysis, comparing the patterns of tree-rings obtained with sequences whose dates are already known.

The full reports and results for these buildings have yet to be published, so only provisional results can be summarised here. The final reports will be published sometime during 2011 and summaries submitted to the Vernacular Architecture Group's national dendrochronology database – which is available on-line at [http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/vag\\_dendro/](http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/vag_dendro/).

## 8.1 Dean Leys

Thirteen samples were taken of which the tree-ring sequences in six cross-matched to show that the oak trees from which these timbers were taken had been growing between the years 1431 and 1493. The six samples all came from timbers of the frame itself – two from truss tiebeams, two from posts, one from a wallplate and the sixth from a curved brace.

None of the six samples included bark, so felling dates were calculated from sapwood samples. This produced a felling date between 1495 and 1527. Because medieval builders used oak when it was still ‘green’ and easier to work, this means that the main frame of Dean Leys was most likely built in a single phase at some time between 1495 and 1527.

This is interesting. As Andy Moir points out: ‘This dating [for Dean Leys] is a century earlier than previous estimates based on stylistic features.’

Dean Leys has a Queen Strut roof and full gable ends, both of which are usually taken to indicate a date after 1600. Perhaps the dendrochronology is suggesting that the dating of these features in Buckinghamshire should be reconsidered?

Likewise, domestic buildings of 1495-1527 usually had open halls, with a central hearth, no upper floor and no chimney - resulting in smoke-blackened roof timbers. But if Dean Leys was originally an open-hall house, as this dating suggests, then why are its rafters not smoke-blackened?

Well, Dean Leys has clearly had major repairs during the past 500 years. Perhaps the roof was replaced? Or perhaps it was originally an unheated agricultural building? Or perhaps it always had a chimney, in which case the dendrochronology results are suggesting that chimneys, usually considered to appear around 1580, were around earlier than that – in Wingrave at least!

So the dendrochronological survey may have answered one question – Dean Leys dates from the period 1495-1527 – but has raised lots of others.

These will be for the Dean Leys Survey to explore and later projects to answer – *for these, see Section 10 below.*

## 8.2 28 Nup End Lane

This is a very small house, as workshop participants found when looking around. Of an original two-bay timber-framed building, only one bay remains and much of the ground-floor is a later extension, probably in the 19th or early 20th centuries.



Smoke-blackened rafters at 28 Nup End Lane.  
Photo: Mike Farley

The roof timbers are impressive, with heavy rafters, open to the thatch and smoke-blackened (see photograph). But these turned out to be elm, so not suitable for dendrochronology.

Fortunately the main frame of the building is oak, and on the day of the workshop Andy Moir was able to take coring samples from six timbers. Five of these contained sufficient rings for analysis, but these did not cross-match, so there was not enough evidence to deduce a building date.

With such a small building there are no further timbers available to sample, so dendrochronology has drawn a blank here.

The smoke-blackened rafters, however, do indicate that 28 Nup End Lane is at least 16th-century and possibly earlier. A more exact date may result from the planned survey of the building – *see Section 10 below*.

### 8.3 **Windmill Hill Farmhouse**

Core samples were taken from Windmill Hill Farmhouse on the day before the Historic Buildings Workshop. This building was jointly surveyed by members of the BAS Historic Buildings Group and Wingrave Archives Association in 2010, so was not included in the survey list for the workshop itself.

The farmhouse is a large four-bay timber-framed building with impressive roof timbers. Twelve core samples were taken, but the analysis proved disappointing. Only two pairs of ring sequences cross-matched – insufficient to produce a firm construction date for the building.

However, three other core samples look promising: each contains more than 50 growth-rings and a section of sapwood. And the farmhouse is a large building with further timbers available for core sampling. This is scheduled to be done on the afternoon of 1 March 2011.

## 9: JUDGING THE WORKSHOP, 'TICK-BOX' FORM AND GLOSSARY

The workshop concluded with a valuable 'feedback session' which will be used to inform future events and historic buildings projects.

### 9.1 **The Workshop itself**

Everyone agreed that the survey had included too many buildings, to be viewed in too little time. 'External-only' viewings were, on the evidence of the day, also as likely to be misleading as informative.

Instead of the seven viewings for each group, two or three with both external and internal access would have been better – and if all groups viewed the same buildings then the subsequent discussion would have been more valuable too.

### 9.2 **The 'Tick-box Building Summary' Form** (see sample in Appendix A)

This was generally felt to be too complex for beginners and not suited to a survey 'in the field'. Though the information requested by the form was all relevant, it was not organised appropriately: users initially found themselves searching from page to

page to find the building feature they needed to record – then abandoning the form altogether in favour of informal notes.

If a 'survey form' was to be useful when viewing a historic building, then it needed to be in sequence. In other words it needed to set out the building's features in the order in which you would naturally see them: external features first, including the building's surroundings, then obvious features inside, with things such as types of roof truss and plan forms left until later.

The 'Tick-box' version was not in this logical order. On its first page it asks for the 'Date of First Build', something you're likely to deduce only at the end of your survey. Most external features appear on page three.

Could we design a better form? One designed with its users in mind, restructured to mirror the building as you see it, in sequence?

This should start with the information required by the Historic Environment Record. It should include space for notes, for information gathered from the building's owner, for a note of what the Listing / Pevsner / the RCHME had to say, a request for a sketch of floor plans for the building, information about maps and possible documentary evidence. Could this be the starting point for a 'Buckinghamshire Historic Building Recording Manual'?

*[ These suggestions became the starting point for the HBG's 'Survey Guide' project – see Section 10 below. ]*

### 9.3 **The Illustrated Glossary of Building Terms**

(see sample in Appendix B)

This illustrated glossary was welcomed, but participants wanted more! The terminology wasn't easy (precisely what was a 'lamb's tongue stop'?). So a list of historic building terms like this, with pictures that show exactly what you're looking at, is just what historic house surveyors need.

So more please!

*[ The workshop used version 1 of the Illustrated Glossary, which is being compiled by Andy Moir and Tree-Ring Services. Since then Andy has produced version 1.1, with considerably more information. ]*

### 9.4 **The art and science of dating historic buildings**

There was further discussion about how dendrochronology results might be used to inform and improve the dating of historic buildings generally.

Not all buildings are suitable for dendro-analysis: those not built of oak, for instance, or where there are insufficient timbers left for coring. In Wingrave, the cottage at 28 Nup End Lane is an example of this. So here we must rely on stylistic dating – our understanding of which structural, architectural and design features were used in which periods of our history.

Could the precise dates given by dendrochronology be used to make the dating of these stylistic features more accurate? Could the science of dendrochronology improve the art of interpretation?

The workshop agreed that this was worth investigating and seven people signed up for a new project to do this – see *Section 10.2 below*.

## 10: OUTCOMES FROM THE WORKSHOP

The first outcome was a decision to hold a ‘follow-up’ meeting in March 2011. Progress reports from four historic building projects will be presented at this meeting:

### 10.1 **A Historic Building Survey Guide**

Informed by feedback from the workshop, this project aims to develop a survey guide for the Historic Buildings Group.

Project team: Andrew Muir and Peter Marsden.

### 10.2 **Dendro-dated Buildings in Buckinghamshire**

This project, launched at the workshop itself, aims to examine 50-plus historic buildings whose construction dates are known from dendrochronology. By comparing their descriptions, it is hoped that a relative chronology of dateable features might be developed for Buckinghamshire which could be used to date other buildings more accurately.

Project team: Sue Fox, Peter Marsden, Andrew Muir, Rosemarie Storr, Heather Wallace and Julia Wise.

### 10.3 **Historic Survey of Dean Leys**

This practical survey project hopes to answer some of the questions thrown up by the dendrochronology results at Dean Leys.

Project team: Peter Marsden, Robin Moat, Andrew Muir, Jane Muir and Vanessa O’Carroll.

### 10.4 **Historic Survey of 28 Nup End Lane**

Because core samples from this single-bay timber-framed house produced insufficient evidence for a precise dendro-dating, a practical survey there is all the more important - particularly as smoke-blackened rafters suggest a date pre-1550.

Project team: Provisionally Mary Saunders and Julia Wise.

### 10.5 **Windmill Hill Farmhouse model report**

A full measured survey of Windmill Hill Farmhouse was done during 2010. The aim now is to produce a model Historic Building Survey Report that can be added to both the village archives and those of the county. This is in preparation – but will not be finalised until the dendro-survey is also completed.

Project: Andrew Muir

---

**THANKS ARE DUE TO:**

- The Council for British Archaeology for help in funding the workshop.
- The residents of Wingrave who allowed workshop participants to invade their gardens in order to view and record their buildings (and in some cases happily gave away the age and provenance of their houses!)
- Particularly the owners of Dean Leys, The Hollies and 28 Nup End Lane for opening their houses to the workshop participants on the day .
- Andy Moir, for his participation throughout the day, for the use of the 'Tick-box building summary form' and 'Illustrated Glossary', and for allowing us to share his dendrochronology results.

---

Summary Report written by Peter Marsden / 7 February 2011