

MUSEUM 4 WATTON

It is two years since I spoke at this event, then in the Sports Centre, Museum 4 Watton was merely a concept with a highly motivated group behind it. Watton Town Council leased us the front of Wayland Hall at a Peppercorn rent and we applied for a lottery grant to fund our costs, we decided to open the Museum weather or not we succeeded with the funding. A great deal of time was taken up in acquiring second hand cabinets from other Museums which inevitably we did not need. These cabinets were passed on to the new desert Rats Museum at Mundford. As many of you will know our Lottery bid was successful, we were awarded £63.000 and a little over a year ago the Museum opened. I would like to think that all of you have visited the Museum, for those that have, come again our displays are constantly changing, for those who have not, come and see what you are missing. We have what is formally described as the 'oldest and finest' flint axe head ever found this end of the country, estimated at ½ million years old. An Iceni coin 2000 years old that is one of only 9 ever recorded and is the only one on public display in the world. The Court Barron Record Books for the Manor of Watton Hall that record the fire that destroyed our town in 1764. There are many more items that are unusual and unique and they all relate to Watton and surrounding villages. Our visitor target, set by HLF, was 1500 per annum, in our first year we have seen 5000 many of whom were visitors to the town.

Our needs now are funding for running costs, these are not paid by the lottery, and more volunteers. It is our policy to meet and greet all visitors so if you can spare a morning or afternoon, between Wednesday and Saturday and would like to help and have some company, come and have a chat with us.