

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION - FRIDAY 6<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2001 TO ANNE BRAITHWAITE AT THE MILL, Tel. No: 831282 [e-mail: Mill@auwoxon32.freereserve.co.uk].**

It is clear from comments we get that the historical contribution about Ascott is very well received and enjoyed. Would readers be interested in a regular short natural history article focussing on local birds, mammals, fish or flowers - and are there any contributors out there who would be willing to provide such items periodically? Are there any other suggestions for articles of interest?

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**HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD**

**FEBRUARY**

Sunday, 4 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 a.m. Matins
[Epiphany 5]	4.00 p.m. Family Service
Sunday, 11 <sup>th</sup>	9.00 a.m. Holy Communion (Canon Pyburn)
[Septuagesima]	
Sunday, 18 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 a.m. Holy Communion (Rev. D. Ashburner)
[Sexagesima]	
Sunday, 25 <sup>th</sup>	9.00 a.m. Holy Communion (Canon Pyburn)
[Quinquagesima]	

**MARCH**

Sunday, 4 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 a.m. Matins
[Lent 1]	4.00p.m. Family Service
Sunday, 11 <sup>th</sup>	9.00 a.m. Holy Communion (Canon Pyburn)
[Lent 2]	
Sunday, 18 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 a.m. Holy Communion (Canon Shaw)
[Lent 3]	
Sunday, 25 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 a.m. Family Communion Mothering Sunday
[Lent 4]	

For details of services in April please look at Church notice board

**From the Parish Registers**

Holy Matrimony	11 <sup>th</sup> November	Brendan Craig Cleaver and Jenny Elizabeth Dowler
Burials	3rd November	Denys Robert Alfred Jackson
	13th November	Jean Trinder
Burial of Ashes	26th November	Joan Margaret Joyee Pratley
	30th November	Florentina Tait

***Date for your Diary: CHURCH FÊTE on The Green Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2001***

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**POPPY APPEAL**

The recent house-to-house collection for the Poppy Appeal fund amounted to £347.89.

Many thanks to Mrs. Carol Hawtin, Mrs. Mary Barnes, Mrs. Kate Gidman, Mrs. Jill Stedeford, Mrs. Kathy Pearce and Mrs. Joan Lilly for their help.

**Mavis Mortimer, Poppy Appeal Organiser**

**ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD PARISH COUNCIL**

It is over a year since our grand firework display to mark the Millennium and 2001 seems to be here in no time. The Parish Council would like to wish all villagers a very happy second year in this millennium.

West Oxfordshire District Council Leisure and Tourism Committee have approved a £7000.00 Grant towards the Playground Equipment but it has to be finally confirmed by the full committee meeting on 17th January. hopefully all will go well and we may place a firm order for the equipment in the near future.

Mr. Pearce and Mr. Braithwaite have arranged a meeting with the Cornbury Agent with regard to Corner House Farm site. The plaque for Harry Cook has been placed on the stone trough at the corner of High Street.

We continually press the County and District Councils over the drainage between the level crossing and river and the footpath above Maple Way. Mr. Leadbetter pursuing the drainage problem has recently been talking to Paul Lancaster from the District Council who has agreed to take that problem in hand and a short while ago Mr Rodney Rose (County Councillor) discussed the footpath with Hugh Potter, the Senior Field Officer, who has agreed to look into that matter.

**Wendy Pearse Parish Clerk**

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**WYCHWOODS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

The History Society Programme from February is as follows, all talks begin at 7.30 p.m.

Thursday, 15th February	Shipton Village Hall	
	The Village over the Ridge - Fulbrook	Sylvia McLintock
Thursday, 15th March	Milton Village Hall	
	What we learn from Ancient Pottery	Margaret Ware
Thursday, 19th April	Shipton Village Hall	
	Men behind the Medals	Graham Pitchfork

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Old and new members are welcome. Subscriptions remain at £4 for an individual and £6 for a couple which includes a copy of "Wychwood History," when published. Visitors welcome at any meeting at £2 per person. Further details from Wendy Pearse on 831023.

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**"HIS NAME BE NOT FORGOTTEN"**

On the Roll of Honour for World War One kept in the Tiddy Hall are sixty nine men and three women, approximately one sixth of the inhabitants of the village of Ascott. Of this number thirteen are commemorated on the plaque on the pillar of the church gates as the War dead of Ascott. These men would have been well known to their fellow villagers but today it seems rather impersonal and remote that only initials and not Christian names were recorded.

After the War the relatives of the deceased were sent the appropriate medals, a scroll and bronze plaque. The scroll read "He whom this scroll commemorates was numbered among those who, at the call of King and Country, left all that was dear to them, endured hardness, faced danger, and finally passed out of the sight of men by the path of duty and self sacrifice, giving us their own lives that others might live in freedom. Let those who come after see to it that his name be not forgotten."

But do we remember them? Their names are read out at the Remembrance Day Service and the poignant notes of the Last Post break the silence. Their surnames are past village names but in several cases, their families have moved on and apart from Reginald Tiddy, few memories survive. A sense of sadness pervades. If possible, I would like to put some flesh on the bones of these lost men who walked our streets, worked in the fields and probably spent their short life span in the pretty surroundings of the Evenlode Valley which we all enjoy today. Many of them, however, breathed their last in the blood, sweat and mud of Flanders and the Somme, far away from their Ascott homes.

I have uncovered some information about a number of them and am grateful to those villagers who have helped me, but if anyone knows any details, no matter how small, I should be pleased to hear from them. Below are a list of the names on the plaque, fortunately their Christian names are on the Roll of Honour.

ELISHA PRATLEY  
FRANK THORNTON  
WILLIAM J. CLARIDGE  
V. HARRY HONEYBONE  
ERNEST HANKS  
CECIL BECK  
FRANK E. JACKSON  
FRED SMITH  
WILLIAM FAULKNER  
ALBERT T. LONGSHAW  
JOHN A. CLARIDGE

DENNIS SMITH  
REGINALD J. TIDDY

The Roll also lists two other names with R.I.P. beside. Why they are not on the plaque is unknown but their names are:

ELIJAH PRATLEY  
HARRY GRACE

One of these men who did not die on the Western Front was FREDERICK SMITH and the clue to his war is inscribed on his parents tombstone in Ascott churchyard. Most of us acquaint the First World War with the Western Front, perhaps seconded by Gallipoli but the war was fought in other peripheral regions, one being Mesopotamia, today's Iraq, and it was there close to the ancient Tigris and Euphrates rivers that Frederick Smith met his death.

Fred's parents were Charles and Rebecca, Rebecca being one of the Ascott Martyrs. In the 1891 Census, he is listed aged one with brothers Thomas 21, Charles 5 and sister Elizabeth 12. The five year old Charles was later to become the father of the late Charlie Smith of Maple Way and I remember Charlie once told me of his father's brothers Fred and Wally "They was both army". Wally was not born in 1891 but the rest of the family were living in the house opposite the then Coldstone Farm, the last on the left heading for Shipton, where the five year old Charles was still living in the 1950s.

Fred was probably already in the Army at the outbreak of the War and arrived in Mesopotamia when the Indian Government pressurised by the British sent a small force to secure British interests in the oil refinery at Abadan and the pipeline to the coast. Unfortunately the military commanders of this mission produced a total military disaster and caught up in it were Fred and his comrades.

General Sir John Nixon, GOC Mesopotamia was ambitious and not being content to secure the oil installations as ordered, he decided to try to capture Baghdad. After entering the port of Basra on 22 November 1914, the 30 miles to Abadan were soon accomplished, but the way ahead was vast open terrain, inhospitable climate and lying in wait were a large Turkish Army and bands of ruthless tribesmen. Nevertheless the force pressed on and had reached Amara, 100 miles north on the Tigris by 3 June 1915 and a similar distance on the Euphrates by 25th July. Nixon delighted, decided to send Major General Sir Charles Townshend, Commander GOC Expeditionary Force D, northwards towards Baghdad. Townsend with 14,000 troops accepted the orders to advance a further 90 miles to Kut, but planned on his own initiative to press on the other 210 miles to Baghdad in search of glory. The force defeated the Turks at Kut but the Turkish army slipped away. However Townshend pressed on to Ctesiphon 20 miles from Baghdad where General Nureddin had entrenched a large army across the line of the British advance. Outnumbered three to one Townshend attacked but was sharply repulsed suffering 4,500 casualties and was reluctantly forced to retreat returning to Kut by 2nd December 1915. Kut was merely a collection of mud huts on a bend of the Tigris and Townshend had

plenty of time to retreat to the coast. But instead, he decided to await relief and preserve his grand ambition of glory. He sent a message to Nixon who had already retreated to Basra, saying he only had supplies for a month. Nixon panicked, sent the first relief column which having struggled through floods and Turkish attacks was forced to retreat having lost 6,000 men between 18th and 21st January 1916. Lieu/General Aylmer commander of the relief force asked Townshend to co-operate with diversionary sorties when the second relief column advanced in March but Townshend refused saying it was bad for morale. Again the column was repulsed with 3,500 casualties. Townshend, urged to break out rather than starve never revealed the true amount of stocks in hand. He was not prepared to stain his reputation by defeat, revelling in the thought of the hero gallantly holding out against countless hordes. The third relief column pushed further in April but to no avail and by that time 23,000 men had become casualties attempting to relieve less than half that number still in Kut.

But by 29th March 1916 food had run out and Townshend had to surrender. With his personal staff he was sent to Constantinople where he remained an honoured guest of the Turkish commander until the end of the war. 345 prisoners were exchanged for Turkish prisoners, but the remaining Expeditionary Force D. troops set off on a forced march of 1200 miles under Kurdish whips and died in their thousands of typhus, dysentery, cholera, extremes of heat and cold and exhaustion. If they dropped out of the column they were soon at the mercy and torture of local tribesmen. 70% British and 50% Indian troops died.

I do not know exactly where Fred featured in this campaign. He is recorded on his parents' tombstone as having fallen "during the seige of Kut" in "June 1916", which was after Townshend's surrender. He could have been amongst Townshend's force or in the relief column but at some stage he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal, the highest award granted to a NCO apart from the Victoria Cross.

Great secrecy was preserved about the Mesopotamia disaster and the church gate plaque which lists the dead in the order in which they died, appears to record Fred as dying in Autumn 1917. However some time after his parents died, Charles in 1918 and Rebecca in 1920, news must have arrived with a more exact date of death. Sadly, Fred was a long time missing.

Hopefully, more stories will follow.

**Wendy Pearse. Phone No: 831023**

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#### **A RURAL BUS SERVICE TO CHARLBURY - UPDATE**

You first read of the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) scheme to introduce a local bus link between Ascott-under-Wychwood, Leafield, Finstock, Charlbury and the station in the July 2000 edition of the Grapevine. An update in October explained there were problems with the number and cost of the tenders submitted to the County Council by bus companies and that this was causing some delay in completing the contract

negotiations. It was hoped the service would begin early in 2001 but the start-date, for the reasons set out below, is now set for mid-late March.

On 23 November the CC transport sub-committee voted additional funds to confirm Worth's Bus Company has the contract to provide the service with a new Mercedes bus. The bus is on order but will not be delivered until the spring. The chaos on the rail network and Thames Water's roadworks in Charlbury, that will extend to Five-Way shortly, make it a bad time to start a new service. In the hope that the confusion and delays will largely be overcome by mid March this seems an appropriate time to begin the new service.

Advertising the service timetable and charges should begin towards the end of February. Details can still change, but the bus service is now guaranteed for a period of one year. As soon as the Parish Council receives information it will be posted on all the village notice boards. The service will dovetail with the railway timetable and run from/to Ascott eleven times each day, Monday-Friday, between 07.08 (to catch the 07.38 train to Paddington) and 19.48 (returning people off the 19.30 from Oxford). It is possible that we will also get a Saturday service but that is not yet confirmed.

Questions about the service can be directed to Nick Leadbetter (Tel: 831571).

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#### **ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD W.I.**

We decided to have a change this year and instead of having a Harvest Supper, 37 of us met at Tiddy Hall for Harvest Lunch on Monday 23 October. We had a delicious meal of chicken pie, carrots, peas and mashed potatoes followed by a variety of puddings. For our entertainment, we thought it would be fun to have a Beetle Drive and so the Hall rang with laughter as dice were thrown, weird-shaped beetles were drawn and amidst the hilarity a voice would suddenly shout "BEETLE" and we all turned expectantly to see who it was. Mrs Mortimer and Mrs Moss, Mrs Pomfrey and Mrs Rainbow and Mr and Mrs Collett were all prize winners.

We decided to have a change in November. Instead of having a speaker, we brought along a recipe, together with a taster of that recipe, and, after the business of the meeting was finished, we adjourned to the kitchen to sample the various goodies that had been brought along which varied from puddings to cakes and biscuits. It was great fun as we all sat round the table tasting a little bit of this and a little bit of that and putting the world to rights with our chatter as we did so.

Our Christmas outing was to the Red Horse Inn in Shipton where we had a delicious buffet with several of us going back for second helpings. After the meal we pulled our crackers and then we had to put our brains to the test with a couple of quizzes, one of them testing our memory of nursery rhymes. The evening was a great success and was a happy, if early, start to the Christmas celebrations.

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### THE ASCOTT BELLRINGERS

Our small team of ringers came together in the winter of 1998, to learn the art of change ringing. Our target was to ring for the millennium service, a national event, encouraged by the church and ringer's guilds throughout Britain.

We achieved our aim and have continued to ring for church services, weddings and special occasions, meeting on Monday evenings for our practice sessions. If you've ever wondered why the village seems deserted on a Monday night it's the locals escaping to somewhere more peaceful!

We are keen to recruit new members to help keep the tradition of ringing alive in our community.

The art of ringing is a unique combination of physical and mental skills, and a team activity giving the satisfaction of working with a close knit band of colleagues.

Anyone can learn to be a ringer from teenager to pensioner. We have, in Martin Kirk, an excellent tutor and would welcome anyone from the parish who would like to join us.

If you are interested in finding out more about ringing please contact Martin Kirk telephone 831012 or Mike Pearce telephone 830058.

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### CHAUNDY UPDATE

Some of you may remember that in 1998 the Chaundy family, long connected with Ascott, held a 'gathering' at Tiddy Hall. We all have copies of the video made of that day's events which is fun to replay, but even though we have not all met together since then, there have been other developments.

Groups of family members are now in regular contact, some meeting in their own parts of the country, others writing letters and e-mails as well as 'phoning.

I reverted to my maiden name of Chaundy following a divorce and for me, the day of the 'gathering' was a life-changing experience! My parents died many years ago, and as an only child with no children of my own, finding a family has been really wonderful. I'm in regular contact with Frank in Essex, Bob in Bedford and Margaret in Bampton. And, of course, there's always great, great grandfather and great, great, great grandfather [John & Fanny, and John & Mary, in the low rounded grave and the large grave recently exposed, respectively] in the churchyard at Ascott.

There is now a family tree of 11 generations, even though there are several parts of it that need quite a bit more work.

A possible re-union, tentatively arranged for October 2000 had to be postponed but, hopefully, we will arrange another one this year. If anyone has photos of Chaundys - perhaps from Village Fêtes - we would love to see them. And if anyone knows if a

portrait exists of my ancestor John, who was Sheriff. of Oxford in the 19th century, I would be most interested. The archivists at Oxford County Council were not able to help me.

We have a website at - <http://born.as/chaundy> - and if anyone is interested in visiting it, it contains some photos of Ascott.

### **Jan Chaundy. Chichester, West Sussex**

[If you have any information/photographs etc. of the Chaundys, please contact Anne Braithwaite at The Mill, Tel. No: 831282 or e.mail: [Mill@auwoxon32.freemove.co.uk](mailto:Mill@auwoxon32.freemove.co.uk)].

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Holy Trinity Church, Ascott-under-Wychwood

**MOTHERING SUNDAY, 25<sup>th</sup> MARCH**

**AT 10.30 a.m.**

***FAMILY COMMUNION***

Everybody Welcome. Refreshments following the Service.

### VARIETY SHOW FUNDRAISING EVENT

On **Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> February** there will be a comedy/variety show presented by Rex Boyd at the Tiddy Hall at 7pm. All proceeds from ticket sales and donations will be given to the Parish Council to use for the purchase of playground equipment for Ascott. All ages are welcome to attend. Tickets will be £5, or £3.50 for 12 year olds and younger.

Rex has been a professional entertainer for over 15 years and has lived in Ascott for one and a half years. He performs regularly at festivals and comedy clubs around the UK, Europe, and sometimes even further. As well as presenting some of his own routines, Rex will comper the show which will also feature an appearance from the well-known, local comedy duo of Norman and Lyon. Any other local performers (amateur as well as professional) who would like to get involved would be greatly welcomed. Please contact Rex at 830053 to join in the fun on stage, or to enquire about advance tickets.

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**Do you need a BABYSITTER?  
If so, ring Leisha Braithwaite on 01993 831282**

### LEAFIELD C. of E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Looking out of the window at the frost covered roofs in Leaffield is a truly picturesque sight this morning. The children at Leaffield School really do have the position at the centre of the village. It is difficult to recall, now that the sun has been shining for many days, the rain and wind that we experienced before Christmas. Christmas celebrations at school included our Millennium celebration as well, a concert titled 'New Millennium Heroes'. As usual, the children rose to the occasion and showed us just how brilliant they really are. Every child in the school had an important part to play in the performance, with solo and group singing, dancing, narration, percussion instruments and mime from the infants. A special mention must go to Mr Staines, who ably managed stage direction, and also to all teaching and non-teaching staff, without whose support the whole event would not have been possible.

The school has been involved in several charity-based fund raising events during this academic year. A representative from 'Help the Aged' visited school in order to run 'Hectorcise' sessions with the children, giving them an awareness of the importance of mobility exercises for older people and raising money for Help the Aged through sponsorship.

Children also had the option of taking part in a 'Children in Distress' appeal, where they pack decorated shoeboxes with items such as, hat, scarf and gloves, toothbrush and toothpaste, small games, colouring pencils or pocket size toys and sweets etc. This activity actively encourages them to think about those who have less and is a very practical way of providing support for disadvantaged children. The shoeboxes were then collected together and sent to children in countries such as Romania and Kosovo, to arrive by Christmas. The children at Leaffield collected 52 shoeboxes altogether.

Other events around Christmas time included the Christingle Service, led by Rev. Knowles. If a Christingle Service has never been a part of your annual calendar, add it to your 'must-do' list for next Christmas. It is a truly 'magical' experience, seeing so many children's faces lit up by candle light and realising that they hold the future in their hands. The children also are encouraged to consider those people their age who live on the streets in Britain. Small cardboard candles were given out prior to the service, which they are asked to fill with change to support street children. These cardboard candles are given in as part of the service. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Knowles for all the time and energy that she gives to school. Mrs Knowles leads a weekly choir practice in the church and an assembly in school. We are very lucky to have you in Leaffield.

The PTA Christmas fair proved to be a very popular event with carol singing, mulled wine, stalls and games and the 200 Club Hamper Raffle helping to draw in the crowds.

Our computer suite is now finished and in use. Each of our four classes has timetabled lessons where ICT teaching can take place and other times in the week for children to consolidate what they have been taught in small groups with an LSA or the class teacher. This is an extremely exciting resource for a small school, most have opted to keep their computers in the classrooms, opening up a whole new world of possibilities for learning.

As a staff, we are very excited about this new development in Leaffield School and I would like to invite you to come and have a look and share in some of our enthusiasm.

Leaffield School is certainly thriving, as any visitor to the school would confirm. Our rising 5's are especially fortunate; the ratio of children to teachers being 7:1 this term. In the summer term this is likely to rise to 10:1. We are proud of the fact that we can provide these very young children with such a positive start to their life at school, with each child receiving three times as much teacher time as in those in some other schools. How fortunate they are!

**Liz Davies Head Teacher**

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### ASCOTT PRE-SCHOOL

Ascott Pre-school is doing well and all places are now filled until Easter. Several children joined last term: Harry Bridge, Maggie Boyd, Matthew Cradock, Isabelle Gulley, Ethan Preston, Edward Sellars, Bill Wallace, Harry Williamson, and Isla Weir. This term they have been joined by Alex Ayres, Finn Barrett, Felicity Brooker, David Kloos, James Knight, Tegan Saunders and Lauren Taylor. Several children have moved on to nursery or elsewhere since Christmas and we were sad to say goodbye to Isadora Barefield, Bradley Flinders, Chiharu Hasagawa, Ryan Loveridge, Stefan Palejowski, Luke Saunders, Joshura Schofield, Edward Sellars, Joseph Stevens, Charlie Tobin, Guy Walker, Robbie Williamson and Tommy Woodward. Last year Pre-school raised over £2000 through fundraising events, which has enabled us to invest in a range of interesting new equipment and to stock up on essentials. This year our pre-Christmas events were successful, and we are very grateful to all who helped or contributed. The craft fair sweet stall raised £150, the Christmas concert over £95 and carol singing £27.

The highlight of the term was undoubtedly the Christmas concert, where children sang carols (traditional and otherwise) and presented a short play Goldilocks, Curlylocks and the Six Bears. The event was very entertaining and families and friends enjoyed mulled wine and mince pies after the performance. The following week the children had their Christmas party and were thrilled to receive a visit from Father Christmas, who distributed presents to some overwhelmed toddlers!

This term the Pre-school theme is on nursery rhymes. A library visit from all the playgroup children is being planned; Sandra, Frances and Pauline will shortly be attending a Multicultural Workshop to make costumes and food with a multicultural flavour, and the annual social services inspection will take place in February. There are no dates fixed for fundraising events yet, but Pre-school will at some stage be holding a Duck Day (as in previous years), so look out for further information nearer to Easter.

**Clare Shaw**

### VILLAGE PHOTOGRAPH

My apologies for the delay in having this but unfortunately it took longer to collect the names than anticipated. This has now been completed and the photograph should be with us within the next two to three weeks.

We will deliver the photographs to those who have ordered and anybody else who would like a copy could they please contact Simon Gidman on 01993 830441.

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### TIDDY HALL

To start the New Year we are holding our 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary Party on Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> January. This year the children's party starts at 2.30 p.m. and Mr. Magic will be entertaining them until 3.30 p.m. Entrance £1, includes a 'goodies bag'. In the evening from 8.00 p.m. we shall be dancing to SPLASH, an excellent local band. Beer and wine bar. Tickets £5, under 14's £3, available from Tel. No: 830227 and 830114. Please support these two events; we would love to see all the family come along in the evening - children welcome!

**Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March - Irish Night** [50/50 fund raiser with the Ascott Sports Pavilion Fund] This promises to be one of Tiddy's great nights! The fabulous Irish band Slainte, Irish stew supper, and of course the famous black Irish Porter - Guinness! [Other beers and wine also available].

Tickets: £12.50 available from:- Lyn & Tony Collins - 830114  
Ros Harbour & Roger Shepherd - 830227

Tickets are limited to allow everyone a seat, so don't leave it too late.

The CRAFT FAIR in November raised £286. Thank you to everyone who helped and attended, even the torrential rain didn't keep many away.

Can we remind every one that the Hall is available and equipped for badminton. There is also a full size table tennis table. Anyone interested in playing either contact Committee Members for further information.

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### DENYS JACKSON - LANDLORD AND FRIEND

Like many people in Ascott, I knew Denys Jackson both as Landlord of The Swan and a friend. His sad death from cancer will leave a gap in village life. Our sympathy goes to Dot, Geoffrey, Robert and Andrew in their loss. I would like to pay my tribute to him on behalf of a village it is well known that I love, and to which Denys contributed so much. For fifteen years he was my neighbour, and for much of that time I and others enjoyed his and Dot's company in the village pub.

Denys and Dot came to Ascott in 1968 to run the pub and did that for twenty years, before retiring to the cottage in the Shipton Road which the family converted very professionally from stables. In the pub Denys mixed a wry response to any nonsense with skill as raconteur. Quiet evenings with Martin Kirk, Syd Ryan and myself, among others, after Denys had retired were made peculiarly enjoyable by Denys' crystal clear memory for

tales, observations and jokes. As a landlord he kept a pub as it should be, no fly-by-night fads, but good old-fashioned beer and button-leather.

Despite being colour blind, Denys was - and this is not so well known - an accomplished potter, carrying on a 1000 year old tradition for Ascott, and painter. It was with sorrow - but quite a lot of wet sales as well! - that he retired from the pub in November 1988. Rumour had it that he gave each of his regulars a free pint and cigar on Christmas day - but it never happened to me!; and his good stewardship of The Swan attracted 'punters' from all parts of Ascott-under-Wychwood society.

Many no doubt, will be the tributes to him; I for one, remember shovelling 'esse-aitch-one-tee' round to him as fertiliser for his well-tended roses, much to his amusement, as you can imagine! I will always remember his kindness, his good sense and dry humour. I hope I speak for many when I say, it was a privilege for Ascott to have Denys in its midst. He will be badly missed by us all.

**Clive Scott**

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### JOAN PRATLEY [DESMOND'S WIFE]

Joan Pratley (nee Clarke) was born in Edmonton, London and had five sisters and one brother. Her father, Frederick Clarke as well as being an excellent cabinet maker, was highly respected for his work as a naturalist, identifying plant species and making botanical illustrations. His collection of drawings is housed at Kew Gardens.

Joan was evacuated to Leafield in 1939 as a young child with some of her sisters and her brother. At the end of the war she returned to London to finish her education. Her brother and sisters remained in London but Joan was keen to return to rural life and so came back to Leafield to stay once again with Archie and Gertie Ferryman, starting her first job in Witney.

She met Desmond in 1948 and they married in London on June 17<sup>th</sup> 1950. Joan and Desmond spent their first six years of married life living with Desmond's parents in Heritage Lane. During this time Desmond and Joan, along with Eric and Joan, built their own houses in London Lane. Joan served on the Parochial Church Council from 1953 until the birth of her first child and for many years distributed the Charity Commission vouchers around the village.

Joan had 3 children and 2 grandchildren and dedicated her life to bringing up her family and helping Desmond with his business. She was widowed on January 30<sup>th</sup> 1987. Joan was a keen supporter and fundraiser of Witney Band for many years, while her 2 daughters were playing members. Regular trips to Moreton-in-Marsh market with her friends became an important part of her week in more recent years.

Sadly, Joan had a stroke in September 1998, which left her severely disabled. After five months in hospital, she returned home where she remained, thanks to support from family and a dedicated team of carers until her death on November 9<sup>th</sup> 2000. During the last two difficult years of Joan's life she remained cheerful, positive and uncomplaining. She will be remembered with love and affection by everybody whose lives she touched.

### **CHURCH KNEELERS**

To all those interested we are holding another get together at Vine House on  
**Saturday, 31<sup>st</sup> March from 10.30 a.m. to 12 o'clock**  
If you need help or need more wool or you just want to chat about your kneeler,  
please come along.  
If you would like to help sew up a kneeler or would be interested in helping  
generally, please contact either  
Ann Burleigh on 831377 or Anne Braithwaite on 831282

### ***Jumble Sale***

**In**  
**Milton Village Hall**  
**On Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> February at 2 p.m.**  
Books, Jumble, Cakes, Tea, Raffle, White Elephant  
Entrance 25p.  
In aid of Wychwood Handicraft Society

### **ROMAN CATHOLIC MASSES**

**Burford** - Church of SS. John Fisher and Thomas Moore  
Sundays at 9.15 a.m. & 11.00 a.m.;  
Holy Days 10.00 a.m. & 7.00 p.m.  
**Chipping Norton** - Holy Trinity Church  
Sundays at 10.30 a.m.; Holy Days 9.00 a.m. & 7.00 p.m.  
**Charlbury** - St. Teresa's  
Sundays at 11.00 a.m.; Holy Days 9.30 a.m. & 7.30 p.m.

### **SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)**

**Burford** - Friends Meeting House, Pytts Lane  
(off Witney Street) Sundays at 11.00 a.m.  
For further information, contact Nigel Braithwaite  
on 01993 831282  
**Charlbury** - Friends Meeting House, Market Street  
Sundays at 10.30 a.m.  
For further information, contact Andrew or Patricia Pymmer  
on 01993 882848

### **THE "POST OFFICE" STORES**

#### **Milton-under-Wychwood**

Open: Mon.-Fri. 7 a.m. – 5.30 p.m. (Closed 1-2 for lunch)  
Open Saturday 7 a.m.-1.00 p.m. & Sunday 8 a.m.-12 noon

**POST OFFICE SERVICES AVAILABLE AT**  
**"THE SWAN", ASCOTT**  
**MONDAY 10.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.**  
**Bank Holiday Excepted**

John, Edna & Staff will be pleased to serve you  
with newspapers and magazines, greetings cards, fresh bread  
Fresh flowers for all occasions  
Agents for **SKETCHLEY CLEANERS &**  
**LOCAL SHOE REPAIRS;**  
**SUPA-SNAPS PHOTO PROCESSING**  
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**Accommodation available in friendly BED AND BREAKFAST**  
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**MILL LAND, ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD**

**Please contact: Anne and Nigel Braithwaite**  
**[01993 831282; e.mail: Mill@auwoxon32.freeserve.co.uk]**

### **WYCHWOOD HANDICRAFT SOCIETY**

Meet every fourth Tuesday in the month in Milton Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.  
**27<sup>th</sup> February Edna Naish Flower Arranging**  
**27<sup>th</sup> March Members' Evening**  
**24<sup>th</sup> April Margaret Gibbs Doll Making**  
Everybody welcome - if you need transport please ring Anne Braithwaite on  
831282



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# Body Talk

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