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# The Ascott Grapevine

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Issue 50

Spring 2006

## Grapevine Appeal

The Ascott Grapevine is provided FREE to every household in Ascott and we wish this to continue for a long time to come.

Although 'The Grapevine' does receive support from the Parish Council and the PCC, it only raises a limited amount of revenue from advertising. 'The Ascott Grapevine' survives mainly on donations. If you would like to help The Grapevine continue, any donation large or small would be appreciated. You can give a donation to any member of the editorial team.

If there is an aspect of village life not already covered in the Grapevine please contact a member of the production team to discuss your ideas. Articles for the Summer issue of The Grapevine should be submitted by July 4th.

Call 01993 832163 or email:

[ascottgrapevine@dial.pipex.com](mailto:ascottgrapevine@dial.pipex.com)

**Stuart Fox, Kingsley,  
Wendy Pearse,  
Karen Purvis**

## Church Services

1st Sunday  
10.00am HC C

2nd Sunday  
8.00am HC P

3rd Sunday  
10.00am HC C  
(Benefice Service - held  
at one of the Benefice  
Churches by rotation)

4th Sunday  
10.00am MP P  
4.00pm  
Family Service

The service will be held at one of the churches in the Benefice by rotation. Please check Notice Board for full details.

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### What's what

**EP**= Evening Prayer/  
Service

**FC** = Family Communion

**HC**= Holy Communion

**MP** = Morning Prayer/  
Service

**QP** = Time of Quiet  
Prayer

**BS** = Benefice Service

**Bapt** = Holy Baptism

**C** = Contemporary Language

**P** = Book of Common  
Prayer

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## Chase News

You will find further information about church services and news about what is happening across the Chase Benefice in the *Chase News*, included in the centre of this issue of the Grapevine.

### Content & Editorial Policy

If you have an article, story or poem you would like to submit for publication the Grapevine editorial team would love to hear from you. Material for publication is gratefully accepted. Due to space considerations material may not be used immediately but may be held over to be included in a later issue.

The Grapevine editorial team reserve the right to shorten, amend or reject any material submitted for publication.

# Happy Birthday Your Majesty!!

To celebrate the 80th birthday of our Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Parochial Church Council of Holy Trinity Church, Ascott-under-Wychwood, are arranging an entertainment to be held on the **Village Green on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2006 at 6.00pm.**

A stout pig will be roasted and served with side trimmings to tables

set out on the green. This to be followed by strawberries and cream. A bar will be provided offering fine ales, wines and soft drinks. It is intended that there will be music and dancing and entertainments for children.

Tickets priced at £10 for adults and £5 for children are available from Mrs Anne Braithwaite (831282),

Mrs Debra Cull (831621) and Mr Timothy Lyon (832531).

The organisers are proposing a Grand Raffle, prizes for which will be gratefully received.

In the event of inclement weather, the celebrations will be held in the Tiddy Hall.

All proceeds in aid of Church funds.

*Tim Lyon*

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## The New Wychwood Surgery

I guess by the time this copy of the Grapevine drops through your letterbox the new surgery will be well on the way to completion and near to opening it's doors to the public.

By now as most will know the new surgery is in Meadow Lane at Shipton under Wychwood. So Ascott, a few steps nearer to us and fantastic parking facilities. Yippee I hear you say!

It will be a very sad day when the Milton Surgery closes its door. I have been there for 34



years but the truth is it's just not big enough anymore.

Not only will the new surgery have been purpose built, new clean and shiny, it will hopefully offer more services for the patients' care.

The sad side, and there usually is one, is that at the beginning of April, Dr Sandy Scott will be retiring and we will all miss him greatly.

He has given so much to the Surgery and patients over the years.

We must all wish him every happiness and good luck for his future and any ventures he may undertake.

Thank you Dr. Sandy!

Doctors and staff look forward to welcoming you to the New Wychwood Surgery.

*Annalise Niebuhr.*

# Dr Sandy Scott's Retirement Celebration

The poster said "Everybody Welcome" and the Wychwoods took the poster to heart with a grand turnout of villagers filling the Beaconsfield Hall to celebrate not only Dr Sandy Scott's retirement but also his huge 35 year commitment to the welfare and care of the patients of the Wychwoods Surgery.

Dr Nixon began the speeches describing Dr Sandy's initiation from taking over during a flu' epidemic and coping for the first six years as the sole doctor, until being joined by his great friend the late Dr Robert Beazer. Dr Sandy's many exploits are well known from the non-stop drive Lands End to John O'Groats to the wing walking. All in aid of funds for the Surgery Projects such as the Transport Fund.

Malcolm Cochrane described Dr Sandy as a forthright and inspiring leader not least exemplified by one of his latest ventures as the oldest man to take part in the



British Bobsleigh Championships. The Wychwoods Medical Practise which Dr Sandy has built up through his enthusiasm and commitment is one of the highest achievers in the whole country. But his achievements are not just in this country. His work in Nepal culminating in the Everest Expedition Trust and the establishment of the Pheriche Hospital are a great and much loved accomplishment. Malcolm Cochrane then presented Dr Sandy with a cheque for £2500 donated by his friends and patients.

Replying Dr Sandy described himself as overwhelmed and speechless by the occa-

sion but luckily had come prepared with notes. Thanking everyone including those who had prepared the celebration, he explained that the money would be divided in two, half to go to the Pheriche Hospital and half to the third picture of the Wychwoods to be painted by Martin Taylor. This view would be from the Swinbrook road towards the A361 and beyond, covering all the villages.

Committed at birth by his father the first Dr Scott to become the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dr Scott, Sandy's life was predestined. But who could have known then what a major impact he would have on our villages. In a witty

and humorous speech Dr Sandy expressed his huge debt of thanks to his wife Wimpy and Dr Robert Beazer whose help had sustained him through his many commitments and ventures. When he took over with just his sister Janet Wallace as nurse and Annalise Niebuhr as pharmacist the number of patients was 2200. Now it is 5200 administered by five doctors and a grand team of personnel many having al-



*...and it's also farewell to the old Milton Surgery*

ready served the community for several years.

The applause was heartfelt and loud. As

many said, "There will never be another Sandy."



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## Television Comes to the Village Shop

Central Television contacted us to ask if they could film "A Day in the Life of Ascott Shop" we were very excited by this approach and all that free publicity so naturally we agreed. On Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February Wendy Nelson, the presenter from Heart of the Country, and her camera man Mike arrived at the Mill around 7.15am to film Nigel Braithwaite (who is our regular volunteer on a Friday morning) leave home to open the shop at 7.30 and start his shift. They filmed whilst Nigel went about his tasks ie. marking up the newspapers, cooking bread and pastries and

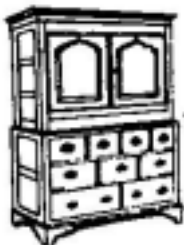
all the time asking him questions, how did the shop start, what are you doing now, why is it so successful etc etc. then came Sue with her sandwiches, they had several attempts at filming her walking into the shop and more questions, Debra was filmed decorating the table for Mothering Sunday, Mike came in with the fruit and veg and Daphne was busy unpacking a delivery and arranging the items on the shelves. They spent sometime talking to Fred who keeps us nice and tidy by clearing the large number of boxes that accumulate.

It was a really busy morning, Emma started her shift bringing with her Thomas her son who had broken his leg, I think Wendy Nelson could see that this is what a community shop is all about. Various deliveries started to arrive, fresh meat from Callow's farm shop, every leg of lamb and pork chop was filmed not to mention every customer that crossed the threshold.

Finally, some of the Management committee gathered together for a "mock up" planning meeting with Stuart in the Chair. The day went very well with lots of laughs, we now look forward to seeing the programme sometime between July and December, they will let us know in due course.

Not to be outdone BBC Television's, Country File also wanted to do a feature on the shop for their video library, so on the 21<sup>st</sup> March they arrived and it all started again.

*Kathy Pearce*



*Robert Gripper*  
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## Nectar from the Grapevine

One of the varied responsibilities that I have in my role as Volunteer at Ascott Village Shop is that of ordering wine from 'The Oxford Wine Company. My love of fine wine ensures that this is a pleasure, rather than a task!

Our current best seller is undoubtedly **Pinot Grigio, Nagyrede Estate** - '*Fresh and zippy medium dry style*'. This excellent white wine heralds from just over the Hungarian border, a fact that is reflected in the price of just **£4.95** per bottle.

Southern Australia brings us **Kingston Wildlife Chardonnay** - '*A fruity wine with a citrus nose and balancing acidity, possessing the classic peaches, figs and cashew nuts power of good chardonnay*'. Also, **Kingston Wildlife Mataro/Shiraz** - '*Rich, warming plum fruit flavours with a hint of spice. Delicate oak handling gives the wine a pleasant cigar box character*'. Both are extremely popular at **£5.49** per bottle.

Argentina offers the powerful **Carta Veja Merlot** - '*Full flavoured, fruit driven Red*', once again retailing at **£5.49** per bottle.

Spain adds gutsy **Navajas Riojas** - both red and white to our range.

All the above and many more lead us to France, one of my personal favourite wine producing countries. We offer: affordable Red, White and Rosé **Vin de Pays Country Wines** at **£4.45** per bottle, **Muscadet** from the Loire Valley; **Chablis** and **Petit Chablis** from **Burgundy**; an elegant **Fleurie** from **Beaujolais**; an unusual, extremely full bodied white **Chatauneuf du Pape** from the Southern Rhone; a fabulous



White **Sancerre** at **£9.85** and a very special and rare, **Domaine Cherrier Rosé Sancerre** at **£10.40** per bottle - '*Raw black-currant leaf and gooseberry flavours typical of the Sauvignon blanc grape. Dry with pronounced fruit*'.

Our range of wines would not, of course, be complete without an 'affordable' **Champagne** and a 'Vintage' **Veuve Clicquot Champagne** for that special occasion.

We are delighted to offer our customers a five per cent discount on wine ordered by the case of twelve bottles.

**Bridgette Crundwell**  
*Chairman*  
**Ascott Village Shop**

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# Baseball in Ascott!

On 15<sup>th</sup> August 1988 Mrs Hazel Tustian then postmistress of Ascott, was sent a postcard by Mr A Souch of Flackwell Heath, Bucks. It was a photograph of “Ascot-u-Whychwood Baseball Team” taken by Percy Simms of Chipping Norton and probably dating between 1920 and 1930. Hazel has recently passed the postcard on to me thinking it might form the basis of an article for the Grapevine. So following is some information I have uncovered about baseball in our area which flourished from the early 1900’s until the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War and for a couple of years shortly after the War.

Baseball is an old European game and certainly dates back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Arnold Doubleday from Wootton near Woodstock emigrated to America in the early 1800’s and it is believed that it was he who devised the rules of baseball which are still in use



today. In baseball a long bat is used with a hard ball as opposed to rounders when the bat is short and the ball is soft.

In the early 1900’s Fred Lewis from Chipping Norton originated the idea of scouting for young boys in the town before Baden Powell’s establishment of the Scouting Movement and in fact Fred became the District Commissioner for Scouting after 1910. He also wanted to establish a game which the boys could all play together on equal terms and being familiar with baseball played in America he felt that game was the ideal answer. He sent to America

for the Baseball Book of Rules and also later had the basic equipment shipped across the Atlantic to England. In a letter sent by Baden Powell to Fred the playing of baseball is mentioned.

After the First World War the youngsters who first played had become adults but they still wanted to continue the game. So in 1920 Chipping Norton Baseball Club was established under Fred’s guidance. A Baseball Association was formed in England and in fact was probably more popular in the north of the country than the southern area. However in 1926 Chipping Norton played in



the All England Championships in London and came away the victors.

Chipping Norton had several teams established in the town whilst Ascott, Chadlington and Finstock were some of the village teams on the circuit. On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> June 1936 an Oxfordshire team played West Ham at West Ham Stadium. Unfortunately they were not the victors but amongst the players was listed Reginald Edginton - Catcher - from Ascott.

Fred Lewis was well known in Ascott. He always sported a large cowboy style hat. As well as the mens' team, a boys' team was established in the village. Amongst the village players were Cyril Edginton, Mike Shayler, David Hanks, Harry Hanks, Charlie Smith-catcher, Chris Cook-pitcher,

Arthur Longshaw, Reg Edginton, Ron Edginton and Norman Edginton. After the War Gilbert and Frank Keep were also in the team. There were 9 players on each side and once 3 were out they were all out. Each side had 9 innings. There was always a good crowd to watch the game as it was very popular with the villagers. Prior to World War Two the game was played up London Lane on land above the vicarage but when it was briefly revived after the War, with Norman Edginton then acting as umpire, the ground used was that opposite

Andrews Yard where the Council Houses were subsequently built. This had been considered as a possible playing field for the village but was later rejected as too small.

So it may be surprising to many present villagers to realise that what today is almost regarded as a religion in America, was once a highly popular feature of this small Oxfordshire village.

With thanks to Hazel Tustian for the postcard and Alan Watkins, Cyril Edginton, Eric Pratley and Alan Vickers for the information.

*Wendy Pearse.*



*Photograph courtesy of Eric Pratley*

## The Pound

From the beginning of the domestication of animals it was necessary to provide a secure area to keep the animals safe from predators and from causing damage to essential arable crops. The word pound is of Saxon origin and by Norman times when the Manorial system with its huge open fields was in use, the pound, a walled enclosure for the containment of straying animals, was an essential element of parish life.

Ascott's pound which lies on the corner between Vine House and the Churchyard with access from Church View, must be one of the oldest fea-

tures of the village and in October 1602 Ascott's Manorial Court Book records "we ordaine that the pound shalbe sufficiently repaired betweene this and Candlemas Day upon paine for everie man that makes default xiid."

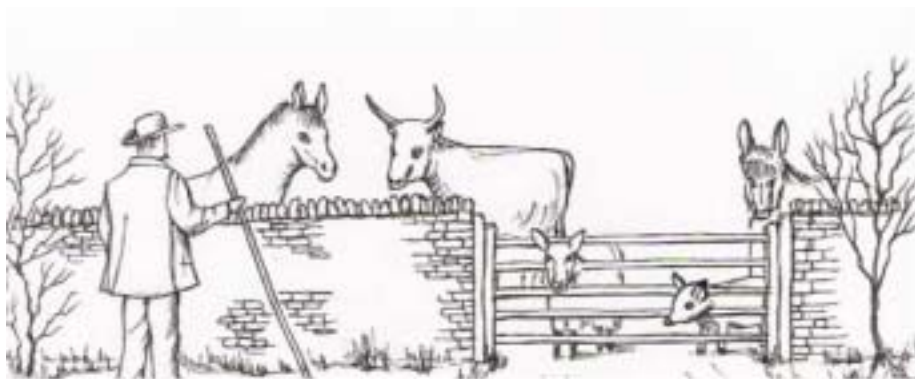
Earlier in 1587 two sheep who strayed into the parish were contained in the pound and had not been claimed for a year and a day, so were then considered the property of the Lord of the Manor. Normally any owner of straying animals would have to pay a fine to retrieve them from the pound.

At the Manorial Courts the Hayward was

appointed. He was the man who rounded up straying animals and looked after the pound. Between 1818 and 1827 the Hayward was William Quartermain. He lived on the corner of Church View and Heritage Lane and in 1827 during his tenure the Court Book records "it is ordered that all pigs and asses found straying in the roads and fields be pounded by the Hayward".

Following Enclosure of the open fields in 1838 the office of Hayward was discontinued and the pound which had served the parish for centuries, became redundant.

*Wendy Pearse*



## Folk at Tiddy

On Saturday 11 March 2006 we held the 14<sup>th</sup> Folk Night since we resurrected them in 1996. Our guests were two young men called Newfolks, who both originated from Wales. Oli lives in South Wales and Ed now lives in Slough. It was a fantastic evening of entertainment (as I'm sure those of you who were there will agree). Oli played fiddle and Ed piano accordion and guitar, plus a few vocals from Oli. The quality of Newfolks' performance was top class. We had an audience of about 150 people, who appeared to be completely spellbound by two young chaps with such talent. As always our evening commenced with The Last Straw, who never fail to entertain us, as does Bob Buckingham with his jocular sense of humour, and not forgetting Tony's excellent input as MC for these events. The purpose of this particular evening was to raise money for Ascott Sports Club and

we achieved the grand sum of £825.00. This was the 5<sup>th</sup> Folk Night held in favour of Ascott Sports Club and brings the total raised to over £3,500.00. Also we have donated £359.00 to Coldstone Angling Club from Raffles.

Folk at the old Tiddy Hall was started by John Townsend (late of Shipton Road Ascott) in 1968. In those days they were called Ceilidhs and were held once a month. We had

guests like The Yetties, Johnny Silvo (some of you may remember watching him on Play Away for childrens television), Dave & Toni Arthur, (Toni also used to be on the same TV show), Pam Ayres, Isla St Clair, Martin Carthy and Noel Murphy, to name but a few. Noel Murphy used to be in a duo called "Draught Porridge" with Davey Johnstone. Davey later went on to play in Elton John's band and for

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some years now has been Elton's musical director. Paul Weaving was also a regular in those days. Paul is now part of the duo The Last Straw.

John Townsend became ill in the late 1980's and the Ceilidhs came to an end. He died of Lupus in April 1995. After the new Tiddy Hall was opened in 1994 we were asked many times to resurrect the folk evenings. In 1996 we thought it would be a good idea to have a folk night in memory of John

Townsend. The Ripley Wayfarers were our main guests and as a result of a good night we were able to give a donation to a Charity in aid of Lupus as well as raise funds for the new hall. The pressure was now on to 'do' it again! We then went on to hold a Folk Night once a year, usually around October time to raise money for Tiddy Hall funds. These have raised over £7000.00. But it didn't end there! In 1998 a new Sports pavilion was built on the playing field. In the early years,

and still do now, the Sports Club needed funds to help with the running costs, so we started having Folk Nights to help them, the first being in March 2002.

We have had so many great nights over the years so for those of you who have never been to one of our Folk Nights why not give it a try next time. Look out for posters or on the Ascott website [www.ascott-under-wychwood.org.uk](http://www.ascott-under-wychwood.org.uk)

*Lyn Collins*

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## The February Quiz at Tiddy Hall

The quiz held at Tiddy Hall in February was a roaring success. Everyone enjoyed themselves hugely and a grand total of £689 was raised which will be used to pay off a further chunk from the village shop's mortgage.

Eleven teams with an average of eight contestants each gathered at the hall ready for the fray. The questions proved to be quite challenging which caused lots of deep thinking and all over the hall you could see people mentally sorting through their acres of memory to come up with the correct answer. There was great rivalry between teams. Team conversations had to be hushed especially when there were disputes between team members as to what was the right answer to a question. Nobody wanted a neighbouring team to benefit from an overheard answer. Even 'dirty' tactics were employed where one team

would deliberately put off another team by saying a wrong answer loudly enough to be heard; this being in the hopes that the other team would believe it to be right, use it as their answer and get less points. Such shenanigans at a peaceful village event! The team who won by fair means or foul was presented with bottles of wine and the team with lowest points went home with lemons which I am told were put to good use to make some tasty sweetstuff.

Fish, chips and mushy peas from the Arctic Fish Bar in Chip-ping Norton who delivered it to the Hall was served in the interval. It was well cooked, tasted delicious and helped to restore depleted brain power. The licensed bar proved so popular that extra supplies had to be fetched from the shop during the course of the evening. I had not realised until then what a hungry and thirsty activity hard thinking was.

The usual prize raffle proved popular and a special draw, open to all shop volunteers, was held for the bottle of champagne presented to the shop as runners-up in the Oxfordshire Village Shop of the Year. Rose Jones was the winner which was a very appropriate way to reward her for being a particularly active volunteer.

The Management Committee of the shop thank all of you who took part, Gloria and Dave Poole who set the questions and ran the quiz and those who played a part in organising the event. You all made the evening the great success it was.

*Yvette Keauffling*

# Memories of the Ascott Wheelbarrow Race

Almost fifty years ago  
The Ascott Wheelbarrow Race was run  
A great event for us village people  
In our closed and little world.

In September, when high summer  
Begins to lose to cooler days  
By the green in early evening  
There the start of the barrow race.

While in a field between the two pubs  
The Churchill Arms and Morrells' Swan  
The Hatwell family brought their funfare  
For a week the show went on.

From the Gallopers came the old tunes  
With a beating of a drum  
Dolly Grey and Tipperary  
All the songs my Granny sang.

Now the crowds would start to gather  
Opposite the blacksmith's shop  
And competitors with their partners  
Muster near the starting point.



Once I saw the actor Jon Pertwee  
Start the Ascott Wheelbarrow Race  
Long before he became the Doctor  
Who in a Tardis roamed in space.

But he was funnier as Wurzel Gumage  
Much more in tune with us village kind  
From the earth we get our living  
To the earth we all return.

Now the racers flex their muscles  
Like greyhounds strain in the slips  
I didn't know that dogs played cricket  
Shakespeare must have made it up.

One partner balanced in the barrow  
Will he fall head first out?  
While the other grabs the handles  
The first lap he is going to push.

They all begin to feel the tension  
Waiting for the starting shot  
Comes the crack of the two two rifle  
One great heave and they are off.

Racing to the top of Church View  
At Crown Farm they make a turn  
Aching arms, some start to stagger  
To the bottom of the Row.

Turn again the Swan is sighted  
To catch their breath, no time to think  
On the table beer is waiting  
Which every racer has to drink.

Now the change, first partner resting  
Sits in the barrow out of breath  
While his mate must do the chasing  
But the ride is only brief.

Up the hill towards the station  
Round and down toward the green  
Outside the Churchill more drink is waiting  
Most will try and bolt it down.

Beer goes down the shirt and trousers  
Too breathless to enjoy the drink  
But the ordeal will soon be over  
Now they're on the final lap.

The first who pushed must do the racing  
To the finish by the school  
Muscles cramping, heart is thumping  
The chance of winning now is nil.

Most collapsing with their barrow  
Make it to the finish line  
I did it once, my exhausted comment  
"Never again, never again."

To the Victor go the trophies  
No prize in life for runners up  
But how can they impress the ladies?  
Why, go and win a coconut.

*Fred Russell.*

*Blacksmith's shop - now Forge Garage.*

*Gallopers - Thousands came for Carousel or Roundabout.*

*To the bottom of the Row. - Another name village people called Church View.*





## A Walk with the Dog

I walk with my dog everyday round the village of Ascott under Wychwood. I'm always seeing the dog taking the owner to walk. As I set off along Maple Way a woman with the dog, we both say hello and I said how's your dog, she said I took my dog to the vet today because it bit my husband, I said did you have to put it down, she said of course not, I had its teeth sharpened, then I started to walk down Shipton Road, another woman walking with a dog, I said that is a lovely bulldog you've got there. She said no its not a bulldog, it was chasing a cat and ran

into a stone wall, then I walked through the churchyard and saw a man with a dog and I said have you heard that 3 men and a dachshund were sitting at a table playing poker, the stakes were high and an on-looker, I've never seen such a smart dog win four hands in a row, one said he ain't that smart, whispered one of the players, whenever he gets a hand he wags his tail. As I walk toward the green and saw some chicken on the green then I notice a lady with a bottle of whisky on the left side by the green, I said to her why are you giving whisky to the chickens, and she said

she wanted some scotch eggs.

As I was walking to the corner by the green a woman with a horse and said my horse likes to gamble, I said how can you tell, she said every time we come to a fence or a gate he tosses me for it.

As I was walking towards the Ascott signal box a woman with a dog said that there was a dead rabbit in the middle of the road, I said I bet I know how that happened, she said tell me what happened. There were 3 rabbits sitting talking by the side of a busy road, this rabbit was keen to see what was on the other side of

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the road but was frightened of attempting the journey for fear of being run over by a car. The rabbit gave him a piece of advice, if there is a vehicle coming they said look right between the headlights and curl up in a tight ball, let it pass over the top and away you go. It is as simple as that. A few minutes later the first rabbit tried to cross the road, halfway across he saw a car approaching towards the signal box, lining himself up directly between the car headlights, he curled up in a ball and allowed the wheel

to pass either side of him, then he scampered to the safety of the grass verge on the other side. Shortly afterwards the second rabbit did the same safely to the other side of the road, the third rabbits turn next, five minutes later the rabbit plucked up the courage to try and cross the road, he had only gone a few yards when he saw headlights approaching the signal box. He lined himself up in a tight ball and splat he was run over, one rabbit turned to the other and said that was bad luck - how many

reliant robins do you get coming towards Ascott signal box.

As I was heading to the Swan the landlady said what do you know, I said I know what the spiders favourite family is on Coronation street, she said what's that, I said it is the Webster family.

Then I passed the pub up the street and a young lad washing his car said to me what do you do if a bird messes on your car? I said 'don't ask her out again', then I headed home.

*Timothy Ryan*

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## Art Exhibition

The Rotary Club of Chipping Norton and North Cotswolds would like to see you at the Cotswold Art Exhibition on Friday 28th to Sunday 30th July from 10am to 6pm at the Cotswold School, Bourton on the Water. Enjoy a day out, admir-

ing hundreds of paintings, sculptures and ceramics, created by highly skilled amateurs and professionals from a wide area. Admission is free, but the more works of art you buy the more our charities will benefit. Come and support CLC-Sargent (Cancer

Care for Children), TOAD (Trips, Outings, Activities for the Learning Disabled) and Moreton New Ambulance Fund.

*Ronald Speirs*

# Parish Conservation Challenge in Ascott-under-Wychwood

The Wychwood Project Parish Conservation Challenge has raised funding for some of the smaller parishes in the Royal hunting Forest of Wychwood to spend on conservation activities. On Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> February residents of Ascott took up the challenge to find ways to spend their funding within the two year timescale of the project and made a range of suggestions.

Some of the activities could be carried out by local people, others could require the additional expertise of craftsmen or more experienced conservationists. Some people in the parish are already very knowledgeable about a variety of conservation activities but others are keen to learn more by joining in any activities that are proposed. Hopefully there will be something for everyone at some point during the next two years.

Some of the suggestions received were:

- To rebuild the wall of the pound and then make better use of the pound as a community garden for wildlife, perhaps in a cottage garden style
- To plant native wildflowers along road verges in and around the village
- To look into setting up road side nature reserves where the verges are wide enough
- Manage the churchyard as a 'Living Churchyard' to encourage wildflowers to grow in some areas
- Clear overgrown vegetation at the sheep wash
- Plant trees along footpaths to enhance views and encourage birds and wildlife
- Putting up nest boxes for barn owls and other birds
- Research into lost ponds and hedgerows
- Wildlife and habitat surveys of hedgerows, trees and ponds
- Digitise photographs of Ascott to conserve them and make them available to everyone in the village and the County Records Office
- Investigate different options for work at Five Shilling Corner.
- Find out why the SSSI at GR299174 is no longer designated
- Hedgelaying and rebuilding stone-walls in the parish

If you have any comments to make about any of these suggestions or would like to take part in the Parish Conservation Challenge in Ascott please contact Stuart Fox on 01993 832004 or email: [stuart@wychwood.me.uk](mailto:stuart@wychwood.me.uk).

*Stuart Fox*

## Nature Notes

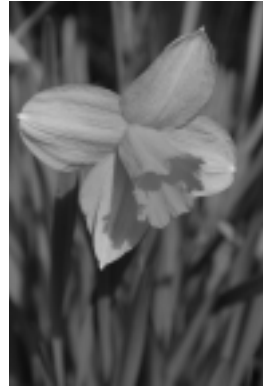
What a long cold winter! After a number of mild winters and early springs it was unusual to see snowdrops still in full bloom at the vernal equinox (March 21<sup>st</sup>), but no daffodils in flower. In the hedgerows life seemed to be in “suspended animation” no celandines in flower, the trees still in tight bud and growth at a standstill. The only colour was from a few patches of blue speedwell “toughing it out” in the nearby field.

Suddenly everything changed; on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March, the average day-time temperature rose from 5C to 12C and the night temperature climbed from near freezing to 6C. The snow-



drops quickly faded and within 48 hours daffodils and other spring bulbs were in full bloom. In the fields the grass was growing and in the hedgerows celandines and violets burst into full bloom, all within a few days. Isn't nature incredible! The first butterfly, a yellow Brimstone was on the wing on the 25<sup>th</sup> having awoken from winter hibernation in a nearby hedgerow or patch of ivy; a few days later I saw a Comma, again it would have overwintered as an adult, probably in a shed or outhouse.

One major problem, this year, seems to have been the lack of rain particularly in the southeast of England. Looking back we had 18.4cms of rain from November to February this year, whereas ten years ago the total was 31cms, a fall of 40%. I wonder if there will be a damp summer to make up for the current shortage.



Despite the cold weather the “mad march hares” have been chasing across the open fields and some birds have started searching out nest sites, launching into song to establish their territories. Judging by the numerous road-kills, badgers have been leaving their setts, having spent the coldest months in a kind of “semi-hibernation”

On two occasions recently whilst travelling home from Charlbury I've had very close encounters, or should I say “near misses” with the local wildlife; the first was a Muntjac Deer; the second a much larger Fallow Deer. Fortunately on both occa-

sions the deer and the car remained intact.

There are five species of deer found in the British Isles; the Red, Roe and Fallow, which are all considered natives and the Sika and Muntjac, which have been introduced. The Roe, although a native, almost became extinct by the early eighteenth century and were re-introduced in Dorset in 1800 and in Suffolk in 1884, probably from German stock. They are now quite widespread over Southern England but it is the Fallow and Muntjac that are most widespread in the Wychwoods. Cornbury Park has a herd of Fallow Deer, which are managed for the production of organic venison. Fallow Deer existed in Britain before the last ice age, but were



made extinct by it. They were subsequently re-introduced, initially by the Romans and later by the Normans. The Wychwood Forest was a Royal Hunting Forest from Saxon times and the deer would have been protected for the King's sport.

Fallow deer live in small groups, usually within woodland but will venture out into open farmland at dawn or dusk to graze. For most of the year there are two distinct groups; one consisting of adult females with yearlings and fawns, the other of adult bucks. The two groups come together for the rut in August, September and October. The bucks will fight to defend their rutting stand and will also scent mark the area to attract the does. The young are born in May and June, usually one fawn weighing 4.5 kg.

They are herbivores and will eat almost any ground vegetation and will also consume root crops, such as carrots,

sugar beet, parsnips and potatoes. When food is scarce they will browse the shrub layer in the woods and will strip the bark from trees, often doing considerable damage, preventing regeneration of trees and killing young and newly planted trees. This brings them into conflict with man, particularly as their numbers have been increasing over recent years and means that they have to be managed by culling. They have no other natural predators.

The Duke of Bedford introduced the Muntjac from southern China in the mid nineteenth century and so too did other landowners and zoos. The present wild population has come from escapees and deliberate releases. In 1921 Whipsnade Zoo released a significant number into the wild. The Muntjac has now spread over much of southern England and become fully acclimatised to our climate.

The Muntjac is one of the most ancient of deer species with fossilised remains dating back to the Miocene Era between fifteen and thirty-five million years ago.



Muntjacs are small, only about eighteen inches at the shoulder and weighing between thirty and thirty-five pounds. They are also very secretive, primarily being animals of dense woodland, feeding on ivy, bramble, coppice shoots, fruit, nuts and fungi.

Unlike the adult Fallow buck, with its magnificent branched antlers the Muntjac's antlers are only five or six inches long. What are remarkable are the canine teeth, which in the buck protrude below the gums and are his main weapon when fighting others of his spe-

cies. These teeth are not rigidly fixed and move slightly to allow him to masticate his food. Like the Fallow they scent mark their territory but they do not have an annual rut, breeding throughout the year, producing an average of 1.5 offspring every twelve months. They tend to live solitary lives rather than in social groups, bucks being very territorial and the does establishing a more fluid

range. The buck will attack and seek to drive off other bucks that enter his territory that is defined by urinating on vegetation leaving small heaps of dung and fraying plant stems depositing scent.

You are more likely to hear the Muntjac's "bark" and the sound of them pushing through dense undergrowth rather than seeing them!

*Stuart Fox*

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Learning Disabled) & Mordon New Ambulance Fund

## Book Review

As a biographer, I've noticed that the audiences for novelists at literary festivals are full of young faces, while mine are all at least as old as me, i.e. old. Why do the old prefer biography? Because, I think, we've discovered that life itself is more interesting than any but the greatest imaginations can make it. Reality is too much for the young, because it's all still before them. For us, for whom it's mostly behind us, it's to be cherished; and at the same time we need to know that someone really did these things to be impressed and intrigued. We want the real thing.

In television, however, reality is all the rage. So perhaps it's not so much our subjects' reality that's the problem. It's the fact that they are (usually) dead, and belong to a previous generation. They're the past, and young people are interested in the present. That's the problem.

So I want to tell you about an unusual biography, which will interest everyone, young as well as old. It's called **Stuart: A life Backwards**, by Alexander Masters, and, it's brand new, published last year. It's not about a greybeard covered in glory, but a young homeless man whom no one has ever heard of, who was addicted to drink, drugs and violence, and who died before this book was published, probably by suicide. It begins near the end, when Stuart and Alexander meet, and follows Stuart's life back to its beginning, where the springs of his self-destruction lie - and the springs, too, of his irrepressible intelligence, generosity and crazy courage.

It is a dark portrait of a hopeless underclass, and at the same time hilarious and full of hope. Above all, it is brilliantly narrated, so that it is privileged, effete Alexander who

seems the hopeless case, and outcast, almost illiterate Stuart who is the source of every new, fate-defying idea, including the one for the book itself. **Stuart: A Life Backwards** is an anti-biography about an anti-hero, which will shake up biography as Stuart shook up his corner of Cambridgeshire-though not quite as much, I hope. I recommend it.

**Stuart: A Life Backwards** was shortlisted for the 2005 Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-fiction

**Stuart: A Life Backwards** is available in HarperPerennial.

*Carole Angier*

# Ascott Music Festival

Ascott Music Festival is a new 2 day music festival being held at Crown Farm, Ascott-Under-Wychwood on Friday 21st and Saturday 22nd July 2006. All profits from the event will benefit Oxfordshire Mind (mental health charity).

The festival will be a family friendly event providing an eclectic mix of music including Rock, Blues, Folk and Jazz. Local professional and semi-professional bands and artists will feature, along with international acts such as Paul Jones and the Blues Band, Richard Thompson, Nine Below Zero, Rachael Warwick, Dave Kelly & Christine Collister and The Travelling Gentlemen. Other activities will include a Jive workshop, children's activities, craft demonstrations and a music workshop.

More information and full details about the event can be found on the official website: [www.amf.uk.net](http://www.amf.uk.net)

## Volunteers needed

The festival organisers are still looking for volunteers over the age of 18 who can spare a couple of days to help with the event (this will include Thursday, 20th through to Sunday, 23rd July 2006), who are willing to work approximately 6 hours per day (shifts are most likely to be approx, 4 Hours each day and no one is expected to work without breaks - these

will be arranged within your team).

Some of the activities for which Volunteers and Team Leaders are still needed are:

Parking Attendants, Taking Tickets/Wristbands, Selling Raffle Tickets/Tombola, Selling Merchandise, Selling Programmes, Litter Control, Campsite Warden and Team Leaders.

Application forms are available from the official website: [www.amf.uk.net](http://www.amf.uk.net)

## Open Mills Day Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2006

**Ascott Mill will be open**  
for Open Mills Day this year.

In addition to the riverside walks [dogs welcome] there will be a special Art and Craft Exhibition featuring a range of local artists' works including: wood turning, jewellery, paintings, patchwork and quilting, leatherwork, wrought ironwork, cards, needlework and pottery. Other attractions will include a display of owls [static], a plant stall and produce stall and cream teas will be available in the garden.

**Admission £1**

Funds raised in aid of The Sai Ram Trust  
- a local registered charity

**12 noon - 5.00 p.m.**

*Do please come along!*



# Ascott-under-Wychwood Parish Council

It has been a busy time for the Parish Council we have our Annual Parish Meeting being held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> April and in May we will see the General Elections taking place. Please refer to the Village Notice Boards for Election details as well as full details of the 2006/2007 Council Tax.

On Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> February the Parish Council helped to host a presentation by Jane Bowley of the Parish Conservation Challenge in Ascott-under-

Wychwood. This was held in the Tiddy Hall Room and proved very successful. There were some 15 suggestions having been made by Parishioners of and around Ascott which included the re-building of the Pound, clearing overgrown vegetation at the sheep wash, to name but a few.

With the help of Mr Gerald Simper, the Parish Contact for the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens, the Parish Council are in the final stages of producing a

leaflet "A Walk through Ascott". Once finished this leaflet will be available in the Village Shop and is complete with village photographs and a map.

*Angela Barnes  
Parish Clerk:  
01608 641045*

## Parish Council:

Nigel Braithwaite,	Chairman	831282
Elaine Byles		831427
Stuart Fox		832004
Mike Pearce		830058
Wendy Pearse		831023

---

## Parish Council Elections 2006

On May 4th elections are due to be held for the District and Parish Councils in Ascott. This time there will be substantial changes in your Parish Council with three long-serving members retiring; Mike Pearce, who has served for twenty years, Nigel Braithwaite for eighteen and Wendy Pearse, who was clerk for three and a half years and councillor for four are stepping

down. The village owes them a considerable vote of thanks for all their hard work, dedication and enthusiasm with which they carried out their duties.

Thanks to their leadership the village has been protected from unsuitable development, we have a new village hall and sports pavilion and the village shop was reopened.

Looking to the future we are disappointed that only three nominations have been received for the five seats on the council; these are Elaine Byles, Stuart Fox and David Wilkinson. There will therefore be no Parish Election. Once the new council meets in May we hope to be able to co-opt two others as councillors to bring us up to full strength.

## Scents, Colour and Tiny Feet

Well, the new pond turned green, they always do. Just when you want it to be clear and sparkling it turns green, but it doesn't take long for nature to sort out the tap water and you can soon see the bottom again. The fish look happy enough.

By the time that you read this I hope gardens will be a "host of golden daffodils" a bit later than usual, but always a delight to see. I'm worried that they will go over quickly after their late arrival.

The cold weather seemed good for the

snowdrops, they certainly remained "snowy-white" and in flower for a long time. Now is the time to move them, they can be dug up "in the green" the clumps split and replanted in their new home.

A "must-have" plant at this time of the year is *Daphne-Bholua*-Jacqueline Possle; the scent is "out of this world." You will wonder why you haven't had one (or maybe two or three) before now. The scent hits you long before you see its pretty pink flowers.

Another winter favourite is the winter

honeysuckle- *Lonicera Purpusii*, again this has an amazing perfume and its many flowers cheer up any dull days. Both of these plants are happy in dappled shade. Plant them next to your front door and visitors will be greeted by their beautiful scent, and it will put a smile on the postman's face.

As well as scented flowers look for winter colour too; *Cornus*-Winter Beauty, with its yellow or red or orange stems will brighten any dull day. To ensure a colourful display each year cut back the old woody stems to encourage new young growth. Be brave, now is the time to prune the *Cornus*, you can always use them for indoor display and still enjoy their bright hues.

Well, I'm back at the pond. Do you think that I will hear the patter of tiny frog's feet this year? If not, maybe next!

*AJP*



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## Memories of Coldstone - Part 3

I never actually worked the carthorses myself but I was often there when they were being used. There were three or four of them in the early 1940s. The first working pair I remember were Captain and Bonnie. Captain was an old white horse and was a favourite with me and my sister Gertrude when we were very small. The last working pair were Judy and Flower. Judy was a big, quiet, friendly horse and she did most of the carting work. I remember one time when dad was mowing some clover by the main A361, a motor bike went roaring past. Flower tried to take off at a gallop but fortunately Judy held her back. The old mower did rattle for a minute.

Their stable was the building adjoining the house and this was used for pottery making af-

ter we left and is now a dwelling. There were about twelve horse standings with a manger and a hayrack all along the front wall. The hayloft overhead had a hole through the floor over each standing so that the hay could be pushed down into the hayrack for each horse. There was a doorway to the loft where an upstairs window now looks out towards Ascott, the wagon loads of loose hay were drawn up below this and unloaded through the doorway into the loft. The entrance from the stable into the loft was up a strong vertical ladder fas-

tened to the wall and through a hole in the loft floor. This was an attraction to children and the trick was to be first up the ladder so that you could drop handfuls of hay onto those following up.

Swallows also made good use of the stable with three or four nests every year in the beams over the horses, and also some more in the roof of the loft. In those days we had a big old wireless set with an outside aerial which was fixed high up from the wall of the house to the top of a pole by the holly tree on the lawn, and on summer evenings when



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dad was sharpening a mower knife on an old butter churn stand in the shade of the holly tree, the swallows were up on the aerial under the blue sky singing their heads off.

We used to enjoy a ride in the cart when it was being used and on one summer evening when I was five or six they were taking one up to the fields. I was in it with Gertrude and two young cousins who were visiting, and all was well

as we went along Gypsy Lane until we were nearing the top of the slope over the river bridge. Then the tipping lock on the front of the cart gave way and we were all tipped out onto the hard stone track each collecting several bumps and bruises. For some time after that we wouldn't ride on anything with less than four wheels.

About a year after this dad was using a four wheeled trolley to clear

away some old straw and rubbish where corn ricks had been and he was taking it across some ruts to dump it in the corner of the field. So I sat on the front corner of the trolley and it was a good bumpy ride. I didn't feel any falling sensation but I can still remember seeing the front of the trolley going up under blue sky. Dad didn't hear anything but the horse stopped on its own and when dad looked round I was on the ground between the front and back wheels under one side of the trolley. Nobody could understand how I escaped intact and unscathed.

One horse which grandfather bought was a mare named Ness but when she got to the farm she seemed nervous and excitable, so after discussion grandfather harnessed her to a cart to try her out. He was standing on the bed of the cart holding the reins and he took her out for a walk round but when they came back into the farm entrance

the iron tired wheels clattered noisily on the stone road. She bolted through into the inside yard but got too close to the gatepost, so the cart wheel ran up the wall where the pottery kiln is now, tipping the cart onto its side. Grandfather was thrown head first against the wall of the opposite building. He was knocked unconscious and had a cut on his head. They moved him round into the house and apart from having no memory of the day's events he soon recovered. I don't remember seeing this horse again.

Up until the mid 1940s much of the farm work was done by the horses. Corn drilling, harrowing, rolling and all the carrying jobs with carts and wagons. The horses did not seem to like being asked to walk backwards into the shafts for hitching onto carts etc. and when they were in trace harness they seemed to be irritated when the trace chains rubbed on their

back legs when they were turning at the end of the field, with implements such as a horsehoe. Otherwise they enjoyed their work. On hot summer days they stood in the shade of our railway bridge to get away from the flies. I often walked on my own up to the fields where the work was being done and when I was young enough to be nervous of pushing past them in the confines of the bridge I went carefully over the top of the railway. Nobody knew!

Heavy work such as ploughing, cultivating and corn binding was done with the tractor, an early type of Fordson with iron wheels and spade lug grips. This was

normally left in the fields and rarely came into the farmyard. From an early age I used to ride on it with dad, a child could sit safely on the axle or the toolbox and I was more than happy just to watch the furrow slices weaving their way through the plough or the fine soil scurrying round the tines during cultivations. Sometimes there was the sweet smell of new hay to savour or the smell of the fresh cut stubble in the evening when the dew started to rise, after a good day of corn binding with all the new sheaves in tidy rows around the corn field.

In those days hundreds of rooks and jack-



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daws used to fly round and land just behind the moving plough all competing to snatch up the newly exposed insect grubs, a couple of pied wagtails were also usually present but the sight of a gull was an extreme rarity. It is all changed now, the rooks seem to have other interests and hundreds of gulls often come but unfortunately they eat earthworms which are needed in the soil. At seed planting time in the spring we kept a good lookout for peewits' nest. These were carefully left intact so that when the parent birds protected their eggs and young by driving off the rooks and

crows they also prevented these predators from eating the seed corn. Peewit chicks are fully covered in downy feathers when they hatch and within a few minutes are out of the nest and running in all directions which keeps the old birds busy. In those days before chemical crop sprays were used there was always a scattering of weeds/wild flowers in the corn crops and some such as coltsfoot leaves and wild mint produced a distinctive smell when cut or bruised.

We had another Fordson tractor in the late 1940s. This one was on rubber tyres and was

brought home each time after work which saved a lot of walking. More of the farm work was taken over from the horses with the shafts on wagons and implements being replaced by tractor drawbars.

We only used two gaslights in the house, one in our living room and one in that of our grandparents. I remember two occasions towards the end of the War when hundreds of our heavily loaded bombers were flying overhead and the vibration was so strong that the gaslight globe in grandparent's room shattered and crashed down in pieces onto the dining table.

With only two rooms fully lit it meant that we only had two windows to black out at night. The blackouts were light wooden rectangular frames covered by a type of roofing felt



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and these fitted tightly outside the windows every night. The gaslight in our room became so poor after a time that we used an Alladin Paraffin Lamp which stood in the centre of the dining table and was an improvement. It was a case of using hand torches and candles in the rest of the house after dark, apart from very small paraffin lamps in the bedroom for us children in our early years. The bedroom over the front door had dozens

of holes in the wall plaster where the preceding occupant had fired rifle bullets into it, presumably from his bed. He must have had a thing about guns as he used one to kill himself around the end of the War.

We didn't get on very well with our neighbour Mr Scott who lived with his wife and four daughters at Ascott Earl House or Stone End Farm. Although he was a leading figure in the Home Guard he wasn't

very strict with his lights during the blackout. Sometimes one shone out of his porch and very effectively floodlit the wall of our stable. This upset grandmother. Soon after the War when the Council was putting tarmac on the road he got them to put a road surface in front of his house at the start of Gypsy Lane which had up until then been just a stone track. He also put up a sign saying "Private Road. No Parking.", which was

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illegal because it had been a public bridle road for centuries. The crunch came when our iron wheeled tractor had to be brought home to plough our fields on the Coldwell Brook side. It made significant lines of dents in Mr Scott's prized bit of road and he was incensed and told dad that if he did it again he would cut his throat!

Old Scotty got his comeuppance at the finish. On the day they moved away they put a lot of furniture onto the front lawn ready for loading but unfortunately for them there was a deep flood at the time and when the fur-

niture van came we could see him waving his arms about and shouting at the men. However they refused to carry the things through the water and he had to take it all back into the house

and load everything through the side door by the bottom of the hill. He moved to Henley-on-Thames and we wondered if his new home was close to the river! The new arrivals

were much more pleasant, a youngish man and his mother. They soon removed the Private Road notice and they gave me a cricket bat!

*Jim Pearse.*

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**Friday, 21st July 2006**

**Saturday, 22nd July 2006**

The Blues Band (Featuring Paul Jones)

Richard Thompson

Nine Below Zero

Rachael Warwick

Dave Kelly/Christine Collister &

The Travelling Gentlemen

Dino Baptiste

Gary Fletcher

Kaminsky Connection with Judy Eames

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Live Jive - Acoustic Stage

Camping - Charity Raffle



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# Cook's Corner: Ascott's Favourite Recipes

## Baked Lemon Sponge

[serve hot or cold]

### Ingredients

1 cup sugar	2 tablespoons butter	rind beating thoroughly. Melt butter and add. Fold in the stiffly beaten egg white and bake in dish set in a pan of hot water for ¾ hour in moderate oven.
1 tablespoon flour	2 egg whites, stiffly beaten	
Pinch of salt		
2 egg yolks		
1 cup milk	Sift flour with sugar and salt and blend with beaten egg yolks. Add milk, lemon juice and	
Rind and juice of one lemon		

*Anne Braithwaite*

*Have you a favourite or seasonal recipe you would like to share? Then please jot it down and hand a copy to Stuart Fox, Wendy Pearse, Karen Purvis or Kingsley or email it to: [ascottgrapevine@dial.pipex.com](mailto:ascottgrapevine@dial.pipex.com)*

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## Flix in the Stix

*After the May showings we are having a break until September.*

**Thurs May 11th**

CRASH

Tiddy Hall 8pm

**Sat May 13th**

FLIGHT PLAN

Milton Village Hall  
8pm

**Thurs May 25th**

THE PRODUCERS

Beaconsfield Hall 8pm

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## Wychwood Library

### Opening Times

**Monday:**

2pm to 7.00pm

**Wednesday:**

9:30am to 1pm/

2pm to 5pm

**Friday:**

2pm to 7pm

**Saturday:**

9.30am to 1pm

### Summer Events

**Colouring Competition**

Milton Summer Fete

'Scarecrows'

**Reading Scheme**

starts July

*Beryl Brown,  
Library Manager  
01993 830281*

# The Story of R.J.E. Tiddy

April 2006 will see the publication of the 21<sup>st</sup> Journal of the Wychwoods Local History Society. The lead story of this edition will be an article by Anne Pedley on the life of Reginald J.E.Tiddy, a great benefactor of Ascott who had the original Tiddy Hall built for the people of the village. The be-spectacled young man who gazes down at us from the wall of the present Tiddy Hall looks settled in his role of Oxford Don but unfortunately like so many of his compatriots he was soon to die amongst the trenches of the First World War. Those of you who frequent the Tiddy Hall may be interested to read his story and copies of Journal 21 may be obtained from the address at the end of this article.

Perhaps some of you may also be interested in other articles

which have appeared in past Journals so I am including a list below.

## **Journal 6. Leonard Boxe, Gentleman of Ascott**

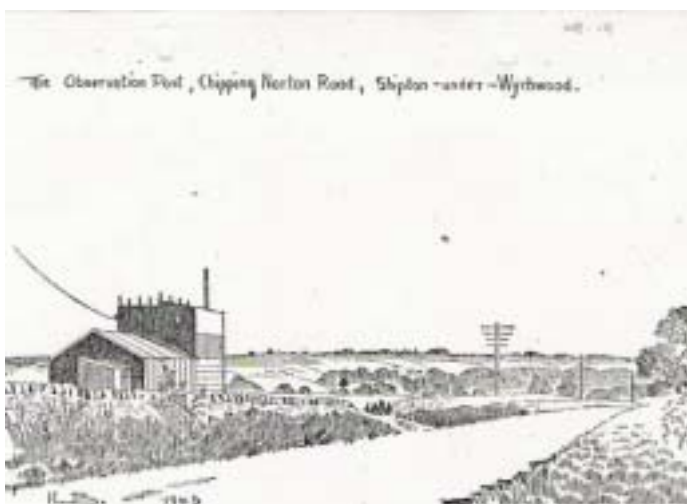
Leonard Boxe was quite likely the builder of the original Coldstone Farm at the end of Shipton Road and this article is based on various sources especially his inventory and accounts which list all that he owned both at Coldstone Farm where his daughter was living at the time of his death in 1623, and Roger Hill Lodge (now High Lodge up Brazil Lane) where Leonard himself was living.

## **Journal 7. Observations on Ridge and Furrow in Honeydale Field.**

This article discusses ridge and furrow which still exist in the grass fields of Honeydale Farm and a few other fields near the Evenlode, a surviving legacy of ancient farming methods.

## **Journal 8. Royal Observer Corps, Shipton, (The Hut up the Chippy Road).**

The Royal Observer Corps had a hut on the site of the present T.V. Relay Mast in Ascott parish at the entrance to Honeydale Farm.. From



the origins of the Air Defence system to the establishment of the Shipton Post of Observer Corps, Post Y in 1936, the construction of its wooden hut in 1938 and development of the underground shelter in 1959, John Rawlins has produced a substantial article with mention of local people including Ascott villagers who served in the Observer Corps.

#### **Journal 10. The Search for George Quartermain of Ascott under Wychwood.**

The story of an Australian woman's search for her Ascott ancestor.

#### **Journal 11. Personal Memories of Ascott under Wychwood.**

This is the first part of Doris Warner's article. Doris was the postmistress at Centuries House for many years and her early memories cover life in Ascott in the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **The Priory Tithes of Ascott under Wychwood.**

Both St. Frideswides and Osney Abbeys in Oxford owned land in Ascott and the tithes which had formally been attached to the properties caused much dispute in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **The Chaundy Family of Ascott under Wychwood.**

A history of the Chaundys who lived in Ascott from at least the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

#### **A Determined Emigrant.**

An article about Eli Pratley who travelled to New Zealand from Ascott in 1874 and established a large family dynasty.

#### **Journal 12. More Personal Memories of Ascott under Wychwood.**

More of Doris Warner's memories of the village up to 1962.

#### **Sheepwashing and the Ascott Sheepwash**

A description of the sheepwash on the Ascott and Shipton boundary in the field opposite Coldstone.

#### **Journal 13. Correspondence.**

Correspondence concerning the Sheepwash at Ascott.

#### **Journal 15. A Survey of the Earthworks of Ascot d'Oilly Castle.**

A substantial article covering the history and recent survey of the earthworks under the guidance of professional James Bond.

#### **Journal 16. Ascott Tollgate Board.**

The Tollgate Board which is described in this article used to stand near the Leafield turn on the Charlbury to Burford Road B4437. It is now held in the Museum Services Store at Standlake.



### **Journal 17. His Name be Not Forgotten.**

The article covers the stories of the men of Ascott who died in the First World War and whose names are listed on the plaque on the pillar by the churchyard gates.

### **Journal 18. Chestnut Close.**

Sir Peter Leslie who recently left Wychwood Manor to live in Oxford, wrote the story of his research into the history of his house formerly known as Chestnut Close.

### **Journal 20. The People of the Wychwoods in 1881.**

Research into the Census of 1881 has produced all manner of details about the local villages including Ascott.

### **Journal 21**

Apart from the article on **Reginald Tiddy** there is also an article on the working of the **Ascott Manor Courts** at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> centuries which gives fascinating details of life in Ascott at that time.

The price of all the Journals up to and including Journal 13 is £3 each and the remainder retail at £3.50 each. If you wish to purchase any of them they may be obtained from the following address. Graham Nelson, History Bookshop, Unit 1A, Fosseyway Business Park, Stratford Road, Moreton in Marsh, Glos. GL56 9NQ. Tel 01608 652936 [www.historybookshop.com](http://www.historybookshop.com)

Postage and packing is £1.10 for the first copy and 50p for each additional copy. Cheques should be made payable to Wychwoods Local History Society. All of the journals are on sale at the monthly meetings of the Society and visitors are welcome at £2 per head. Subscriptions are £6 for an individual and £9 for a couple which includes a copy of the Journal, Wychwoods History, when published. More information can be obtained from me Wendy Pearse on 831023.

The May meeting is on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30.p.m. at Milton Village Hall when the speaker will be Jude Barrett on Cirencester Museum and it's Contents - Focussing on it's Romano-British Mosaics.

The June meeting is on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30.p.m. at Shipton Village Hall and the speaker will be Chris Galloway talking about Ditchley Park.

*Wendy Pearse*

## A Day in the Life...

The alarm goes off and I can't believe it's time to get up already and I convince myself that the clock must be broken. I reach out an arm to silence the buzzer and turn on the radio in time to catch *Farming Today* on Radio 4. Oh dear, that means it really is time to get up.

When I volunteered to step in to fill a temporarily staffing shortfall in a London office, I didn't realise quite how early I'd need to get up. The vagueries of British Rail mean that to get the office (luckily not too far from Paddington Station) by 9am, I need to catch the train from Charlbury at 6:41am. It's such a shame that more trains don't stop at the village station as I could then just walk down the road and hop on; but at least they do still stop in Charlbury fairly regularly.

I'm amazed by how many people commute every day and as I'm beginning to become a regular myself, I'm on

nodding acquaintance with quite a few of them now.

The journey in to London is not too bad most of the time, although on one particularly bad day, having left Charlbury on time at 6:41, I didn't get to London until 11:30! Still, at least for the morning journey I usually manage to get a seat. It's the trip home that makes me glad I'm not a 'real' commuter.

If I'm lucky and there are no delays on the Tube, I can just get to Paddington on time to catch the 18:22 back to Charlbury. Of course, Paddington is very busy at that time of day with everyone trying

to go home, rushing about and piling onto trains. It's usually standing room only until Reading and sometimes even Oxford.

It's almost 8pm by the time the train arrives in Charlbury and then it's out of the station and time to head home to Ascott.

Now that it's spring it's light in the morning and it's light in the evening, so I do get to see some of the countryside in which I live. At least I only have a few more weeks of being such an early riser, and it has re-taught me one thing: I'm incredibly lucky to live somewhere so beautiful.

***A Reluctant  
Commuter***



*Ascott Station in the days of more civilised rail travel*

## Ascott Pre-School: An Education

I want to share a secret with you: When my sister, a Cotswolds resident, first tried to persuade me to move down here, I resisted. My initial impression was of chocolate box villages full of Japanese / American tourists and second-homers, certainly not the tight-knit, caring community I sought to bring up a family in. I know - how wrong could I have been! It was clear within days of arriving in Ascott and the Wychwoods, this was a really welcoming and neighbourly place, full of the values I wished for my son. And nowhere has this been more apparent than in the wonderful Ascott pre-school where the kind, dedicated and hard-working staff have created a safe and secure environment for Thomas, and many others to blossom in. No surprise then that they have just been awarded Investors in People and are at the heart of a Partners in Quality initiative.

If you have visited Tiddy Hall on a weekday morning, or you have children there then you will know what a busy, lively place the school is. The children always seem to be having such fun, whether painting or cooking or sticking and gluing. There is such creativity: I was presented with the most wonderful paper hyacinth creation for Mothering Sunday! And there are plans afoot to extend this ingenuity to after school-cooking clubs, using produce the children have planted and watch grow!

The affiliated Toddler Group is the same these days, especially now that a Pre-School teacher is there to help run it. Only this morning, I watched one/two year olds and their mums make fluffy ducklings for Easter whilst babies crawled amongst a mountain of toys. They even go on outings - most recently, the new soft play centre in Carterton, and they are

now planning a summer trip to the Cotswold Farm Park. The Group is very social and a great place for both child and adult to make / catch up with friends - a brew is guaranteed!

It isn't just about the social though. Staff spend ages planning and theming activities for each term / week. This summer term children will learn "all things growing" - look out for our potatoes! And twice weekly our three and four year olds "participate in Prepare for School" sessions, learning to read and write, as well as enjoying lunch together without parents around!

None of this comes cheaply; fund-raising to provide that little bit extra is increasingly important and also enables the school to link with the wider community. Mums, grannies and local ladies enjoyed a special "Girls Night-In" during January with a simple supper, a glass of



wine and a film screening. A big thank-you to all who participated: It raised over £400, enabling us to buy a tandem trike and subsidise a "Teaching your child to read" evening open to all in the community. Forthcoming events include a Family Fun Day for St George's Day (23<sup>rd</sup> April - lots of knights, princesses and dragons!) AND the Summer Sports / Fete to include a mini-Olympics! (Date to be confirmed). Look out for local notices for further details but please come and support us.

Sadly the end of the Easter term saw the end of an era as Sandra & Philippa left us. Like all the staff, they worked endlessly and tirelessly to create a place of fun and laughter and love, where children are nourished and hugged! We wish them all the best.

So Ascott Pre-School has proved an education for Thomas and me. According to Thomas he has learnt "*lots of things e.g. how to help the teachers tidy up!*" While, I have learnt that there IS plenty of heart and soul, and community in the Cotswolds. Thank-you

so much Ascott Pre-School for our education - take a gold star and go to the top of the class!

Ascott Pre-School runs morning sessions Monday - Friday, with dedicated afternoon sessions for new starters. Prepare for School is on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 11.45 to 13.30. Toddler Group is held every Tuesday from 09.30 at Ascott Sports Pavilion. For further details contact Pauline Plant on 07968006451.

*Emma Jackson*

### **The "Post Office" Stores Milton-under-Wychwood**

Open: Mon.-Fri. 7am - 5:30pm (Closed 1-2 for lunch)  
Open Saturday 7am - 1:00pm & Sunday 8am - 12 noon

**Post Office Services Available at 'The Swan', Ascott**  
Monday 10:30am - 12:30pm Bank Holiday Excepted

John, Edna & Staff will be please to serve you with newspapers and magazines, greeting cards, fresh bread.

Fresh flowers for all occasions

Agents for: Sherlocks Dry Cleaners

Abbeycolor Photo Processing

Link Cash Machine

Tel no: Shipton-under-Wychwood 830213

# Ascott-u-Wychwood Cricket Club

The Cricket Season is nearly here again. Please feel free to come along and watch us play or just have a chat with friends; old and new. Light refreshments are usually available (if you're nice to the tea-ladies).

Anyone interested in playing should contact our captain Clive Jowett on 07921 786355. The ability to play well isn't essential; most of us only turn up for the ex-

cellent teas (best in the county) and the obligatory visit to the pub afterwards.

Expected highlights for the coming season include playing on the lawn of Blenheim Palace again and the return of the Don Barnes XI. This fixture proved to be one of the highlights of last season and Don Barnes will be out for revenge this year, following the narrowest of defeats in 2005.

## Home Fixtures for 2006:

**May 7<sup>th</sup>**

Practise Game - an opportunity for new players

**May 14<sup>th</sup>**

Combe

**May 21<sup>st</sup>**

Swinbrook

**May 28<sup>th</sup>**

Peter Gross XI - with barbecue

**June 4<sup>th</sup>**

Appleton

**June 18<sup>th</sup>**

Shipton

**June 25<sup>th</sup>**

OCFE

**July 9<sup>th</sup>**

Windrush

**July 16<sup>th</sup>**

Minster Lovell

**Aug 6<sup>th</sup>**

Don Barnes XI

**Aug 20<sup>th</sup>**

Swinbrook (again)

## FARMERS MARKETS 2006

**Witney** - 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the Month

**Chipping Norton** - 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the Month

**Woodstock** - 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the Month

**Charlbury** - Quarterly on Saturdays (Dates to be Confirmed)

Further details from Thames Valley Farmers' Market Association on:

0870 2414762

or

visit the web site at:

[www.tvfm.co.uk](http://www.tvfm.co.uk)

# Tiddy Hall

## Regular Activities

Monday to Thursday  
Mornings Pre-School-  
Contact Pauline Plant  
07968006451

Wednesday Evenings  
Badminton. Contact  
Chris Morgan 01993  
831958.

Saturday Mornings  
Dog Training. Contact  
Sharon Wilson 01993  
831801.

## Friday Mornings

Mother and Toddler  
Group. Contact  
Pauline Plant  
07968006451.

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## Special Events

Thursday 4th May  
District Council Elec-  
tions

Saturday 10th June  
Roseneath School of  
Music Annual Concert  
7.30pm (Pauline Carter  
01993 774568)

Thursday 29th June  
Village Shop AGM 8pm

Thursday 11th May  
Film Night - 8pm  
'Crash'

To book the Tiddy Hall contact:  
Ingrid Ridley 01993 830612



## LEAFIELD PLAYGROUP

Playgroup Room, At the Village Hall, Leaffield

### **We have extended our opening hours!**

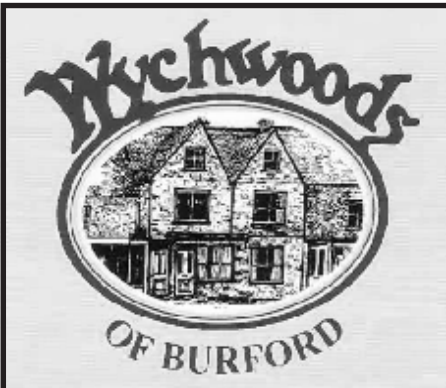
Leaffield Playgroup can now offer places from 9.00am to 3.00pm for children ages 2 to 5 years.

We aim to provide a safe and secure environment, with equality for all individuals—a place where children can develop learning through play.

We have:- a purpose built room, outside safety play area, computer area, home corner, dressing up, reading area, arts & craft area, physical activity area.

For more information, a look round or to book places please either contact Joanne Williams on 01993 878062 or 878667/Jackie Harper on 01993 878218 or Lisa Marstin on 01993 878122

Reg. Charity No. 1063400



Providence House, 49 High Street,  
Burford,  
Oxfordshire OX18 4QA  
01993 824800

Dashwood House, Shipton Road,  
Milton Under Wychwood,  
Oxfordshire OX7 6JH  
Tel: 01993 832288

Email: [sales@wychwoods.com](mailto:sales@wychwoods.com)

Website: [www.wychwoods.com](http://www.wychwoods.com)

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