

---

# The Ascott Grapevine

---



## 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 team to discuss your ideas.

**Articles for the Autumn issue of The Grapevine should be submitted by 5th October 2009.**

Call 01993 831023 or email:  
wendypearse@[btinternet.com](mailto:wendypearse@btinternet.com)

*Stuart Fox, Elaine Byles,  
Wendy Pearse, Maggie Lyon.*

## 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.

Opinions expressed in contributions are not necessarily those of the editorial team.

## Advertising Rates

**£15.00 for a full page  
£10.00 for a half page  
£5.00 for a quarter page**

**BOOK and PAY in advance  
for FOUR issues and you only  
have to PAY for THREE**

## A Message from the Associate Priest

Dear Friends

Once again the longest day has gone and we are now in the height of summer and the holiday season and everything in the gardens is growing on apace.

It is the glorious time of year when gardens are full of their achievement of glory and the grass grows fast and furiously if there is sufficient rain. The outside life calls to something deep within us – to notice and rejoice in the glory of nature.

Yet sometimes it doesn't feel at all easy to take pleasure and delight in our surroundings – perhaps due to poor health or family worries or the threat or reality of unemployment or financial constraints. There are so many issues that can cloud our view of the world and get in the way of appreciating the glory of summer, the glory of the creator God.

The English poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins (b.1844), writes in a unique style about nature and in all his poems there is a religious dimension. The poem, *Pied Beauty* begins “Glory be to God for dappled things” and there is the contrast between different shades and contrasts .... “all things counter, original, spare, strange”.

[www.ascott-under-wychwood.org.uk](http://www.ascott-under-wychwood.org.uk)

Even in his poem “peace” there is something of the paradox of thinking about peace when we hear of many wars.

Perhaps poetry can express something of the conflicts we live under in ways that are helpful. Learning to praise God even in times of difficulty can be something worth achieving, and learning to see God in the little things is a gift that many people have when their lives are restricted by adversity. Perhaps you have a favourite poem or painting or sculpture that helps you

to be able to praise God no matter what are the difficulties you are experiencing. Holding on to these, or to a simple prayer or poem can be a tangible expression of that something that lies deep inside us.

If you would like to share a poem or piece of prose, or a piece of art because it has helped you, I will be delighted to receive it at the Vicarage and perhaps we can use them to support and help others.

Happy rest of summer!

**Mary Crameri**

Page 3



## **Ascott Village Charity**

### **“helping the community where it matters”**

At the recent Parish Council AGM we were able to report that the charity had been active in helping Ascott Preschool to the tune of £500. This was used to part fund timber fencing at the Tiddy Hall enabling the little ones to spend time out of doors in a secure environment.

We have also been fortunate to receive a generous gift from the estate of Jussi Brainin. He was a much-loved person in the village and this gift is characteristic of his generosity and of his interest in all aspects of village life. We know from Jussi's family that he would be happiest for a young member of the village to benefit from some educational purpose. Perhaps about to embark on University? Jussi was unable to because of the onset of WW11 when he was of that age and he always regretted it. However, he did make up for it later in his life, taking courses as a mature student.

As a reminder, the Village Charity is set up to help ALL individuals and groups in Ascott for the purpose of education, recreation or the environment. We're sure you will agree, a fairly broad remit!

So, if you need a helping hand do get in touch with one of the Trustees (all written applications will be treated in strictest confidence).

We're here to help.

The Trustees are:

John Cull - Chair

Mark Dawbarn - Secretary

Stuart Fox - Treasurer

Elaine Byles

Reverend Mark Abrey

**P.S.** If you have any ideas of how the Village Charity might evolve for the benefit of Ascott, please contact John Cull on 831621 or [john@wowmatters.com](mailto:john@wowmatters.com). We are currently looking at some potential exciting projects so keep an eye on future editions of the Grapevine for further information.

**John Cull**

## Marriages

On the 23rd May 2009 at Holy Trinity Church, Ascott-under-Wychwood,  
James Graham Duncan to Louise Marie Timms.

### VITAL RECITALS EVENING

A very big thank you to everyone who attended the evening with Vital Recitals. Sadly our "Summer's Evening in the garden" was a non starter due to the inclement weather, but all was not lost as we created (loosely!) a garden theme in Tiddy Hall! There were some serious picnics brought along, and tables were decorated with pot plants and candles and even some candelabras!

Vital Recital's performance was magical, and they entertained us with a variety of music, some known pieces and others new to the audience.

A raffle of Fairtrade prizes which were very kindly donated by Vital Recitals also added to the evening. We were delighted to send a cheque for £300.00 to Helen and Douglas House Hospice, so many thanks to everyone who came along and contributed to the evening.

**John and Debra Cull**

**WYCHWOOD**



**FUNERAL SERVICES**

(W. J. WRIGHT)

**FUNERAL DIRECTOR – IAN MARSDEN**

Personal Caring 24 Hour Service, Private Chapel of Rest,  
Pre-paid Funeral Plans, Monumental Masonry

**Tel 01993 831557**

Email: [info@wrightsfunerals.co.uk](mailto:info@wrightsfunerals.co.uk)

**OLD BANK, HIGH STREET,  
SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD OX7 6BA**

## WYCHWOODS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The last meeting of the season was a very entertaining affair. The talk was given by John Woolley, who as a young policeman, together with his sergeant, was first on the scene of the hideaway of the Great Train Robbers in 1963. The audience was enthralled by his descriptions and presentation of the unfolding events at the time and I would recommend to anyone who has the opportunity to hear this talk, to grab the opportunity.

Our first meeting of the next season will be held in Milton Village Hall on the **17<sup>th</sup> September 2009 at 7.30.p.m.** The speaker will be Derek Cotterill and his talk is about The Establishment of Villages between Burford and Lechlade.

Old and new members are welcome. Subscriptions are £6 for an individual and £9 for a couple which includes a copy of Wychwoods History when published. Visitors are welcome at any meeting at £2 per head.

***More information about the Society can be obtained from Wendy Pearse on 831023.***

### **Robert Gripper** **Antique Furniture Restorer**

Repairs & rebuilds, veneering, carving & turning, colouring, French polishing, finishing, upholstery, desk leathers, gilding mirrors & picture frames, insurance work & valuations, clock repairs, and much more.....

Manor Farm  
Ascott under Wychwood  
Oxfordshire, OX7 6AL  
01993 831960  
01993 830395 fax



[robgripper@btinternet.com](mailto:robgripper@btinternet.com)

# MEMORIES OF ASCOTT'S VICARS

These days one vicar in charge of several parish churches seems to be the trend. But it used to be normal for each parish to have it's own vicar, apart from very small villages like Lyneham which shared the vicar with Milton.

My first memories of Ascott's vicars date back to the 1940s when Rev. Bartlett was the vicar. He christened me on Easter Sunday 1940. I don't know which year he left but I can just about remember him.

He was replaced by Rev. Carey Cooper. In those days the vicar lived at the Vicarage and was a very important member of the community. As Ascott was a Church of England school the vicar would come to the school and talk to us every Friday morning. Also, on Saints' days the whole school would attend a service in church. Ascension Day was special. We went straight from school to church in the morning, back to school after the service to drink our milk and wash the milk bottles, then, the rest of the day was a holiday.

## **Ascott Vicarage**

Every year there would be a Fete at the vicarage to raise money for the church. One year Rev. Cooper organised a tea party for all the children at the vicarage. The tables were outside in the large garden and it was a fine day. Everyone enjoyed it especially as children didn't have too many treats in

those days. One of the reasons was that there was still food rationing even though the War had ended.

Every Sunday afternoon there was a Sunday School for the children. It was voluntary of course. Some of the children who attended the chapel used to come to the church Sunday School as well. This wasn't too popular with some of us but there wasn't any reason why they shouldn't attend both.

Rev. Cooper left in about 1950 and he was replaced by Rev. V.J.Nickalls. He was the vicar I had most contact with. In those days there was the exam we called the Scholarship, also known as the Eleven Plus Examination. Each year four or five children took this exam in Ascott. Those who had passed the first part which was an intelligence test, had to do a test in maths and English. In my year four of us at Ascott school reached this stage. We had to go to Milton School to take this test, so Rev. Nickalls took us in his car. Otherwise I don't know how we would have got there as most people did not have a car in those days.

As well as the normal duties, Rev. Nickalls also held confirmation classes. By that time my family had moved to Honeydale Farm and Rev. Nickalls used to hold the classes there in the caravan in which we were living at the time. He used to bring Fred Russell with him. My brother Jim, Fred and I

were confirmed at Milton Church in December 1953.

The next vicar was Rev. P.G. Smith. He lived at Leaffield Vicarage and was responsible for both parishes so Ascott Vicarage was sold. This meant that Ascott did not have a resident vicar anymore and also when the vicarage became privately owned, it was no longer available for fetes and



Ascott Vicarage

other functions in the gardens and on the lawns, a purpose for which it had always been enjoyed by the community. When it came to Lent Rev. Smith used to tell us that he wasn't going to take any extra services, but urged everyone to go to the services that there were. He seemed to be an hardworking vicar. My father died on a November night in 1986 and Rev. Smith came to visit my mother on the following afternoon which was most appreciated.

I am sure that the present clergy work very hard but the situation with the Chase Benefice is very different. Earlier this year it was suggested that Ascott might not have it's own Harvest Festival which to me would be a great pity. It always used to be a very important occasion. Not only was the church well decorated with appropriate gifts,

but different members of the congregation used to decorate the same area every year. My mother always decorated the font. For decades my family has been supplying sheaves of corn every year for the Harvest Festival. When the corn was cut with a binder it was just a case of choosing

two good looking sheaves but now the corn is cut by a combine harvester. My brother, Jim Pearse, has to cut some by hand, straighten it into a tidy sheaf and tie it up with string. This has to be done prior to combining. After the Harvest Festival all the produce used to be taken to Ascott school to be sold. The sale was held on the Monday evening and proceeds went to the church funds.

**Gertrude Pearse**



# **2009 WYCHWOOD Forest Fair at Cornbury Park**

***Wychwood's own green country show comes home!***

**This year's Forest Fair will be held at Cornbury Park, just off the B4220 between Finstock and Charlbury, on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September from 11am until 5pm.**

The Wychwood Project, supported by the Friends of Wychwood, held the first modern Forest Fair in 2000. Since then, the Fair has been held at a different location each year to help indicate the extent of the former forest and to seek to involve more people in the activities of the Wychwood Project, which works with local people to restore habitats and create woodlands within the boundaries of the ancient Forest of Wychwood. By kind permission of Lord and Lady Rotherwick this year's Fair will be close to the original historic site.

This year there will be over 180 stalls and activities to enjoy, including George Hatwell's Children's Fun Fair. There will be displays by the Wychwood Project and its supporters the Friends of Wychwood, as well as by many other local conservation and community groups. As usual, there will be a wide range of Rural Crafts on show and an Arts and Crafts tent.

Refreshments will include all-day takeaways, pig roasts and the Friends of Wychwood's tea tent. As well as plenty of Local Food suppliers, locally produced ice cream and farm produce, Witney's local Wychwood Brewery will provide a beer tent.

Any profit from the Fair will be used by the Friends of Wychwood to help support the Wychwood Project and other local community conservation work..

**£5 PER ADULT – PARKING FREE – UNDER 16s FREE**

**We need volunteers to work on stalls – if you would like to help and enjoy a free, fun day out, call Robert Bigwood on 01993 868 203**

# The Swan at Ascott

Fabulous Food  
Sunny Garden  
Cosy Bars  
Five Elegant Rooms



Stay for a pint or a weekend!

Shipton Road, Ascott-under-Wychwood  
01993 832332 [www.swanataascott.com](http://www.swanataascott.com)



With fifty pubs closing down every week these are difficult times for the hospitality industry. Thanks to your support, and long may it continue, Ascott still has a village pub and its going as well as can be expected under the present circumstances. In the first year of offering accommodation it is astonishing to discover that we have had guests from fourteen different countries!

WODC have just introduced a rating system for Food Hygiene at every food outlet in the area. It is called Scores on the Doors and you may be relieved to know that we have been officially described as Very Good and accordingly we have been given four stars. Much credit must go to Az whose full time job is to keep everything clean.

One Diary Date....on Monday August 31st, which is Bank Holiday Monday, we are having a family BBQ. Adult meals will be £6.50 and Kids Meals £4.50 and we will be serving food from 12.30 until 3.30. Music and hopefully sunshine will also be available and I hope you will all come along and have some fun. Dogs are welcome too!

**Richard Lait**

## **A Word of Thanks**

At the Church Fete on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2009 I was on the entrance gate. I was extremely heartened to see that all dogs were on leads and that when the owners were asked if they had 'poo bags', most answered 'yes' and the majority were very anxious to produce them as evidence. Those that did not have one readily accepted my offer of one. Humour was also in evidence especially from the gentleman, who when I asked him if he required a 'poo bag' replied, 'I've already been, thank you'.

I am sure that this positive attitude contributed something to the enjoyment of the Fete. Once again thank you all very much for your co-operation.

**Rob Morgan**

## ASCOTT VILLAGE FETE

“A quintessential Village Fete” that’s how someone described it to me as we both stood there and looked up the field basking in the glorious sunshine of the afternoon, surrounded by marquees with coloured bunting and humming with throngs of children, adults and dogs! Goodness! I could go on...it could become a “Darling buds of May”...but let’s not get carried away!

This was the Ascott-U-Wychwood Village Fete and yet somehow this year it did have a special “buzz”. Was it because we opened earlier at 12.30pm, or that we had invited dogs along to compete at the Dog Show so masterly put together by Harry and Karen? Perhaps it was the very special entertainment from the Ascott Pre-School, Windrush, Wychwood and Leaffield Schools who delighted everyone with their musical and dance talents, or the background music of the jazz band? What about the scrumptious food and

thirst quenching beers, Pimms and afternoon teas? Then of course there were the stalls, those who will be with

us for as long as there’s a fete, because it wouldn’t be the same without them, and the introduction of new stalls, new people...life moves on.

There are too many of you to mention by name! So many people offered their services, be it putting up/taking down the marquees, ordering and buying stock, collecting items for stalls, running stalls, serving teas, beers, cooking the food, acting as MC. Without the commitment from the Village, our Fete would not be able to continue or grow year on year. It was a fabulous afternoon, helped a little by the sun of course! A truly staggering amount was raised, approx £3,600 (we are still counting as this goes to press!) which goes towards our beautiful Village church.

To all who helped a very big thank you and please, if you have any feedback or ideas for next year then do let us know.

My final accolade goes to the 4 key players behind the scenes with me; Louise, Jacqui, Mary and Vicky, such support and a great team to work with. Thank you!

**Debra Cull**











## WEE WILLY'S WOES

**I have always been a fan of Stanley Holloway and his famous poems. A few years ago I was moved to try to write something in his style. The poem below is based on an actual event that happened to a colleague on the train from Versailles to Paris. Trying to explain himself in French was far from fun. Having written it I sent it over to Ronnie Barker for his verdict (he was at that time, helping my business partner and I, tweak our two man West End show) and he was kind enough to make some improvements so this is a joint Barker/Lyon effort!**

### Wee Willy's Woes

Now Mr & Mrs Fezackerly  
Keen for some sea and some fun,  
Embarked on a trip to t'seaside  
Taking wee Willy their son.

They thought about going by chara'  
But had promised young Willy a treat  
So dad said "We'll go on the railway"  
Little Willy said "E this is greet."

The train it were diesel electric  
The kind with the doors that do slide  
And very soon Dad, Ma and Willy  
Were all safely seated inside.

If ever you've travelled with children  
You'll know how important it be  
To ensure that before the departure  
They have all been along for a pee.

They weren't too long out of t'station  
When young Willy said "Hey-up, Dad"  
"On the train where the heck is the lavvy?"  
Dad said "There isn't one lad"

At this Willy showed consternation  
For as certain as certain could be  
The message from little lads bladder  
Said he urgently needed a wee.

"Whats to do then Dad?" asked little Willy,  
"I'm feeling quite faint from t'pain.  
If I don't get relief in a minute  
I'll widdle all over t'train"

Now Ma had been sitting and thinking  
She said "It might be against law,  
But when train next stops at a station  
You'd best piddle out of the door"

They decided t'were best plan to follow  
And soon into station train sails  
Wee Willy whips out his wee willy  
And rapidly moistens the rails.

The relief it were really exquisite  
And Willy ran back to sit down,  
Leaving Dad stood in door way, confronting  
Stationmaster's big ominous frown.

His station had won many prizes  
For being so tidy and neat.  
He thought that poor Pa were dispenser  
Of bright yellow pool at his feet.

*Don't forget about the Ascott website:*



“What’s meaning of peeing on’t platform?”

“That’s disgusting I call that” said he  
“We’ve Gentlemen’s toilets provided  
For those that are needing a wee”.

“T’weren’t me” cried poor Pa in fluster  
“It were my little Willy t’blame”  
He said “I don’t give a damn what yur  
call it”

The outputs the blooming same!

**Tim Lyon**

**DEADLINE FOR  
AUTUMN 2009 EDITION**

**OCTOBER 5TH**

**PLEASE DON’T BE LATE**



**Come and enjoy a coffee  
[and home made biscuit]**

**between 10.00 and mid-day**

**in the Church**

**on:-**

**Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September**

## WOODS AND FIELDS

If you are travelling on the A424 from Burford to Stow why not park in the lay-by just south of The Merrymouth Inn and go for a walk. This is what I did some weeks back. From the lay-by I walked past the Merrymouth for a few yards and then turned left. This takes you along a road leading to Workham Farm. (There are two Workham farms shown on the map, I presume one is older than the other). If you keep to the left you can follow a footpath leading steeply down through the trees to Workham Bottom which has a small stream running through it. Go across the stream on the little footbridge and follow the hedge line up the other side. This climb is not quite as steep as the descent down from the road. Continue to climb the slope and you start to go through more open country with panoramic views. As the slope levels out you will see a footpath marked to the left – ignore the turning and carry straight on. On your right hand side behind the hedge are the hangars of the disused Little Rissington airfield. Look out for the old Pill Box hidden away in the hedge. Continue your walk to the corner of the field enjoying the open views as you go.

When you get to the corner you will see a sign telling you that you cannot go any further, i.e. on to the airfield. Bear left, it is signposted, with the hedge on your right, and con-

tinue to follow the field boundary. At this point the walk progresses slowly downhill with open views in front of you. Towards the end of the field the path firstly descends and then ascends a slope turning to the left as it does so. There is a small wood on your right hand side as you start to descend. After you have ascended the slope the path is signposted to the right. The hedge is now on your left and there are open views both in front and to your right. Follow the path along the top of the spur of land until you come to the corner of the field.

At this point turn left and head downhill towards Choate's Barn. There will be a stream on your left hand side. When you reach the bottom of the valley head diagonally to your right up the slope the other side until the path turns through a right angle to the left. Follow the path, which is now a wide track between hedges and continue through the woods until you reach Tangle Farm, Tangle Hall and Tangle Cottages. The track now becomes a made road up to the A424. Take your time going up the hill to stop firstly to catch your breathe and secondly to look around you at the views. When you reach the A424 turn left and walk back to the lay-by. *A word of warning* – take care as you walk along the verge as it can be overgrown and very uneven.

If you wish, instead of walking up the made road to the A424 junction, there is a footpath signposted to the left diagonally across the field. If you followed this path you would reduce the distance you were walking on the A424 by about half but I have not followed this path.

I would suggest that if you are going to take this walk you take full account of the weather forecast. There is no shelter if it rains and also there is very little shade along the route if it is sunny. I used the Ordnance Survey Pathfinder Map 1091, Burford and Witney (North).

**Rob Morgan**

---

## **THEN AND NOW**



**Pre 1900 ?**



**2009**

## The Cooks of Corner House Farm

What a difference a war makes; in this case World War 2. If Dorothy Keene had not been evacuated from Barnes to Somerset, she would never have met and married Harry Cook, a Head Gardener from Ascott under Wychwood who was stationed there and who had worked on some of the great gardens such as those at Cornbury & Cirencester before the war and afterwards Gympton and Althorp.



Of course Harry's family had been involved in agriculture in and around this part of Oxfordshire for



generations, from James Cook born 1777 in Brize Norton, Charles Cook born 1835 in Field Assarts, Benjamin Cook (a coal merchant) born 1860 in Asthall Leigh and his father Charlie Cook born 1887 in Ascott who was farming Corner House Farm. When Charlie decided to retire in 1952, Harry, Dorothy and daughter Mary (Barnes) returned to Ascott

and took over the farm which he

worked until he passed away in 1998.

In addition to the arable activity, the dairy and poultry, there was the shop which Dorothy and Mary ran for many

So to stir memories, Dorothy Cooked some pictures of gone by.



ries for some and of the past for others has kindly provided the farm from days

**Tim Lyon**





## **A WINDOW ON THE PAST PART 2**

### **An intended Association for the Protection of the Parishes of Shipton and Ascott**

You may well be puzzled by the above title. So I will explain.

Since the birth of Christ, Britain has faced a number of invasions. Some were successful. Certainly that of the Romans, initiated by Claudius in AD 43. The Angles, Saxons and Jutes came and gradually occupied much of our homeland, followed by the warring Vikings, who, in time, calmed down and became settlers in our fair and pleasant countryside. Probably however, the one who had the most influence on Britain and left a lasting legacy,

came on the date immured in the minds of practically all Britons. 1066 Battle of Hastings. His name, of course, William the Conqueror.

But since that date, nearly 1000 years ago, we are all proud to acknowledge that despite attempts to the contrary, notably the Spanish Armada, we as a nation have never been invaded and occupied.

However, the Vicar of Shipton in 1883 having little contemporaneous news to offer to the Chipping Norton Deanery Magazine, sent the following extract. It contains evidence to prove that at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the threat of invasion was high in the minds of the Wychwoods population. Apparently our remoteness from the sources of invasion was no deterrent. In the year 1798, the Vicar of Shipton, Thomas Brookes, wrote the following on the flyleaf of one of the Shipton Parish Registers.

‘At a meeting of the Vicar and principal inhabitants of Shipton and the chief of it’s Hamlets, together with the parish of Ascott annexed (holden on the ninth day of May 1798, at the Crown Inn, at Shipton) it was unanimously resolved. That we the loyal and dutiful subjects of His Majesty King George, and true friends to our happy constitution both in Church and State,

think it our duty in this time of a threatened invasion by our ancient, implacable, and unprincipled enemy, the French, to guard against all internal disturbances within our granted Reach, which may be raised or encouraged by the perfidious and plundering promoters thereof. That in our opinion, the properest and most effectual way of doing this is to associate ourselves (at our own expense, if we can only be provided in part with arms) in a Military Corps, to keep the foes of our constitution, (if any should discover themselves to us) in becoming awe, in case of such actual invasion, and indeed whilst we continue to be threatened therewith; and of course to defend our own and our neighbours property and persons from every kind of rapine and injury-the projected and expected consequences of such alarming and such criminal confusion. That we therefore most cheerfully undertake the defence of all the above places, and if necessary any adjoining parishes; but we beg leave to promise or engage no further, though in the extremity of things we might be dutifully induced to extend our aid, (in order as far as in us lieth) to enable all the united regular forces in the kingdom (without any

possible call elsewhere) to meet the daring enemy upon their first landing. Here follows a list of names desirous of being permitted by His Grace the Lord Lieutenant, to form the herein mentioned association – From Shipton 22, Leafield 1, Langley 2, Milton 30, Ascott 17. Thomas Brookes, Vicar, thanks the above for their loyalty to the best of kings and the best constitution in the known world. He promises them his advice and every other assistance in his power.’

Fortunately the threat from Napoleon never materialised. But how the population of the Wychwoods must have rejoiced at the great success of the Battle of Trafalgar and their hero Nelson.

**Wendy Pearse**

## **Bed & Breakfast**

**Fiddlers Hill  
Shipton under Wychwood**

**2 excellent en suite rooms  
One twin - One Double  
Television – Tea Making  
Guests’ own Patio/Garden  
Parking**

**Please ring 01993 830640  
Mobile: 07803 399697**

## THE ELUSIVE MANELESS LIONS OF TSAVO, KENYA

A Canadian retired accountant about to enter her eighth decade; a thirty-something Greek and Malay Australian couple; a worldly well-travelled German Argentinean; two semi-retired solo travellers, one from Arizona and one from Ascott under Wychwood. What one earth did we all have in common? Coming together at Tsavo East National Park with experts Dr Bruce Patterson, Curator of Mammals, Field Museum, University of

opportunity to assist leading environmental scientists and local conservationists in vital field research. You get to experience the area, the people, the culture, language as well as the wildlife. You could be working, as I did, very antisocial hours but the rewards are immense, the expert knowledge so readily shared, the individual and overall experiences so amazing.

Although I have visited the other continents, never Africa before. I



Chicago and Simon Sting, driver and guide from Southern Cross Safaris, a multitude of wildlife, a fabulous wild area of Kenya ... and a distinct absence of lions.

Earthwatch are an international organisation, European branch in Oxford, who rely on volunteers to support a global research programme both financially and practically. The cost to the volunteer is similar to that of a luxury holiday but instead of comfort and relaxation you have the incredible

thought my ambition would be fulfilled in February 2008 but the long-anticipated trip was cancelled due to the post-election violence in January. But the day finally came in March 2009 when we met at Nairobi, our team of six flying in from all corners of the globe. I had arrived a few days early so that I had the chance to visit the sights of the Nairobi area and also a day trip to Lake Nakuru to see the flamingos, pelicans and rhinos (both white and black) of this saltwater lake.



The drive to Tsavo is east along the notorious A109 which runs east-west from Mombasa on the coast right through to Kampala. The trip took about 8 hours along a mixture of good fast road which dissolved without warning into miles of off-road detours on sand. The driving is quite staggeringly dreadful – huge lorries thunder towards you, pickups and mini-buses stuffed full of people overtake and weave in and out or swerve to avoid the bigger ruts and potholes.

The safari camp where we stayed was a typically Kenyan thatched open building with spacious comfortable if intimate accommodation. Three excellent meals a day, showers (sometimes hot), constant sunshine, congenial and intelligent conversation at the huge table, no TV, no phones. Perfect. It sometimes felt like a reality TV show but without the cameras thank goodness.

The subjects of our research were the infamous maneless lions of Tsavo when for nine months in 1898 two male lions killed

and ate dozens, perhaps hundreds, of people during the construction of the railway from Nairobi to Mombasa. The purpose of the research is to collate data on lion behaviour, land use and prey distribution in a privately-owned conservancy which acts as a buffer between Tsavo East and West



National Parks. The brief was to accurately record not just lions but all larger species noted during our twice-daily drives. This mainly comprised antelope (ubiquitous dik-diks), zebra, buffalo, warthog and

birds of prey, interspersed with more occasional elephant, giraffe, small cats, baboon, hyenas, genet and so on.

The first week recording drives were scheduled from 4-8pm and 10pm-2am, with morning sessions learning about the languages, tribes, culture and flora of Kenya. The second week drives were 2-6am and again 4-8pm with mornings off to catch up on sleep. The Landrover had three sunroofs so that you could stand on the battered seats for a good view and a bit of breeze. Jobs were allocated for that particular session – recording sightings and exact GPS position, estimating distance of sightings, making frequent checks for



signals from lions with radio collars, or upfront with Simon our eagle-eyed driver and guide, who was relied on to drive at 4mph, stop when someone spotted something interesting or accelerate away if any animal looked threatening. As night fell a powerful spotlight beam was shone in a semicircle in front, picking up the brilliant eyeshine possessed by all nocturnal creatures.

And what were the most memorable experiences?

- Dawn breaking on the cool red earth savannah, which by 10am had become a furnace. This part of Kenya is right on the equator.

- The two young male lions that we saw on our introductory drive the first evening, before we had started the research. Sadly it was too dry for prey to visit the dried up waterholes so the lions seemed to have moved on too, as we never saw them again. When the rains came during the second week we did see tracks and hear night roaring to suggest that they were back.

- The magic of watching some of the smaller cats such as serval, wildcat and caracal in their natural habitat.

- Many many pairs of shining eyes staring back at us in the darkness – a herd of buffalo

- My roommate Connie confusing the time of day and rushing into the bar on our return one morning and buying a round of Tuskers, even though it was only breakfast time. We had been up 5 hours though....

- Flocks of vivid blue rollers gathering for their migration north

- Having a staring contest with an eagle owl at very close quarters

- Escaping a charging female elephant that thought we were threatening her calf. Even the professionals got a bit flustered then!!

- Visiting Bungule primary school where Bruce was introducing some of the older

students to the research, prior to a visit to Tsavo National Park where only a tiny minority had been before.

There is competition from increasingly heavy cattle grazing and an urgent need for informed strategies to protect both lions and people outside the parks. Kenya is a desperately poor country where most people struggle just to survive; their wildlife has become their finest asset as tourism depends on it. This was the sixth and final year of the project which has produced a biodiversity database to assist resource management. and to



develop strategies to improve the value of the reserve for its lions. The absence of lions was as important and relevant as their presence, although of course not nearly as exciting for the team.

So if you fancy this sort of working holiday check out Earthwatch at [www.earthwatch.org/europe](http://www.earthwatch.org/europe) and the many projects worldwide that they offer. My trip proved to be both richly rewarding and an intense personal experience. What and where will it be next time? Perhaps the elephants at Tsavo? No, turtles in Costa Rica sounds different. But then what about those dolphins in Greece?

I must mention my gratitude to my dear mother who sponsored me on the trip, her own thank you to me. She had always wanted to go on safari but never had so as she said 'you go and tell me all about it'. Which I most gratefully have.

**Sue Richards**



## **Garden Notes**

Looking out of the window while I'm writing I see that everything looks green and lush. I think that the weather so far this summer has been almost ideal for good growth with hot periods followed by plenty of rain. Perhaps though the balance is beginning to shift as July progresses so there is a little bit too much rain and not enough heat. The heat at the end of June/start of July was not ideal for gardeners but in theory by this time of year everything in the garden should be under control and the gardener can sit back and enjoy the scene. There must be the odd person who fits this scenario but I have never met her or him. In our garden work continues, weeds are never under control and we are always in the throws of making major changes.

Next year it is just possible that we will be satisfied with the layout changes we have made this year and there will be no need for any more major changes but I am not holding my breath. The best alteration we have made and completed this year is to replace the gravel paths with grass. It has made such a tremendous difference. All the vegetation looks so much

more attractive set against the grass rather than the gravel. The garden we have made called out for grass rather than gravel to make it into a proper country garden. The gravel paths have served their purpose providing hard and dry surfaces for all the heavy work we did while constructing the garden but were not things of beauty once clods of earth had been dropped on them as we ferried things to and fro. The clods brought weed seeds with them which germinated exceptionally well in the earth/gravel mix we had produced and the whole area became a disaster zone. Clearly the gravel paths had reached the end of their useful life and needed replacing. Grass had turned out to be the perfect answer.

We are still digging out clumps of really tough grass, the seeds of which the flood must have brought in. It has been touch and go whether the clumps would get round to seeding themselves before we got round to removing them. I'm sorry to say that sometimes they have won and we'll be doing the self same task this time next year. The rambler roses have been wonderful this year even though the flowering period was cut short by the extremely hot weather in

June/July. Day lilies (*hemerocallis*) have been glorious too. They have a longer flowering period than the normal lily although each flower only lasts for a day and as they have a very wide selection of colours there is bound to be one to suit any colour scheme. They help to keep colour going in the garden after the glorious explosion of colour in June has started to fade as July comes in.

One of the most difficult things to maintain is a succession of plants blooming throughout summer. When I first became interested in gardening I was very surprised to read that August was a difficult month to fill with colour. Until that time I'd never paid much attention to what was blooming when. Now it is one of my main concerns and I know by experience that August is tricky. Delphiniums, lupins, once flowering perennial geraniums, phlox and lavender will have all gone over with dahlias and michaelmas daisies not yet holding full swing. Many people fill the gaps with bedding plants but that is not something I'm interested in doing through lack of time so I was very pleased when, in recent years, grasses and echinaceas were introduced to gardens as these have helped to counteract August's

dirth of blossoms. The selection of echinaceas is getting wider. From the original pinky mauve flowers, orange, yellow and green coloured flowers and those with mixtures of the colours are being produced. My favourite at the moment called "Sundowner" combines orange and mauvy pink petals with a prominent bronze boss of stamens. That does not sound so good written down but it is a truly beautiful flower and a valuable one as it combines well with orange, mauve or pink flowers. It is surprising that anyone ever creates beautiful garden when all the factors which need to be considered to achieve it are taken into account. Apart from succession and harmonising the colours of the plants, contrasting shapes, height and spread of the plant and for how long it flowers are important as are the sort of conditions it needs ie. shade, sun, dry, wet, acid or alkaline soil. Despite all these variables and others, lots of people do

manage to achieve brilliant gardens as evidenced by the many yellow book gardens which open to the public and provide so much enjoyment.

A couple of weeks ago we visited an open garden in Cirencester. It wasn't a big garden but was crammed full with hemerocallis, roses and clematis and it managed to find room for a small pond complete with a number of frogs who were not shy to hide their faces. It

**Wychwood Wrought Iron** 

**QUALITY WROUGHT  
IRON PRODUCTS**

- FINIALS
- SECURITY GRILLS
- CURTAIN POLES
- LAMPS
- CANDLE STICKS
- ACCESSORIES

All our products  
are hand-made  
using traditional  
blacksmith's skills

Call us on **01993 832850** or go to  
[www.wychwoodwroughtiron.com](http://www.wychwoodwroughtiron.com)  
email. [info@wychwoodwroughtiron.com](mailto:info@wychwoodwroughtiron.com)  
**Visit our website to see our full range**



really was a small pond yet the frogs were quite content which made me ponder again how we were going wrong with our pond. We catch sight of a frog only by the merest chance and very rarely. While walking by our pond, the day after going to Cirencester, we heard “a plop” and were convinced we had surprised a frog in the undergrowth which had jumped into the pond so we stood gazing into the water determined to seek it out. At the other side of the pond a head appeared which wasn't frog-shaped and a long thin neck started to appear (a Loch Ness moment?).

What turned out to be a grass snake came into view but no frog. A few seconds later a frog did jump out of the water into a neighbouring border with another one about to join him who caught sight of us and remained suspended in the water. The thought came to me, do grass snakes eat frogs and is this why our sightings of them are so infre-

quent? Will someone please let me know.

I'm looking forward to sitting lazing in the garden thinking about what planting changes I am going to make for next year rather than what major changes we still need to make to layout. I can hardly believe I have written that. There are a couple of smaller changes to layout still to be completed which should be over by the end of the year, then total concentration on plants.....bliss.

**Yvette Keauffling**

**Leaffield Picture Framing**  
(Tony Croft)

Complete Picture Framing Service  
Mount Cutting  
Wash Lining  
Tapestry Stretching

Door to door delivery and collection  
Home consultation if required

Please telephone  
01993 878357 or call  
Tony Croft

Cotswold View, Ascott Road, Leaffield  
for  
Free Estimate or Further Details

## ITS GOLD FOR GREAT BRITAIN

With the Olympics getting ever closer, perhaps we should start thinking about what game or sport could be introduced to guarantee a gold medal for Great Britain. My first ideas were Darts or Shove Halfpenny. Seventy years ago at village fetes, bowling for a pig was very popular, but on second thoughts that may upset competitors from abroad. What about a Super Market Dash? Each competitor would have to see how much they could get in a trolley, in say, two minutes. Obstacles could be put in their way like middle aged, middle class ladies with shopping trolleys, to push them off course. I think these women should be used as front line troops. There can be no greater aggressive creature on the planet than these women with full shopping trolleys.

The British are said to be very patient about queuing, so why not have queuing for a bus, to see who would be prepared to wait the longest? This, of course, would be an endurance event. My money would be on India to win. I understand there are a lot of old Fakirs there, who can go without food and drink for weeks. So we might have to wait till Christmas to get a result.

The most spectacular and colourful and a best bet for a medal, would be Foxhunting. With the technology we have today, cameras could be attached to the hounds, then like Cricket, Football and Rugby, the kill could be viewed from all angles to see if it was a good one or not. For me it would have to be on television because I wouldn't go to the bottom of our lane, to watch it in reality.

Now if I haven't caused controversy by what I have written; if I have not caused a gnashing of teeth by the Countryside Alliance; then I give up. What's that I hear you say? I wish you would.

**Fred Russell**

**DEADLINE FOR  
AUTUMN 2009 EDITION**

**OCTOBER 5TH**

**PLEASE DON'T BE LATE**



# ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

## **Dog Fouling**

This has improved "thankyou" to those conscientious dog owners. However the problem still exists and WODC are working with the Parish Council to detect culprits and alleviate this problem, which quite frankly has to be said is "manmade". Just to reiterate from the last edition of the Grapevine the Parish Council and Parishioners are watching and reporting continually. Please pick up after your dog!!!

## **Planning**

Planning Applications are still few and far between and remain exceptionally quiet, a sign of the economic climate I guess. The bright red hoarding on the 2A Shipton Road site has now been painted in Burford Green (British Standard 4800 12 b17) as defined by WODC Planners.

## **Flooding/Contingency Plan**

As explained in the last edition of the Grapevine the flooding is now noted under Contingency Plan on the Parish Council's Agenda. The Council have indeed met up for a briefing on how the emergency plan should operate and be administered. Once again thank you to Nick Leadbetter for organising this. Thames Water were invited to attend the June meeting and representatives Huw Thomas and Mark Wickstead

attended listening to the Parish Council's and parishioners' frustrations at the current sewage and drainage system within the Village. Both Huw Thomas and Mark Wickstead have confirmed they will attend the July meeting to present an update on issues discussed as well as the Flood Report. It is also worth noting that our District Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles has now arranged a follow up meeting from the Flood Meeting last year. This is scheduled to be held on Thursday 13 August from 5.45pm to 6.45pm at the New Beaconsfield Hall in Shipton-under-Wychwood. Thames Water have confirmed they will be attending this meeting. One item that was discussed at the June meeting with the representatives from Thames Water was the data and how this was collected and used and for those households that have been flooded since the horrific floods of 2007, but under normal weather conditions. Thames Water have now supplied the Parish Council with their questionnaires for completion by the said affected parishioners and have asked the Parish Council to convey to the Parishioners that any information provided is kept and treated in the strictest of confidence and is not shared with anyone else. Should this be you, please complete your questionnaire and together you and us



the Parish Council can hopefully make a difference.

### **Christmas Tree**

I am so pleased to bring you all some good news. The Parish Council have now been able to confirm that a lit Christmas Tree will be erected on the Village Green over the festive season and Chris Badger of Crown Farm has very kindly offered to supply the tree. We have some minor works to carry out on the Green in order that the electricity company can connect power to the tree, but after this it should be all systems go and carol singing around the tree can be enjoyed by all.

### **Ascott Signal Box**

I am sure you are aware that Network Rail's plan for the dual track is due to commence and whilst this gives a bigger amenity to the Village it could mean the end of Ascott's Signal Box. The Parish Council have endeavoured to have this made a "listed building", but without success. This is an ongoing issue.

Once again, the above are but just a few of the ongoing issues that the Parish Council face on a monthly basis and remind you all that they meet every second Monday of the month in the Tiddy Hall at 8pm, with the exception of August. The monthly Agenda is displayed on the Notice Board at the bottom of High Street and Dawls Close one week before the meeting. Should anybody wish to speak with a Parish Council member, the contact

details are noted below and of course on the Village Website.

### **Parish Council:**

Stuart Fox	832004
Elaine Byles	831427
Bridgette Crundwell	830671
Peter Greening	831757
Rob Morgan	831958
Angela Barnes (Parish Clerk)	01608 641045

### ***Bed & Breakfast***

#### ***In Ascott***

Excellent independent  
ensuite rooms  
for your friends or relatives  
coming to stay

Children welcome.

Please ring  
Mrs Ingrid Ridley

01993 830612

visit the website

# Roseneath School of Music

Piano lessons for all the family  
Centres in Witney and Ascott-Under-Wychwood

**Pauline Carter** BA A Mus LCM CT ABRSM Dip CS

01993 774568

[roseneathmusicschool.webs.com](http://roseneathmusicschool.webs.com)

[paulinecarter73@msn.com](mailto:paulinecarter73@msn.com)

## FARMERS PREPARE FOR WAR

Handed to me recently was a Farmers Weekly magazine dated 21<sup>st</sup> April 1939. There must have been an atmosphere of foreboding at that time, a mere 20 years after the death and devastation of the First World War and Hitler was now preparing to unleash his forces of evil and destruction against neighbouring countries. Farmers were very concerned about Britain's food supply under wartime conditions.

The Editor wrote, 'Food plans have been front page news this week. 'Food for All in Wartime' and 'Food Plans Ready.' Fine and comforting thoughts, but unfortunately

not confirmed by the facts. Nowhere has there been given the slightest indication of where our food supplies are expected to come from in time of War. There are only two ways of getting food; importing it or growing it.'

If War came it was expected that many merchant ships would be sunk by the German Navy. Following the First World War had been the Great Depression of the 1920s and 30s and the farming industry was in a very

sorry state. Cheap imports had reduced the prices of home produced food. Prices paid to farmers at Banbury were £4.5s per ton for wheat, £5.15s for barley and £5.17s for oats. Fat cattle that week averaged £2.5s a hundredweight (50 kilograms.)

A lady from Lincolnshire wrote, 'We are preparing for War. The seed sowing time is rapidly passing. We are facing an emergency with thousands

of acres idle, farms empty, buildings down or in a deplorable condition. We of the countryside view the outlook with grave misgiving. In such dangerous days one would imagine that orders to go full steam ahead with food production would be



given, but no, things still drift on in the same old way.'

Members of the National Farmers' Union were urging their headquarters to make immediate representations to the Minister of Agriculture. One member, Mr H Goude said 'Everybody seems to think that somebody else is doing what is necessary, and nothing is being done by anybody. If War comes we will be in a frightful mud-dle.'

The Government disclosed that it had several quite different plans to cover a number of contingencies but these were being kept secret. No plan would be put into operation unless a War broke out. War-time planning for agriculture would depend upon the nature

of the emergency at the time. Farmers would clearly remember the desperate food shortages during the First World War and their observations repeated here reflect their concerns with the country so unprepared in the face of the approaching conflict.

I have also selected a few other items from this edition of the Farmers Weekly which may be of interest.

The power force on farms at that time was still mainly horse and man power but a timely advertisement from Ford was offering Fordson Tractors on iron-wheels with fitted spade lugs for £155. (Spade lugs were the iron teeth bolted onto the rim of the rear wheels to provide a grip on the ground.)

Large numbers of these were taken up by farm-

ers and it was these tractors which powered the boost in food production which saw Britain through the War.

Another advert was from Dunlop proclaiming the benefits of rubber tyres for tractors. At that time nearly all wagons, carts and other farm machines ran on wheels with iron tyres.

Work horses were kept on practically every farm then. Many farmers took a pride in their teams and some bred their own for replacement and for sale and also entered a selection in classes for judging at shows organised by the various Agricultural Societies. In this area Shires were the most popular. Other breeds included Clydesdales, Suffolk Punches and Percherons.

I was unaware previously that horse drawn sprayers were ever in existence. A friend tells me that a petrol engine drove a pump which provided pressure for the spray. In the wartime and early 1950s before the introduc-

tion of selective chemical sprays it was common to see yellow flowers in the cornfields.

They were not oil seed rape but charlock, a vig-



orous weed which competed with the crop. In several places in this magazine dilute sulphuric acid is recommended as a crop spray to control this weed. I hope the horse's feet were well washed after the work.

Although quite a number of breeds of cattle were kept on farms at the time, in the market report for livestock, all the dairy cattle and most of the beef cattle were listed as shorthorn. The replacement of these red and red and white roan cattle by the black and white friesian had hardly begun then. The photograph of the champion bull at the Hereford



Herd Book Society show and sale at Hereford demonstrates the small size of the beef breeds at the time. Hereford and Aberdeen Angus cattle were deliberately bred down to a reduced size following the decline of the large country estates and gentlemen's houses after the First World War. Previously they had needed big joints of beef to feed large households and a staff of perhaps 30 people.

Craven 'A' cigarettes were advertised as 'made especially to prevent sore throats'. 10 for 6d, 20 for a shil-

ling. Cheap? No!! Skilled farm workers were receiving wages of £2 a week. So to smoke 30 a day would take a quarter of a man's income.

Attention ladies. A message from the Garden Section. 'Many of you will know that dandelion leaves are delicious in salads; and there are special varieties that have been 'bred' for the purpose. It may sound slightly mad to sow dandelions in your garden; but if you like salads, it is a very good idea, for these cultivated plants have bigger and juicier leaves than the wild plants, and you know exactly where to find them.'

In the 'Farms for Sale' section of the classified advertisements, Woodcocks of London listed the following item.

'Oxon, near Burford. Very fine farm just under 300 acres, productive arable and pasture intersected by a trout stream; superior residence in wonderful situation; ample buildings; cottages; tithe free. Will accept £5,750 freehold. Genuine sale after 25 years occupation.'

I wonder where it is and who bought it?

**Jim Pearse**

## NATURE NOTES

You're enjoying a lazy sunny afternoon in the garden when from nowhere appears a mass of flying ants. What's your first instinct; look for the ant killer or pour a kettle of boiling water on their nest to kill them all? Well don't; let nature take its course! Of the original swarm over 95% will be devoured by birds, spiders or even other ants leaving the remainder to mate.

You are witnessing a "marriage flight" consisting of males and fertile females. Once they have mated the poor males soon die and the females will break off



their wings and either return to their original nest as an additional queen or find a suitable place to excavate her own nest and lay her first few eggs. These eggs, which she tends, will hatch and become sterile, female workers. During their larval stage they will be fed with regurgitated liquid food by the queen, even though she has not eaten since her mating flight. Consequently these larvae will produce smaller adults than subsequent better fed broods. Once these small workers are able to forage for food the queen will lay more eggs, which will be looked after by the workers who will also feed the queen, so she becomes an "egg-laying" machine. Unlike bees and wasps, to which ants are

related, there may be several queens in a nest and the nests may last for many years, protected underground from the ravages of our winters.

From egg to adult, depending on ambient temperatures, will take from 50 to 80 days; the eggs hatch after two to three weeks and the larva, which look like tiny legless maggots grow for a period of three to four weeks, shedding their skins three times. Throughout this period they are fed and cared for by the workers. The final stage is pupation, which lasts from two to four weeks, after which the adults emerge.

These young adults will become the new workers tending the next batch of eggs and young, whilst the older adults will join the teams foraging for food away from the nest. Queens may live for many years, but the workers have a shorter life-span from a few weeks to a year or so, depending on the species.

Ant's nests are a complex system of galleries, chambers and inter-connecting tunnels, sometimes under an ant-hill but more usually under a stone or paving if the nest is in a garden. Although ants have compound eyes they rely on touch and scent to find their way around the nest and to communicate and recognise each other. Ants from another colony, with a different scent, will be attacked, driven

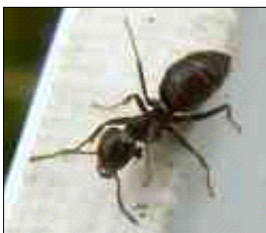


out or killed. They are able to produce a variety of “smells” called pheromones each of which will trigger a different response; perhaps to follow a trail to a source of food or defend the nest. Ants don’t have ears but are sensitive to vibrations, which are picked up through their legs.

Ant’s diet consists mainly of small insects, but they will also eat some fruit or vegetables and are very fond of sugary substances and will invade larders looking for these. They are also scavengers, often feeding on animal corpses and some ant species actively “farm” and protect aphids encouraging them to secrete a sugary waste, known as honeydew, which they adore. Next time you see aphids feeding on your roses, look for the common Black Garden Ant climbing the plant stems, you may also see them tending their flock and collecting the honeydew. The trail leading towards the aphids or indeed any food is marked by a scent trail that can be followed by all workers who are out foraging.

The food collected by the foraging workers is taken back to the nest and shared with the queen and also those ants that look after the developing brood. These nurse ants predigest

some of their food and regurgitate it in the form of a protein-rich soup that is fed to the developing ant larva.



There are three species that you will find locally; the Black Garden Ant (*Lasius Niger*), the Red Ant (*Mymica Ruginodis*) and the Meadow Ant (*Lasius Flavus*). Of these three species only the Red

Ant stings, injecting formic acid. The sting is not barbed like a bees, but smooth like a wasps, so this little ant can sting repeatedly and will if you disturb their nest or handle one. The sting is not particularly painful; it’s much like being caught by a stinging



nettle. The Meadow Ant is unusual because it makes its nest in lawns and permanent pasture rather than under a stone. In the lawn it produces the little heaps of dry soil that appear amongst the grass, but in undisturbed meadow land these develop

into vegetation covered ant-hills. This ant rarely comes to the surface, feeding on root aphids and other soil-living insects. This little ant is a champion builder sometimes creating nests up to one metre deep. The Black Garden Ant is probably the one most often seen and the one most likely to invade our homes. It can create colonies of four to seven thousand individuals.

**Stuart Fox**

## ASCOTT SHOP A.G.M



The Village Shop held its annual meeting at the Swan on 26<sup>th</sup> May. The meeting was very well attended by shareholders and other villagers.

The main purpose of the meeting was to review the financial results for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, question the management committee about all aspects of the shop's results, discuss ideas to improve the shop's performance and improve its facilities and finally to appoint a new management committee for the coming twelve months.

The Treasurer was pleased to report that the results for 2008 had been very encouraging; sales had increased by 10.8% to £152,906 and profits had risen from £737 in 2007 to £4,805 in 2008. Cash reserves were in a strong position. This will allow us to proceed with our capital expenditure plans in 2009 and still have adequate reserves to safeguard the shop's future.

Two members of the management committee, Lorraine Knight and Alan Chubb, had decided not to offer themselves for election this year, although Alan will still continue to manage the rota and deal with the replacement of our EPOS till system. The meeting thanked them both for all their hard work during the previous twelve months, Lorraine for dealing with all personnel matters and Alan as our very able Chairman.

The new management committee is: Nigel Wild (Chairman), Stuart Fox (Treasurer), Paul Galistan (Secretary), Maggie Lyon and Mike Pearce. Maggie will be looking after staff and personnel issues.

Finally, a big thank you to all those volunteers who keep the shop operating, seven days a week, fifty two weeks of the year and also to all our customers.

**Stuart Fox**

---

### ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD ON YOU TUBE

Enter the link below into your browser to see Ascott-under-Wychwood through the year :

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPmr2JaR4pA>



## THEN AND NOW



Circa 1920's?



August 2009

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## BONFIRES

Why is it that as soon as we get a nice sunny day someone has to light a bonfire? Today is lovely and sunny so I opened all the windows to let the fresh air in and the washing has been hung out to dry but it's not long before I've got the same old problem, smoke is blowing across the garden and I've just dashed out to get the washing in. Unfortunately I'm too late, it smells of smoke so will need washing again.

Now I have to make a decision, either I leave the windows open and every room will smell smoky or I can shut them all and sweat in the heat wave!

Sometimes there are several bonfires in one week so perhaps it is time to think of others before lighting a bonfire, they really are an unpleasant nuisance!

*Name and address supplied*

## THANKS

To the kind and considerate Voters of Ascott Under Wychwood. Ken and Audrey would like to express their thanks at the consideration shown, by the Voters, for their welfare at the Polling Station on Thursday 4th June 2009. Their offers were greatly appreciated. Your P.O and P.C.

**Ken & Audrey James**

## A MOBILE PRIMROSE??

I have been nurturing a primrose plant in the cremation memorial area at the church - it's right next to my father's headstone and has done rather well this year, after all the rain of the last few summers. But it seems to have walked! If you have dug it up please would you plant it right back where it was. Both my father and I would both be most grateful.

**Sue Richards**

---

**We welcome your letters for publication in *The Ascott Grapevine*. Please keep them as short as possible and send them by email to [wendypearse@btinternet.com](mailto:wendypearse@btinternet.com) or hand your letter to any member of the Editorial team.**

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO FOSTER'S VAN

Having only just, quite by accident, found the Ascott-u-Wychwood web site, I began reading the electronic version of the Grapevine. I read with some interest an article in Issue 54 relating to Foster's Van.

Some dates and details within this article are incorrect, so here I would like to put the record straight

In January 1964 Fosters advertised for a manager for their Upper Milton Depot. The job came with a cottage. We were thinking about getting married and this would give us a home of our own, so Basil applied for the job and got it. By February 1964 Basil was installed as manager of the Upper Milton Depot and John Hemming left Fos-

ters at that point. We subsequently got married and for the next two years worked for Fosters.

In 1966 Mr Foster was suffering very ill health. He had one son who was not interested in the business, so all the managers of the depots were given the chance to buy. We bought the mobile business in July 1966 and continued to work from Upper Milton.

In 1970 when the Co-op closed the butchery shop in Milton High Street, we were able to buy the property and set up the general hardware business. We ran the mobile and shop side by side very successfully until we retired in 1999.

**Basil and Teresa Pratley  
Milton-u-Wychwood**

---

## What would you like to see in The Ascott Grapevine?

If there is anything you feel you would particularly like to see included in future editions of the Grapevine, either on a regular or ad hoc basis, then please feel free to let any member of the Editorial Team know (there is a contact telephone number and email address on the inside cover of this issue). Please remember this is your local magazine and we endeavour at all times to bring you items that are interesting, amusing and sometimes dare I say it, controversial!! Please help us to keep *The Ascott Grapevine* **your** magazine by telling us what is of interest to you.

Thank you.

**The Editorial Team**



# Cotswold Wildlife Park and Gardens

*Visit Cotswold Wildlife Park and Gardens over the summer period for a great day out for all the family.*

*The ideal venue for gardeners and their children.*

Walk with lemurs in the Madagascar enclosure. This area has restricted opening from 11.30am - 3.00pm.

See the penguins being fed at 11.00am and 4.00pm (except Fridays).



Birds of  
Prey Flying Demonstrations all week-ends in August.

Reptile Awareness Days all Sundays through to 30<sup>th</sup> August from 2.00pm - 4.00pm (weather permitting).

Tropical House, can you find the sloths?

*Picnic areas, self-service cafeteria, adventure playground, narrow-gauge railway, excellent wheelchair access, dogs allowed, on short leads please.*

**Burford Oxon OX18 4JP Tel 01993 823006**  
**Please see our website for more information**  
**[www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk)**

## CONGRATULATIONS

.....to Mr John Gripper, who has been awarded the O.B.E, for Rhino conservation and animal welfare, in the Queen's birthday honours.

John Gripper was a founder member of the Sebakwe Black Rhino Trust which has operated in Zimbabwe for 20 years and seeks to protect and conserve Black Rhino in a conservation area, which originally covered 250,000 acres but is now, because of the political situation, reduced to a third of that size.

In Africa as a whole only something like 4,000 Black Rhinos remain, down from 17,000 in 1970. This decline can be attributed to hunting and poaching. Rhino horn is seen as a potent medicine, particularly in the Far East and today the poachers are still



active. In Zimbabwe poaching is a major problem, the hunters are well equipped often with AK 47 rifles and they even have helicopter back-up. Given the poor state of the Zimbabwean economy poaching valuable Rhino horn must be a great temptation.

The Black Rhino Trust employs twenty guards who patrol the conservancy area and sometimes they are assisted by the army. In a recent shoot-out the army killed four poachers.

John is also well known for his work with zoos, concerning himself with all aspects of animal welfare in many different countries.

**Stuart Fox**

### **Graduate looking for part-time work for the next 6-12 months**

I have been lucky enough to have been offered the post of Reserves Assistant at Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust. This is a volunteer post for three days a week so I am looking for earning opportunities to support myself. I have been working as an NHS administrator but also have retail, babysitting and catering experience, and a clean driving licence. Please contact me at [helenagilbert@hotmail.com](mailto:helenagilbert@hotmail.com) if you are looking for extra help.

**Helena Gilbert**

## POLYTHENE BAGS

Just twelve months ago the shop Management Committee decided to start charging 5p for every polythene carrier bag we supplied. We thought this would be a worthwhile contribution to the reduction of waste and helping the environment.



Did it work and where have all those 5p's gone? Certainly more of our customers now bring their own shopping bags and our expenditure on wrapping materials has significantly reduced.

In total since the scheme started we have raised £105.10 which has been sent to Helen & Douglas House, which still represents over 2000 polythene bags.

**Stuart Fox**

When times are tough  
you and your people need to be at the top of your game.  
When you need to really stand out from the crowd,  
we can help you to excel.

Presentation Skills  
Selling Skills  
Negotiation Skills  
Customer Service Skills

Call us on **0845 003 8175**  
email: [potential@newtricks.co.uk](mailto:potential@newtricks.co.uk)  
[www.newtricks.co.uk](http://www.newtricks.co.uk)

**New Tricks Training Ltd**

The advertisement features two smiling men in suits on either side of the text. The man on the left wears glasses and a patterned tie, while the man on the right is clean-shaven and also wears a patterned tie.



The Post Office Stores  
Milton-under-Wychwood

The Post Office, The Green  
Shipton Road  
Milton-under-Wychwood, OX7 6JL  
Tel: 01993 832243

Opening hours:  
Mon.-Fri. 9am - 5.30pm (Closed 1-2 for lunch)  
Saturday 9am - 1.00pm

Post Office Services Available at 'The Tiddy Hall', Ascott  
Friday 2.00pm - 4.00pm (Bank Holidays Excepted)

We have a good selection of Greeting Cards, Stationery, Agents for Dry  
Cleaners, Passport Photos  
We will be pleased to see you

**More Mowing Matters - another cry for help!**

The grass in the Churchyard has been growing this year with relentless vigour but we have just about been able to keep it under control. In all modesty, I think it looks pretty good, something which is important given that the Church is in the centre of the village, not tucked away at the edge.

To keep it neat does take a great deal of time. The bulk of the work falls on Fred's shoulders but to give you an idea, to completely trim and mow my 'third' takes about 3 hours a week. Our problem is equipment; the tractor is great on open spaces and the Hayter effective on straight runs where the tractor cannot go. The problem is that the Hayter is very heavy and difficult to manoeuvre around the gravestones. We really need a lighter mower for these areas and hence this plea for help. If anyone could find it in their heart to donate a mower or to contribute towards a fund to purchase one, it really would make life a great deal easier. Cheques payable to Ascott PCC and delivered to Debra Cull at 1 The Green could make two chaps, just past the first flush of youth, very happy.

Many thanks

**Tim Lyon**

## THE SIGNALMEN OF ASCOTT IN THE 1940s

With the Ascott Signal Box under threat of closure, I thought I would recall the men from the village who worked in the box as signalmen in the 1940s.

The three I remember were Colin Chance, Jimmy Griffin and Bill Powell. Colin Chance lived in the house near the green where Sally Franks lives today. He lived with his wife and daughter Esme. Esme worked in Oxford and with Lily Edginton was a Sunday school teacher at the Baptist Chapel. She also played the harmonium to provide music when we sang the choruses. Mrs Chance I never saw out in the village and not very often in her garden. I often thought she was a prisoner in her own home.

But Colin was a cheerful man, who, when in church, would sing the hymns in a loud voice which could be heard above the rest of the congregation. He also attended Chapel where they enjoyed singing a rousing hymn to a good tune.

When Colin was on duty at the signal box, I would often see one or two middle aged men stood at the bottom of the steps discussing with him all the gossip of the village. The signal-box was an ideal place to observe what was going on in Ascott. Until 1953 the cricket pitch was over the level crossing in the field near the Manor. Sometimes when a match was being played he would let me stand on the platform at the top of the steps to watch the game. He had an old pair of binoculars which I sometimes looked through. There were some people who thought he used these to watch courting couples walk along the river bank and in the fields up Chippy Hill.

Jimmy Griffin lived with his wife at no 6 High Street opposite the shop. Of course the shop was not there then. Instead a pear tree grew in the field. My grandmother always said that Jimmy Griffin was a good living man and he did always seem to be cheerful. He never dealt in gossip that I can recall, so you never saw men stood at the bottom of the steps when he was on



duty. The only time I saw Jimmy get angry and go red in the face was when he took Chapel Sunday School. Some of the older boys would fill their mouths with water from the tap opposite the Swan, then go into the Chapel with their cheeks bulging. You can guess what happened when they burst out laughing.

Mrs Griffin was a tall, thin, austere woman and one of the village layer-outs. She would attend people just before death, then wash and lay them out after they had died.

Bill Powell moved to Ascott from Hook Norton where he had been signalman. Bill had married Rose Alden. Her father had been the village blacksmith many years before, so it was like a family returning to it's roots. He lived with his wife Rose, Mary his daughter and son David in the cottage next to the Playing Field. Their neighbours were Ossie and Rose Storey and daughter Anne, now Mrs Franks. Of course in the mid 1940s there was no Playing Field, just a large meadow which stretched to the allotments. At the top of the field was the village football pitch.

Before the Second World War, Bill had been a keen local footballer and right into old age often went to watch Oxford United. What I remember him best for is telling

funny risqué stories as we stood at the bottom of the signal box steps. I can still remember some but I don't think they would be suitable for a genteel publication like the Grapevine.

These men and characters like them from the village enriched my boyhood and youth. And to quote A.E. Houseman:

'They remain in those blue remembered hills in that land of lost content.'

**Fred Russell**



*Ivy's*

**01993 830268**

**FLOWERS FOR ALL OCCASIONS**

**WEDDINGS, ANNIVERSARIES,  
BIRTHS & FUNERAL TRIBUTES  
FRESH FLOWERS & PLANTS  
GIFTS & BALLOONS, FLORIST SUNDRIES  
LOCAL & NATIONAL DELIVERIES AVAILABLE**

**8 CHURCH STREET  
SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD  
OXFORDSHIRE, OX7 6BP**

**CREDIT & DEBIT CARDS ACCEPTED**

**CLOSED ALL DAY MONDAY**

# ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD PRE-SCHOOL FETE





## SWYCH Report

We spent two days outside Milton Co-op giving away a variety of beautiful hand-made cloth bags, and recording opinions on how to get rid of the demon plastic ones. Thank you to Lewis and the staff for their co-operation.

We now have energy monitors which will shortly be on loan from the Library. You will be able to borrow one and monitor your electricity use. You can actually see how much power each electrical item is using, and what it is costing. Knowing where the money goes is very likely to help you save on the bills. **For more information phone 01993 831909.**

Some energy facts:

- 8 out of 10 people have no idea how much they pay for gas and electricity.
- Washing clothes at 60 degrees uses almost twice as much power as at 40 degrees.
- You can save over £40 a year by switching to low energy light bulbs.
- Using one of our monitors will help you identify savings of at least 5%

Our Swap Shop and Green Fair in March was a great success; we are grateful to the Wychwood Primary school for allowing us to use their facilities.

**The next Swap Shop is on September 19<sup>th</sup>.**

Recycling:

Please keep saving your Tetrapaks (waxed cardboard juice & milk cartons), and put them in the bin at no 1 the Sands, Milton. We have so far recycled over 1500.

Used household batteries are collected in the battery box at the Co-op (total so far nearly 800).

Used printer cartridges (Canon, HP, Lexmark, Dell), can be recycled at Groves offices, Milton, just inside the office door opposite the shop.

Finally – we have no representative from Ascott in our group. **If you would be interested, please phone Jenna Saunders 01993 881338.**

**Heather Shute [www.swych.org.uk](http://www.swych.org.uk)**

**DEADLINE FOR  
AUTUMN 2009 EDITION**

**OCTOBER 5TH**

**PLEASE DON'T BE LATE**



## LEAFIELD SCHOOL

We have reached the end of another successful and enjoyable academic year.

The school has been as busy as ever with school trips, Sports Day and, of course, SATs. The 10 Year 6 children did us proud in the SATs, achieving 100% in Science and Maths and 92% in English. The Science results were especially good, with 100% achieving level 5.

Science is clearly a strength at Leafield. The school took part in The Big Science Event, in which children were invited to carry out an investigation of their choosing, put together a poster and make a presentation of their findings. Two of our children, Maggie Boyd and Holly Hooper, represented the school and were the proud winners of the competition. 4,000 children from Oxfordshire schools took part in the challenge, some from very large schools, so this was a great achievement.

Our children have been lucky to enjoy a wide range of trips – from Oxford's Mosque and Synagogue, as part of their multi-cultural studies, to a fun day out at Warwick Castle.

After-school clubs continue to be offered in abundance including Art, Gardening, Music and Breakfast Clubs. Some of the children from the Music Club gave a delightful performance at Ascott Fete in June.

Sport is a key feature of life at Leafield School, with children having the opportunity to try out Martial Arts or participate in cricket tournaments and outdoor athletics competitions. Despite the blustery weather for Sports Day it was wonderful to see all the children joining in so enthusiastically and showing great sportsmanship.

All the children in Key Stage 2 took part in a fabulous production of Bugsy Malone at the start of July. The children approached each of the 3 performances with great excitement and did a fantastic job of learning their lines and all the songs. Special thanks must go to Miss Webb for dedicating so much of her time to this event.

Friends of Leafield School continue to ensure that there are plenty of fun fundraising events on the school calendar. After-school cake sales have become a regular feature, offering a Friday afternoon treat and an opportunity to raise some money for the school.

So many of the events children have enjoyed could not have happened without the extra support of staff and parents. Thank you to everyone who has given up their free time for the benefit of the school.

We wish everyone a good rest over the summer holidays.

**Carole Bartlett, Parent Governor**

## *WAGS vs. WYCHWOOD*

*As I was going to St Ives I met a footballer with seven wives*

*Seven wives or Seven WAGS  
Seven Armani or Gucci Handbags*

*Seven sports cars in the drive  
Seven concerts backstage live*

*Seven million in the bank  
Seven award ceremonies to thank*

*Seven different obsessive fans  
Seven shades of orange tans*

*Seven visits to the spa  
Seven holidays a far*

*Seven dreams achieved in a week  
Seven people bored of hearing them speak  
As I was going to Wychwood  
I met eleven lads who wished they could*

*Play football every Saturday  
From September until May*

*Eleven kit bags with dirty boots  
Eleven bleached blonde Beckham roots*

*Eleven players to put up the nets  
Five players ready to play for the vets(\*)*

*Eleven cigarettes at half-time  
Eleven £1 dirty boots fine*

*Eleven there in rain or snow  
Eleven different cars in tow*

*Eleven referees with no clue or reason  
Eleven contenders for goal of the season*

*Eleven people who come and cheer  
At the end both teams simply go for a beer*

- \* *Vets is the abbreviation of veterans used for those players past their best in age and in fitness!!!! Not players who need to visit an animal doctor!!!*

## **WYCHWOOD FOREST FOOTBALL CLUB**

Wychwood Forest FC who currently play in the Witney & District area are looking for talented new players.

We currently play in Division 1 and Division 4 with a 1st and Reserve Team. All players are welcome to attend pre season training to find their level and have some fun.

***Please contact Sue Andrews on 01993 779523***

**Subject: The Inland Revenue replies to a letter . . . .**

***This is a real reply from the Inland Revenue. The Guardian newspaper had to ask for special permission to print it:***

Dear Mr Addison,

I am writing to you to express our thanks for your more than prompt reply to our latest communication, and also to answer some of the points you raise.

I will address them, as ever, in order.

Firstly, I must take issue with your description of our last as a "begging letter". It might perhaps more properly be referred to as a "tax demand". This is how we at the Inland Revenue have always, for reasons of accuracy, traditionally referred to such documents.

Secondly, your frustration at our adding to the "endless stream of crapulent whining and panhandling vomited daily through the letterbox on to the doormat" has been noted. However, whilst I have naturally not seen the other letters to which you refer I would cautiously suggest that their being from "pauper councils, Lombardy pirate banking houses and puissant gas-monsters" might indicate that your decision to "file them next to the toilet in case of emergencies" is at best a little

ill-advised. In common with my own organisation, it is unlikely that the senders of these letters do see you as a "lackwit bumpkin" or, come to that, a "sodding charity". More likely they see you as a citizen of Great Britain, with a responsibility to contribute to the upkeep of the nation as a whole.

Which brings me to my next point. Whilst there may be some spirit of truth in your assertion that the taxes you pay "go to shore up the canker-blighted, toppling folly that is the Public Services", a moment's rudimentary calculation ought to disabuse you of the notion that the government in any way expects you to "stump up for the whole damned party" yourself. The estimates you provide for the Chancellor's disbursement of the funds levied by taxation, whilst colourful, are, in fairness, a little off the mark. Less than you seem to imagine is spent on "junkets for Bunterish lickspittles" and "dancing whores" whilst far more than you have accounted for is allocated to, for example, "that box-ticking façade of a university system."

A couple of technical points arising from direct queries 1. The reason we don't simply write "Muggins" on the envelope has to do with the vagaries of the postal system; 2. You can rest assured that "sucking the very marrow of those with nothing else to give" has never been considered as a practice because even if the Personal allowance

didn't render it irrelevant, the sheer medical logistics involved would make it financially unviable.

I trust this has helped. In the meantime, whilst I would not in any way wish to influence your decision one way or the other, I ought to point out that even if

you did choose to "give the whole foul jamboree up and go and live in India" you would still owe us the money. Please send it to us by Friday.

Yours sincerely  
H J Lee  
Customer Relations

### **S.O.S– SAVE OUR SIGNAL BOX**

As many of you are aware our signal box will become redundant when the project to reinstate the double track, on much of the Cotswold Line between Oxford and Worcester, is completed in 2011. The level crossing and points would be operated by staff at Network Rail's new Thames Valley signalling centre, which is currently under construction at Didcot.

Because the building occupies such a prominent position at the entrance to the village and has been part of the fabric of our community since 1883, the Parish Council would like it to be preserved. Initially we applied to English Heritage to have the building listed, but sadly this was refused. The signal box was not considered old enough or rare enough to warrant a listing.

We have also contacted Network Rail who are open to the idea of saving

the signal box, but suggest that it should be dismantled and re-erected on private land. The Council's view is that even if we could find the land to move the box this would diminish its significance to the landscape of the village. Network Rail has agreed to

engage with the local community nearer to the time of decommissioning so the Council will be seeking to persuade Network Rail to leave the box in its present position.

Moreton-in-Marsh are also striving to retain their signal box,

but seem to be prepared to consider moving it away from the railway and rebuilding it elsewhere.

The Council would welcome any feed-back from the village and support when we start to negotiate with Network Rail.

**Parish Council**



## WHAT'S ON IN WEST OXFORDSHIRE

Venue	Event	Dates
<b>Kelmscott Manor</b>	New Collection on Display	to 30th Sept
<b>Quaker Meeting House</b>		
<b>Burford</b>	300 years, an Exhibition	to 31st Oct
<b>Blenheim Palace</b>	Living History, Costumes and Entertainment in Pleasure Gardens	to 30th Aug
	Jousting on the South Lawn	7th to 9th Aug
	Classic Car and Motorcycle Show	30th to 31st Aug
	International Horse Trials	10th to 13th Sept
	Festival of Cycling-Rides through the Park	4th Oct
	Christmas at Blenheim	14th Nov to 13th Dec
	Living Crafts	20th to 22nd Nov
<b>Cogges Museum</b>	Victorian Life	to 6th Sept
	Pig Pampering Weekend	8th to 9th Aug
	Old Fashioned Games and Traditional Toys and Street Fair	15th to 16th Aug
<b>Chipping Norton Theatre</b>	Workshop for 8 to 12 year olds	3rd to 7th Aug
		10th to 14th Aug
	Workshop for 6 to 7 year olds	3rd to 5th Aug
	Pantomime-Dick Whittington	17th Nov to 9th Jan
<b>Woodstock Antiques Fair</b>	Town Hall 10am to 4.30pm	8th to 9th Aug
		12th to 13th Sept
		10th to 11th Oct
		14th to 15th Nov
		12th to 13th Dec
<b>Burford Flea Market</b>	9am to 5pm	8th Aug
		5th Sept
		19th Sept
		13th Oc
		17th Oct
		14th Nov
		5th Dec
<b>Cotswold AONB</b>	Walk in Stonesfield 2.30 meet At Post Office	16th Aug
	Wander along the Windrush 10am, meet Burford Car Park and bring lunch	13th Sept
<b>Bridewell Organic Garden</b>	Open Day	16th Aug
<b>Cotswold Summer Craft Fairs</b>	Methodist Hall Burford	28th to 29th Aug
		11th to 12th Sept



Venue	Event	Date
<b>Motor Neurone Disease</b>	Walk in Cornbury to Fund Raise 10.30am to 2pm	12th Sept
<b>Charlbury Street Fair</b>	Opens at 2pm	19th Sept
<b>Charlbury 10K Race</b>	Through Cornbury Park 10.30am	20th Sept
<b>Crown Farm Ascott</b>	Fell Pony Society Annual Show	13th Sept
	BHS Fun Ride	27th Sept
<b>Chastleton House</b>	Treasure Forever	26th Sept
	Housekeeping Secrets - a tour	3rd Oct
	Gunpowder Plot	31st Oct
<b>Christmas Presents Fair</b>	Methodist Hall Burford	23rd to 24th Oct
		6th to 7th Nov
		20th to 21st Nov
		4th to 5th Dec
<b>Combe Mill</b>	In Steam	16th Aug and 18th Oct
<b>Wychwood Forest Fair</b>	Cornbury Park	6th Sept
<b>Carterton Country Music</b>	Nashville Sounds	
	Carterton Social Centre 8.30pm	28th Aug
<b>Country Dancing</b>	Carterton Social Centre 8.30pm	25th Sept
<b>Witney Music Society</b>	The Classic Buskers at Woodgreen School 7.30pm	9th Oct
	Piano for 4 Hands	
	Witney Methodist Church 7.30pm	13th Nov
	The Esterhazy Connection at Woodgreen School 7.30pm	11th Dec
<b>Burford Orchestra</b>	Autumn Concert at Burford School 7.30pm	28th Nov
<b>Chipping Norton Choral Society</b>	Brahm's German Requiem at St Mary's Church 7.30pm	5th Dec
<b>Woodstock Music Society</b>	J S Bach Mass in B minor at Parish Church 7.30pm	11th and 12th Dec

***THESE LISTINGS WERE CORRECT AT THE TIME OF PUBLICATION BUT PLEASE CHECK DATES AND VENUES BEFORE ATTENDING ANY OF THE ABOVE***

## WYCHWOOD LIBRARY

What a lovely summer we are having at Wychwood Library. We have lots of new stock for your holiday reading and we hope you were able to pick up some of the wonderful, nearly new, donated books at the Milton Fete. We made £237 that will go towards even more new books.

The coffee mornings are busier and busier. Come along and meet your friends here on a Wednesday morning between 10am and 12.

It's not too late to join the Summer Reading Scheme, "Quest Seekers", for our younger readers. There are three stages to the challenge with stickers and prizes to collect and when they have read six books and found the golden book they are awarded with a medal, a magic colour change pen and a certificate. We will hold our medal and certificate giving ceremony on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September at 5pm.

We will also be having an activity morning on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> August at 10.30am until 11.30. Come and help make a huge dragon to live in our children's area cave this summer.

There will be a Story Time on Friday afternoons throughout the summer holidays at 3pm. All young readers welcome.

We would also like to highlight the new service at Wychwood Library to help our housebound readers. Angela Townsend is working with the WRVS

to visit customers in their homes taking them reading or listening items. We can provide large print books or books on tape or CD. This is a free service so if you know of anyone who would like to be included please let us know.

We will be holding an "Ancestry Week" on 12, 14 and 16<sup>th</sup> October with knowledgeable helpers to get you going. Book here early for a slot to check up on your ancestors. It's fascinating.

We are always happy for suggestions of books you would like to see on our shelves if you think that other readers would like them as well.

Come and visit us at Wychwood Library.

**Ruth, Liz and Angela**

### **Opening Times:**

2.00pm to 7.00pm

### **Tuesday:**

**Closed**

### **Wednesday:**

9.30am to 1.00pm/2.00pm to 5.00pm

### **Thursday:**

**Closed**

### **Friday:**

2.00pm to 7.00pm

### **Saturday**

9.30am to 1.00pm.

# **FUND RAISING JEWELLERY EXHIBITION**

in aid of

**Holy Trinity Church,  
Ascott-under-Wychwood**

and

**Sai Ram Trust**  
on

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 6.00 p.m. – 8.00 p.m.

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October 10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

at

**The Mill, Ascott-under-Wychwood**

Featuring

# **Aquarius Designs Jewellery**

## NOTES FOR YOUR DIARY

### **FROM HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, ASCOTT**

4.00 pm SUNDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2009

#### **HARVEST THANKSGIVING SERVICE**

6.00 pm SUNDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2009

#### **HARVEST SUPPER IN THE TIDDY HALL**

WE HOPE TO HAVE SOME ENTERTAINMENT  
BAR APPLIED FOR

COST OF TICKETS FOR SUPPER WILL BE PUBLISHED LATER

### **TIDDY HALL**

#### **Regular Activities:**

##### **Monday – Friday Mornings**

Pre-school

Contact: Mrs Pauline Plant

07968006451

##### **Thursday evenings 7.30 – 9pm**

Yoga

Contact: Jan Holah

01608 810620

##### **Wednesday & Friday Afternoons**

Piano Lessons

Contact: Pauline Carter

01993 774568

Post Office runs every Friday  
afternoon 2pm – 4pm

#### **Special Events:**

##### **Wednesday Evenings**

Badminton

Contact: Chris Morgan

01993 831958

**Harvest Supper Sunday 4th October  
at 6.00pm**

**To book the Tiddy Hall contact:**

**Ingrid Ridley**

**01993 830612**

## REPORT FROM TIDDY HALL

On Wednesday June 24<sup>th</sup> the Tiddy Hall Trustees held their Annual General Meeting. It was reported that the year ending May 2009 was a good one, with an overall profit of £3603.85, a big increase on the previous year. A big contributor to this profit was Flix in the Sticks, with a couple of very successful film and supper evenings. The Barn Dance in May also raised funds and was enjoyed by all!

The Ascott Pre School is the main user of the Hall, holding sessions every morning throughout term time. Mrs. Pauline Carter holds piano lessons on Wednesday and Friday afternoons while John Naish continues to run the Post Office every Friday, 2pm – 4pm. The Windrush Valley School also use the Hall for games activities and afterschool clubs, several groups of ladies play badminton regularly and Summer School Yoga returns on 14<sup>th</sup> July (why not come and have a go!) There are plenty of birthday parties taking place throughout the year – for the young and old – weddings, elections, Harvest Supper, Rock School, Race Nights and various other activities all make The Tiddy Hall a busy hall indeed!

However, in order for our community to continue having this wonderful facility, we now need to bring the fire alarm system up to date and in line with current guidelines. A Fire Risk Assessment has taken place and, with these findings, we hope to have the necessary work done over the summer months. This

does not come cheaply! We will need to spend in excess of £6,000! We have applied for a grant to help cover these costs.

The Trustees are looking for a few more people to join the team! We would like to have 2 or 3 new members. Mrs Lyn Collins has now stepped down, after 15 years, and we would like to thank her for her dedicated work, being the main organiser of the many wonderful Folk Nights which have been held at Tiddy for so long. We are a friendly bunch, who meet about once every six weeks for an hour or so, to discuss any issues which need to be addressed.

The Tiddy Hall Trustees are:

Mr. Roger Shepherd – Chairman  
Mr. Nick Carter – Treasurer  
Mr. Ken Smith – Secretary  
Mrs. Ingrid Ridley – Booking Clerk  
Mr. Simon Gidman  
Mr. Ken Baker  
Mrs. Pauline Plant

**If you feel you would like to join our team – please ring Mrs. Ingrid Ridley on 01993 830612.**

Look out for another Flix in the Sticks Supper Evening this autumn and also a Coffee Morning & Table Top Sale, to help raise some more funds to cover the cost of the new Fire Alarm and Emergency Lighting System.

**Ingrid Ridley**

## Monday to Saturday except Public Holidays

### Chipping Norton-Kingham Station-The Wychwoods

	notes	NS	NS	NS	S							
Chipping Norton, West Street .....		06.07	06.45	07.15	08.00	08.30	09.30	10.35	11.35	12.35	13.35	14.35
Churchill, Bus Shelter .....		06.12	06.51	07.21	08.07	08.37	09.37	10.43	11.43	12.43	13.43	14.43
Kingham, Church Street .....		06.15	06.55	07.25	08.11	08.41	09.41	10.47	11.47	12.47	13.47	14.47
Kingham Station ⇌ .....	[arr]	06.19	06.58	07.28	08.14	08.44	09.44	10.50	11.50	12.50	13.50	14.50
Kingham Station ⇌ .....	[dep]						09.55T	10.55T	11.55T	12.55T	13.55	14.55T
Idbury .....							09.58	10.58	11.58	12.58	13.58	14.58
Fifield .....							10.01	11.01	12.01	13.01	14.01	15.01
Milton-u-Wychwood, Quart Pot ...							10.05	11.05	12.05	13.05	14.05	15.05
Shipton-u-Wychwood, Post Office ..							10.08	11.08	12.08	13.08	14.08	15.08
Ascott-u-Wychwood .....							10.14	11.14	12.14	13.14	14.14	15.14

notes	NS	S	NS	S	NS						
Chipping Norton, West Street .....	15.30	16.20	16.35	16.55	17.30	17.45	18.25	19.10			
Churchill, Bus Shelter .....	15.38	16.28	16.43	17.02	17.37	17.52	18.32	19.17			
Kingham, Church Street .....	15.42	16.32	16.47	17.06	17.41	17.56	18.36	19.21			
Kingham Station ⇌ .....	[arr]	15.45	16.35	16.50	17.10	17.45	18.00	18.40	19.25		
Kingham Station ⇌ .....	[dep]	15.50T	16.35	16.50T	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
Idbury .....	15.53	16.38	16.53	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
Fifield .....	15.56	16.41	16.56	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
Milton-u-Wychwood, Quart Pot ...	16.00	16.45	17.00	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
Shipton-u-Wychwood Post Office ...	16.03	16.48	17.03	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		
Ascott-u-Wychwood .....	16.09	16.54Z	--R--	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....		

### The Wychwoods-Kingham Station-Chipping Norton

	notes	NS	NS	NS	S	NS	S					
Ascott-u-Wychwood .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	09.30	10.30	11.30	12.30	13.30	
Shipton-u-Wychwood, Post Office ..	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	09.36	10.36	11.36	12.36	13.36	
Milton-u-Wychwood, Quart Pot ...	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	09.39	10.39	11.39	12.39	13.39	
Fifield .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	09.42	10.42	11.42	12.42	13.42	
Idbury .....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	09.45	10.45	11.45	12.45	13.45	
Kingham Station ⇌ .....	[arr]	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	09.50	10.50	11.50	12.50	13.50	
Kingham Station ⇌ .....	[dep]	06.30	07.00	07.30T	08.15	08.30T	08.55T	09.55T	10.55T	11.55T	12.55T	13.55
Kingham, Church Street .....	06.34	07.04	07.34	08.19	08.34	08.59	09.59	10.59	11.59	12.59	13.59	
Churchill, Bus Shelter .....	06.37	07.07	07.37	08.22	08.37	09.02	10.02	11.02	12.02	13.02	14.02	
Chipping Norton, West Street .....	06.43	07.13	07.43	08.28	08.43	09.08	10.08	11.08	12.08	13.08	14.08	

notes	NS	S	NS	S	NS	NS					
Ascott-u-Wychwood .....	14.30	15.30	16.15	16.30	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Shipton-u-Wychwood, Post Office ..	14.36	15.36	16.21	16.36	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Milton-u-Wychwood, Quart Pot ...	14.39	15.39	16.24	16.39	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Fifield .....	14.42	15.42	16.27	16.42	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Idbury .....	14.45	15.45	16.30	16.45	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Kingham Station ⇌ .....	[arr]	14.50	15.50	16.35	16.50	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Kingham Station ⇌ .....	[dep]	14.55T	15.50T	16.35	16.50T	17.20T	17.55T	18.10T	18.50T	19.25T	19.50X
Kingham, Church Street .....	14.59	15.54	16.39	16.54	17.24	17.59	18.14	18.54	19.29	19.54	
Churchill, Bus Shelter .....	15.02	15.57	16.42	16.57	17.27	18.02	18.17	18.57	19.31	19.57	
Chipping Norton, West Street .....	15.08	16.03	16.48	17.03	17.33	18.08	18.23	19.03	--R--	--R--	



## Monday to Friday except Public Holidays

service	C1	C1	C1	C1	T1	T1	T1	T1	C1	C1	C1
Milton-u-Wychwood, Quart Pot ...	06.40			07.56							
Shipton-u-Wychwood, Post Office ..	06.42			07.58							
Ascott-u-Wychwood .....	06.48			08.04							
Leaffield, The Fox .....	06.10	06.56	07.25	08.12	09.30	10.30	12.15	13.15	17.25	18.10	18.55
Ramsden, Royal Oak .....	↓	↓	↓	↓	09.40	10.40	12.25	13.25	↓	↓	↓
Finstock, School .....	06.16	07.02	07.31	08.17	09.45	10.45	12.30	13.30	↓	↓	↓
Charlbury, Five Ways .....	06.19	07.06	07.35	08.21	09.49	10.49	12.34	13.34	↓	↓	↓
Charlbury, Browns Lane, Co-op .....	06.21	07.08	07.37	08.23	09.54	10.54	12.39	13.39	↓	↓	↓
Charlbury, Rail Station ⇌ ... [arr]	06.25	07.12	07.41	08.27	09.57	10.57	12.42	13.42	17.50	18.35	19.40

route in Charlbury: Fiveways, Sturt Road, The Slade, Enstone Road, Browns Lane, Market Street, Dyers Hill, Station ⇌

service	C1	C1	C1	T1	T1	T1	T1	C1	C1	C1	C1
Charlbury, Rail Station ⇌ ... [dep]	06.25	07.12	07.41	10.00	11.00	12.45	13.45	17.10	17.55	18.40	19.45
Charlbury, Browns Lane, Co-op ....	↓	↓	↓	10.03	11.03	12.48	13.48	17.12	17.57	18.42	19.47
Charlbury, Church St, The Bell .....	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	17.14	17.59	18.44	19.49
Charlbury, Hixet Wood .....	↓	↓	↓	10.04	11.04	12.49	13.49	↓	↓	↓	↓
Charlbury, Five Ways .....	↓	↓	↓	10.06	11.06	12.51	13.51	17.16	18.01	18.46	19.51
Finstock, School .....	↓	↓	↓	10.10	11.10	12.55	13.55	17.20	18.05	18.50	19.55
Ramsden, Royal Oak .....	↓	↓	↓	10.15	11.15	13.00	14.00	↓	↓	↓	↓
Leaffield, The Fox .....	↓	07.25	↓	10.25	11.25	13.10	14.10	17.25	18.10	18.55	--R--
Ascott-u-Wychwood .....	--R--		--R--					--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--
Shipton-u-Wychwood, Post Office ..	--R--		--R--					--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--
Milton-u-Wychwood, Quart Pot ...	06.40		07.56					--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--

route in Charlbury: Station ⇌, Dyers Hill, Thames Street, Nine Acres Lane, Enstone Road, Browns Lane, then

C1: Church Street, Park Road, Fiveways

T1: Sheep Street, Hixet Wood, Fiveways

**Notes:** --R-- continues to these points on request

Buses will wait up to five minutes for late running trains except up to 20 minutes for the last journey



The C1 is normally operated with wheelchair accessible buses

**T1: Journeys will only operate if requested in advance with the operator**

**Phone 01993 869100 at least two hours before you wish to travel**

RH Transport Services  
North Bungalow  
Downs Road  
Witney OX29 0SY  
Tel: 01993 869100

traveline,  
public transport info:  
0871 200 22 33



With financial support from  
**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**  
ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY  
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

## **COOK'S CORNER: ASCOTT'S FAVOURITE RECIPES**

This is a quick and simple curry. It originated from a famous chef on the BBC website who instructed that the oil be heated and the spices cooked in the hot oil for two minutes. Do it this way and believe me you have a fair chance of choking to death on chilli fumes! When I discussed this serious health hazard with an Indian chef he confirmed that frying spices was not such a good idea and so we agreed on this cooking order which works better, tastes better and is almost completely painless. I think this is pretty bomb proof and my cooking style is more about going with the flow than getting hung up on exact quantities.

### **Chicken Curry**

- 1 nice big onion chopped
- butter
- 1 tsp ground ginger (or chopped fresh ginger)
- 2 garlic cloves crushed
- 1 tps chilli powder (use mild or hot and adjust quantity to your taste)
- 1 tsp Garam Masala
- 2 good big tomatoes diced
- 150ml cream (go on, use more if you like)
- 1 lime
- 2 chicken breasts cubed (more if you are hungry)
- 1 tbs sunflower or rapeseed oil

Chop the onion and gently sweat until it is soft (about 5 minutes) in as much butter as your conscience permits. After about 3 minutes add the ginger and garlic.

Add the chopped tomatoes and the chilli powder and garam masala and simmer for 6 minutes.

In a separate pan stir fry the chicken pieces in the oil until they are lightly browned and add to the onion/tomato mixture. Add the cream and the lime juice and reduce the liquid by about a half.

Serve with rice, naan bread etc.

**Tim Lyon**

**AIRPORTS &  
WEDDINGS**



**HKS Chauffeurs (UK) Ltd**

**Tel: 07795 171771  
or 01993 705993**

**Email: [info@hkschauffeurs.com](mailto:info@hkschauffeurs.com)  
[www.hkschauffeurs.com](http://www.hkschauffeurs.com)**

**Professional, Reliable and working for you**

## **Oxfordshire's Premier Executive Chauffeur and Wedding Car Service**

**8 Seater luxury Minibus, Mercedes Cars**



**We provide an independent, fully licensed and insured chauffeur and wedding service, when and where you may need it.**

**HKS Chauffeurs should be your first choice for executive travel.**

**We specialise in • airport transfers • hotel transfers • sporting events  
• theatre trips • business meetings • private tours • special occasions**

**Heathrow-Gatwick-Stansted-Luton-Birmingham-Coventry  
Bristol-Bournemouth-London City-West End Theatre Trips  
Wimbledon-Ascot-Cheltenham-Wembley and O2 Arena  
01993 705993**



**We are an independent estate agency specialising in the sale of property in West and North Oxfordshire and into the Cotswolds.**

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

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



66 Great Cumberland Place  
Marble Arch  
London  
W1H 7BL  
Tel: 0207 298 0314

Email: [sales@wychwoods.com](mailto:sales@wychwoods.com) Web: [www.wychwoods.com](http://www.wychwoods.com)