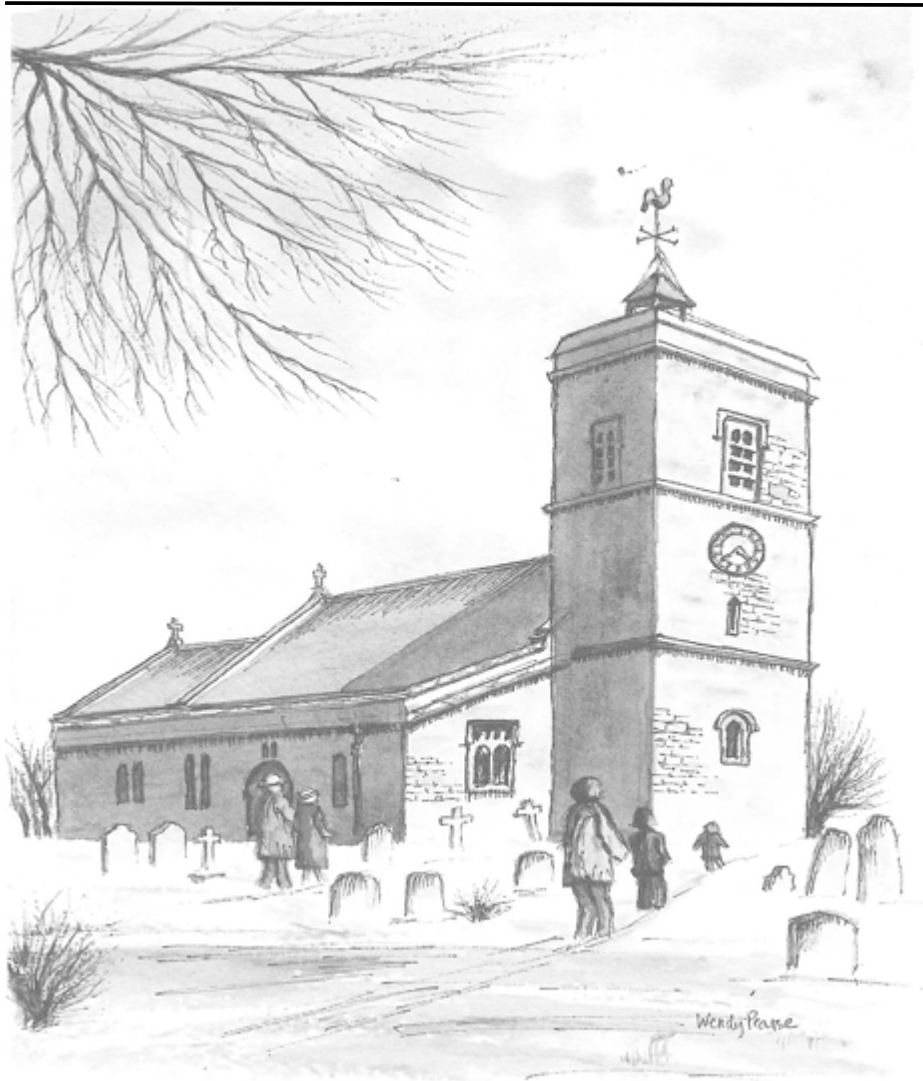

The Ascott Grapevine



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 Spring issue of The Grapevine should be submitted by 5th April 2010.

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.

Unfortunately due to increased postal costs in mailing the magazine to our advertisers, it will be necessary to make a slight increase in our advertising rates for 2010.

Advertising Rates

£16.00 for a full page
£11.00 for a half page
£6.00 for a quarter page

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



HOLY TRINITY CHURCH ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD

The new pattern of worship has been agreed and from January 2010 it will be :

1st weekend	0800	Enstone	1000	Spelsbury
2nd weekend	0800	Ascott	1000	Chadlington & Heythrop
3rd weekend	0800	Spelsbury	1000	Enstone
4th weekend	0800	Chadlington	1000	Ascott

Please check notice boards for any changes.

OBITUARY

Cyril Charles Edginton 1923 – 2009

Cyril Charles Edginton was born on the 20th February 1923 in the farm cottage which stands opposite the Forge Garage. He was the youngest of four children born to David and Lily Edginton. David was a farmer and Cyril would follow in his father's footsteps, working on the farm with his father until David died in the 1970's and the farm was divided between other Crown properties.

Cyril lived in Ascott his entire life and would see many changes take place, from steam trains to the modern diesel engines, the introduction of electric lighting and working the land with tractors instead of horses. Village life would see many changes in his lifetime.

Cyril was educated at Ascott primary school and after passing the eleven plus went on to finish his schooling at

Burford Grammar School, the first in his family to do so. He obtained a good level of education and achieved good marks in his exams before leaving to work full time on the family farm.

Farm life in those days was very different and Cyril spent many hours in all weathers walking behind a pair of horses doing all the things that would later be done by tractor. He would also remember the time when the family had cows that were hand milked and delivering milk to the local people with a churn on a handcart. People would come out and buy fresh milk by the jug, no bottles or pasteurisation in those days. There was a pig sty in the garden of the cottage where there were always pigs being reared for the table.

During the Second World War, Cyril served in the Home Guard. He tested to become a rear gunner/radio operator with the RAF but could not take it up as he was in a reserved occupation.

Cyril played football for the village as a young man and also was a regular in the cricket team for many years. He continued to play various sports for the village throughout his life, playing cribbage and dominoes until recent years.

In 1956, Cyril married Kathleen Holloway from Chadlington and they went on to have two children, a daughter Valerie and a son Peter who continues to live in the village.

Cyril had many memories of life in the village including playing football by moonlight on the village green, no street lights in those days, and a van calling by giving away samples of tobacco which would halt the football as the lads all left to try their free samples.

Cyril died in Ascott on the 16th September 2009, aged 86 years.

**Valerie Weedon
Peter Edginton**

A rectangular advertisement for 'Ivy's' floral services. The top and bottom corners are decorated with green ivy leaves. The text is centered and uses various bold and italicized fonts. The phone number '01993 830268' is prominently displayed. The services listed include weddings, anniversaries, births, funeral tributes, fresh flowers, plants, gifts, balloons, and florist sundries. It also mentions local and national deliveries, the address '8 Church Street, Shipton-under-Wychwood, Oxfordshire, OX7 6BP', and that credit and debit cards are accepted. A note at the bottom states 'CLOSED ALL DAY MONDAY'.

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

The Wild Garden

Creating a Legacy for the Future

Many local residents will have fond memories of feeding the ducks in the Wild Garden in Shipton or walking in the avenue in spring, when the snowdrops and aconites are out. Sadly, the Wild Garden has been closed for about a year due to damage to the ponds and dog fouling.

We now have an opportunity to buy the Wild Garden but to do this we need your help! Brian Gorton, the present owner, has offered the garden to the community for £50,000 and a campaign is underway to raise both this amount of money and the further funds needed for initial essential work and the on-going running costs. A charitable not-for-profit company has been formed and so far over £27,000 has been pledged in support of the project. Our goal is to raise sufficient funds to be able to acquire the garden during 2010 and after essential work, to open it fully to the public by the end of 2010 or early 2011, but to do this we need you to support us and help create a legacy for the future.

The Wild Garden in its present form was laid out in the mid 19th century as a pleasure garden adjoining

Shipton Court, although the site was used as a recreation garden dating back to the building of Shipton Court in Elizabethan times. A tithe map of 1837 shows some of the existing ponds and paths, as well as the original dog kennels in the south-west corner which

gives Dog Kennel Lane its name. A number of photographs from the early 1900s give us an impression of what the garden was like at that time. More recently the gardens have developed as a place of peace and tranquillity with the soft paths threading through the trees and ducks replacing the original swans on the upper ponds. Our intention is



to keep the garden in very much the same state, carrying out necessary work needed to maintain safe access and doing a small amount of restoration where this is appropriate.

Please visit our web site **www.wychwoodwildgarden.org.uk** for further information and to download a pledge form. We have been encouraged by the recent meetings in Ascott, Milton and Shipton providing strong support for acquiring the Wild Garden by way of a community owned company. This will ensure that the gar-

den is retained in local ownership with open and unrestricted access to all. Please support us to achieve this so that future generations of children can also enjoy feeding the ducks.

Mike Watson



WYCHWOODS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

On Thursday, February 18th at 7.30.pm in Shipton Village Hall, we are having a talk by Ascott resident Nick Leadbetter. It is entitled The Civil War in Oxfordshire, so if you would like to find out what happened in our county in those far flung days, do come and join us for the talk.

Another very popular speaker is booked for Thursday, 18th March at 7.30.pm in Milton Village Hall, Tim Porter will be describing the role of Medieval Hospitals. Tim's talks are usually accompanied by really beautiful slides.

In April we have a return by a speaker from Little Rissington. On Thursday 15th April at 7.30.pm in Shipton Village Hall, Mike Boyes, who previously described the lives of a Victorian Rector of Little Rissington and his nine old maid daughters, will be back to describe The Adventurous Lives of Five Cotswold Brothers, of the same family. So much to look forward to.

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.**

ASCOTT-U-WYCHWOOD VILLAGE FETE

JUNE 12TH

**AT THE SPORTS
PAVILION, HIGH STREET**

12.30 opening

Dog Show

**(Bring your dog and enter the various
classes)**

Debbie Arthur's Jazz Band

**Performances from the local Schools
Stalls**

Children's Corner

.....and much more!

**Come and treat yourself to lunch at our BBQ,
sup a good beer, Pimms or soft drink in the
tent, and have afternoon tea later on!**

All proceeds go to our Village Church

HELL'S BELLS – IT'S THE ASCOTT PANTO!

Once again this year Ascott's resident poet and playwright, Fred Russell, put quill to parchment and the pantomime 'Hell's Bells' was born. It is a gripping tale of an evil plot by Beelzebub and his accomplice

the wicked witch to silence the church bells, a plot confounded as ever by brave St George.



Along the way there were romances, detectives, exploding puddings, vicars, ugly sisters; in fact all the usual suspects! The cast of thousands (well believe me there were quite a few!) threw themselves heart and soul into the production, guided this year by a professional producer in the shape of Danny Brainin. All performed with gusto (oh yes they did!) and, judging by the deafening applause, the whole evening was a great success.

The Tiddy Hall accommodated a near capacity audience of over 90 people. The proceedings were opened by Predwyn and Kira Piper



singing and playing. Then Jim Pearse recited a poem written by Wendy and thence to the panto. After a break for refreshments, Daphne Abe led her choristers in some wonderful Victorian songs and carols so that

it really was a very Christmassy evening that will be long remembered by the children not totally traumatised by Predwyn's very realistic depiction of Beelzebub!

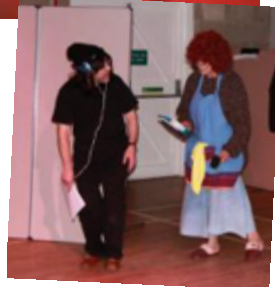
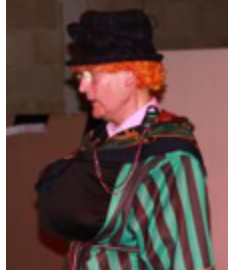
Thanks must go to everyone involved and especially to Fred for bringing it all together. This event is funded by the discussion group so our thanks to them

for laying on this splendid evening of entertainment and refreshments. They kindly agreed that there could be a collection with the proceeds going to the Ascott Grapevine and your generosity raised over £300.

Rumour has it that Fred is already hard at work on next year's panto – not long till Christmas!

Tim Lyon





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Fabulous Food
Sunny Garden
Cosy Bars
Five Elegant Rooms



Stay for a pint or a weekend!

Shipton Road, Ascott-under-Wychwood
01993 832332 www.swanatascott.com

NEWS FROM THE SWAN



With an excellent Christmas and a fantastic New Year behind us we are now onto the next decade. Many thanks to all who visited the Swan over the festive season. New Years Eve and New Years day brunch were particular highlights and amazingly our chefs produced over 500 servings in less than 24 hours! Brunch proved very popular so we will try a few more during the year, probably on Bank Holiday Mondays. Its hard to beat a "Full English."

The next Quiz Night is on Wednesday February 3rd, starting at 7.30pm. It is essential to book in advance for this and the cost is £7.00 each, including a meal.

Also, we are offering two main courses for the price of one every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday lunch and dinner throughout January and February. Who said there is no such thing as a free meal!

Who can tell what 2010 will hold for us all? Certainly 2009 has been a tough time for the pub trade with a record number of pubs closing in the last 12 months. Everyone is welcome at any time, whether for a drink or some food, and if you can persuade any friends to give the Swan a try so much the better. The saying "use it or lose it" has never been truer for the pub trade.

Good luck for 2010!

Richard Lait

A WINDOW ON THE PAST

PART 4

Incidentals

For a final glimpse into Ascott's past through the early Deanery Magazines, I have gathered together a few items of passing interest.

On New Years Day 1881, Henry Taunt, the famous Oxford photographer, visited Ascott, and put on an Entertainment in the Schoolroom. 'Mr Taunt, of Oxford, exhibited by dissolving views "a journey down the Thames" from its source, at the Seven Wells, near Cheltenham, to London Bridge. The views, chiefly from photographs, gave charming pictures of the scenery: some amusing scenes followed with a brilliant succession of chromatropes.'

Then in February the Railway was the subject of discussion. Sounds familiar!

'During the past month we have been invaded by a small army of Navvies, not for evil intent, but for the safety of the passengers travelling by train Londonwards: they have re-laid the line for about a mile between Ship-ton Station and our own. The railways of nowadays, strictly speaking, can scarcely be called "iron roads"; the rails are of steel, the sleepers are of wood, and only the cradles are of iron; in fact, considering the immense quan-

tity of timber used in their construction, they may more justly be termed wooden ways, than ways of iron. The Navvies who were billeted in the village seemed to differ happily from those of former years, and behaved themselves well.'

Reverend York, it seems, was keen to promote Ascott for the tourist trade. In August.

'Ascott is now enlivened by the presence of a good score of visitors, and not without reason; therein can be found very comfortable quarters, abundance of pure water, and appetizing, fresh, country air, with the advantage also of a Station close at hand. The statistics of mortality show that it is a very healthy place. In the past 7 years there have been 27 deaths of adults, resident in this Parish, and 10 children chiefly under a twelvemonth old; of the 27 adults, one reached nearly 90, two were 88, two 87, one 85, two 83, five from 76 to 81, and four from 70 to 75.'

And in 1881, regarding the village allotments, which at that time reached all the way from the village, alongside London Lane, to the Charlbury Road. 'there seems no doubt about the general abundance and good quality of the potato crop; our Parish allotments have

given some grand yields, and in an adjoining field 3 sacks were planted and 39 sacks produced, all in good saleable condition, and not including the small: in other instances some roots have produced from 30 to 40 potatoes each, mostly of good size.'

Not that education was neglected in the village at that time. Rev. Yorke records that in 1882, 32 youths attended Night School together with others over twenty one years of age, The number of school children was 92. In fact from a village of 401 inhabitants, 150 were under education in the Parish.

In September of that year, work had commenced once more on the Railway.

'We have had lately another visitation of Navvies for the relaying of the line with new transverse sleepers in place of longitudinal, and steel rails resting on iron chairs: this arrangement is said to be the most perfect plan known of laying a line.'

Two notable events occurred in November.

'On Saturday, November 11th, our usually quiet village experienced two excitements, a pleasant one in the meet of the Heythrop hounds on the Green, and, at mid-day, a very different sensation by the cry a fire, a rick being found in flames in Mrs Townsend's yard, (Long House Farm) the burning straw threatened to do much mischief, but many helpful hands came to the rescue, and comparatively little damage was done: the disaster was caused by a

small boy playing with lucifer matches.'

Finally a few suggestions from the past, for those expecting an addition to their families, and pondering over the infant's name. Rev. Yorke compiled a list of unusual boys and girls names that he found in the early parish registers. Here are some of his discoveries.

For boys – Foulke, Scroope, Limbrough, Acteon, Zacharia, Shadrach, Albion, Merry, Jabuz and Japeth.

For girls – Fillimore, Bettresse, Morris, Maudlin, Jacomin, Livia, Abina, Damaris and Kezia.

Wendy Pearse

**DEADLINE FOR
SPRING 2010 EDITION
APRIL 5TH
PLEASE DON'T BE LATE**

BLAIRS GOUT PILLS

EXTRACTS FROM THE AGRICULTURAL GAZETTE

January 9th 1899

In the comment column there was consternation at the large amount of cheap grain and chilled meat that was being imported, which was lowering the prices paid to British farmers. This was reflected in an extract from Mr Rider Haggard's paper on English Farming.

'Compared with other and rougher countries it is curious to note the ceaseless nature of the work needful to the carrying on of an English farm. We have brought cultivation to such a pitch of science that everyday has its appropriate and necessary labour, without which all would be spoilt.

Yet the pity of it is that under present conditions it can scarcely be made to pay, if the land is farmed fairly it is in many instances being worked at a loss or at any rate without a living profit.

The reader may say that no one would carry on a business under these conditions; yet it is still carried on in many cases from sheer force of habit or because those who practice it have nothing else to which to turn. The small farmers only too often keep up the game till they are beggared, when they adjourn to the workhouse or to live upon the charity of their friends. The larger farmers go on until they are absolutely impoverished and retire into

a cottage, or if they are fortunate, find a position as a steward on some estate.'

(I suspect that some farmers may have carried on as long as possible simply because it pleased them to be farmers. JP)

Tuberculosis was also included in the comment columns.

'There was a proposal to slaughter cattle that are in an advanced stage and visibly affected by the disease. Stringent precautions were not considered necessary with a slowly progressing disease like tuberculosis. Everybody acknowledges that 'stamping out' tuberculosis is impracticable.'

(In the late 1940s and 50s a skin test was used to obtain control of the disease. The cattle being inoculated on the side of the neck and checked again three days later when any animal carrying the disease would have reacted with a significant lump at the location of the injection. It would then be sent for slaughter. By this means tuberculosis was to all intents and purposes eradicated, and apart from regular tests to ensure that all herds were clear, it was forgotten. Then about 10 years ago we began to hear of a resurgence of the disease in Gloucestershire and the west of Eng-

land, and it made steady progress eastwards. Now almost every farmer of cattle in this area has recently had animals shown to be carrying the disease, in some cases a significant percentage of their herd have had to be slaughtered. A large increase in the population of wild deer and badgers has occurred in recent years but whatever the cause, the effect is a large heavy cloud hanging over livestock farmers. JP)

In the market section the price paid to farmers for barley was 28 shillings a quarter (448lbs) which was £7 per tonne, compared to about £80 per tonne today. In 1899 a tonne of barley would have paid a farm worker's wage for 14 weeks, but today's tonne of barley would pay a worker for less than two days. With modern machinery however, one worker can achieve results in one day undreamt of by farm workers in 1899. The crop yields have also increased about fourfold but the purchase and maintenance of expensive machinery also has to be paid for, so everything is relative.

There were some interesting advertisements. It seems that even in those days Blair was providing the great remedies.

**The Great Remedy
BLAIRS GOUT PILLS
Gout, Rheumatism, Sciatica,
Lumbago.**

**All quickly relieved and cured
without restraint
of diet by these celebrated Pills.
At 2s 9d per box.**

**Cupiss Constitution Balls
HORSES For Grease, Swelled
Legs, Cracked Heels,
Coughs, Colds, Sore Throats,
Disordered Liver,
Broken Wind, Influenza, Loss of
Appetite etc. etc. etc.**

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA
THE COMING COLONY,
LAND GIVEN AWAY
Splendid Soil, Abundant and
Certain Rainfall,
Great Climate, Good Harvests
and
BEST MARKET IN THE
WORLD
A LARGE AND INCREASING
GOLD YIELD
Coal, Lead, Iron and Copper
Mines.
Magnificent Timber Resources.
Pearl, Shell and other fisheries.**

It seems that Western Australia had improved after a young immigrant from Ascott sent a letter back to the village in 1881, as quoted in the last Grapevine, Issue 64.

‘I must tell you that if one comes out here they must not care how they live or they had better stay at home,

though a man can earn more money here, but I would not advise anyone to come out here for I shall not stay long.'

'News in 1882: Mrs Townsend's three sons seem to be doing well, but the Colony has suffered in the past summer from a terrible drought such as has not been known there for 10 years. The pastures have dried up and the sheep, cattle and horses have been dying by the hundreds.'

(Obviously the advertisements in 1899, like their counterparts of today, needed to be taken with a touch of scepticism! JP)

I was rather intrigued by this recipe and method of making treacle toffy.

'Treacle Toffy'

Melt a quarter pound of butter in a good sized saucepan, and pour in 3lb of black treacle, boil for twenty minutes and then add another quarter pound of butter and 1lb of sugar to which has been added a mixture of half a teaspoonful of ground ginger, ditto Jamaica pepper, ditto cinnamon, ditto black pepper; let it boil again and continue until it comes to the crack, which may be known by dropping a little from the

spoon into a basin of cold water; when it rattles on the bottom of the dish it is boiled enough, and may be immediately poured into flat dishes previously buttered; when cold enough to handle it must be taken up and worked by pulling out till it gets too hard to pull when it is twisted into a rope and cut into suitable pieces. Of course the operator's hands must be well oiled or buttered to begin with.'

(I wish you a happy toffee pulling episode. JP)

Jim Pearse

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Shipton under Wychwood**

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One twin - One Double
Television - Tea Making
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ASCOTT CHRISTMAS TREE

After a number of requests (er..mainly from me!) our Parish Council came up trumps, by arranging a Christmas tree for the Village Green and what a wonderful sight it was! Thanks to the generosity



think you'll all agree it looked wonderful! Another first this year was carol singing round the tree. The weather albeit cold was very seasonal and it

ty of Chris and Janet Badger a magnificent tree was cut down early December. However, let's go back several months. A channel had to be dug from the middle of the green to the electricity pole to enable us to have power for the lights courtesy of S.E. Board.



This was all dug out by

volunteers, Shane Barnes and David Cook. Then once the tree was delivered it had to be sunk into the ground. Thanks again go to the volunteers

Shane who was joined by Robin Walker. The lights were hung and after a slight delay with S.E. they were finally switched on and I



was lovely to see so many people there enjoying the mince pies and the mulled wine kindly supplied by numerous people from the Village, and of course singing a selection of carols suggested by Daphne Abe. A collec-



tion was also made and a total of £174.61 was raised which was divided between Christian Aid and the Village Charity. It was certainly

a lovely way to start the Christmas festivities and let's hope we can do it again in 2010!

Debra Cull

What is Forest School?

Forest Schools are a unique way of building independence and self esteem in young children. They originated in Scandinavia in the 1950's and focused on teaching children about the natural world. From here the idea was brought to Bridgewater College, Somerset, in 1995 and has spread throughout the UK since.

In Oxfordshire, Forest Schools use the outdoor environment to support children's learning across the whole curriculum, using learning and teaching strategies boosts their confidence and self esteem.

It has been found that the combination of freedom and responsibility has been particularly beneficial to children who, for whatever reason, struggle within a conventional classroom environment, or who exhibit challenging behaviour. The experience is fun, and the learning which occurs is observed and recorded in a similar way to the learning which occurs in school. The children splash about in puddles, roll in the leaves and because of the high adult/child ratios, they can safely experience

types of activities that are so often prohibited nowadays, such as climbing trees or cooking on fires.

Ideally children will attend Forest School sessions weekly, throughout the year, and although this isn't a specific environmental educational programme, they will experience all weathers and seasons and develop a deeper understanding about the natural world along the way.

Children who go to Forest School regularly visit a marked out area of woodland which has been specially set aside for their group. This usually in-

Bed & Breakfast

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

Children welcome.

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Mrs Ingrid Ridley

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visit the website
www.meadowbank-ascott.co.uk

volves a trip either walking or by minibus to the woods. Once children get to Forest School they are free to participate in activities suggested by staff as well as undertake their own exploring. The session will usually include time for a drink and a snack and a chance to share all the exciting things they have done.

In order to take the children to Forest School you need to hold a Paediatric Outdoor First Aid qualification, as well as being a qualified Forest Leader.

The Astor family has kindly allowed Ascott Pre-School to use part of their 'woods' for Forest School, on the Bruern Estate. So the children go out every week to the site in the minibus, hired from the Ace Centre, it's even being called the 'Edie McCredie' bus by some!

There is a bit of a walk to the site from the minibus. This gives the children an opportunity to discuss how the environment is changing etc. At the site camp base is sorted, the children have a snack, then off to explore. Some revisit their play; others choose the activity or items brought. They have lunch back at 'base' then there is a short time left before we have to leave. We all pile into the minibus, muddy, windswept, dishevelled.....but smiling!

Lisa Munro
Forest Leader

IT WAS ME!

Mummy, what is that man doing? Why is he looking at the gravestones? What is he writing?

Between the end of May and the beginning of September this year I was often in the churchyard of Holy Trinity Church, Ascott-under-Wychwood looking at all the grave stones. What was I doing? I was recording all the inscriptions on as many gravestones as I could read. This was not an easy task as many of the stones are old, flaked, covered in lichen and overgrown. You might have noticed that I was there at different times of the day and in different weathers. This was because some stones could only be read when the shadows were in the right direction. You might have noticed that I was sometimes on my hands and knees. This was because some of the stones have religious texts along the bottom of them and you have to strain your eyes to read them.

Why did I start this exercise. What was the trigger. I have started to look into my own family history, like many people of a certain age. I have done the usual things like writing down what I know of my own generation, my parents generation and my grandparents. I then progressed to the public library to look up census forms and births, marriages and deaths. All this information is free in the reference sections of all public libraries. Then, one day

when it was raining and I didn't want to go out I googled the area where my great grandparents came from. What a revelation! There was this website which had all the birth, marriage and death registers from 1600 to 2003 for all of the churches in the area and I was able to trace all my relations back to the late 1700s. But there was a lot more as well. All the Parish Magazines from the 1878 to 1951 for all of the churches were also there, as were the school records, hospital records for 1868 to 1873 including Case details for 1867 and half of 1868 and Minute Books from 1905 to 1943. Also there were monument inscriptions and even court records. It was a veritable gold mine. All human life was there. Just by sitting at my computer I could find out when people were born, baptized, married and when they died and were buried. I could also find out which school some of them went to and when they were missing to help with the potato harvest. I also found out who misbehaved and who won prizes for reading and knowing their tables. The Parish magazines gave me information on who received, on loan, woollen blankets from the gentry to keep them warm through the winter and when they had to return them to 'The Big House' for washing. Some of my family also received Christmas gifts of '3 yards of cloth' or 'Christmas bread'. There was obviously a great sense of community since many were invited to the Christmas and New Year dinners

provided for the community. Some of the hospital records were very revealing. Many people were admitted on the recommendation of the Vicar who also paid for their keep while they were there. A typical case read

'Case – Age 57, wife of a labourer from --- admitted 31 March under doctor ---. Debility from disordered digestion. This was a case of gastric derangement – originating in want of proper nourishment – She was a poor miserable creature unable to really to take proper care of herself – her husband earned good wages but she did not know how to spend her income to their advantage. Her treatment was followed by Rhubarb draught with Ammonia., diet at first was middle – afterwards meat and beer. Discharged Saturday, 25 May 1867. 8 weeks in hospital.'

It would appear that many were admitted because they were exhausted and undernourished. 'Meat and Beer' were often prescribed as their treatment. There were more serious cases and the descriptions provided by the doctors of their treatment were quite harrowing sometimes ending in death.

All of these details must have taken someone a long time to collate and put on the Web. It was extremely useful to me and I felt that I could give something back.

So, back to Holy Trinity Church, Ascott under Wychwood. What did I

Don't forget about the Ascott website:

find when reading the inscriptions. Many things. The number of children who died in infancy must be a reflection of the hard times people lived through. There is one person who is listed on one of the stones who is buried in Bromley, Kent. There is a person who died in Jamaica who is buried in Ascott. There is a farmer's daughter who married a London solicitor who was born in Hanover Square. As would be expected there are whole generations buried there. There are mentions of people who lost their lives in the wars, even the siege of Kut is mentioned. *(The siege of Kut-al-Mara, 1916, lasted 147 days before 11,800 British and Indian troops inside the garrison town finally surrendered on 29 April 1916 to Khalil Pasha, Baghdad's military governor. It was the greatest humiliation to have befallen the British Army in its history).*

What I didn't find. I didn't find out how many people are buried in the churchyard, nor did I find the earliest burial or the oldest person. All I did was read the inscriptions that are legible. So please don't ask me where your great

aunt Sheila twice removed is buried.

What happens next. My intention is to complete my list with, as far as is possible, the birth, death and burial dates of the persons mentioned completed. This will take a little time. Then I will present a copy to the Church, Wychwood Local History Society and Oxfordshire Library. I also hope to place a copy on the Ascott website.

I am pleased to know that the information I have gathered has already been of use to other people in the village who are doing research.

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ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

"HAPPY NEW YEAR"

Carols round the Christmas Tree

Firstly, a very big "thank you" to Chris Badger for donating such a beautiful Christmas Tree. It was erected on Saturday 5 December and considering this was the first year it went very well. A big "thank you" also to Robin Walker and Shane Barnes for coordinating the erecting of the tree and then helping to dress it with the lights which were very kindly donated by the Village Charity.

The carol service round the tree was on Saturday 19 December led by Mark Abrey and was very well attended. Mulled wine and mince pies were served by John and Debra Cull. A collection received from the carol service totalled £174.61 and was split £87.31 to Christian Aid and £87.31 to the Village Charity. This was a truly festive evening enjoyed by all on a cold and frosty night. Long may it continue.

Parish Councillors and the 2010 Elections

In the October edition the Parish Council reported that Peter Greening had stepped down and they are actively seeking to co-opt for this vacancy and with the 2010 Elections now approaching the Parish Council need five councillors in order to function. Please give this some thought and feel free to con-

tact either myself or one of the councillors noted below.

Planning Applications

Planning continues to be particularly quiet.

Flooding/ Contingency Plan

The Parish Council members and several volunteers organised a trial run of the Village Contingency Plan with the kind help of Nick Leadbetter, which proved to be very useful. Sandbags, hi-viz jackets and shovels etc have been delivered by WODC and concerns were raised as the sandbags were biodegradable. Our District Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles confirmed that these were the correct ones to be used. Large maps have been purchased and laminated and are now kept in the Tiddy Hall room. All that now remains is for the equipment to be marked so that it can be easily identified, a practice sandbag fill, a practice loud hailer session together with a second practice run so that all know how to operate pumps, electrical equipment etc.

Ascott Signal Box

The Parish Council are pleased to report good news that the Signal Box will now stay and continue to be manned in Ascott as well as Moreton and Evesham.

Just to confirm, the Parish Council meet every second Monday of the month in the Tiddy Hall at 8pm, with the exception of August. The monthly

Don't forget about the Ascott website:

Agenda is displayed on the Notice Board at the bottom of High Street and Dawls Close one week before the meeting and the Minutes are displayed on the Village Website after they have been approved. 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
Rob Morgan	831958
Angela Barnes (Parish Clerk)	01608 641045

SERVING YOUR COMMUNITY

Elections will be held for your Parish Council on the 6th May 2010. Ascott has five Parish Councillors and it seems likely that there will be an opportunity for two or three new candidates to put their names forward to replace retiring members.

Becoming a Parish Councillor and representing the community can be a very rewarding and interesting experience and will enable you to become informed of and involved in the various activities and events in the Parish. The Council meets eleven times each year and looks at planning issues and other matters affecting the village; is responsible for maintaining the playing field, village green and verges; deals with issues such as drainage and flood-

ing and represents the Parish's view to the District and County Council.

Parish Councillors meet regularly with their County and District Councillors and are invited to attend events and meetings where issues affecting the local community are being discussed.

There are always new ideas coming forward to improve our environment, the renovation of the Pound and erection of the Barrow stones is a good example. Also, events, like the Carols on the Green around the Christmas tree, can be planned and organised.

Much of the day-to-day administration is carried out by Angela Barnes, our Parish Clerk, but individual Councillors often decide to specialise in one particular area, for instance transport, allotments or flood relief work.

Don't hesitate, if you would like the chance to serve your community please put your name forward in 2010.

If you would like further information contact Angela Barnes or one of the present Councillors. Our contact details are shown at the end of the Parish Council report elsewhere in the Grape Vine.

Stuart Fox
Chairman Ascott Parish Council

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NATURE NOTES

Returning to a warm house after a cold, icy and muddy walk with our new spaniel puppy made me consider all the creatures that have to survive the winter months without the benefit of shelter and central heating. Where does all that abundant summer wildlife go and how does it survive our inhospitable winter? There seem to be three choices; flee the country and head south, like the Swallows, Martins and other birds; remain here and hope to survive the cold and lack of food; finally enter a state of dormancy and let the worst of the winter pass you by.

Living on an island it is mainly birds that have the ability to move south, in search of food and a warmer climate. Whilst some butterflies and moths, like the Red Admiral and the Painted Lady, are summer immigrants very few of those that breed here are thought to make the journey in the other direction. The birds that leave our shores are predominantly, but not exclusively insectivorous, the seed and berry eaters tend to stay. Indeed some, such as Redwings and Fieldfares, come to England from their northern breeding grounds because our winters are less harsh. Birds, like the Blackbird, will modify their eating habits, searching for worms in the summer, but eating fruit, berries and seeds in the winter when the ground is frozen. The mortality rate amongst the bird population in winter is very high, particularly

www.ascott-under-wychwood.org.uk

amongst the smallest species and the population of Gold Crests, Wrens, Long-Tailed Tits and Blue Tits can plummet after a long lasting cold spell. Without sufficient food being found during the day, these birds will not survive a long winter's night, so try and feed your garden birds regularly throughout the winter.

If you can't fly away then you have to cope with food scarcity and cold weather by



adopting other survival strategies. The Fox grows a thicker winter coat and Moles burrow deeper in their search for earthworms. Squirrels build a winter nest, called a drey, where they will sleep during bad weather, but on sunny and warm days they will venture forth to find food, perhaps on your bird table or by digging up a cache of nuts that they buried during the previous autumn. Unfortunately they also strip bark from trees to get to the nutritious sap-wood underneath, doing extensive damage and leaving open wounds that may become subject to fungal attack. Smaller rodents like Shrews, Voles and Mice suffer very high levels of mortality during the winter. Shrews in particular rely on insects as their main food source and

spend most of their waking hours eating. The Common Shrew will starve to death if it goes without food for more than three hours. A Shrew that survives one winter will never get through another.

The final survival strategy is dormancy or hibernation. Badgers enter a period of dormancy in the winter after having eaten well in the autumn increasing their body weight by up to sixty percent. From December until March they will stay underground in their sett, living mainly off their accumulated fat. This is not true hibernation as they will venture forth during warmer periods.

Amongst our native mammals only Hedgehogs, Dormice and Bats truly hibernate, thus reducing the body's energy needs and food requirements. Prior to hibernating they will eat large amounts of food, gorging on the summer and early autumn surpluses, to build up reserves of fat. Two types of fat are laid down; white fat which acts as an insulator and a source of nourishment, keeping the body 'ticking-over' and brown fat which accumulates near to the animals brain, heart and lungs, warming-up these vital organs when it is time to wake in the spring. If an animal comes out of hibernation too early, because of a warm spell or disturbance, these fat reserves will quickly be used up and the animal may not survive the remainder of the winter.

During hibernation body temperature drops close to that of the surround-

ings, the heartbeat slows to a few beats a minute and breathing too slows and becomes almost imperceptible. Hibernation is triggered by a change in blood chemistry thought to be caused by shortening day length and falling temperatures.



All of our cold-blooded animals, amphibians and reptiles but not fish, hibernate during the winter as their body temperature is the same as their surroundings, but they must find somewhere sheltered where the temperature will remain above freezing. Frogs will hibernate under a log or bury themselves in the mud at the bottom of a pond, absorbing oxygen through their skin. Toads and Newts always find somewhere on land burying themselves under a stone or log pile whilst Snakes will often use discarded burrows.

Fish do not hibernate, but tend to become lethargic in cold weather, reducing their food intake and migrating to the deeper parts of ponds, rivers and lakes.

Snails literally 'shut up house' for the winter, closing the opening of their shell with a special slime containing calcium phosphate that hardens into a tough protective covering. They spend the winter amid rotting vegetation, in the leaf litter or under a log or stone.

Sometimes they will be found glued to a post or wall in a sheltered spot.

Finally where do all the insects go? The majority will over winter as eggs



which were laid in late summer. In some cases these have to be subjected to a period of

cold weather before they are able to hatch. Some moths survive as pupae buried in the soil or leaf litter, whilst some butterflies will spend the winter as adults in garages and outbuildings or other sheltered spots such as dense ivy thickets, emerging in spring to mate and start the next generation. There is a final group of butterflies and moths that spend the winter as larva, such as the Speckled Wood, Marbled White and Large and Small Skippers. This arrested development is termed the diapause. In order to survive these tiny larva produce a natural anti-freeze and enter into a state of suspended animation until the warmer weather returns and they can start feeding and growing again.

Given a choice I think that I will stick to central heating and a log fire!

Stuart Fox

EXTRA-CARE HOUSING IN THE WYCHWOODS

The Proposal

Oxfordshire County Council with Cottsway Housing are looking into the possibility of creating Extra Care Housing on land to the West of Green Lane in Milton –u- Wychwood, on land owned by the County Council. The proposed scheme will be for 40 units, and is intended to make up for the loss of both Greenlands and Langston House in the Wychwoods.

What is Extra-Care Housing

"Extra Care Housing (ECH) is described in various government sponsored reports as: "Purpose-built accommodation in which 24 hour personal care and support can be offered and where various other services are shared."

In this respect the most important factors that define ECH are:

- **Purpose built 'lifetime' homes for rent, sale or shared ownership**
- **An on-site team of carers providing personal care on a 24-hour basis that provides an alternative to residential care and much more services than sheltered housing**
- **Ability to provide a daily hot meal (usually from an on-site kitchen) served in a communal dining room**

- **Enhanced bathing and toilet facilities and a laundry**
- **Various communal rooms/areas offering a range of therapeutic, health, leisure and activity functions**
- **An ethos of extra care that promotes independence, not to foster a culture of dependency. Wherever possible, people are assisted in performing tasks themselves, rather than having them done for them".**

The theory of "Extra Care" is to provide accommodation and support to enable us all to remain in our villages for as long as possible, and to remain as part of the Community. The amount of care increases as the need dictates. The Green Lane position gives close proximity to Deli, Post Office, Co-op, Hairdressers, Pub, Library and more, making a perfect site for residents to feel included in our community.

Concerns

My only reservations on support to this scheme are that of design and access to the site. I will not support a proposal that uses Green Lane as a route into the proposed development. Cottsway Housing have explored the use of a possible access through the garden of 2 Shipton Rd, which they own (opposite Elm Grove). I am happy to support this idea.

The Way Forward

Cottsway have now produced draft plans for the scheme. These need to be accepted by both the people who live in the area of the proposed development, and the local Planning Authority at West Oxfordshire District Council. The first stage of this process will be a Meeting of OCC, Cottsway, and a working Party of Milton –u- Wychwood Parish Council during January, to discuss the draft Plans. This will hopefully be followed by a submission for Planning permission to WODC. Consultation within the Wychwoods will also be part of this process. A public Meeting will be held, at which Plans will be on view, and at which various other questions can be answered, such as eligibility, costs, etc, etc. I will ensure that the Meeting is well publicised. I will be happy to answer any questions, but would suggest we wait until after the open Meeting.

ClIr Rodney Rose
(Oxfordshire County Council and Milton Parish)

Email: rodney.rose@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 07919298277



Cotswold Wildlife Park and Gardens

The Park remains open throughout the year and is a popular attraction over the winter months. There are a number of indoor enclosures and the restaurant serves hot snacks and meals.

ANIMAL OF THE MONTH

Meerkats

The name meerkat comes from the Afrikaans language for marsh cat, which is funny because they are not from marshland and they are not cats!

Size: Weight: 750g-1 kg. Height: up to 30cm high when standing on back legs.



Habitat and Distribution: Rocky grass-land, scrub and desert in the Kalahari desert, which extends through south Angola, Namibia and Botswana, all in southern Africa. They are diurnal (active during the day) and at night live in burrows, which are complex tunnel systems consisting of mounds, access holes and tunnels which lead to numerous sleeping chambers.

Age: Meerkats live up to 10 years in the wild but up to 15 in captivity.

Groups and Breeding: Meerkats typically live in groups of up to 25 animals but communities may get as large as 40 individuals. They are unusual as they depend on each other for survival.



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www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk

GLOBAL WARMING

I'm not a scientist, but I do question our acceptance of the opinion that global warming is caused solely by man's activities and that this is a proven fact. Why? Probably because I'm a natural sceptic and always tend to question everything that I'm told, especially if it's a politician doing the telling and particularly if it's seen as an excuse to raise 'green' taxes and waste vast sums of money building inefficient and unsightly wind farms.

Yes, I accept that carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas, as is methane and both are produced as a result of human activity, but water vapour is possibly more important in the greenhouse effect and is not generated to excess by human activity. Anyway, the amount of carbon dioxide that we add to the atmosphere is small compared with the total produced by nature. One belch by a large volcano will put far more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than we humans do each year. Carbon dioxide is a natural component of our atmosphere and all plants require it for growth, they combine it with water and through photosynthesis manufacture the sugars they require.

Today, when compared with our geological past, the earth is much cooler, the icecaps much larger and the seas cover less land. Indeed we are still in an ice age, but enjoying a warmer interglacial period. There is no less ice at the Earth's poles today than there was

thirty years ago. It is also interesting to note that there has only been ice on earth's surface for less than 20 % of its history.

In Europe we suffered a 'Little Ice Age' from 1400 to 1850, with the coldest period being in the 1600's so we should be expecting temperatures to rise and glaciers to retreat as they have been doing unevenly for the last 250 years. Prior to that we enjoyed a six hundred year period of warming which enabled grapes to be grown by the Romans as far north as Hadrian's Wall and allowed the Vikings to settle in parts of Greenland which are now ice bound. More recently there have been shorter periods of warming and cooling which do not seem to correlate with mankind's industrial activities. We are currently in the eighth year of a period of global cooling.

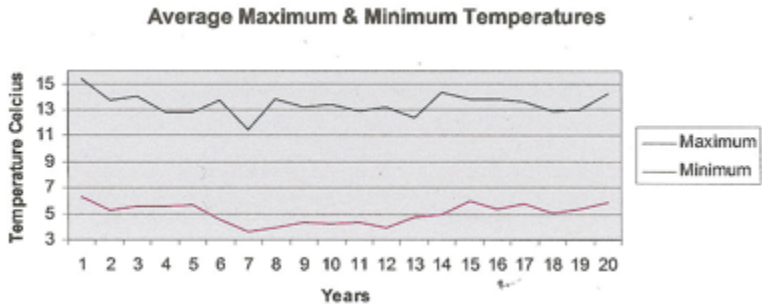
Climate is cyclical. In the current era these cycles tend to be one hundred thousand years long, with ninety thousand years of variable glacial conditions followed by ten thousand years of warming. We are currently at the end of the current warming period, so perhaps we should be expecting another ice age! Perhaps the carbon we emit might keep us warm a little longer.

I realise my views may be regarded as 'deranged.' if you think so please use the next issue of the Grape Vine to shoot me down in flames, after all I'm not a scientist just a cynic.

Don't forget about the Ascott website:

One final thought; at all of these international conferences why doesn't anyone mention the real problem that the world is overcrowded and population growth needs to be controlled.

The following graph shows the average maximum and minimum temperatures that I have recorded, over twenty years, in this area. Sadly it proves nothing either way, but seems to indicate a period of cooling between thirteen and eight years ago with temperatures gradually retuning to the levels achieved in the late eighties and early nineties in 2009.



Stuart Fox

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WINDRUSH VALLEY SCHOOL NEWS

FOOTBALL FOCUS



Windrush Valley School football teams have been very busy of late, with 3 home matches against St John's Priory and Kitebrook House School.

On Wednesday 7th October, we welcomed St John's Priory to our home ground at Ascott-under-Wychwood, and fielded two skilful under 9 and under 11 teams. With Dan Milner scoring 3 and Edward Butler scoring a further 4 goals, Windrush Valley under 9 boys sealed a confident 7 – 0 victory. Not to be outdone, the Windrush Valley under 11 boys, also playing St John's Priory, scored 7 goals in total; 2 each from Blake Richardson and Ross Hedigan with a further 3 winning goals put in the back of the net by Alex Roscoe, resulting in a 7 – 0 win.

A few weeks on, and the Windrush Valley School under 9's football team were back on the pitch, hosting Kitebrook House School. It was an action reply of their previous game, with Dan Milner scoring 3 and Edward Butler securing the win with a further 4 goals. Well done to all those who took part from Windrush Valley School, St John's Priory and Kitebrook House School.

NETBALL NEWS



With our football teams busy on the pitch, the girl's netball squad have been looking forward to their first competitive match, as bad weather has seen off their first few fixtures. With the weather holding off, the netball squad travelled to St John's Priory School, Banbury, for their first game on 4th November. For some of the Windrush Valley squad, it was their first competitive match, but they certainly didn't let nerves get the better of them, and all of the team played exceptionally.

Unfortunately, as sometimes happens, the score did not reflect the standard of play and Windrush Valley came away losing 10 goals to 2. This has not deterred the girls; they had a great afternoon and are keener than ever to get back on the court!

Well done to all the girls who played in the match:

Romy Dawkins, Georgie Townley, Tiana Thomas, Hollie Taylor, Catherine Hawkins, Lizzie Cornish and Augusta Townley.

RUNAWAY SUCCESS FOR WINDRUSH VALLEY SCHOOL

Five teams from Windrush Valley School, Ascott-under-Wychwood, took part in St Hugh's annual cross-country event, on a very cold Tuesday 10th November. Senior Mistress, Mrs Janice Askew said: *“Windrush Valley School have such a pool of sporting talent, we were able to take three boys teams for the under 9 and 11 year age groups, and a further two girls' teams in the same categories. All the children have worked immensely hard during their school training sessions, and this hard work paid off with our under 9 boys coming in third, and the under 11 boys running away with a first place victory”.*

Staff and all the pupils from Windrush Valley School, would like to congratulate our runners who all did so well:

U9 Boys (third place): Daniel Milner, Edward Butler, Caden Spencer
U9 Girls: Rachel Purvis, Cassia Belardo, Poppy Kay

U11 Boys (first place): Ross Hedigan, Alex Roscoe, Luke Milner
U11 Boys: Henry Gardner-Roberts, Neil Atkinson, Charlie Spencer
U11 Girls: Tiana Thomas, Flo Denham, Hollie Taylor

SUCCESS FOR WINDRUSH VALLEY SCHOOL

15 children from Windrush Valley Independent School (Ascot-under-Wychwood) travelled to London on the 15th October 2009 to represent the school at the ISA North London swimming gala. With numerous schools from the London area attending, competition was tough! With determination and commitment, teamed with 110% effort from all the children, they were a formidable force to be reckoned with.



All the children were successful in their heats with many 1st, 2nd and 3rd places achieved, highlighted by four children being selected to compete in the ISA National Finals later this year, in Coventry. A great achievement for the school and swimming squad alike.

Ross Hedigan (50m Freestyle & Relay National finalist); Neil Atkinson, William Burnell and Alex Roscoe (Relay National finalists).

Headmaster, Mr Alan Wood, said, *“I am so proud of all the children in the swimming squad, and to have four children selected for the national finals in Coventry, from a small independent primary school is absolutely fantastic, we seem to be breeding future athletes at Windrush Valley, as we have had several children selected for the ISA National finals in athletics and cross-country!”- Go Windrush!*



Left to right: Charlotte Roscoe, Alice Martin, Flo Denim, Romy Dawkins, Augusta Townley, Evelyn Smith, Tiana Thomas, Hollie Taylor, Alex Roscoe, Max Boyns, William Burnell, Ross Hedigan, Neil Atkinson, Daniel Milner, Blake Richardson

Windrush Valley is an award winning independent day school located in Ascott-Under-Wychwood. The school caters for 3 to 11 year boys and girls, and prides itself on providing a happy, positive atmosphere for learning. The school is a member of the Independent School Association.

WYCHWOOD LIBRARY

It's cold outside but nice and warm in here so come into Wychwood Library, choose some books and get cosy. There are lots of new titles coming in all the time so plenty to make a selection from.

The new Afternoon Reading Group is very active with some very interesting discussions on the chosen titles so far. Come and join us. We meet on the second Thursday of each month, except August, at 1.15pm until about 2.30pm.

Future events at Wychwood Library include a knitting group called "I knit Links", based on a nationwide non-profit Community Interest Company. Lorna Raye is to run the group which will meet every second Thursday morning from 10.30 until 12. You can contact Lorna on 01993 832 121 for more information. The first meeting is on Thursday, 25th February.

We will be having another IT Learning/Ancestry week on the 8th and 10th of February from 2 – 5pm.. One-to-one tuition with the Wychwood Volunteers for an hour each. Come in and make a booking.

The SWYCH group will be holding a Film Night in the library on February 11th at 7.30pm. No entrance fee but a small charge for refreshments. Look out for the flyers or contact Jenna on 831 338!

Wordpeckers We have begun our junior reading group again but we are still open to new members between 8-12 years. We share our reading choices and talk about the books we are currently reading and we are hoping to do some creative writing as well if we have time. So if you love reading and talking about books and authors come along and join us. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 6th January at 4pm. in the library and on the first Wednesday in the month after that.

Remember, you can take out books, DVDs etc and return them anywhere in Oxfordshire. If you do think you are going to be late, and the items will fit, pop them through our letterbox to save being charged overdue fines!

Opening Times:

Monday:

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

THE WYCHWOODS DAY CENTRE

The Wychwoods Day Centre annual Christmas Party was held on Thursday the 17th December in the Beaconsfield Hall and - as I say every year - was probably the best one yet!! Thanks to

our wonderful band of volunteers we now have the organisation of the "Day" resembling something of a military operation, from thinking about and creating the stockings through to providing a full turkey dinner and all

the trimmings for 50-plus members, volunteers and

guests. We started with coffee and biscuits on arrival at 10am and the usual games of scrabble/dominoes/rummicub before guests arrived to join

in our Carol Service led by Rev. Wendy Callan. Sherry and mince pies swiftly followed whilst the kitchen was a hive of activity in preparation for the main culinary event with 3 large Hartley's turkeys under the carving knife! As ever the meal was delicious and was finished off by Christmas pud, trifle, pavlova, teas and coffees. You may reasonably think that by now it was time for a snooze - but oh no! - there was more to come and there was no escape until we'd been festively

entertained by Mark Jessey and Richard Sandate on guitars and "Doolallybird" or rather Mandyræ Large in one of her wonderful hand-made costumes. Before their carriages

arrived to take them home the members were duly presented with their Christmas Stockings by two extra special guests in the guise of Ru-

dolph and a very tall giraffe - aka James Walmsley and Tom Gidman!

All in all we had a wonderful day and I can only reiterate my thanks and appreciation to all those in this great and caring community who gave so much of their time and energy

towards making it the success it was and also for all their support during the year! Thank you also to all the mem-



bers for my beautiful bouquet of flowers which has lasted well into the New Year! I am only sorry that, due to the snow and ice, we have had to miss our first Thursday back after the Christmas break but look forward to meeting up again soon.

Katherine Gidman
Co-ordinator



GARDENING NOTES

The new year, a time to take stock and make plans for the gardening year. With all the vegetation cut down by snow and frost and with leaves lost from trees and shrubs, it is the best time to view the basic layout and design of the garden. The bareness makes it easier to decide what needs changing and what fresh opportunities the changes will give. We have been a bit ahead of what is normal for us by starting to take stock in the Autumn rather than wait for

Winter. We removed two trees in November because we realised we had planted too many in too small a space. It was such a shame to remove trees that had just begun to establish themselves. They were

planted in the garden just five or six years ago. Unfortunately it is a common mistake to plant too many things in a new garden: with so many bare areas of ground to cover, the temptation is always to put in too much. Then when everything starts to grow well, you realise some have to be taken out.

Now with the bones of the garden laid bare by Winter, we can see that we did the right thing. There is a better balance between the size of the planted areas, hard landscaping and grass. Space has been made to develop another reasonably-sized flowerbed where

previously there was a mish-mash of too many trees and too many small areas separating each one. So what to plant in this new area? I shall be spending many a miserable, grey, Winter day looking through garden books and plant lists, getting ideas and getting excited by the possibilities. But have the bare bones showed us we need to get to grips with anything else? I am amazed to say I cannot see anything major in the way of layout that needs doing. That's not to say it is perfect but it is what we are happy with at the moment.



Jobs for this time of the year generally involve tidying up, pruning and clearing messy corners (but I will keep some corners for wildlife to shel-

ter), the soil is too wet to do much else. I do not need to cut down last year's spent flower stems, most were done in Autumn but I left some for the birds. Gold finches and others seem to enjoy the seed heads of ornamental grasses and verbena bonariensis and anyway the seed heads glistening with hoar frost are a glorious sight. The rose and shrub pruning can be done during any frost-free time between now and March. Vicious thorns and a scramble of stems put me off doing the ramblers. Thank goodness they do not have to be done each year but one or two have

come to the point where they are smothering other plants and must be taken in hand. Even though most ramblers only flower once a year, if your garden is large enough do not ignore them, as they bear such an abundance of flowers for some four or five weeks in mid summer and the scent is delicious. Last year, two or three of them had a good second flush of flowers in Autumn, an unexpected delight, brought on I assume by the prolonged mild weather during October.

It is exciting knowing that spring is just around the corner. There are quite a few bulbs poking up through the soil, daffodils as well as snowdrops and I hope that there will be some tulips. Garden experts advise that they should be dug up and replaced each year which comes a little expensive and labour intensive so I left them in the ground last year in a foolhardy way. About six years ago I planted something like two hundred tulips in blocks of bold colours, twenty five to a block, they were a really glorious show and the second year was equally good. I had planted them twelve inches deep as advised, also by experts, to ward off tulip disease. But the third year they all succumbed to that dreadful fungus which stays around the garden for three years afterwards. They all had to be dug up and destroyed. The year before last, I thought I would try again

because I am very fond of tulips. I planted just a few and at a normal depth because there seemed no point in repeating deep planting which had not helped and was hard work. They flowered well last year so I am anxious to see whether they will survive for a second year, then a third or beyond. I am not hopeful and if I am proved right will try again but planting in pots, throwing away after flowering and buying in new each year as the first expert advice said. I have got to succeed, tulips are so shapely and colourful.

Thoughts will soon be turning to vegetable gardening because potatoes will be available at any moment to buy for chitting. January is a long month but once over February will flash by, then March is potato planting month. Nobody wants to be caught out, but to be ready with well-chitted potatoes to plant as soon as the weather and soil are right. Broad beans can be sown and garlic planted in February so the new gardening year will soon be upon us. Catalogues are already coming through the door bringing the promise of Winter's end. Monty Don likes to get out and do something in or connected with garden every day of the year and that's what I am trying to do to make the winter hurry by and to be ready for Spring.



Yvette Keauffling

TOO MANY COOKS

Does the BBC promote gluttony, one of the seven deadly sins condemned by the church? I asked this because there cannot be many days go by when there aren't at least two programmes about cooking on the television. This annoys and amuses me. It annoys me because the BBC must think I have a fortune to spend on the food they prepare. It amuses me because if you cooked the way they do, you would have a sink full of pots and pans that would take longer to wash up than to eat the meal. I have some experience in cooking. Over fifty years ago I worked in the Officers Mess in Cyprus whilst doing my National Service. There I could use as many utensils as I wished. There was always some poor Cypriot to do the washing up.

I would like to digress for a while. Before going ashore in Cyprus us squaddies were given a pep talk by the C.O. It went along the lines of this. Now look here chaps, when you get ashore you will find most of the people very friendly, but always remember they are not as good as you. This gave some of the men I served with, who came from some of the no go areas of our large cities, the idea, whoever the Cypriot they met, they could address them as Wog. Sometimes I had difficulty in doing this. Most Cypriots I met could speak English. I could speak no Greek. One man I met who worked as a waiter in the Mess, had been a teach-

er. He liked to talk in English about Greek philosophy. One story he told me of Socrates. It was said Socrates had a nagging wife. After a row one day she broke a water pot over his head. Socrates is supposed to have said, 'After the thunder comes the rain.' If you detect some left wing views in my writing, then you ought to be a detective. In my younger days I was often told to go and live in Russia. I would like to say I have never been a left winger. I would admit to being an inside left, sometimes in the old W formation. I wonder how many of you know what I am talking about!

Returning to the BBC and cooking – do we eat to live or live to eat? It's a wonder the whole country doesn't suffer from deep depression, indigestion and heartburn. I overcome depression by, whenever I hear the opening bars of EASTENDERS, I quickly reach for the off switch. I would like to put my foot through the screen but that would be too costly.

In a few short years, if things remain as they are, I will no longer have to pay a T.V. license. So I will then have no right to criticise the B.B.C. Then I shall slump back on the sofa like a great lump of pudding, eating junk food, and having mind numbing cooking programmes, etc. on television to watch.

Fred Russell

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AWARD FOR ASCOTT VILLAGE SHOP



Mike Pearce, Deputy Chairman, Village Shop Management Committee, receiving the Fairtrade Certificate from Mahall Mason of the Fairtrade Foundation.

IT IS LEFTENANT, NOT LEWTENANT, KIRA

In November, I went to a talk given by a very attractive young woman called Kira from the United States. She gave a talk on being a DRUID.

Before I go on, I should like to deny I have ever said, or you have heard me say, 'Yanks go home.' When I got home I found a letter which I almost sent to the W.O.D.C. I hope the Grapevine will print it.

**To the Housing Officer of
W.O.D.C.**

Dear Sir,

I wish to make the most serious complaint concerning my next, door neighbours. Their behaviour every full moon leaves much to be desired.

The trouble starts when the moon reaches the highest part of the heavens. It is then, they and their friends, strip off and run naked around the garden, dancing in a frenzy that culminates in wild scenes of sex and drink.

I have two teenage children who seem desperate to join them in their depravity. I have gone to great lengths to restrain them, the last deterrent being a high voltage electric fence dividing our two properties. Unfortunately it

Page 42

electrocuted the cat, and burnt the testicles off the dog when it jumped the fence chasing the postman.

Can I suggest you send someone from the Council to act as an undercover agent to monitor the behaviour of my neighbours every full moon. They could use a rent card as a loincloth to cover their credentials.

I remain, yours sincerely,

I.B.A. Nutter

**DEADLINE FOR
SPRING 2010 EDITION**

APRIL 5TH

PLEASE DON'T BE LATE

Don't forget about the Ascott website:

FLOOD RELIEF UPDATE

Meetings last week with NR and the EA concluded that piling had to be halted until the New Year. The piles under the bridge have to be welded to make up the full length required and the river has been too high to allow this to be done. Also, to drive the piles under the bridge requires a temporary platform (coffer dam) to be built in the river and that was not possible while EA Flood Warnings were in place recently.

The upstream piling (on the Ridleys' land) is complete and so Dyer and Butler are concentrating on finishing all the EA work upstream of the bridge before the Xmas break. That means the 2 bunds and the swale plus all the making good should be complete. The finished job so far looks very good and the sweep of the bend approaching the railway bridge is much improved. Once the grass grows back I think everyone will be very happy.

Dyer and Butler then expect to take 3 weeks finishing under and downstream of the bridge and they shall

attempt to identify a window of time when the water levels will be acceptable. They are keen to do this as soon as possible in the New Year as they are now losing money on the project, mainly due to the delay caused by the difficulty in anchoring the bridge wall in October. Without that delay the job would be done.

Philippa Carter

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The Forest of Wychwood and the Wychwood Way



The Forest of Wychwood

Charlbury lies at the heart of the former royal hunting Forest of Wychwood, where medieval Kings hunted deer and grew trees for fuelwood and timber. The Forest once extended from Woodstock to Burford and Chipping Norton to the River Thames. The Forest was a patchwork of woodland, heathland, meadows and agricultural land. A strict 'Forest Law' prevented the killing of deer or the cutting of trees without the King's permission.

Over the centuries much of the woodland was cleared for farmland and settlements. The fields were gradually enclosed by hedges and dry-stone walls. Some woodland was not cleared. The largest remaining piece of this ancient woodland, now known as Wychwood Forest, lies to the south-west of Charlbury and is part of the Combury Estate.

The Wychwood Project

The Wychwood Project was established in 1997 and aims to raise awareness of the history and heritage of the royal hunting Forest of Wychwood. The Project encourages local people to take part in and benefit from the conservation, restoration and enhancement of the rich mosaic of landscapes and habitats within the Forest boundaries.

The Wychwood Project is supported by West Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council and The Friends of Wychwood. The Project works with a wide range of people, landowners, local communities, schools, organisations and agencies. Membership of The Friends is open to anybody with an interest in the Forest of Wychwood.



The Wychwood Way

The Wychwood Way is a 59km (37miles) continuous, way-marked trail around the heart of the former royal hunting forest. This trail follows ancient track-ways including sections of the Roman Akeman Street and the Saltway, used in Saxon times to bring salt south from Droitwich in the Midlands. A guide-book describing the landscape, history and wildlife to be seen along the Wychwood Way can be bought from local Visitor Information Centres. The Wychwood Way can be joined by following the Oxfordshire Way north or south from Charlbury. Return buses to Charlbury can be caught along the Wychwood Way from Chadlington, Accot-under-Wychwood, Leafeld, Ramsden, Combe and Stonesfield. The Wychwood Way was created with support from the Wychwood Project, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Hanson Environment Fund and the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment.

For information about the Wychwood Project or the Friends of Wychwood contact:

Wychwood Project, Countryside Service, Fletcher's House, Park Street, Woodstock, Oxon OX20 1SN

Telephone 01993 876143

Email Wychwood@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Website www.wychwoodproject.org

ASCOTT ACCOLADES !

During the current snowy conditions, people have really pulled together and gone out of their way to help others. Here are just a few letters of appreciation:

I am the first to acknowledge that I could come under the heading of 'Grumpy Old Woman' so it is particularly nice to give an accolade. My praise goes to Tyacks Coal Yard where one is met with friendliness and help from all the staff.

They are cheerfully delivering logs and coal via treacherous roads and I should like them to know how much they are appreciated!

Sue Boyer



Photograph by Lorraine Knight

Another accolade. To Brenda our special Postlady, who, with a lovely smile and socks over her boots, has made sure we got our mail!

Sue Boyer

Were you one of those villagers who benefited from our lovely village shop during the January snow? I most certainly was. I am a villager (of Shipton Road) with an indirect connection to the shop and a great supporter of all the shop brings to our village. Praise must go to the volunteers who kept it open throughout the bad weather and to the local suppliers who kept it stocked and brought fresh produce to the village. Whilst the shop enjoyed record takings recently, this facility can only sustain itself with the continued good will of the volunteers and a constant high level of sales.

So remember, if you enjoyed your shopping experience through the bad weather but are not normally a regular village shop supporter, maybe you could start to use the shop throughout the year. We don't need to do our weekly shop there, but I'm sure you must need to top up at some point between supermarket shopping, like I do. Maybe, just maybe, you can get the odd thing from our village shop. Think about the extra revenue you can bring in over a year by just spending a fiver every week.

So, next time you hop in the car to make a journey to a local co-op, please think first – do I need to make this journey and could I buy what I need from our village shop instead? This goes hand in hand with the Government's current campaign Drive 5 miles less a week. Maybe you'll be saving money as well!

Anonymous

TIDDY HALL

Regular Activities:

Monday – Friday Mornings

Pre-school

Contact: Mrs Pauline Plant
07968006451

Post Office runs every Friday
afternoon 2pm – 4pm

Special Events:

Wednesday Afternoons

Piano Lessons

Contact: Pauline Carter
01993 774568

Flix in the Stix in February TBC

Tuesday Evenings 7.30 – 9pm

Yoga

Contact: Jan Holah 01608 810620 To book the Tiddy Hall contact:

Tuesday Evenings 6 – 7pm

Karate Class

Ingrid Ridley

01993 830612

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TIDDY HALL

The improvements to the emergency lighting and fire alarm system at Tiddy Hall were finally completed at the end of August and we breathed a sigh of relief when the Fire Officer gave the all clear after his inspection. Although we were fortunate in receiving a grant of £2000 from Grass Roots, we still needed to use a large chunk of our reserve account to cover the cost of these improvements. Another grant was also received by Pre School which went towards the improvements to the entrance of the car park and the fencing around the hall. We are now turning our attention to raising more funds to build up our reserve account once again and to make plans to renew the kitchen, which is looking tired, in the next couple of years.

We are delighted to welcome two new trustees on to the board – Rebecca Baxter and Chris Morgan. Thank you for joining us!

The end of 2009 saw plenty of activities at Tiddy Hall. Back in October, the Fishing Club held a Race Night. Pre School held their annual carol concert and also a quiz night while Windrush Valley School held their Christmas party. The village pantomime was enjoyed by many. A big thank you to Fred Russell and Danny Brainin for putting the pantomime together and to those who gave up their time in making it such a success.

Look out for another Flix in the Stix evening in February - a film evening only this time, possibly a triple bill, and another film and supper evening in the spring. We would be delighted to see you there!

Don't forget our regular activities! Ever fancied learning the piano? Lessons are held at Tiddy Hall on Wednesday afternoon/early evening. Or if you would like to try a yoga session or karate session (limber up in the New Year!), then please contact the individual organisers.

The aim of the Tiddy Hall Trustees is to keep hiring fees reasonable, difficult with the increasing demands of electricity bills, health & safety requirements, insurance etc, etc! But we still feel Tiddy Hall provides excellent value for money and we are very lucky to have such a beautiful hall in our village. Indeed, many people who see it for the first time are always hugely impressed. So, if you are interested in holding a function, please ring Ingrid on 01993 830612 for further details.

Ingrid Ridley

COOK'S CORNER: ASCOTT'S FAVOURITE RECIPES

Broccoli and Pear Soup

1 onion
2 large heads of broccoli
2 over-ripe pears
Chicken stock
Cream, stilton cheese and parsley to garnish.

Cook the onion until translucent and add the florets of broccoli and the peeled and cored pears. Cook for a few minutes then add really good chicken stock and seasoning including a few chili flakes.

Continue to simmer until the vegetables are soft then blitz with a blender. To serve, top with a blob of cream and some crumbled stilton cheese and chopped parsley.

This recipe can be made with broccoli that has passed its best and the pears can be bruised....

Sue Boyer

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	06.19 [arr]	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	15.45 [arr]	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	06.40	07.56	07.56							
Shipton-u-Wychwood, Post Office ..	06.42	06.42	07.58	07.58							
Ascott-u-Wychwood	06.48	06.48	08.04	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--	--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--
Shipton-u-Wychwood, Post Office ..	--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--	--R--
Milton-u-Wychwood, Quart Pot ...	06.40	06.40	07.56	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



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ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD IN THE SNOW



A BYGONE ERA



Corner House Farm, Ascott-under-Wychwood

LAST BUT CERTAINLY NOT LEAST

..... THANK YOU THANK YOU..... THANK YOU

A HUGE THANK YOU TO THE DISCUSSION GROUP FOR OFFERING TO TAKE A COLLECTION AT THE ASCOTT PANTOMIME WITH THE PROCEEDS BEING DONATED TO THE ASCOTT GRAPEVINE.

A GRAND SUM OF £303 WAS RAISED AND THIS WILL CERTAINLY GO A LONG WAY TOWARDS THE SURVIVAL OF THIS MAGAZINE AND WE ARE EXTREMELY GRATEFUL FOR THIS FUNDING.

THANK YOU ALL ONCE AGAIN.

**The Editorial Team
The Ascott Grapevine**



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