

The Ascott Grapevine



Issue 72

Autumn 2011

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 Winter issue of *The Ascott Grapevine* should be submitted BEFORE Christmas or 28 December at latest.

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

The Editorial Team:

***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

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£6.00 for a quarter page**

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FOUR issues and you just have
to PAY for THREE.**

THE CHASE BENEFICE

RIDE AND STRIDE - SEPTEMBER 10th 2011



THANK YOU to all those who sponsored Mark or Andrew for the annual sponsored bike ride / walk for the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust and the churches of the Benefice.

Mark, with Charles Powell (Enstone) and Chris Galloway (Spelsbury), covered 16.8 miles to visit the 6 churches of the Benefice plus Chadlington Methodists and Shipton-under-Wychwood before retiring to The Lamb at Shipton for lunch! Andrew ran from Heythrop to Chadlington.

Mark and Andrew between them have raised over £2,000 - half of which will come back to the Benefice.

You can still sponsor them if you didn't get around to it before the event:

www.justgiving.com/markabrey / www.justgiving.com/AndrewThayer

By popular demand we will be continuing

Coffee Mornings

with bring and buy

in the Church

on

Saturday 5th November

Saturday 3rd December

10.00 12 mid-day

Please come!

Nigel and Anne Braithwaite will not be sending Christmas cards to all their friends in the village this year - instead we will be putting the money towards the upkeep of Ascott church.

BIRTHS

On 21st July 2011, a son, Oliver to Roy and Kath Williams.

DEATHS

On the 27th September 2011, Peggy Baldwin, aged 75 years.

MARRIAGES

On 24th July 2011, at Holy Trinity Church, Kate Tucker to James Beattie.

On the 28th July 2011, in Oxford, Sara Arkle to Michael Tucker.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Traditional Service of 9 Lessons and Carols - 11 December at 4.00 pm

Crib and Christingle Service - Christmas Eve at 3.00 pm

Midnight Service - 11.30 pm

Christmas Day Service - 10.00 am

PLEASE KEEP AN EYE ON OUR CHURCH

I have just heard that the lead thieves have been active in our deanery again (Finstock and Churchill). I am writing to ask that we all keep an eye on our church buildings as we go about our daily business and if you should see anything suspicious, to report it to the Police. As far as I am aware there are no scheduled works due on any of our buildings that involve people being up ladders!

to ask that we all keep an eye on our church buildings as we go about our daily business and if you should see anything suspicious, to report it to the Police. As far as I am



Mark Abrey

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VISIT TO RUSSIA - SEPTEMBER 2011

“You’re going where?” friends asked us when we said we were off to Moscow and some of the surrounding towns for our holiday. “How exciting and how different!” I hadn’t realised quite how intoxicating and mind-blowing our first couple of hours in Russia would be. We were jostled and pushed through Immigration. We watched everyone else’s suitcase going round and round the carousel before seeing ours sitting on the side. No one was holding a placard with our name on it when we



passed through Customs into the main part of the airport and the drive to our hotel in Moscow along crowded, queuing lanes of traffic by a taxi driver who thought nothing of crossing 5 lanes of traffic at breakneck speed was something I would rather not go through again! We were dropped off at a side door of the hotel and had to carry our suitcases up 3 flights of stairs before getting to Reception and the distinctly unhelpful receptionists. We found out that the Senior Pentathlon World Championships were being held nearby and all the competing teams, trainers and officials were staying in our hotel. We also discovered the hotel had 2,000 rooms, with dining

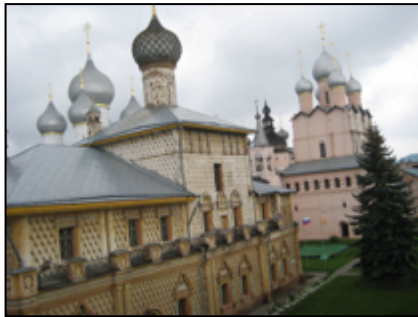
“facilities” for 1,000 sitting in canteen-like conditions at tables for 10 people. Oh dear – what a start to our holiday. But things could only get better.

Next day Mark and I decided to brave the Metro and go and visit Anton Chekhov’s house. Without a detailed street map and unable to read the various signs, we thought we had found the right place and although no other visitors were there, we were assured that this was the correct house. It was only when we

walked into the first room that we discovered we were in Tchaikovsky’s house, so obviously our pronunciation wasn’t very good. The journey back was uneventful on the Metro, although at one of the stations, we did get muddled up with seven angry looking young policemen, one of whom had a huge, muzzled German Shepherd dog with him.

The following day we met up with our Russian guide, Irina, who turned out to be great fun and very knowledgeable. Unfortunately it was bucketing with rain and umbrellas were the order of the day. We travelled everywhere by Metro and all the stations differed from one another. Many of

the older stations are beautifully decorated with mosaics, marble, stained glass, statues and chandeliers and all of them are kept immaculately. Red Square felt so familiar as we walked into it for the first time with Lenin's tomb, the walls of the Kremlin, St Basil's Cathedral and the Gum Department Store surrounding it. We went inside the Kremlin walls to see the five Churches and Cathedrals ensconced within and also saw the world's largest cannon and the world's largest bell. The domes on all the Churches are quite magnificent and everywhere looked as if it had just been re-decorated.



We left Moscow the next day and our driver drove Irina and us to Vladimir, which is about 120 miles north of Moscow and is a large industrial town with plenty of history attached to it. A local guide gave us a guided tour of it and also the nearby town of Suzdal and there we saw a fascinating Museum of Wooden Architecture where early Russian architects created structures without the use of nails. We then visited a large monastery, which had a tall bell tower, and at noon every day a man would climb the steps to ring 9 or 10 bells, which involved tweaking the clappers, using his hands and feet, rather than moving the whole bell. It

sounded almost as good as the bells at Ascott Church!

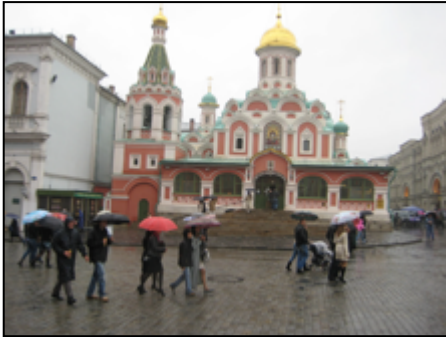
Here we also enjoyed looking round the local village market where about 20 (mainly) old ladies were selling fruit and vegetables grown in their gardens, berries and mushrooms picked from the forests and pots of homemade jams and pickles. They kept trying to get us to taste their wares, which we were very happy to do!

Then we arrived in Rostov. Having settled in at our hotel, we took a walk after dinner into the centre of town. We knew the roads were being re-surfaced

but we had not realised to what extent this was being done. Nearly every road in the town had been dug out to a depth of about 3' with mud, debris, diggers and machinery lining the base. Any car driver brave enough to drive had to use the narrow pavements with pedestrians flattening themselves against the walls of the houses to avoid being run over. Next day our driver had big problems as he tried to find his way to the main road and asking pedestrians was pointless, as many had no idea which roads were useable and which were not.

However we made it to Yaroslavl for another city tour and to see yet more Cathedrals, Monasteries and also an Icon Museum. On the way back

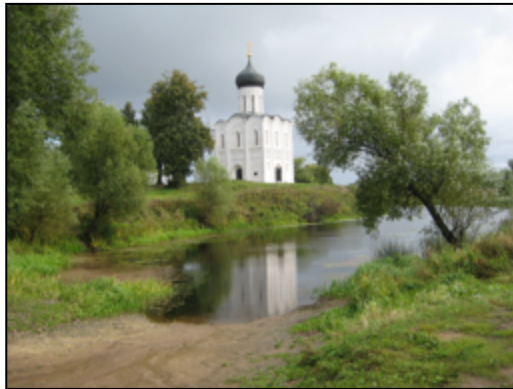
to Rostov, we stopped at an enormous supermarket which sold everything - food, drinks, electrical goods, clothes, books and even ferrets and hamsters. Sugar could be bought in either 10 or 20-kilo bags – ideal for jam makers!



fantastic carvings on the outside walls of many of the churches, of the frescoes covering every inch of the walls telling wondrous stories from the Bible, the enormous chandeliers hanging from the rafters and, of course, the massive iconostasis filled with icons which dominate every church some of which were incredibly ornate, others more simple but all so very compelling.

However, my favourite memory is of a small pink cathedral called Kazan, which had an atmosphere of such peace and such holiness that it really took my breath away. It was incredibly moving.

Our final day and we were up early to go to our last town, Sergiev Posad, which holds a prominent place in Russian culture and history being associated with Russia's most brilliant spiritual leader, St Sergius, who founded a monastery here in the Middle Ages. There are now over 300 working monks living there and it is open to the public every day with one of the 10 churches within the walls holding services throughout the day.



My abiding memories of our visit are of the splendour and magnificence of the stunningly beautiful domes proudly pointing to the heavens, of the

Mark and Rosemary Dawbarn

CHARLIE SMITH REMEMBERS

PART 3

Continuing with Charlie's memories of Ascott from when he talked to us twenty years ago. As before, questions and explanations are in italics and brackets.

(What was the river like?)

The water was deep then you see. 'Cos the flood gates was prim and proper.

Mr Reynolds worked the mill. *(Langley Mill)* Well then, when he didn't work the mill he kept the flood gates down and then the water fall had got old boards in, what used to stack the water back, and that was deep. That was always coming up over the boards. It never has any water in that side brook now. When we was sort of young boychaps and after we left school, well just for a bit of fun we use to go and ease the boards up see and let it come over the top of us, lay on the steps and let it come over the top of us. It used to be smashing there.

Many's the time I've gone up on a sack of corn, right up to the top of the granary. When he worked the old mill. 'Have a ride up Mr Reynolds?' 'Yep.' He'd put the old chain round properly, sat on there and up you went through the old trap door. Played many a happy hour up in them bins, in a bin of maize or something like that with Headley Reynolds, his sister and one or two more of us. We used to go in there and jump in this maize and think that was wonderful.

(How big were the bins?)

Well I suppose they were about half the size of our kitchen. There were about four or five up there then. I never see much of the other mill, down there. *(Ascott Mill)* Coopers kept that mill, down that end. The only time was sometimes we played truant when the otter hounds were on. Then we used to get the old raps on the knuckles. Playing truant, we made a lot of excuses. Otter Hunt. They had the old boys in the blue pantaloons things and these dogs used to go down the river and hunt the otters out.

They used to fetch them out see 'cos they reckoned they was always a plague with fish. Now I think they are protected.

We got lost more than once following the hounds. But that was always on a Saturday morning. They use to meet on the Green when we was kids and we trooped along and followed them. They used to go up to Priestgrove and double into Brazil as we called it. Then through the wireless station and all round Fordwells. And we come back round Leaffield and we tapped on somebody's door 'Could we borrow the key so we could have a drink of water out of the tap?' 'Cos the old taps was with the old key controls in them days. See there was no tap you could go and turn on in Leaffield

(Was that because the water was a bit scarce?)

A bit scarce up there. Yes. We always had to go and borrow a key from somebody's house. All 'cos we was lost and kept on saying which was the way back to Ascott see. You can tell we was tired by the time we got back. And the last tap I see like that was at Coombe, after they did away with them at Leafield.

(Did you ever get into the Forest?)

Yes and I got lost in there as a kid. I was soon found, my sister, Mrs Shaylor as she is now. Frances, Lily Beck and one or two more used to take us up as boys. There were primroses see. You'd wander off see and you got lost and there was a lot of shouting about 'fore you got found.

What we called up Brazil. That was the bridle way to Leafield. That signs gone now. It doesn't say bridleway to Leafield. It's always been like that, just a bit of a track though. But it always said Bridleway to Leafield.

I never forgot years and years ago, this is going back to when I was a kid. You got a big grass field on the right hand side of your house coming down. *(Honeydale Field on Honeydale Farm.)* Well that was always a good field for mushrooms. This is going back some years 'cos my sister was courting her late husband and we'd gone up there. I don't know who it was. I think Waltons had got the farm in them days. They let you go in. And it was a cool night. I'd got a mac with me and I just laid my mac down on the ground and we throwed the mushrooms down on my mac. Lovely mush-

rooms but I've never been to that field since. *(Jim said . 'It was ploughed up in the Wartime. We laid it down again to grass afterwards. Dad said, 'I wonder if all those mushrooms will come back again like they used to be.''*

'Cos in latter years I used to like going blackberrying. Well before old Woodley come there. *(College Farm)* There was that old high hedge come right along the way from what was Ridley's fields in them days, use to come right along your field, right to your gate. When poor old Ivor *(Warner)* had it, there was stacks of blackberry bushes right out into the field there. You could go and pick beauties then. And then Woodley come and he cut all of it out and sort of cut the hedge eventually, trimmed the hedge up. I used to love going up there get the old blackberries. It was a nice little jaunt in them days. *(Up by the old bridleway?)* Yes, cut straight across then. Go up the bridle path, go into Gypsy Lane, across the Swan Field then and get through the fence, and then go along the hedgerow that parts your field from Woodleys. Hows that water supply up in that corner? Does it still pump plenty of water? *(The spring where our water comes from.)* *(Not much at the moment but it never has stopped, not in all the dry years.)*

When we was kids you know, young kids, it always puzzled us what was them iron railings all round that place. Never ventured to go in. *(What was the water situation like in the village.)*

There was a lot of wells, but see we had water in them days from the spring that comes up in the vicarage grounds. There's a spring just as you go inside the big gate in the vicarage. Just down the bank at the entrance to the pond there's a spring there and it used to get lost a time or two 'cos poor old Dessy Pratley have been up there at times where somebody been clearing about there and some bit of clay has gone over the spring and stopped the water, and he cleared it. And I think Badgers still get some to their farm from that spring, round from the pond. And old Jimmy Andrews that was blacksmith then in them days, I seen him, see in them days there



Charlie Smith (centre with ball)

was a lot of clay all round, just pushed a matchstick or a stick in some of the holes. You can tell there was no pressure. *(In the pipes.)* Yes. As boys we'd say 'What's that about?' *(I suppose when it got wet, it would swell and fill the holes up)* That's right. See our tap then, as I said I was born in the bottom house where the bishop lives now. *(Appletree Cottage)* We used to have to come up to a tap then by the entrance to the village hall. That's where we used to have to draw our water. Well it got so bad in the village, they put a tank there for it to go into a tank. Oh many's the time

we've gone up there and drawn water and the water bin red. In the summer when the droughts on see. Red with the rust out the pipes. You had to boil it all see.

Well the best water ever come in Ascott in them days was what run through your farm. That's the best water that comes out that old bank, where old Bill got his caravan, round Caudle Brook, beautiful water. I ent looked for years but the last time I was up there, that was still coming out. The

only thing that was spoiling it, there was like a trickle of water coming down the ditch into it. Quite messy water it was. 'Cos there used to be fish and all get up there. By that

pumping station. Now that was another thing as a boy, when Ashbys kept the farm there. Now poor old Ern Moss, now he's been dead some years now, but he worked on that farm. We old boys used to go up the stream, the other side where it comes under the road and we used to chase the fish down. And they'd stand there with the old double barrel gun and shoot 'em. Yes they shot 'em. And if they wouldn't come out, they'd say "Go and pull some grass." We'd go and pull some grass and that would send them out then, coming underneath that road. There used to be some

nice fish. Where it used to get a bit deeper up above the Washpool and right up where poor old Bill had his caravan, there was some deeper places there and there used to be some good fish get up there.

(Do you think they stayed there or do you think they came up the river?)

I think they come up when the floods come up. Because you know the old dead moat, as we called it, in Badgers field. It was in them days the other side of the bridge, you know. I expect you went sliding on it in the winter when you was a schoolboy, when it froze over. See when the river used to flood, there used to be a lot of fish get in there, and we old boys, when the Walton boys were there, we used to get an handful if we got there in time and throw them back in the river. There used to be no end come up with the floods.

(So they used to stand on the road and shoot over the little bridge as the fish came down where the stream flows under the Shipton Road.)

Yes or stand on the banks, yes. I used to say, "Well, that's a queer way of fishing."

Wendy Pearse

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR HOME

Homes with no security measures in place are ten times more likely to be burgled than those with simple security measures. Good window locks and strong deadlocks can make a big difference. Find out about a few effective steps you can take to secure your home.

Top Tips: Things you can do to prevent burglary:

Taking just a few steps can make a big difference in keeping your home safe from burglary.

HIDE all keys, including car keys, out of sight.

INSTALL a visual burglar alarm.

INSTALL good outside lighting.

LEAVE radios or lights in the house on a timer.

MAKE sure the fences around your garden are in good condition.

STORE valuables items (including passports, driving licences and bank statements) out of view.

HIDE cash and wallets (never all in the same place)

SECURE bikes at home by locking them to an immovable object inside a locked shed/garage.

KEEP ladders and tools stored away; don't leave them outside where they could be used to break into your home.

More tips that can keep you safe

If you live in a building that has a shared entrance, be careful about ‘buzzing’ people in or holding the door open for a stranger when you walk in or out of your building.

Never leave a spare key in a convenient hiding place, such as under a flowerpot or doormat, or behind a loose brick. Burglars know to look there. They will also check the garage or shed for spare keys to get into your flat or house.

For more information, you can download the 'Keep it Safe' booklet or read the guide to home security from the Home Office Crime Reduction website.

Doors and windows

In most burglaries, the criminals broke into the house or flat through the door, either by forcing the lock or kicking it in. So make sure your doors are strong and secure. Consider fitting a bar for extra strength; a locksmith can advise you on how best to do it.

Glass panels on doors are particularly vulnerable. If you have one on your door you could replace it with laminated glass, which is stronger. You can also buy a film in a DIY store that you can stick over the glass to make it harder to break.

Home security and DIY shops sell inexpensive, key-operated locks to fit most kinds of windows. Fit window locks with keys to all downstairs

windows and those upstairs that are easy to reach.

If you are fitting new doors or windows, make sure the ones you buy are certified to British Standard BS7950 (for windows) or PAS 24-1 (for doors).

Beware of bogus callers

‘Distraction burglars’, known as bogus callers, will distract your attention in order to get into your home to steal your money or belongings.

If anyone you don’t know turns up at your door, you should always ask to see their identification before letting them in. Only let someone into your home when you are absolutely sure they are genuine.

Find out more by following the link below:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/CrimeJusticeAndTheLaw/Typesofcrime/DG_4002678

PC Kirstyn Tyrer



ASCOTT VILLAGE SHOP

The shop continues to go from strength to strength and it is clear that with the continuing high price of fuel, our customers are choosing to shop with us rather than travel to local towns. We are there to serve you, our village, and whatever we can do to improve our offering we will do. If you have suggestions for items you would like to see in stock, please let us know.

We can order goods for you from our suppliers such as fruit and vegetables or meat. Fruit and veg are delivered three times a week. Meat orders to Callow's Farm are made on a Wednesday for delivery on Thursday; Foxbury Farm, order Thursday for Friday delivery.

We now have a monthly draw. First prize is a £20 shop voucher, second prize a £10 voucher. For every complete £5 spent, you will be allocated a draw ticket. Our September draw had nearly 1000 entries!

Dry cleaning, repairs and minor alterations are now on offer in the shop. Midland Dry Cleaners collect and deliver mid-afternoon on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Items must be with us by noon on a collection day. Prices are very competitive and the quality is excellent. If you have an item that is not on the main list, Midland will probably tackle it. One customer asked about cleaning a horse coat. The answer was "If it's not too hairy, we'll do it!"

Finally – and all too soon it seems – Christmas is just around the corner once more. Each year we take orders for meat, fruit and vegetables. So if you're already planning your festive menus, we'll be delighted to organise the necessary ingredients.

Ascott Shop – run by the village for the village.

HAPPY 40TH BIRTHDAY COLDSTONE ANGLING CLUB!

In July 1971 a local chap in his twenties met six friends at The Swan public house to suggest starting an angling club in the village.

That night Coldstone Angling Club was formed.

For any community-based club to endure after four decades gives cause to celebrate and this has been achieved in no small part by the tireless effort of founder member Pete Moss, his fel-

low committee members and, more to the point, the help and support of many from Ascott-under-Wychwood and surrounding areas.

The fact that two founder members are still actively involved in the club today shows the sustained commitment that has gone into it to ensure its survival; for fishing clubs have suffered a steep decline in members over recent years with many dissolving into the history books.

As a boy, not many years after Coldstone Angling Club was formed, I remember belonging to Tile Hill An-

gling Club in Coventry where I grew up. I would stay at my granddad's house in Canley at the weekend and rise with the larks on

Sunday morning, walk down to the coach stop with my tackle, pop into the sweetshop to fill up a bag of 'pick'n'mix' and then wait for the coaches to arrive. Coaches, plural, as one would not suffice. The club had 80 to 100 members who

fished the competitions week in, week out.

I remained a member of THAC until University took me on adventures new. Fast forward 20 years and I decided to rejoin the club for old time's sake and catch up with some of the characters from my youth. Big mistake!

The first indication that times had changed was when I was told to make my own way to the match venue. When I got there I enquired as to when the coaches would arrive.



L/R: Don Barnes, Pete Moss, Steve Russell, Don Hedges and Chris Newport



L/R: Carole Hawtin, Jean Byrom, Judy Moss and Mary Barnes

“Coaches? We haven’t had a coach for 10 years. This is it. 6 is a good turn out”.

You see the match fishing landscape had changed. Commercial still waters full of Carp popped up all over the country and hosted open

matches to all and sundry, often several times a week. Anglers suddenly had a lot more choice on their doorsteps and it became less appealing to travel. In recent years this was further compounded by a sharp decline in the quality of fishing on many rivers as predation from American Signal Crayfish, Cormorants and Otters hit every stage of the fish lifecycle.

Once a club’s membership falls below a certain level it becomes unsustainable. It can no longer afford the water rents or other costs associated with operating, unless of course it enjoys community support or a wealthy benefactor. Sadly, Tile Hill Angling Club is now confined to history too.

In 1992 Coldstone Angling Club had 90 members and a healthy waiting list! Today we have 30 or so including ju-



niors and OAPs which compares favourably with other local clubs but nonetheless renders us too small to cover overheads from membership fees alone. The contribution of local people to the survival of the club, monetary or in kind, cannot be overstated.

On September 3rd it was time for the club to show some appreciation for the support it has received over the years and so hosted a dinner-disco at Tiddy Hall to thank the community for services rendered. As usual Pete Moss organised most of it and more than a good time was had by all.

The Shaven Crown ran the bar, Cessi Maghee and staff served a delicious 3-course meal and the finale was a rousing disco from Dickie Wallis and son, whereat inebriated souls cut some amusing shapes on the dance floor. I include myself here.

Special thanks and a gift of our appreciation went to Mrs C Hawtin, Mrs M Barnes, Mrs L Collins, Mrs J Byrom, Mrs J Moss, Mr T Hawtin, Mr T Collins, Mr T Lyon, Mr R Shepherd and Mr P Knight. We

would like to take this opportunity to thank you all again and everyone else who has either attended our fund-raisers or helped in some way towards the running of Coldstone Angling Club.

One final note, back by popular demand on Saturday December 3rd 2011 is the Coldstone AC Race Night at Tiddy Hall. Always great fun and this year will include hot food and a raffle.

To book your table please call Pete Moss on **01993 830758**.

Steve Russell



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ASCOTT VILLAGE SHOP SEPTEMBER RAFFLE

We have drawn the winners for our September Raffle :

1st £20 Sam Holden
2nd £10 Jackie Bramley

CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU BOTH.

GARDENING IN ASCOTT

AUTUMN

The season of mists and mellow fruitfulness? A late spring frost which hung icy and low in my garden destroyed any hope of a fruitful autumn. The just-formed tiny fruitlets of apple and plum shrivelled and died over that cold night. Not even the crab apple tree escaped the frost. The only fruit which did survive were a few cordon and espalier apple and pear trees which have the protection of a west facing garage wall for shelter. Fortunately generous neighbours whose gardens somehow evaded the icy grasp have been generous with their harvest. It is surely one of the great delights of living here in Ascott to see boxes full of lovely fruit lining our streets and lanes and labelled 'please take'. What generous souls gardeners are! Would the world be a happier place if populated by gardeners?

Dahlias

Always a favourite of mine, but for many years considered 'out of fashion', dahlias have now become of interest to designers and therefore to us gardeners again. Their bright showy blooms make a wonderful late show in the garden. Relatively cheap to buy as tubers and growing rapidly over the spring and summer into often very large plants, they refresh the border which by late August can begin to look a little tired. The problem I find with

dahlias is storage of the tubers over winter. For many years, whilst gardening in the almost tropical climes of East Sussex, I left the tubers in the ground all year. A good mulch of straw and spent mushroom compost seemed to keep them warm and dry throughout their dormant season. Here in Ascott I have found that they either rot, or start into growth so late in the summer that their show only lasts a few weeks before the first frosts. So I tried carefully lifting the tubers, dusting with sulphur to prevent mildew and storing them in boxes or paper sacks. No success there either. Last year the garage proved insufficient protection from the intense and long period of cold weather we experienced. Perhaps next year I will just buy some new tubers in the spring from the growers and let them worry about winter storage!

Some of my favourite Dahlias:

Downham Royal - a lovely deep purple pom-pom type.

Hillcrest Royal - deepest pink. Big and spiky. A favourite of the late Christopher Lloyd and used in his garden, Great Dixter.

Howard David - dark foliage and lovely rich orange flowers

Lover Boy – Red, big and strong grower.

New Baby – a small pom-pom type with orange flowers.

H.S Princess – Dark rich foliage with stunning white flowers. Not too tall so excellent in large pots. I used three together in a big pot this year. Early to flower and still going strong at beginning of October

A reminder: I always regret not taking time to stake my dahlias correctly. Stout wooden stakes are required, not canes which are insufficient for the heavy and luxuriant growth of dahlias. Keep tying the plant to the stake with soft string as it grows. It is too late when they fall over!

Tulips

Late November and early December is a good time to plant tulips. They are apparently more prone, if planted too early, to a fungal disease called Tulip Fire. They are such a colourful sight in late spring and their rich colours seem harbingers of the bright summer colours to come. For the last few years I have bought a 'Collection'

from a leading supplier. A mixture of tulips chosen to be planted in close proximity to each other and in complementary colours. I use two large pots and plant 20 – 25 tulips in each pot. This made a super display just outside our back door, especially when viewed from the comfort of the armchair.

My tulip pots:

Couleur Cardinal - red

Havran - purple velvet

Princes Irene - Orange flushed with purple and red



Going away and need someone special to care for your pets?

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Old friends and White Borders

The White Garden. A perennial favourite ever since Vita Sackville West planted her white garden at Sissinghurst in Kent. Last year my long suffering and patient husband endured 'yet another garden visit' when we returned to Sissinghurst in Kent. I know there has been some criticism of the garden style adopted by The National Trust in its management of some of the famous gardens in its custodianship, such as Sissinghurst and Hidcote, but I must say that the White Garden at Sissinghurst looked stunning in the early morning light of last June, and I returned home inspired to improve my own small white border.

This is Vita Sackville-West writing in 1949 about her plans for a white garden at Sissinghurst:

There will be white pansies, and white peonies, and white irises with their grey leaves...at least I hope their will be these things. I don't want to boast in advance about my grey, green and white garden. It may be a terrible failure...All the same, I cannot help hoping that the great ghostly barn-owl will sweep silently across a pale garden, next summer in the twilight – the pale garden that I am now planting, under the first flakes of snow.

Well, we certainly have barn-owls around the village so perhaps I shall

dream, like Vita of that wonderful sight!

I have attempted to extend the season of interest by adding some 'bones' of evergreen, or perhaps I should say silver, which should give some structure in the years to come.

This is my recipe for my white border which is South/West facing, very narrow and bordered by a gravel path. It can be seen from the back door in the evenings and glows in the twilight of warm summer evenings. It contains many different scents which are more noticeable in the evening as I walk past with my watering can. I could add some lilies for extra scent, but I cannot face dealing with those horrible lily beetles.

My White Border

Bones

Helichrysum
Euonymus fortunei 'Silver Queen'
Euphorbia 'Silver Swan'

Spring

Snowdrops
Narcissi 'Thalia'
White Hyacinth
Dicentra spectabilis alba
White foxgloves
White tulips

Summer

Dianthus 'Cranmere Pool'
'Mrs Sinkins'
Cistus Loretii

Clematic viticella 'Huldine'
Iceberg Roses
White Sweetpeas 'Norman Wisdom'
White Jasmine officinale
White Cosmos – 'Purity'
Philadelphus lemonii
Astrantia major abla

Gold Highlights

Crocsmia George Davidson
Rose Patio Climber 'Laura Ford'
Hosta unknown variety but has gold edged leaves
Sisrinchium - warm yellow and keeps it sword-like leaves over winter.

The star of the border this year has been Euphorbia Silver Swan. It has lovely foliage and has grown to about 18" tall and has made a big impact in the border.

Of course Hidcote has a White Garden and being somewhat nearer to us than Sissinghurst, is well worth a visit next year.

Sweetpea Seeds

This year I have saved more seeds than usual. If anyone is interested in a handful of either a dark coloured mix, or the white 'Norman Wisdom' I shall be putting a few envelopes of seeds in the shop sometime during November. A small donation to charity would be greatly appreciated.

The dark months are on their way. A time of seed and plant catalogues read beside the fire with a cup of tea. A reflective time. A time to plan and dream of gardens yet to come or perhaps only to be created in perfection in our imaginations. The barn-owl will definitely be in my dream, gliding silently along my white border looking for the mice which eat my pea seeds!

Madeline Galistan

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LIFE DRAWING FOR THE TERRIFIED!

Professional artist and life-drawing specialist, Jan Harvey, is running an art workshop in Milton-under-Wychwood, Oxfordshire for those who are nervous about the idea of drawing from an unclothed figure. The half day course, Life Drawing for the Terrified, takes place on Saturday 19 November at Milton-under-Wychwood Village Hall, just north of Burford. It is tailored to those who would love to 'have a go' but would be fearful of walking into a room full of accomplished artists, or for those who simply lack confidence in figure drawing.

'I have been asked a number of times to run this course for beginners who have wanted to try this particular discipline but who have just not had the nerve to do it,' explains Jan. 'I must admit my first life drawing class at college was nerve wracking so I understand fully how strange it is and I have sympathy with students. That is why the atmosphere will be relaxed and gentle encouragement will be the key words!'

'There is so much to learn from life



drawing that it should never be underestimated,' continues Jan. 'It teaches every aspect of drawing from use of line to handling light and colour and it is always challenging even to the most highly-qualified professional artists. Everyone can learn something from every session.'

Jan is also hosting a Life Drawing for Artists session on 29 October at the same venue for those artists who don't need tuition but would like access to a model.



All are welcome.

**For more details and course fees
please email
jan.harvey1@virgin.net or call
01993 832357**



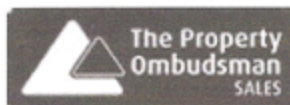
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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM THE ASCOTT GRAPEVINE EDITORIAL TEAM

THE WINTER ISSUE OF THE ASCOTT GRAPEVINE WILL BE AN EARLIER ONE WITH DELIVERY TO YOUR DOORS BY 28 JANUARY 2012. BECAUSE OF THIS WE WOULD ASK THAT ALL CONTRIBUTORS AND ADVERTISERS SUBMIT COPY TO THE TEAM BEFORE CHRISTMAS OR AT THE LATEST 28TH DECEMBER 2011. UNFORTUNATELY ARTICLES RECEIVED AFTER THIS TIME CANNOT BE INCLUDED IN THE WINTER ISSUE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING.



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Ascott Pantomime

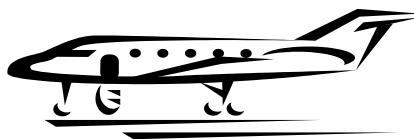
For the last three years, and also continuing this year, a group of villagers has played some of Fred Russell's pantomimes. The response from the people who have watched these shows has been overwhelmingly fantastic, far better than we ever imagined when we started out. Originally the pantos were enacted by a small group and presented in a volunteer's front room. It was decided that we needed to expand to try and embrace as many villagers as possible and thankfully everyone who has seen us has enjoyed the show.

The cast and the acts for this year's panto, "Don't Go Down to the Woods Today", have been decided upon already. However, there must be some of you in the village that would like to contribute to this annual event either by volunteering for a part in the panto itself or can play a musical instrument, sing and/or recite poetry or would like to help backstage. As those who have seen our performances know, acting skills are not in abundance and therefore you would not be expected to learn your lines, we all read our lines from the script as we "act", all you need is to stand up and not be afraid of making a fool of yourself, along with the rest of us, for about half an hour. We are looking for fresh blood, particularly young folk (there is no age limit), who generally have more talent than they realise and it is tremendous fun. The commitment is minimal, rehearsals

are all done within the same week as the show, for example this year the first reading is on Tuesday 6th December, second reading Thursday 8th December and the dress rehearsal an hour before the show itself on Saturday 10th December.

If you feel you would like to be included in next year's panto please contact me by email keith.ravenhill@talktalk.net or leave a note addressed to "Panto" at 4a Heritage Lane. We look forward to hearing from you.

Keith Ravenhill



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NATURE NOTES

I'm going to name 2011 'The year of the wasp!' We've had Hornets building their nest in the eaves above the back-door and Common or German Wasps building in the roof void above one of our bedrooms. At the wildlife park many nests have been found and removed, otherwise First-Aid would be kept busy with requests to deal with wasp stings, particularly when visitors are picnicking.

Our Hornets were particularly active and noisy and most surprisingly were strongly attracted to artificial light. As soon as I turned on the external flood-light the Hornets began to stream out of their nest, flying like moths, towards the light source. Given their size and numbers this was rather disconcerting and encouraged me to flee indoors.

Personally, although I don't want to be stung and I'm just as likely to swat a passing wasp as the next person, I do think that wasps receive a rather bad press. During most of the year they are too busy to bother us, unless we attack their nest, in which case they will act to defend themselves.

Both Hornets and other social wasps share an identical life style. Their year starts in early spring when the queens that were born and mated in the previous year, wake from their winter slum-

bers. Their first instinct is to find a suitable, protected and sheltered site to construct a nest. This structure is made of a kind of paper produced by the wasp mixing saliva with wood chewed from fences and tree trunks. The first

nest will be no larger than a golf ball and contain a few hexagonal cells in which the first eggs are laid. The eggs are cemented to the base of the cell. Depending on the ambient temperature the eggs will hatch within a few days and the larvae will only partially emerge from the eggs so

they don't fall out of the downward pointing cells. During this time the queen will be feeding on high energy foods, such as nectar or tree sap and will be collecting insects and even small pieces of meat from

carrion to feed her brood. When fully grown the larvae construct silken cocoons, sealing the egg cell, and then pupate, emerging after a short time as female workers.

Nest building now begins in earnest, with each new generation adding additional cells to the nest into which the queen continues to lay eggs. Ultimately nests can reach sufficient size to contain 20,000 individuals, although most are much smaller. During this period the wasps are too busy to cause many problems as they will be



Common Wasp



Hornet

collecting wood to pulp and use to extend the nest and food for the growing numbers of larvae. Indeed they are the gardener's friend as they hunt insects, such as greenfly which are pests of our crops, to feed their young. Interestingly the larvae exude a secretion which contains sugars and other carbohydrates which is a useful and welcome food addition for the adult workers. Adult wasps like sweet things, but unlike bees lack the long tongue needed to extract nectar from most flowers. Instead wasps have powerful jaws which enable them to hunt insect prey.

Towards the end of summer, as the days shorten and temperatures fall, the queen will lay eggs in special large cells. These eggs will develop into queens and males. They will mate and start the whole cycle again next year. During this time, the colony begins to break down and with no more larvae to feed wasps become more of a nuisance, particularly if they have been feeding on fallen and partially fermented fruit as this tends to make them aggressive. Because there are no longer larvae in the nest producing the sweet secretion for the adult workers they will seek sugary foods elsewhere and will regard litter bins filled with sweet papers and ice cream wrappers

as ideal feeding stations. They will be strongly attracted to any sugary food and this is when they are most likely to come into contact and conflict with us.

When autumn drifts towards winter the individual workers and males die leaving only the fertilised queens to seek somewhere sheltered in order to hibernate. Old nests are never reused, although a new queen may return to a suitable site building a new nest along side the old one.

Why do Wasps sting? Two reasons; first to protect their nest from attack and second as a means of stunning insect prey prior to bringing back to the nest. The stinging mechanism has evolved from an ovipositor or egg laying tube. A wasp's sting is relatively smooth and so it can sting many times, unlike the bee whose sting is barbed and so remains embedded in you as the Bee flies away, guaranteeing its early death.

The chemicals injected by the wasp sting cause pain and inflammation and are best treated by cooling the area with an ice pack and applying anti-histamine cream. In very rare cases a person may have an extreme reaction and suffer an anaphylactic shock, in which case emergency medical attention is required!

The bad news is that when you are stung the venom contains a pheromone which alarms other nearby



German Wasp



Hornet's Nest

wasps and invites them to join the attack on you. This is why you should never disturb a Wasp's nest, leave it to the professionals if you want it destroyed.

There are several species of social Wasps found in England and these include; the European Hornet (the largest species), the Common Wasp, the German Wasp, the Red Wasp (uncommon and less likely to sting), the Saxon Wasp (only found in the south of England) and the Median Wasp. The Common & German Wasps are very similar and you need to examine their facial features in order to identify which is which!

I hope that you managed to avoid the 'stinging season.'

Stuart Fox

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ALL CHANGE ON OUR VILLAGE GREEN!



‘HELPERS’ OF ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD

This is our new village group of volunteers who have offered to help with maintenance and small improvement tasks around the village. A fantastic number have put their names down already, so a big thankyou to them, but obviously not everyone can turn up every time and we can always do with more!

This is by no means an exclusive group and anyone, young or old, is very welcome to join in at any time.

The Parish Council are leading the group at the moment but we hope that, when we see the fruits of our labour, it will take on a life of its own and eventually other leaders will take over – time will tell! The PC has taken this step because over the past year it has become clear that large organisations are increasingly reducing their budgets for small works and it is communities such as Ascott-under-Wychwood that are likely to be neglected. We have decided to embrace David Cameron’s ethos of Big Society and we have found in the past that large organisations are happy to ‘meet us halfway’ when the community shows willing.

The group plans to meet once a month, alternating Saturday mornings and Monday afternoons, and the next session is:-

Saturday 26 November: 9.00am -12 noon. Meet in the playground to help give it a facelift.

Notices will be displayed on the village notice boards and in the shop but, to make sure that you don’t miss any information, why not send me your e-mail or phone number and I’ll put you on the contact list. This does not mean any obligation on your part.

OTHER TASKS THAT YOU CAN HELP WITH AT OTHER TIMES

Sometimes we will need a one-off heavy job undertaken by just a pair of strong workers, sometimes there is a small maintenance job that someone can do at their own convenience while other times we will need a seasonal helper, for example to water annuals in troughs. We are in talks with First Great Western about improving the look of our station and we shall shortly be on the lookout for donations of perennials, bushes and maybe even trees to try and keep costs down. Does anyone know of a good deal on troughs? Does anyone have some spare plants for troughs?

We are enormously grateful to Yvette Keauffling and all those who helped to raise funds at the Gardens Open weekend in June. Yvette is keen for some of those funds from our gardens to be used to provide additional planting around the village. The bulbs have been purchased from this money and we hope that part-funding the station improvement will be the next project.

From personal experience, voluntary working parties here in the village have always been fun and rewarding and are a great way to meet people that you would not normally bump into – so it really is worth leaping in!

Philippa Carter
On behalf of the Parish Council

e-mail: pippa.carter2@gmail.com
Telephone: 01993 830344

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WELL, I'LL EAT MY HAT!

With the festivities of Christmas not so far away, it is hardly the time for OAPs to be reminded what doctors reported earlier in the year. That we were drinking too much alcohol.

If ever I see Dave in Ascott Church again, I shall go up to him and say, "Dave your government is on a winner. You can either double the price of wine, spirits and beer to all pensioners, and to make sure we comply and don't claim we are under sixty five, staff at the supermarkets should be allowed to body search OAPs, to make sure we are not trying to cheat by hiding our bus pass. This should also apply at the village shop where I would willingly submit to a body search by several of the ladies who serve behind the counter. Or the government on the other hand, could cut the price of alcohol to pensioners, so encouraging us to drink more and therefore bringing about an earlier demise. This would cause less strain on the exchequer, in having to pay the state pension for too many years.

Free bus passes and free T.V. licenses after seventy five, which everyone ought to get free anyway considering the bloody rubbish we are expected to watch, especially Eastenders."

One of the messages of Christmas is Peace on Earth. I have thought a lot about this for over sixty years. I have reached this conclusion. There will never be Peace on Earth until people give up wearing hats or other head

wear. People are not judged by the company they keep but rather by what they wear on their head. What is worn can create envy, hatred, pride or ridicule.

A monarch wears a bejewelled crown so their subjects can wallow in their power, riches and glory. The exception being one made of thorns.

A judge wears a wig, a frightening caricature of what we expect the almighty to look like at the day of reckoning.

A guardsman wears a bearskin to make him look taller and more imposing. Usually in the military, the higher the rank the more elaborate the hat.

In church men are expected to remove their headwear. While in a cathedral a bishop parades slowly up the nave wearing a mitre. This can sometimes be twice the size of his head. In very high church women are expected to wear hats. It would be interesting to check with the Guinness Book of Records what woman holds the world record for the largest hat worn at a wedding. Of course if they are real ladies they should also wear gloves. Ideally black lace ones which reach the elbow. These give me erotic thoughts as to whether they are wearing stockings of the same colour with black suspenders. It is not good to have these thoughts especially if the vicar is preaching about the deadly sin of lust.

I am sure if you are bothering to read this you can think of examples of how

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hats influence people. Most often I wear a flat cloth cap to remind me where my roots are. I never wear a baseball cap. When a boy I spent many happy hours playing football and cricket. Never rounders. That's a girlie game.

So this Christmas if you sincerely wish for Peace on Earth, why not start by getting your family and friends to give up wearing hats?

I wish you all a very hatless Christmas.

A thought to ponder over the festive time:

Did Jesus become the Son of God because he was no good at carpentry?

Now I've become Churchwarden I'm on speaking terms with Jesus. The trouble is I do all the talking. He never seems to answer back.

Fred Russell

DON'T FORGET

**DEADLINE FOR
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THIS TIME**

**BEFORE CHRISTMAS OR 28TH
DECEMBER AT LATEST**

THANK YOU

Family Memories of Geoffrey Moss

My father told us many stories about his childhood growing up in Ascott-under-Wychwood, so I have always felt a close affinity with this beautiful village. Geoff was born in the years preceding World War Two and this overshadowed his early years. He lived in the old station house (long since demolished) and his father worked on the station for many years. I think that the atmosphere and Geoff's memories of this period are captured in his poem entitled "Just Before D-Day" (*This poem was featured in the last Grapevine so another of Geoff's railway poems follows.*)

Third Class on the GWR. By Geoffrey Moss 2010

We knew our class of course we were the third class
Who averted their eyes when the firsts went past.
Then, just as a back up to make sure you had no doubt
They had painted huge threes on the doors inside and out.
There were places on the platform where you were not allowed to stand
One carriage from the engine with the dining car to hand.
But we were no downtrodden people
And not in any need
So we travelled through the counties at precisely the same speed
But the seats were harder.

Geoff's footnote. "The Third Class was abolished in 1956, interestingly First Class was retained"

Geoff attended the village school and progressed to Burford Grammar School, where he excelled both academically and in sport. I believe this is where his lifelong passion for cricket was confirmed. He spoke fondly of village cricket, cycling miles to and from matches. He was still playing in



Geoff Moss with his parents Muriel & Charlie outside Station House

his seventies and his enthusiasm for the game never diminished. After secondary school, Geoff's formal education sadly ended, although my father went on to become something of an autodidact. He developed a love of books, theatre and music, with a particular fondness for Rudyard Kipling, Bernard Shaw and Beethoven. He sought opportunities beyond the small village where he grew up, and following military service, moved to London. In the late 1950's he joined the Metropolitan Police, a career he pursued for 38 years. Fortuitously, the job allowed special leave to play cricket and he was an active member of the Met Police Cricket Team for 50 years, a record

that will probably never be broken. Cricket tours took him all over the world, including India, Pakistan, Australia, West Indies and South Africa. Retirement from the police enabled Geoff to further inspire young cricketers as a coach and he ran many classes across South West London. He also dedicated time to writing, both short stories and poems and I shall end with another of his poems entitled Shorter Days.

Shorter Days

There is a certain freshness on the breeze
That ruffles branches and the still-green leaves.
The sun is paler, not the boisterous summer power,
Nor wide eyed spring sun of primrose gold.
No, this is a fading yellow
That parchment complexion of the old.
Violent colours protests.
Red and yellow dahlias,
Crimson chrysanthus the last to die,
Struggle in the fading light and cease.
This is a one sided war
And there's no peace.

Geoff died peacefully in April 2011, and his ashes have been interred at the family grave in Ascott-under-Wychwood.

Helen Moss (daughter)

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Rob Morgan

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New book on The Cotswold Line – ‘Past and Present’

Tim Maddocks of Network Rail has been working with railway author John Stretton and Silver Link Publishing (The Nostalgia Collection) to produce a new pictorial record of the Oxford to Worcester line. In common with other books in the popular ‘Past and Present’ series, this new book will show views of the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway (OWW) line taken during three distinct periods: pre-singling (before 1971) / the ‘single track’ era (1971 to 2011) / and the newly-redoubled route post-June 2011. Many of the latter-day photos have been taken from the same viewpoint and angle as the older views, enabling the reader to see with great clarity how the line has changed over the years. There are also photos taken during the key redoubling blockades in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Due to limited space in this issue, more detailed information and great offers can be found by visiting <http://www.ascott-under-wychwood.org.uk/2011/10/17/new-book-on-the-cotswold-line>

or you can find it under the Transport category.

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News from Leaffield School

This term we welcomed 15 new children into Class 1 and three new children into other classes in the school. We have also welcomed Miss. Elliott and Mrs. Kitto to the staff. The children have all settled well and have been working hard.

Over the Summer we have refurbished our old ICT Suite so it can now be used for small groups and 1:1 working with or without computers.

The term has already been quite busy with children in Year 6 taking part in the Junior Citizen programme, Year 5 and 6 visiting The Earth Trust and having weekly swimming lessons. Year 3 and 4 will be visiting Chedworth Roman Villa in October and there is an Eco- Community Day planned for the whole school, when children will be out and about in the community. Our Year 6 children are also preparing to take part with other Year 6 in the partnership on a day trip to Boulogne to practice their French. Our Harvest Festival in church produced a lovely array of fruit and vegetables; we obviously have some keen gardeners.

This term we are offering a range of after school clubs too, including; Jewellery Making, Football, Music and Drama, Recorders, Cookery and Construction Club.

We also have on offer a lunch time Spanish Club provided by a visiting teacher and, hope to be able to offer Cycling Proficiency for our older children too.

There are some exciting events planned for December with a Christingle Service in Church and performances from all classes.

Friends of Leaffield School also have some great things planned; designing Christmas cards, cake sales and a fancy dress disco, rounded off with a visit to the Pantomime in Chipping Norton. We are all looking forward to that.

The dates below are for our Christmas events to which everyone is welcome.

- 06.12.11 Christingle Service at Leaffield Church at 10:15am
- 12.12.11 Year 1 and 2 (Class 2) performance at Church at 2:00pm
- 14.12.11 Year 1 and 2 (Class 2) performance at Church at 2:00pm
- 15.12.11 Year 3,4,5 & 6 (Class 3 & 4) Christmas Concert at Leaffield Church At 6:00pm

Deb Brown





The de Savary Family look forward to welcoming you to the newly restored Old Swan where Chef Darren Salmon creates delicious gastro-pub food, simply cooked using only fresh local ingredients. Dine in the snug bars or the candlelit Big Dining Room. Now open for lunch and dinner.

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WYCHWOODS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The last meeting of the Society before Christmas, will be on Thursday 17th November at Milton Village Hall at 7.30.p.m. when Sally Badham will talk about Aspects of Leaffield History. It should be interesting to hear more about our neighbouring village.

Then on Thursday 19th January 2012, again at Milton Village Hall at 7.30.p.m. Dr Tim Jordan will be telling us all about Cotswold Barns.

Old and new members are welcome. Subscriptions are £9 for an individual and £12 for a couple which includes a copy of Wychwoods History when published. Visitors are welcome at any meeting at £2 per head.

More information can be obtained from Wendy Pearse on 831023 or the WLHS Website www.wychwoodshistory.org

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Ascott-under-Wychwood Parish Council

The Parish Council would like to report on some of the projects currently being administered on behalf of the Village.

From time to time the Parish Council are contacted by parishioners who are unhappy with issues within the Village, one of which is inconsiderate parking. Some of you may remember this issue affecting the Village Green when parents would park inconsiderately when collecting their children from school. Sadly the Parish Council have been involved with the Parochial Church Council and Thames Valley Police due to parking issues in front of the Church Gates whereby access could not be gained by parents with buggies and contract workers needing access to the Graveyard. We are continuing to work together to try and resolve this issue and would ask all parishioners to please park with thought for your neighbours.

Helpers of Ascott-under-Wychwood

The Parish Council are pleased to report that a volunteer group has now formed and that minor works have already been carried out, with many more on the list. Should anybody be interested in joining then please do not hesitate to contact Cllr Philippa Carter.

Community Emergency Plan

Cllr Philippa Carter and Cllr Laurence Mellor continue to work hard on this

task planning for adverse weather conditions, inspecting the river between Coldstone House and Chipping Norton road bridge. The Parish Council have purchased a snow plough after having been advised by OCC Highways that they could not guarantee keeping the roads through Ascott clear and that supplies of grit and salt could potentially be less this year than last.

Sports Pavilion

The Parish Council are pleased to report that the AGM was held on 27 July. There are three football teams using the facilities this season – Girls, Boys and a Men's team. The new goalposts are now in place and much appreciated by all participants. Finally the field is in good condition, but under constant threat from wildlife, especially moles.

If anybody wishes to hire the Sports Pavilion please do not hesitate to contact Cllr Laurence Mellor, Cllr Philippa Carter or indeed the Parish Clerk, contact details noted below.

Finally, the Parish Council would like to remind you all that they meet every second Monday of the month, with the exception of August when there is no meeting. All parishioners are welcome. The agenda is displayed one week prior to the meeting and more often than not is a full agenda with lots to get through

If you have any issues, please do not hesitate to contact either myself as Parish Clerk or indeed any of the Parish Councillors noted below.

Carols round the Tree

Watch the Notice Boards for information on the forthcoming Christmas Carols on the Green.

Parish Council:

Rob Morgan (Chairman)	831958
Bridgette Crundwell (Vice)	830671
Laurence Mellor	831182
Philippa Carter	830344
Pauline Marshall	830912
Angela Barnes (Parish Clerk)	01608 641045

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WYCHWOOD LIBRARY

The outcome of the latest Oxfordshire County Council Libraries “Public Consultation” will be announced on or after the 12th December but again, our excellent customers stepped up to support us. Also a “Friends of Wychwood Library Group” has put a huge amount of time and effort into research, evaluation and campaigning on our behalf and as soon as we have more information we will let you know. But the day to day activities of busy Wychwood Library continue.

After our amazingly successful Summer Reading Challenge this is a good time to remind our younger customers and their parents that if we do not have a particular title or series of a book it is free to reserve these items until you are 18 years of age! The books are delivered to the Library within a few days so you are certainly not waiting long. This speediness also applies to adult requests but there is a fee for these of 95p per item which is still good value. Another good requesting tip is that we are able to get you onto a waiting list early for a popular new title. Just pop in and let us know. Also, you do not pay the fee until you collect the item.

Our regular events are well underway again with:

Age UK Singing on Tuesdays at 12.30 until 2pm. Come along and

be taught how to sing using popular songs from the shows and go away feeling great.

Join one of our Reading Groups. One in the afternoon and an evening one. Just ask at the counter for more information and to collect the book of the month.

Come along to the knitting and craft sessions held fortnightly on Thursday mornings from 10.00am – 12 noon or fortnightly on Friday evenings at 7.00pm.

Sign up to our monthly Computer classes. One tutor to two customers for an hour. Please ask at the desk for a space.

Also, a new event, Poetry Club on the third Monday evening of the month at 7.30pm. Bring along your favourite poem to discuss.

If you are thinking of doing some family research this winter, remember that we have the Ancestry Site available on our public computers. This is free to use but it is advisable to pre book a time slot.

And don't forget about Coffee Mornings on Wednesdays. Meet your friends at **your** Library for coffee or

tea and cake. We have a library full of wonderful books for your enjoyment. **Opening Times:**

Monday: 2.00pm to 7.00pm

Ruth Gillingham
Liz Newport **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



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AN ENTICEMENT TO USE YOUR LOCAL STATION THIS CHRISTMAS - PLEASE TAKE ADVANTAGE

Together with this issue of “The Grapevine”, we are enclosing a flyer compiled by The Cotswold Line Promotion Group - the Rail User Group formed to safeguard, promote and improve services along the North Cotswold Line – of which over 20 route miles of track has just been re-doubled. Now that Ascott-under-Wychwood station once again has two platforms, both of which can accommodate 3-coach Turbo Trains, the Group is urging the train operator and also the Department for Transport to re-introduce Saturday train services at our station.

The Group points out that though nearby Shipton Station still enjoys eight Saturday services each week, Ascott lost all its services a few years ago. First Great Western has agreed to the CLPG's request, for a number of Saturday trains to call at Ascott in December to test demand. These offer opportunities for Christmas shopping in Oxford (or beyond) and, on Saturday 3 December, a chance to shop at Worcester's famous Christmas Street Fayre.

The enclosed leaflet gives full details of what is on offer. Clearly, the more successful this venture is, the more chance we have of getting our Saturday trains back. Please tell all your friends about it and, most importantly, do please take an active part in the campaign by using these trains. This may well be our last opportunity to get the service reinstated on a permanent basis.

THE CATHEDRAL EXPRESS MAKES A RECENT VISIT THROUGH ASCOTT



ASCOTT GRAPE VINE

VIEWS FROM THE PAST

It's been a fascinating and rather scary exercise reading the past copies of our village magazine. I've been looking at the issues from 1995/6 and my response to every item of news has been, "it can't be as long ago as that!"

In February 1995 plans had been submitted to the District Council seeking permission to build a new sports pavilion, initially this was refused with a request to put forward proposals for a building with a more decorative exterior. The young farmers were still actively meeting every Tuesday evening at the Swan Public House planning events and outings. I wonder how many Ascott young farmers there were then and what happened to them? In the same issue the PCC apologised for keeping the Church locked during the week, this was done to prevent local teenagers using it as a smoking den. This issue also included a plea for donations to fund the magazine; some things don't change! The magazine then consisted of ten pages and four issues each year cost a total of £200 to produce, of which the Parish Council contributed £50. Today the magazine contains sixty pages and costs £1,100 to produce and distribute with the Parish Council donating £350. The balance is paid for by donations from our readers and advertising revenue.

In May 1995 the first two advertisements appeared in the Grape Vine from ADW Timms, advertising gar-

dening services and the Milton Post Office and Stores. The Milton Post Office has been in every issue since; how's that for a loyal supporter?

The 'hot' news was the imminent arrival of the wheeled refuse bins. This was the first issue to have a pictorial front cover, illustrating a village view, something that we have continued ever since. Viv Lewis provided these drawings for many years and now Wendy Pearse is our artist.

In July 1995 it was reported that the Church Fete had raised £1,500 and also included the end-of-season report from Ascott United football club. They had played 22 matches and won twelve, lost eight and two ended in a draw. The sad postscript to a rather successful season was to lose their final match which was against Ducklington 6-1.

In October 1995 the lead story was the tragic murder of Vikki Thompson which had occurred in August.

The completed Ascott tapestry was dedicated at a special service taken by Bishop Cragg. It's worth taking a few minutes to examine the tapestry and see the many local groups that contributed to its construction. The WI was still going strong, enjoying a talk by Robert Gripper on the subject of antique furniture restoration and entertaining two groups of visitors to lunch at the Tiddy Hall. One group came

from Princes Risborough WI and the other from the Abingdon Stroke Club. Altogether eighty five meals were produced.

In January 1996 the Parish Council were celebrating the erection of 30mph speed signs in the village, not that they seem to have stopped everyone from speeding up London Lane. There was also mention of the Acorn Club, which was open to anyone over 50 and cost 50p a fortnight to join. What happened to this organisation and what events did it organise? Finally this was the first year of our village toad patrol. During the warm nights of early spring a group of villagers patrolled the road beyond the level crossing moving toads, which were on their annual mating journey from the surrounding fields to Mr Gripper's pond, safely across the road. Sadly over the intervening years the toad population has slumped and the patrol is no longer required.


One final request; our archive holds copies of every issue of the Grape Vine, except issue number four which would have been published in October 1994. The last known copy was destroyed in the floods of 2007. Could there be a copy hidden in someones attic? If so please let me know.


Stuart Fox

LEAFIELD CHRISTMAS FAYRE

The famous Leaffield Christmas Fayre takes place at St Michaels Church, Leaffield, on Saturday 19 November from 2.00 - 4.30pm. There will be craft and gift stalls, children's stalls and of course Father Christmas will be visiting. Come and join the fun and festivities at this truly traditional Christmas Fayre.

Entrance £1. Children free. This event raises funds for Leaffield Church.

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THE FOREST FAIR AT FOXBURROW WOOD

Witney's Foxburrow Wood played host to the Wychwood Project Forest Fair this year, attracting another good turn-out of local people as its fame spread across Oxfordshire. Conservation groups were promoting ways of making your life 'greener', and the Wychwood Project was offering an opportunity to plant a tree in the Wood

this winter as well as guided tours to explain the plans for how the woodland will be created. A large Wood Fuel Expo was promoting wood for heating your house, with local stove and boiler retailers, log and wood-chip



suppliers all in attendance. The entertainments this year included two bands, ferret racing, Morris dancing, hand bell ringing, an archery display, a giant wicker man, an Aunt



Sally, a photographic exhibition and a grand draw.

The food and drink stalls are always a big draw at the Forest Fair, and this

year's selection included a beer tent, a tea tent, local ice cream and several pig roasts and barbeques. New this year was a goat-burger bar and a vegetarian kitchen. There were marquees with over 150 stalls of local businesses selling their products, from garden furniture to handicrafts, gifts and cakes. The plant stall and second hand books did particularly well.

What made the Fair special were the country craftsmen demonstrating their skills, such as dry stone walling, hedgelaying, thatching, bow making, wood turning, spinning and weaving. Special too were the number of entertainments for children. They could have a go on Hatwells Fun Fair, try archery, Aunt Sally, the coconut shy, a miniature helicopter race, and bushcraft skills, or listen to a Green Man storyteller. Very popular with the children were the animals brought from Southdown Farm, next door.

For more information on the Wychwood Project, log on to this website: www.wychwoodproject.org

Nick Mottram



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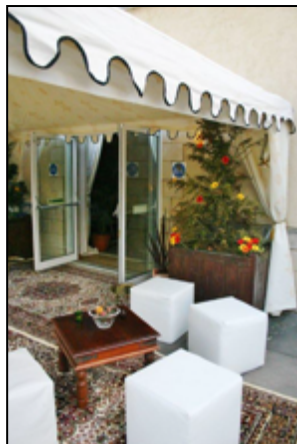
Vikki Smith by:

Tel: 07970 509393 or

Email: victoriasbeautyroom@hotmail.co.uk

13 Crown Farm, Ascott-U-Wychwood, Oxon OX7 6AB

Tiddy Hall Wedding Venue for Sara Arkle and Michael Tucker



WINDRUSH VALLEY SCHOOL



Harvest Festival Windfall!

The Headmaster and staff would like to thank the children, parents and friends of Windrush Valley School, for raising an impressive £122.26 from their harvest festival produce sale. Many of the items were home grown, with the school's Nursery and Reception classes producing a basket of fresh vegetables they had grown in the school garden.

The proceeds will be sent to Helen & Douglas House, a local charity providing hospice care for children and young adults.



Samaritan's Purse "Shoe Box Appeal"

Windrush Valley School have a fun, competitive and great inter-school "house system". Each term one of the "houses" organises a charity fund-raising event. This time, it was the turn of Cheviots House.

They choose to organise the "Shoebox Appeal" through Samaritan's Purse, who send shoe boxes filled with Christmas gifts to parts of Eastern Europe and Africa. We are hoping to collect over 50 shoe boxes for Samaritan's Purse to distribute this Christmas. For many of the children receiving these Christmas shoe boxes, it will be the only presents they get.

www.operationchristmaschild.org.uk



French Diary Competition

Congratulations to all entrants of the French Diary competition held at Windrush Valley School. They were all of incredibly high standard, with a special mention to Charlotte Roscoe for the overall winning entry.

ACOUSTICANA AT THE TIDDY HALL

On February 11th 2012 the Tiddy Hall at Ascott-under-Wychwood will host the third Acousticana concert to raise funds for the Tiddy Hall. Many of you reading this will know of these concerts because the previous two were very well supported by local residents as well as those from outside the immediate area. At the concerts I have been loathe to spend time talking about the idea behind Acousticana as we would rather get on with the music, which is, after all, what people have paid to see. So, having been invited to write this short piece I hope it is informative to those who have already seen the two previous shows and enticing to others to buy tickets for the next.

There are many opportunities in this area for players and singers to engage in communal music making. There are regular 'sessions' in pubs where people join in with well known songs and tunes from the folk and acoustic music repertoire; however, they do not foster innovation, sophistication or subtle arrangements of material. They serve some people very well, but it was obvious that there were another group of musicians who needed a different experience.



Initially, and still continuing once a month at the Killingworth Castle at Wootton, Braham Levy and I hosted an evening in which we performed and invited other singers to do a longer set of their material. Over time musicians began to collaborate on songs and arrangements. Rather by accident,


Acousticana has become a collective of singers who like performing, both separately and together, and who share a common interest in an eclectic range of songs and music. The range is very broad - from traditional songs, contemporary folk, alternative acoustic country music and the occasional dip

into the back catalogue of the best popular songs looking back as far as the 1920s.

As 'Acousticana', we have never asked for any payment from the venues in which we perform, it leaves us free to put on whatever and whoever we want. It enables pubs in particular to have live music which brings in extra custom at a time when many are having problems raising a viable income. (Too many pubs have been forced to close in Oxfordshire villages.) The next step we made was to offer fund raising concerts for charities or good causes.

And so we return to the Tiddy Hall concert in February. At this point we have not finally decided on who will perform; as before we will have some regulars but also introduce some new people to you. If you came before we hope you will come again and we would be very pleased to see new members of the audience. There will be a variety of music, a bar, and the knowledge that all the funds raised will be going back to community events.

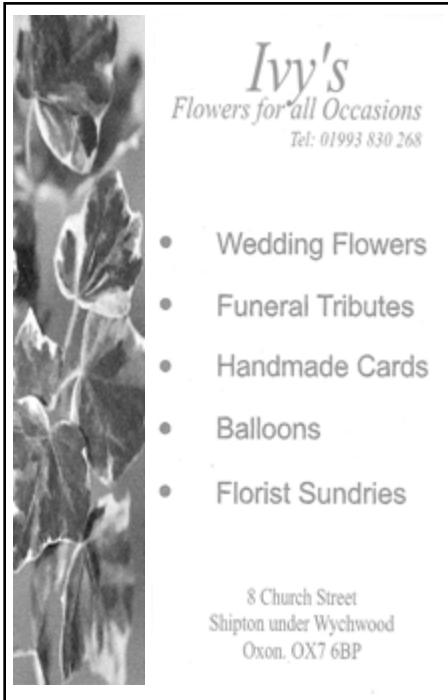
David Menday



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**BEFORE CHRISTMAS
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AT LATEST**

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TIDDY HALL REPORT

The summer months were busy at Tiddy Hall! Although regular activities had their usual break, there was a group of people kept very busy! It was decided that a little TLC was needed to spruce up our village hall in preparation for our big Centenary Celebrations next year! The entrance hall and toilets have all been painted along with all doors frames and emergency exits. The kitchen cupboards were scrubbed clean and sorted. Outside, trees were trimmed and cut back, weeds were sprayed and the outside handle rails have all been repainted. The steps have been repaired and gutters were cleared out. A big, big thanks to Andrew Timms, Pauline & Sally, Ken & Mary, Simon, Nick, Brian and Roger for helping me achieve this over the summer months - a great team effort! There are a few more projects in the pipeline and we hope to complete these before the end of the year!

On July 29th we saw Tiddy Hall in Ascott-u-Wychwood transformed into an exotic Bedouin Tent for Sara & Michael Tucker's wedding. The hall was internally lined with wall and ceiling drapes, floors covered with Persian rugs, the stage covered in cushions and special tables, chairs and accessories all helped to create a magical feel to provide a real 'wow' factor to what was a very special evening! Oasis Events did a fantastic job in making an ordinary village hall into something very special! And...congratulations to

the happy couple!! (*photographs on page 49*).

We welcomed back all our regular users to Tiddy Hall in September. Unfortunately, Pilates has folded due to lack of interest. However, a new class will be starting from 20th October! Ladies, get ready to wiggle those hips and have some fun while shedding those extra pounds – ZUMBA is coming to Tiddy! 6.30pm – 7.25pm Thursday nights followed by Body Conditioning 7.30pm – 8.25pm. Please contact Christina Worth on 07920 031280 for more details.

Thank you to everyone who supported our Coffee Morning and Table Top Sale in early September. £226 was raised for Tiddy Hall funds and we all enjoyed a bit of a shop and gossip at the Tiddy Café! The Fishing Club will be holding a Race Night on Saturday 3rd December, please contact Pete Moss for tickets, and the Village Panto will be held on Saturday 10th December.

Ingrid Ridley

TIDDY HALL CENTENARY CALENDAR 2012

Tiddy Hall celebrates its centenary in 2012. The events below are planned by the Trustees and friends of Tiddy to commemorate 100 years of our beloved hall. Please make a note in your diary of these dates and keep a look out for other events that will be planned by regular users of the hall.

NEW HALL ANNIVERSARY DINNER DANCE

**SATURDAY 28TH JANUARY
LIVE BAND – LICENSED BAR –
POSH FROCKS OPTIONAL**

ACOUSTICANA FOLK NIGHT

**SATURDAY 11TH FEBRUARY
LOCAL LIVE FOLK TALENT
AT ITS BEST**

ASCOTT SONGSTERS EVENING CONCERT

**SUNDAY 25TH MARCH
HOMEGROWN TALENT
UNLEASHED!**

THE BIG WEEKEND 100 YEARS AT TIDDY

**FRIDAY 1ST JUNE EVENING
HISTORY – MUSIC – DRAMA –
MORRIS – MUMMERS AND
MUCH MORE - INFORMAL
SUPPER – LICENCED BAR**

**TEA PARTY for senior citizens en-
tertained by The Children of Tiddy
SATURDAY 2ND JUNE 3.00 pm to
4.30 pm**

**CENTENARY BARN DANCE
MUSIC – DANCE – MORRIS –
SUPPER – LICENCED BAR
SATURDAY 2ND JUNE 8.00 pm to
11.30 pm**

THE BIG LUNCH

**SUNDAY 3RD JUNE
To celebrate the DIAMOND JUBI-
LEE of Her Majesty, Queen Eliza-
beth 11 and continue the Tiddy
Hall celebrations, a Pig Roast
lunch will be served at the Rec-
reation Ground with entertainment
for all**

**AUTUMN FILM NIGHT
FLIX IN THE STIX (date to be con-
firmed)**

THE FAMOUS TIDDY FOLK NIGHT

SATURDAY 20TH OCTOBER

**CENTENARY CHARITY RUN
SUNDAY 28TH OCTOBER**

10K MULTI-TERRAIN – 5K FUN RUN/WALK

TIDDY SUPPER QUIZ NIGHT SATURDAY 24TH NOVEMBER

We look forward to seeing you at
some, if not all! of these events.

Ingrid Ridley



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DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

The last of the celebrations will be on Sunday June 3rd, the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen. A pig roast lunch is being planned at the Playing Fields, and will include entertainment for the children and a Jazz Band. (Elderly villagers unable to get to the luncheon will be catered for.) Ticket prices will be confirmed early next year, however children under 16 will be **free!** In addition everyone under that age will be given a commemorative mug to celebrate both the Tiddy Hall centenary and Diamond Jubilee. (A limited number will also be available for sale). In order for us to establish how many children in the Village we have under the age of 16, we need volunteers from each street to call on every house to collect that information. (High Street is already covered, thank you.) This all needs to be completed before the end of the year, so if you would like to help with this, **please ring Debra on 831621 by November 5th.**

Everyone, family and friends are welcome and we look forward to you joining in all the celebrations next year.

Debra, Mary, Jacqui and Louise

TIDDY HALL

Regular Activities:

Monday - Friday Mornings Pre-school

Contact: Mrs Pauline Plant
07968006451

Tuesday Evenings 7.30 - 9.00

Yoga

Contact: Jan Holah 01608 810620

Friday Afternoons

Piano Lessons

Contact: Pauline Carter
01993 774568

Thursday Evenings 6.30 - 7.25 and 7.30 - 8.25

Zumba & Body Conditioning

Contact: Christina Worth 07920
031280

POST OFFICE RUNS EVERY FRIDAY AFTERNOON

2.00pm - 4.00pm

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Saturday 3rd December

Fishing Club Race Night

Contact Pete Moss for tickets (830758)

Saturday 10th December

Village Panto



To book the Tiddy Hall contact:

**Ingrid Ridley
01993 830612**



MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

The Ascott Grapevine Editorial Team would like to wish all our advertisers, contributors and readers a very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year. Thank you all for your support during the year and we look forward to bringing you even more interesting articles and news in 2012.

LAST REMINDER !!

**THE DEADLINE FOR THE
WINTER 2012 ISSUE IS EARLIER THIS TIME
BEFORE CHRISTMAS OR 28TH DECEMBER
AT LATEST**

THANK YOU

COOK'S CORNER : ASCOTT'S FAVOURITE RECIPES

OLD ENGLISH KEDGEREE

6 oz long grain rice
6 oz cooked fish – boned and flaked
2 medium hard boiled eggs, chopped
3 oz butter (essential for flavour)
1 medium onion
Seasoning

Boil rice in plenty of fast boiling water for about 9 minutes until just cooked. Drain and dry well. (Spread out on a baking tray in the oven for a few minutes on low heat).

Put the butter in a small saucepan and add the finely chopped onion and cook on a low heat for a few minutes until onion is softened.

Mix everything together lightly with a fork into an ovenproof dish. Place in a moderate oven until heated through. The mixture should be creamy and a little cream or milk added if it is too dry. (I always poach the fish in the oven in a little milk and use this to add if needed).

This kedgerree may be made in any quantity allowing 2oz rice per person and corresponding amounts of other ingredients. Any sort of fish of your choice is good - any white fish or salmon if you wish to add a little luxury or kippers are excellent (boil-in-a-bag fillets are good and easy to skin and bone).

Serve with a salad or vegetables of your choice.

Do try this dish if you haven't made it before, it's so good and easy to make!

June Holmes

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