

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 Ascott Grapevine* should be submitted by 5th April 2012.

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

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

SPECIAL DISCOUNT:

Book and pay in advance for FOUR issues and you just have to PAY for THREE.

A MESSAGE FROM THE REV. ANDREW THAYER

Happy New Year. Did you make any resolutions? What is a resolution? I would propose that a resolution is when the you-who-is-present wants to see a transformation in the you-in-the-future. The problem is resisting temptation. 19th Century English economist, Nassau William Senior, the son of a vicar, once wrote, "To abstain from the enjoyment which is in our power, or to seek distant rather than immediate results, are among the most painful exertions of the human will."

We most often set resolutions for ourselves which are physically possible but merely lack the will power to achieve them. For instance, it is physically possible to lose some weight but not when you are in front of a sticky toffee pudding. The other reason that resolutions are difficult is that in the battle between the present self and future self the present self has all of the power. It is in complete control. It has the power to decide to watch tele rather than go to the gym and future self, who isn't even around can do nothing about it.

Let's listen in on an old and wise Cherokee grandfather telling a story to his granddaughter about a fight going on inside himself. "There is a fight going on inside myself. It is a battle between two wolves. One wolf is evil: anger, envy, arrogance, greed, self-pity, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other wolf is good: kindness, serenity, love, empathy, generosity, compassion, faith, peace, and hope. The question is which wolf will win."

The granddaughter thought about this for a moment and then asked: "Which wolf wins granddad?" The old Cherokee simply replied: "The one I feed."

May the new year bring you joy - but never the kind of joy which feeds the evil wolf.

Rev. Andrew Thayer



ASCOTT CALENDAR 2012

DATE	EVENT
28th January	New Hall Anniversary Dinner Dance (Tiddy Hall)
11th February	Acousticana Folk Night (Tiddy Hall)
25th March	Ascott Songsters Evening Concert (Tiddy Hall)
7th April	10 a.m. – mid-day Coffee Morning in Church
5th May	10 a.m. – mid-day Coffee Morning in Church
15 th May - 5 th June	Jubilee Churches Festival
1st June	The Big Weekend - 100 years at Tiddy
2nd June	10 a.m. – mid-day Coffee Morning in Church
2nd June	Tea Party (Tiddy Hall)
2nd June	Centenary Barn Dance (Tiddy Hall)
3rd June	The Big Lunch (the Playing Field)
7th July	10 a.m. – mid-day Coffee Morning in Church p.m. Open Gardens/Bake Off/Produce Stall at Wychwood Manor
4th August	10 a.m. – mid-day Coffee Morning in Church
1st September	10 a.m. – mid-day Coffee Morning in Church
8th September	Sponsored Ride and Stride for Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust
TBC	Autumn Film Night - Flix in the Stix (Tiddy Hall)
6th October	10 a.m. – mid-day Coffee Morning in Church
20th October	Folk Night (Tiddy Hall)
28th October	Centenary Charity Run
3rd November	10 a.m. – mid-day Coffee Morning in Church
1st December	10 a.m. – mid-day Christmas Bazaar in Church

If there are any events missed out in the above calendar then do please let us know : Call 01993 831023 or email: wendypearse@btinternet.com

HOLLIE THE GUIDE DOG

- THE LAST ENTRY?

The last time I wrote about Hollie was when she was taken off to the local HQ at Leamington Spa. Soon after she arrived I had a card with a picture of Hollie together with her new trainer, Bethan. My two main worries about my training was that Hollie was very susceptible to distraction when out on walks on the lead and her spending routine was not always as consistent as I would have liked. Cath Brooks, my supervisor, felt that there was no need to worry as the next training regime would soon sort out these problems.

I had a couple of calls from Bethan to keep me updated with Hollie's progress and Bethan had to work hard to overcome the distraction problem but had no concerns about the spending routine. Hollie's distraction problem was such that they changed the normal routine of keeping her in the HQ kennels during the periods of rest. Hollie was so excited about being surrounded by other dogs that when Bethan collected her for her daily training exercises, it took some 30 minutes to calm her down ready to concentrate and then to keep her out of sight of other dogs. It was decided that Hollie would be boarded out at night and during the day would spend her down time in an office with the trainers. I was worried about this but was assured that this was a common procedure and would allow Hollie to concentrate and this disci-

pline would gradually become part of her life especially as she matured.

In September Bethan invited me to see Hollie at work and then to say hello to her again. This procedure is well organized and I followed Hollie and her trainer Bethan at a distance of approximately 30 metres with another trainer explaining the various techniques used to maintain concentration, reaction to busy conditions and traffic and setting a reasonable steady pace. I was very impressed with the way they had trained Hollie to concentrate on the work she had to do without wanting to stop and meet people or have fun with other dogs and maybe a cat.

On completion of this very impressive display of guiding, I was shown into the HQ guest lounge to wait for Hollie to be ushered in to meet with me. The lounge was a room that Hollie had never been in prior to my visit so when she entered the room she was so excited that she rushed around the room to see what was there, checking on the smells and familiarising herself with this room. Eventually she realised there was someone else in the room and she approached me and stood looking at me without any real recognition until I gave her one of her favourite treats, at which point she lifted her paw and put it on my knee, one of the things we had taught her. We then

PIANO LESSONS

with

Roseneath School of Music

Tuition in Pianoforte and Music Literacy
for adults and children of all abilities in Shipton and Ascott

Pauline Carter

BA, A Mus LCM, CTABSM, Dip CS

01993 774568

www.roseneathmusicschool.com

had a proper hello and then it was time to part again.

I was initially a little sad that her memory of me was vague but then when I reflected on what her life had been since leaving me it was not surprising at all. She had met and lived with a lot of other people both domestically and in training such that I became a distant memory and because of the life she was now embarking upon it was good that she could quickly and easily integrate into her new environment.

Since my visit I received a call to say that her general training was totally successful and she was now in Shrewsbury for her advanced training. This part of the training is to put her in charge of the guiding, which means that she has to react positively to guiding her handler through congested streets, shopping malls etc. and to stop when traffic would not allow the handler to cross but all without guiding commands from the handler. This even means that if the handler commands "Hollie come" at a road crossing she must not proceed if there is a car coming from either direction. She has to make a decision to, basically, be disobedient when there is danger. Hollie will have to react appropriately to what situation is in front of her before proceeding on her handler's commands. This is the most difficult part of the training and it will reveal whether Hollie has the intelligence to be a working dog.

I am awaiting, fingers crossed, for a call in the next few months to say that Hollie has been partnered to a part or fully blind owner. The eventual owner may or may not be willing to allow me to have further contact with Hollie, but I hope so as I would like to see her properly in charge of a person who relies on her to get around in a safe and confident manner.

Jo and I decided that although Hollie was such a lovely dog, the responsibility of looking after and training a guide dog puppy was very time consuming and restricted us more than I had calculated, so we are not planning on training another puppy in the near future. However, we will offer boarding to guide dog puppies when their trainers need to visit places where dogs are not accepted, or they wish to go on holiday without a dog in tow. Guide dog puppies are not allowed to be boarded in commercial kennels, they can only go to people who have had guide dog puppies before.

It has been a worthwhile experience and I would recommend it to anyone who has the time and patience to train a guide dog puppy. Parting from the dog after a year is not as much of a wrench as I expected knowing that the dog is going to play a major part in the life of a person who would otherwise be restricted in what they can do.

Keith Ravenhill

CHARLIE SMITH REMEMBERS

PART 4

We now come to the final part of Charlie Smith's memories of Ascott from when he talked to us twenty years ago. As before comments and questions are in italics in brackets.

Then there was the time, well, right from the time I left school. I think your dad and them was the first ones I went harvesting with, up that old bank, up round Caudle Brook, up that old bank there. (*Arthur Pearse at Coldstone Farm.*) Watch them old rabbits come out. Somebody would clang with the old gun and get another rabbit. I used to enjoy that.

(*What happened with the Ashbys?*) (*The Ashbys from Tysoe came to Coldstone Farm just before the Great War.*) Well I don't know. Didn't they sell up? The Waltons came next. I can't remember nobody else.

Then there was a Miss Ashby, you see. A Miss Ashby and her sister. This was an elderly Miss Ashby. Well it must have bin one of the sisters then. They lived in this farmhouse over the back of us. Where old lady Badger eventually followed them. (*In Heritage Lane*) I know before them council houses was built, we was boys there. Like everybody else we use to go and have a look see if there was any birds' eggs in the hedge. I think it was young Ken Masters was with me. He got killed in the War. He was a schoolmate of mine. We found this nest of thirteen hen's eggs in the hedge. We knowed

they kept hens see. Course, we thought, she'll give us an apple or something if we take 'em. Bold as brass takes 'em carefully up to the door. Went to knock, the door burst open and I dropped 'em. Oh dear, they was really ripe. Well, we said, "Sorry Miss Ashby. We thought we were being true and proper bringing you your eggs and we found that they are bad." She see the funny side of it. Made us feel bits of fools. We was being so good taking the eggs up. Mrs Badger was the one then that come and moved in there when Arthur come from out Broadwell way, was it?. That's when old Stan Webb come to live in the village. He come with them but I think Stan had already been in this village before then.

Well that's all the farmers I can think of. There's Mr Harry Cook. He still brings the milk round. He's got cattle and chickens. His father, old Charlie, was a coal merchant.

When I come out the forces, he asked me if I'd do a bit of helping with the haymaking. I was home on leave, that was it. I wasn't out the forces then. Just come back from abroad. I hadn't



Charlie Smith

done no work for years, you see, apart from sitting taking wireless messages and that, that was all I done. He said, "Come and help me haymaking." Well, something nice to do. But I'd never done actual haymaking, to throw it up. Oh I did come over queer. "My boy", he says, "Get down off that wagon, have a drop of this beer and sit down under the hedge for five minutes." Sit under the hedge and I was right as ninepence. He said, "I'll tell you what you be a doing wrong when we gets back up." I was sticking the fork in just in front of me feet, lifting meself and all you see, to try and pull this forkful of hay out, Soon as he told me the difference see, keep the fork in front of you, don't stand on what you be lifting, I was right as ninepence. Then to finish up the next day, he loaded the waggon, give me a change from loading the waggon. I had to stack it. And you knows Brickhill. *(Just above the river bridge on the left.)* He said, "Hold tight." The old horse jerked and throwed me off the waggon. Poor old Charlie. He was a good old stick. I got on well with him.

And going back to my boyhood days, Old Nobby Clark that kept the pub after, I can't remember his name now. He used to do a milk round in Ascott. He'd got a cow or two. The Swan. He used to have these fields out here see. And what was the Chestnut Close in them days. *(Wychwood Manor.)* One week, I don't know where he went, but I had to deliver the milk all round there. In the old big can and the

old half pint or pint scoop. I can't think of the cook's name now. But I think my sister Frances was working up there at the time and I filled the old jug up see. She said, "Oh Mr Clark always goes again and put another little drop in." I said, "I'm not being cheeky but I'm not Mr Clark and I've gotta walk all the way back to the Swan now. If I run out, I've got to come all the way back." So I says, " You've had your measure."

(Who can you remember at Chestnut Close?) There was Masons, Cunninghams. When Lily Beck and Kath Hanks and all them worked up there. I think that was when Masons kept Chestnut Close. 'Cos they used to have a lot of fetes up there in them days. Because the Furness's was up there one time. *(Lord Sanderson Furness had Chestnut Close built just before the First World War.)* They was the ones that was the trustees of the village hall. I was on the Committee. We was thinking of selling some ground to get some money. We wrote to this address and at that time, they said if we ever sold the ground, they wanted so much of the money back. It was in trust. I said, "If it's in trust then surely there's some money up there somewhere." We said it wasn't worth selling it if they wanted some money. I think they wanted two thirds.

(Did you do country dancing at school?) I think that had petered out a bit then. I can't remember. I know they used to go to all these fetes. I mean



Dancing

Emmy and Frances and Doris Warner and her sister. Arthur Longshaw and all them, they used to go. It was a big concern in this village. Them days there was no wireless and that, was there? The first wireless I ever seen was the Waltons, had your farm. In that big room overlooking the garden. When it was wet there, see, used to play there. Mrs Walton said, "Come on Charlie, come on in." They'd got a Hornby train set in them days. I thought that was wonderful. Then they had this old cat's whisker wireless set. You know, I thought that was smashing. Put these earphones on and listen to the wireless.

From May to September, if our folks wanted us, we was down at the river. If somebody used to say "Where's your old boy or where's so and so?" You go down the river. You won't be far away. We lived down the river.

(Was it cleaner than today?) It was cleaner then because..... When we used to help the Waltons up the fields harvesting, in them days there was some nice mushroom fields. And I

used to say to Mr Walton, "Any chance of any mushrooms?" "As long as you brings your knife to cut them," he says. And we did. We'd take a piece of cake or a sandwich and a bottle of lemonade and, of course, in them days, old boys, good old drink. Yes, we didn't go to the tap, we went to the river and filled it up with river water. It was nice and clean see. There was hardly any cattle got in there then and no sewerage to go in there. As I said, we was always in there. No harm come to us. We all learnt to swim down there. We used to go up near the mill where it was a bit deeper. Pull the rushes up. Three or four of us used to float down the river on a bed of them rushes. The big chaps used to moan when they was down in what was Chaundys in them days. *(Near Ascott Manor.)* "Them old boys been pulling the rushes again." When the mill was on. When they used to top the old mill see, that used to get ever so deep over by the rushes. Them old rushes would keep coming down and they was having a swim and would get tied up in the rushes. When Mr Whittaker come, *(to Manor Farm)* he stopped us. We couldn't go anymore. Else we was always round over there.

When I could swim well, I used to say to my old dad, "Can I go over the line dad?" "No. You' ent big enough yet ." he said. But I used to have him you see. I used to pretend I was going down in Edginton's field or Badger's field see. *(By Gypsy Lane.)* Then I used to cut through under the old iron

bridge and go down in with the big chaps. I was big enough. I was five foot eleven in them days. We used to have some fun. We used to make our own fun. Moonlight nights, we used to be a gang of boys and gels. We used to go round the village, fox and hounds. Follow, they'd shout and we used to go and hide, where that old stream used to come round, where Hazel's was. You know, that stream used to come along round the bottom of Harry Cook's whatsit there. His shed, out this side of the road and then follow it round until it got into the railway. *(The culvert that runs under the railway by the signal box.)* 'Till they covered it up. I got pushed in there many a night. You know, trying to hide from somebody. I got pushed in there and Miss Beck used to dry me off, before I goes home to me dad.

Wendy Pearse

With thanks to Anne Hardy for the photographs.

**DEADLINE FOR
SPRING 2012 ISSUE**

APRIL 5TH

PLEASE DON'T BE LATE

Three Dave's in a Boat

I have been involved with the sea and all things yachting for many years. The interest started when I was a pupil attending the Royal Hospital Boarding School. The school was aligned to the Royal Naval Officers Training College at Greenwich. From there I joined the Royal Navy; which was the "done thing" and served 12 years; followed by further service in the Royal Marines.

The services offered me many chances to improve and gain more sailing experience. I also managed to obtain my professional yachting qualifications whilst in the services. On leaving the forces I purchased my first Cruising yacht and started exploring the French and Mediterranean coast during school holidays with the family. I also managed a number of yacht deliveries as and when I was able to get time away from work.

Fast forwarding to recent time and to this particular "ditty". I received a call from a long term sailing friend of mine; asking if I would be able to get time off work to do a yacht delivery into the Mediterranean with him and another of our sailing colleagues. My name is Dave and both sailing colleagues' names are Dave. So a good start. Three Dave's in a boat!

We formed an eclectic trio. My chum Dave (1) who initially called me had spent his working life with a career in the Merchant Navy as a senior

Marine Engineering Officer with P&O and Cunard lines. My other colleague Dave (2) had an unequalled passion for sailing. He gave up an excellent position as a Sound engineering manager for the BBC. So he could engage in his passion of sailing. He became the principle skipper of “square rigger” youth sail training ship foundation in UK. He also produced the astro-navigation examination papers for aspiring Yachtmasters. Then there was myself Dave (3). I had a background in navigation, communications and electronics. So we had most eventualities covered.

The delivery involved taking an 80ft (26 mtr) brand new, production model luxury motor cruiser, from our home port of Plymouth to Majorca.

We all agreed to meet on board the motor cruiser a few days before our planned departure date. We used this time to check over the vessel in our respective areas of expertise. We covered from top to bilges and stem to stern, making notes and logging our findings into a report, which would be sent to the owner, along with the voyage log on completion of the delivery.

The weather window was set fair and showed a settled weather pattern over South West England and North West France for the next couple of days; which would suit us fine to get over the channel and some way down the West coast of France.

With all the required paperwork complete, the Coast Guard aware of our passage and destination, we left our berth at 0500hr and motored round

to the fuel berth to fill the tanks. On completion we went out to the “Sound” to carry out a number of equipment tests before passing through the breakwater to start our delivery passage.

The first planned port of call was Concarneau, a Breton town just South of Quimper. We knew the town had deep water marina with shower and refuelling facilities.

The weather was as forecast, calm sea state and light winds, not good for sailing but ideal for this type of vessel. We cranked the engine revolutions up to deliver a speed of 28 knots from the big twin Mann diesel engines. Mainly to see how the boat steering responded at high speed. No problem at all and the English coast line became featureless in no time at all. I had not experienced this sort of speed in a vessel since my naval service. This was truly exhilarating. But for passage making reason we reduced speed to 15 knots. Continual speeds of over 20 knots would not be practical, due to the rate of fuel consumption. But nevertheless with average speeds of 15 knots it would be a speedier delivery than I had ever experienced.

The Channel crossing was quite uneventful. Which gave the “off watch” guys time to explore this million Pound plus vessel. It had three huge double cabins with king sized beds and each with en suite facilities. There was also a large ultra modern galley containing all the gadgets one could imagine. Unfortunately most of the

equipment was taped and sealed. So there was no way of “knocking up” any culinary delights for the delivery boys there! The main saloon was larger than my lounge at home and all the furniture was covered in cream leather, it in turn was covered with a protective shrink wrap. There were two conning positions. An upper “fly bridge” for fine weather steerage with the main conning position directly below it. Between decks at the stern of the boat there was a large storage area, which had a big hydraulically operated door, which when operated would open up the stern of the vessel.

In this stowage area was a new “Mini Cooper” and a BMW motorbike. The owners play toys one would imagine!

We arrived in the outer harbour of Concarneau and headed for the fuel berth, because the speed we had been motoring at during the earlier part of the passage had used a lot more than we had estimated. We also wanted an early start the following morning. We eventually found the fuel jetty and secured alongside. There was a guy up on the jetty looking down on us and trying to tell us something, but whatever he was saying was lost in the wind. I climbed the ladder to see what he was saying. It turned out he was the pump attendant and was telling us that the fuel pumps were now closed and would be open at 9 o'clock in the

morning. This wasn't good news for us, because of planned early departure. We needed to win this chap over to let us re-fuel. A few smooth words; a six pack of beer and a couple of packets of Dave (1) cigarettes did the trick! I was on the delivery end of the fuel hose, having opened the fuel caps of the port and starboard tanks; I started to fill the tanks. There wasn't a lot of pressure being delivered by the pump, it seemed to take forever, my hand was physically aching where I had been gripping the fuel gun and we hadn't even filled the first tank yet! I looked



up to the jetty and saw Dave (1) looking the worst for wear, cranking on a handle, which was drawing the fuel from an ancient looking machine and pumping it down to me and he looked truly

knackered. The trustworthy Frenchman had shown Dave how to operate the pump and left him with the pump lock and told him to pay for the fuel at the “Capitan du Port” office. He then disappeared off with the beer. After the re-fuel marathon we went to the marina office to pay for the diesel and then went ashore into the town for a few beers and something to eat. We were back on board by midnight, suitably fed and watered. Then after a chat about the day's events we picked our individual sleeping spots and crawled into our sleeping bags.

We departed Concarneau at about 10 o'clock, much later than planned. We had to go ashore to buy essential food supplies, which we had over looked! We purchased enough food to see us through for a possible three to four days at sea. The weather was still holding true to the forecast. We had fine clear skies, with light south westerly winds coupled with a calm sea state. For this leg of the delivery we were aiming to cross the Bay of Biscay and get ourselves down to Gibraltar if fuel allowed. Dave our engineer had assessed that our economical fuel speed was about 15 knots. So we agreed to do this during daylight hours, then during the night hours we would reduce speed to 8 or 10 knots.

The morning and early afternoon passed by and we had put a good distance between us and Concarneau. We were clear of the shipping lanes and on our own. Dave (2) was on watch, Dave (1) was standby watch and I was off watch. Being off watch gave me time to "play" with some of the boats navigation aids. Such as the radar display. Which uniquely at the touch of a button would move from an "in use" position to a "stowed" position within the main conning position dashboard. I had not experienced "gadgetry" like this before. The maritime radio equipment was state of the art as indeed was

the electronic chart system; all of this equipment was networked together.

It was whilst I was looking at the chart, checking on our position, and distance travelled so far that day, when Dave (2) quite calmly said, "[Something has gone wrong with the steering gear, it's difficult to turn the helm". Initially on hearing this it was alarming and very concerning. But



Dave eased the concern somewhat by saying that he could still steer the vessel, but it was difficult. Dave (1) and I started to investigate possible causes. An obvious reason could have been, something had wrapped itself around one or both

of the propellers and was restricting the rudder movement. But that thought was dispelled, because both propeller shafts were fitted with powerful cutting devices, which were very effective at shredding old rope, discarded fishing nets, plastic waste and other such rubbish, which sadly litter our seas. However we still went aft and had a close visual inspection over the stern to see if anything was trailing astern, but we didn't see anything. Thinking logically, we realised the steering had to be power assisted in some way. So a logical place to start fault finding, would be to locate the power source.

The answer was revealed after what seemed to take forever searching through various manuals. The power

was generated from a large generator set we had on board, situated in the engine room. It would provide the electrical power, to drive any 250volt equipment we needed and it provided power to the boats hydraulic system; part of which was the steering hydraulics.

This area was Dave(1) category. But I went down to the engine room with him to help locate the generator and to see what could be done. We soon found the Generator, not by luck, but by smell! For those who have experienced it, the smell of a burnt out armature coil winding, is unique and usually heralds big problems. As it turned out we were no exception. It was a large generator, comparable in size to a Range Rover engine. We didn't see any sparks or smoke, but the acrid smell of burning "shellac" was shrouding the gen-set. We knew at first sight the unit was "dead" and there wouldn't be anyway we could effect a repair. We were also a little concerned as to why a new unit should fail. It would be a replacement job for the owner further down the line. For now we would have to live with the difficult steering. Even though we still had steerage, we all knew that it was in reality a "mini disaster" because it would certainly present us with problems when entering harbours, where tight and restrictive manoeuvres would be called for. But that would be something for us to ponder on when the time arrived.

The day at sea had passed so quickly, sunset was already upon us. We had

agreed we would start the watch system at 2200hrs and do a three hour watch. This routine would take us through to the daylight hours. Given the fact that we were out of the main shipping routes, should make for a quieter watch, although there would be the usual fishing boat activity around. I took the first watch, because Dave (2) had been on the helm for a number of hours already. He went below and prepared a "boil in the bag" meal for us. Meanwhile Dave (1) went round the vessel checking various hatches were closed for the night passage and that the stern navigation light was working. Having eaten, Dave (1 and 2) got their heads down. Dave (1) would relieve me at 0100hrs followed by Dave (2) at 0700hrs. I reduced the speed down to ten knots and settled into the watch. Even at the boats reduced speed I could still see the phosphorescence coming off the bow wave as we cut through the water, it's a lovely sight to see. I felt at one with myself. I would have preferred to have been doing this as a sailing yacht delivery given the fine weather, but hey, this was great as well and the luxury plus speed factor made it a little bit special. The sky was overcast to the East, but stars showing through sparse cloud cover in the West. The sea was reasonably calm, given we were in the Bay of Biscay. The wind had veered round to the West.

The expected fishing boat activity was evident; their navigation lights in some cases were diminished by the

Don't forget about the Ascott website:

brilliance of their working deck lights, but that was fine at least I could see them and by looking at our radar I could generally estimate their course and speed. Other boats seemed to be manoeuvring aimlessly, usually that happened between having hauled their nets and moving off looking for another place to stream nets. The fishermen were really active on the radio channels. I could make out the French chatter, but there were Spanish boats out there as well. I saw a couple of container ships, their navigation lights showing far out to the West. The watch seemed to pass by quickly and before I knew it Dave(1) was on his way up from the saloon to relieve me. He had two mugs of coffee in his hand. We spent ten minutes or so together, drinking the coffee and I gave him a situation report of what was going on regarding the shipping movements, bid him a quiet watch and went below to get my head down for a few hours before I went back on watch at 0700hrs. Dawn would break somewhere around 0530hrs so we would have gone through the night hours.

Once in my sleeping bag I was away with the fairies. I stirred momentarily when Dave (2) got up to take over the watch but didn't hear the other Dave come down below.

The next thing I knew, I was sitting bolt upright looking at Dave (1) who was in the same situation of dazed shock looking at me. What the hell was that crashing banging noise I said. God knows he said, but whatever it was it

sounded pretty serious. We were out of our sleeping bags and into our clothes before you could shake a stick. Then "bang" it happened again, followed by a series of harsh grating noises. Then we heard Dave (2) up on deck calling us up, but he need not have bothered, because we were there before he had finished speaking. He looked shaken and a bit drained of colour, as indeed we all must have been. What on earth happened we asked Dave? I'm really not sure he answered but judging by the massive bang and grating noise we must have hit and gone over something quite large. Immediately Dave said that our instincts kicked in. Dave (1) and I

Leaffield Picture Framing

(Tony Croft)

Complete Picture Framing Service
Mount Cutting
Wash Lining
Tapestry Stretching

Door to door delivery and collection
Home consultation if required

Please telephone
01993 878357 or call
Tony Croft
Cotswold View, Ascott Road, Leaffield
for
Free Estimate or Further Details

went below decks and carried out a stem to stern search of all the bilge compartments, looking to see if the hull had been holed and taking on water anywhere. This took a while due to all of the smaller compartments below deck, which we needed to access. Meanwhile up on the bridge Dave (2) had stopped both engines and was searching the area of sea in our immediate vicinity. Very much to our relief, after a really thorough search of the bilges and the below decks in general, we saw nothing untoward.. We rejoined Dave (2) back on the upper deck to decide on our next move. We were all shaken and somewhat concerned, but considering the situation, there was an air of calm collectiveness.

Having established that the hull was still intact, gave us a positive attitude and it followed that there was not a risk of sinking from an underwater breach of the hull, which, alleviated the “abandoning ship process”. This also gave us time to gather our thoughts and find out exactly what damage had been done.

My immediate responsibility was to plot our position and see where we were with respect to land. Also to put out a radio call to establish contact with a coast guard station, in order to report our position and describe our situation in general.

Dawn wasn’t far away, we could see the tell tale sign of wispy cloud formation, way off on our Eastern horizon. But it was still too dark to positively identify anything in the sea near us, that we may have hit.

The engines were still shut down and they needed to be started in order to evaluate the situation in that department. Dave (1) fired up the Port engine in neutral gear and things sounded reasonably well, apart from an occasional knocking noise, which

was rather disconcerting. At very low revolutions Dave put the engine into forward gear and immediately a loud chilling grating noise sounded throughout the hull. Just as quickly he put the engine back to

neutral. Obviously there was something seriously wrong. We could only guess, but it seemed as though something was jammed between the port propeller shaft and it’s supporting “A” frame. So if the engine was put into astern drive, the object “may” just free itself. So this was anxiously given a try. I went aft to look over the stern to see if anything came out from under the boat. Dave put the engine into astern drive. There was still a nasty grating noise coming from under the stern, so the engine was shut down again; then I saw a mass of wood debris coming up to the surface it looked as though it had been through a threshing or mincing machine;

Don’t forget about the Ascott website:



which indeed it had. Our propellers! Whatever the object was prior to us going over it was a mystery. At least what was fouling the propeller was now clear, but it was also obvious that substantial damage had been done to the propeller or prop-shaft or both and it wouldn't be playing any further part in the passage. We had to focus attention on our next move. Although we didn't want to, we knew the next thing to do was to start the starboard engine and carry out the same routine as we had on the port engine.

With trepidation Dave (1) started the engine in neutral gear. To our great relief there were no nasty grating or knocking noises, but unfortunately we

realised something was not right. With the engine in forward gear there was a strong vibration being generated and transmitted through the hull. Certainly not the best of news, but the propeller was moving us through the water. This was really good news. Dave slowly increased the engine revolutions testing for reactions and got the boat speed up to five knots. The vibrating increased to a higher frequency and remained constant. Dave suggested that the starboard propeller shaft had suffered a misalignment as a result of what we had gone over, or a propeller blade had been bent or actually broken off; which would cause huge cavitations and subsequent vibration. But



Wychwoods
OF BURFORD



National Homes Network.co.uk
Joining independent estate agents through integrity
Newly Refurbished



The Property Ombudsman
SALES



NAEA
National Association of Estate Agents



OFT
Approved code

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

<p>Providence House 49 High Street Burford Oxfordshire OX18 4QA Tel: 01993 824800</p>	<p>Dashwood House Shipton Road Milton under Wychwood Oxfordshire OX7 6JH Tel: 01993 832288</p>	<p>67-69 George Street London W1U 8LT Tel: 0207 298 0314</p>
---	--	--

Email: sales@wychwoods.com Web: www.wychwoods.com

what the heck, the prop was moving the boat and we could make for a port and sort things out from there.

Due to the activities of the previous couple of hours, we hadn't noticed dawn had crept up on us, revealing a sea state with a slight and long undulating swell. The sea surface was like a "mill pond", these were ideal passage making conditions for us given the damaged propeller and propeller shaft problems we would have to contend with till we reached a suitable port.

I was looking over the stern into the sea at the huge lengths of "splintered" wood that had caused the damage, thinking to myself we were so lucky to still have any propulsion power. Looking at the carnage in the water we had no right to be afloat; let alone still able to make passage. It was then I noticed over on the port side a number of large objects in the water, there were four or five of them, maybe more; about fifty metres away. A couple of them looked to be higher out of the water than the others. Having alerted my chums to the "flotsam". We slowly headed towards them to investigate what they were. We didn't need to get too close, before we all realised what we were looking at. They were huge planks of hardwood, bound together with steel banding. From memory the blocks were probably in the order of 10 to 15 metres long; 5 metres wide and 5 metres deep. Interspersed around the bundles were lots of single planks all of similar dimensions, which had obviously worked loose from bundles where the steel bands had

given way, or the bundles had been hit by larger commercial vessels. In short it was an absolute navigation nightmare for vessels of our size. Obviously it had been part of a commercial ships deck cargo that had "worked free" during a storm and was drifting with the winds and current.

With the yacht in this crippled condition, we had to decide on our next move. Which in essence was obvious. Decide where is the nearest suitable port for us to berth? Suitability basically meant. Deep water at all states of tide and a crane that would be capable of handling the weight of the yacht, because it would certainly have to be craned out of the water, to estimate the damage and subsequent repair.

On studying the chart and working out various tidal calculations, in conjunction with consulting "Reeds Nautical Almanac" which provided me with in-depth information on ports that had the criteria we needed. The port chosen was La Corunna on the north west coast of Spain. It was a large commercial port, but importantly it had a big yachting marina with a crane that would be able to lift the yacht out of the water.

So we set a course for La Corunna, practically due south of us at a distance of 90 miles. It was now 0700hrs and given our limited speed of approximately five knots it would take us 18 hours and we should reach La Corunna around 0100hrs the following day.

Dave (2) took the helm on the bridge and we resumed our passage. I plotted the position of debris on the chart and tried to raise the Spanish coast guard on the radio, to report our situation and the position of the debris. Dave (1) meanwhile knocked up a great breakfast for us as we proceeded on our course.

The onward passage to La Corunna was in general uneventful. However, although feeling more relaxed, we were still very aware of our situation. Limited steering capability and serious propulsion problems! The weather was fine and the sea state remained with a long undulating swell, which really helped our passage making capability. Dave (2) and I split the bridge watches between us during the daylight hours, because our engineering mate really needed to be constantly monitoring the engine and the propeller shaft seal unit where it passed through the hull. The vibrating through the hull continued and at times seemed to increase its intensity and then die back. Whatever was going on down there we knew not, but prayed it would all hold together till we made landfall.

Daylight turned to dusk and our progress towards our destination was still on track. We set the vessel up for passage making at night. Navigation lights on, bridge lights turned off and instrument lights dimmed. On inspection of the navigation lights I discovered the port light cover had gone missing. Which meant we had a bright white light instead of a red one. We

couldn't leave it that way because as we closed the Spanish coast we would be almost certainly amongst other passage making vessels; but more importantly there would be fishing vessels trawling or drifting in the area and our white port light could and would be taken by other vessels as a stern light. Not good news. However a small jam jar, (contents of which were saved for later), lots of gaffer tape and Dave (1's) "red underpants" secured over the jar managed a repair of sorts.

By 2000hrs we had covered 65 miles, which theoretically left us another 25 miles to go. The Spanish coastline was showing up reasonably

Bed & Breakfast In Ascott

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

Children welcome.

Please ring
Mrs Ingrid Ridley

01993 830612

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

well on the radar. As we closed the coast the land and coastline became more pronounced as indeed did the echoes of various shipping activity.

I had made contact with the Spanish coast guard and informed them of our situation and that we didn't need assistance. I also gave them the chart position of where we had seen the bundles of wood and debris.

As soon as we were within VHF range I would make contact with La Corunna and let them know of our situation and ask for a suitable mooring place in the marina.

We were still feeling reasonably relaxed; we were accepting the vibrating; had become used to the variations in its intensity given the variable rate of water disturbance over the damaged propeller.

Our engineer put a halt to our relaxation when he came onto the bridge and told us he was just a little concerned about the fuel situation! He proceeded to explain to us non-engineers that under normal operating conditions with both engines running at certain revolutions they would produce optimum economical fuel consumption. With just the one engine running in it's very laboured state it had consumed fuel at an alarming rate. He had just "dipped" the starboard tank and it was dangerously low. So here we were, back in the state of anxiety again, No worries there then! But bless him, he rallied our spirits by reminding



us, there was still some fuel in the port tank. He then sent our spirits diving again because he needed time to understand and work out the complicated series of valves that needed to be open and closed in a strict sequence in order to transfer the fuel from port to starboard tank in a safe way before the remaining fuel in the starboard tank ran out!! It really wasn't an option at this time to stop the engine, to conserve the fuel whilst Dave (1) sorted the transfer system out, because there was a chance we would not be able to restart it. I went down to the engine room with Dave(1) to help out. Within minutes we realised we could not complete a

transfer using the valve system, because one of the change over valves was controlled by a hydraulic switch and we were right out of hydraulics!! So we had to resort to basics. Siphon the fuel from one tank into a bucket then into the other tank. Sounding a lot easier than it actually turned out to do. Because we couldn't siphon direct from the filler cap we had to locate the inspection plates on both tanks and remove them in order to get a tube into one tank and to pour the fuel into the other one. The actual act of siphoning fell to the resident ships engineer!

There was a moment down in the engine room with just the two of us, when I mentioned to him. Do you realise Dave, here we are out in the Bay of Biscay aboard a multi million

Don't forget about the Ascott website:

pound yacht with all the gadgets one could imagine and there you are a senior marine engineering officer on your knees, stinking of and siphoning diesel from a tank into a bucket. What a picture that makes. With that thought in his head he nearly choked on some of the diesel. After a couple of hours we managed to get the fuel transferred and as such averted another potential setback. We squared things off in the engine room and went back to the bridge. Dave (2) didn't want us near him he said we reeked of diesel. He was probably right!

I looked out of the bridge windows and saw lights in the distance, judging by their characteristics they were shore lights I was looking at. From the radar Dave(2) had identified La Corunna harbour entrance. It lay pretty much on our bow at a distance of 16 miles. All around us there were navigation lights of inshore fishing vessels. We knew they were fishing vessels because there was a lot of voice activity over the VHF. Which was a timely reminder for me to contact the marina and let them know our situation and ETA (estimated time of arrival) and to request an appropriate berth. I made contact almost immediately, the marina watch keeper spoke good English, which for me was good because my Spanish was not at all good, or to be more precise "was not at all". Had we needed it Dave (1) was reasonably fluent in Spanish; obviously something gained from his maritime travels in a former life! I told him we could expe-

rience difficulty manoeuvring our vessel in restricted areas due to our loss of hydraulics. He offered to have a boat meet us at the marina entrance and it would get us to the required berth. This was great news and a generous offer.

We continued to close the land and eventually entered the outer harbour at 0150hrs. We navigated the main channel following various transit bearing lights, checking each course change with our chart of the harbour. Eventually we spotted the port and starboard navigation lights of the marina entrance, we also identified the boat near the entrance that would take us to our berth.

Once safely secured alongside we congratulated ourselves and indulged in a couple of whiskies that would help us sleep! Not that we needed any inducement. Tomorrow was going to be a very long day. There would be many discussions with the marina manager to organise the yacht to be hauled out of the water. We would also have to make contact with the owner and get him to contact his insurance company in order to get the go ahead for whatever repairs needed doing and to identify who would carry out the repairs.

David Wynters

TO BE CONTINUED

ASCOTT CHARITY FUN RUN

So, how do you like to spend Sunday mornings ? A pot of coffee and the crossword, an extra hour's sleep or catch up on a few chores ? For over 150 runners and walkers Sunday 30 October was the occasion for competing in the 2011 village Charity Fun Run. For those tackling the 10k event out towards Pudliscote and around Ascott Hill Farm the word "fun" may seem a little inappropriate. Although the course (against a magnificent backdrop of Autumnal colour) was dry underfoot the big climbs at 3K and 6k were challenging and the pace set by the eventual winner, Paul Fernandez was ferocious. The winning time of 35 minutes 51 seconds set a course record and there was never much doubt about the outcome. First woman home was "local girl" Elysia Ridley in 42 minutes 30 seconds. Itself



a fine performance which, no doubt, reflected her triathlon training. In fact the village was well represented with Charles Marshall, Philip King and

Chris George among the finishers.

Many of those competing the 5k event elected to walk and spent an hour or so in what appeared to be deep and meaningful conversation. First home was Richard Twine in 18 minutes 23 seconds; first woman was Harriet Howard who took just 25 minutes 42 seconds.



Much has been written recently about the legacy of the 2012 London Olympics; witnessing the fitness and commitment of so many people in this event suggests that there is an inherent sporting instinct just waiting to be tapped in West Oxfordshire. The 2012 Ascott Charity Run will take place on Sunday 28 October (6 weeks after we will have

been inspired by events in East London and elsewhere) and the organisers are hoping for an "Olympic Bounce" to inspire a record entry.

Thanks to the more than 40 volunteers (about 10% of the village !) who helped to raise £850 pounds which will be divided between the Village Charity and Tiddy Hall. Further photographs of the day and full results are available on the village web site (www.ascott-under-nychwood.org.uk).

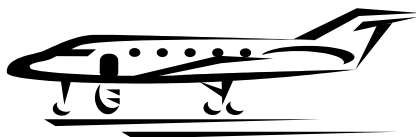
David Wilkinson

YOUR VERDICT ON THE VILLAGE RECREATION GROUND

Many thanks to all who took the trouble to answer the Parish Council's questionnaire about the Recreation Ground. There are now around 120 children under the age of 16 in the village plus grandparents who childmind or have grandchildren to stay periodically. It seemed to us that the playground is very run down and does not entice local children out of their homes, away from their computers and playstations and into the fresh air. However, we are well aware of the difficult financial situation these days and felt it was extremely important to plan carefully, taking into consideration as many views of residents (young and old) as possible.

50% of households returned the questionnaire, of those 91% supported the re-development of the Recreation Ground, 4% did not and 5% did not know. There were many positive comments about the site – its general cleanliness, the beauty of the environment, its accessibility and lack of vandalism – but many criticisms of the appearance, condition and range of the current play equipment. In particular, respondents felt there was a shortage of equipment for the very young and teenagers. There was also a very clear message about not enough seating and no picnic tables.

Some residents will have noticed that we have acted already. The boards around the play bark are extremely unpopular as they are a real trip hazard. Play bark is no longer compulsory and grass quite acceptable as a play surface. So where the bark is not essential (e.g. under swings and the seesaw) the 'Helpers' have removed the boards and the top layer of bark. Another solution will have to be found under the slide and 'Witch's Hat' and this needs time to investigate.



WITNEY SHUTTLE

**DAILY, TIMETABLED, AIRPORT
TRANSFERS FROM WITNEY TO
HEATHROW AND GATWICK
FROM £48 PP RETURN. [ASCOTT
HOME COLLECTION SERVICE
AVAILABLE FOR EXTRA
CHARGE]**

*Visit our website for timetables/fares or call
us and we'll post a leaflet to you*

**WWW.WITNEYSHUTTLE.COM
FREEPHONE: 0800 043 4633**

The 'Helpers' have re-painted and re-stained the play frames and one 'Helper' is renovating the seat. The slide frame will have its top coat and we hope to replace the swing seats (which are cracked) by the Spring. All this will have been achieved at the minimum of expense and we hope that children will feel that the playground is a little more appealing by the time the weather warms up.

A questionnaire is, of course, voluntary and so we have more work to do to produce as clear a picture as possible of what the community really wants us to do. Any more comments to the Parish Council will always be welcome. In the New Year we shall be approaching experts and play equipment companies for their free advice and designs. At the Queen's Jubilee lunch (June 3rd at the Recreation Ground) we would like to present some of the better ideas and have a chance to talk to many of you. We may also feel that the community would like a public meeting in 2012.

Any major changes will, of course, be costly and we expect most of the money to come from local fundraising and grants from organisations that particularly support play spaces. How much support we get from the community

will determine how many changes we make. If the community does not organise and support fundraising activities, organisations will feel that the project is not really wanted and therefore give their scarce funds to a different play project.

That is why your support of the questionnaire was so important and the response was a great start to the project! Thank you.

**Ascott-under-Wychwood
Parish Council**

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

Let Paw Pals become your pet's best friend whilst you're away.

Paw Pals

- 🐾 Dog walking - am/pm, lunchtimes
- 🐾 Home visits for feeding, cleaning and cuddles
- 🐾 Dog Home Boarding
- 🐾 Small animal boarding for bunnies, guinea pigs etc.
- 🐾 Cat home visits

Insured & police-checked staff
Qualified in Pet First Aid
Members of The Pet Care Trust

For more information, please call Paw Pals on 01993 869051/07917 703468
Or visit: www.paw-pals.co.uk/westoxon



DON'T GO DOWN TO THE WOODS... BUT THEY ALL CAME TO TIDDY HALL

The 4th annual Ascott-under-Wychwood Pantomime Evening held in Tiddy Hall was, once again, a great success. This event has gradually grown in popularity and stature, and despite protestations of some of the organizers and performers, appears to be here to stay. As long as there are willing, and, to a certain extent, able volunteers to perform and organize, it looks set to continue for the foreseeable future.

More than 110 people attended this time, continuing the trend of an ever-increasing audience. Next year we may have to move to the O2 arena. But perhaps not.

The evening kicked off in style with a short set of popular music performed by our local singer-songwriter Mark Pidgeon, ably supported by fellow Acousticana regular David Munday. It was not the kind of music usually performed by Mark, but it showed how versatile this young man is, and it set the mood for the (quite literally) cheerful crowd.

Next, our incomparable compère, Tim Lyon, called on Jim Pearse to introduce and recite a poem written by his talented wife Wendy. Jim asked for and received support from an enthusiastic audience.

Finally, the event the entire village had been waiting for with bated breath since the end of last year: the inimita-

ble Fred Russell's new creation: "Don't go down to the woods today...". As on previous occasions, it was inspirationally directed by Carole Angier, and the acting was of the standard we have all come to expect, and, dare I say it, love...

The story is too complex for your reporter to simply summarize, instead I'll merely state that, well, you had to be there.

For the first time we had a child star featuring in one of the leading roles (Goldilocks), and Lauren showed a talent rarely (if ever) seen during these past 4 years. There were too many outstanding (in one way or another) performances to mention, but I am sure the entire village will want to join me in expressing gratitude and admiration for Anthony Wood in what was his final performance as that perpetual Russellian and legendary hero, St George. I don't think we will ever see the like of him again.

After the interval, during which people enjoyed some more of the complimentary food and drink, the audience was enchanted by Daphne's Ascott Songsters. They are better each time your reporter sees and hears them, and managed to imbue the evening with distinct touch of class. Some of the highlights were the strong solo performances by Tony France as the Master of the House from Les Mis-

érables, Adele Curness and young star Will Bujeya. Daphne's outstanding talent and good cheer elevated the performance to one that was worthy of bringing to a close this evening of joyful entertainment for young and old.

The collection at the end of the evening revealed the generosity of the audience. The £470 that was collected has been donated to this year's 2 charitable causes: Pancreatic Cancer Action and The Village Playground.

Most of the evening's entertainment has been uploaded to Youtube and can be found by searching for "ascott panto 2011".

H Kappen

Would you like to take part in next year's Panto Evening? Please contact Keith Ravenhill :
(keith.ravenhill@talktalk.net).





Photographs courtesy: H Kappen



GROVES SHOP AND DIY CENTRE

SELLING A WIDE RANGE OF BUILDING AND DIY PRODUCTS

**: PLUMBING : ELECTRICAL : IRONMONGERY : TOOLS
: HEAVY BUILDING MATERIALS : BRICKS : BLOCKS
: AGGREGATES : CEMENT, PLASTER ETC**

**NEW IMPROVED GARDENING SECTION INCLUDING A
RANGE OF SEEDS, TOOLS, COMPOST, FEEDS ETC.
SMALL SELECTION OF ANIMAL FOOD AND NEW HARD-
WARE SECTION.**

**TRY US FIRST IF YOU CAN'T SEE WHAT
YOU WANT WE WILL TRY AND GET IT.**

Open : Monday to Friday 7am - 5pm and Saturday 8am - 12pm

**Shipton Road
Milton-under-Wychwood**

**Tel: 01993 830302
Email : info@alfredgroves.co.uk
Web : www.grovesdiyshop.co.uk**

DAFFYNITIONS

Being a man of words, I like playing with the English language. I had dabbled with daffynitions some years ago and suddenly got the taste for them again one winter's afternoon. These represent a fraction of the ones I dreamed up, the rest alas were lost when a memory stick crashed irrecoverably.

I discovered too that there are many other savants (or anoraks) like me, and there are whole websites devoted to word plays.

So enjoy them and if they tickle your imagination, you can while away many a happy hour inventing more when stuck on an aeroplane or train. If you do, write them down as soon as you can, or they'll swiftly be forgotten.

Piece de resistance	French virgin
Molto bene	Too much Crossroads
Hiatus	So do I
Eightsome reel	I really 'ates 'em
Suivez la piste	Follow that drunk
Off piste	Totally hacked off
Piston broke	Story of my life
Pomegranate	The rock those whingers shipped to Oz to build our jails
Dickie Valentine	The card you didn't want on February 14 th
Homus erectus	Excited man
Myth	Moth's mother
Brucellosis	A plague of Kiwis
Cuticles	Yes, sweetie pie?
Mal de mer	Mum's poorly
Horse brass	Tony Blair's lost his voice
Hospice	What Tony Blair talks
Per Ardua ad Astra	I bought my Vauxhall on HP
In loco parentis	Conceived on a train
Disarm today	Dat arm tomorrow
Tour de force	Policeman's holiday
The arms of Morpheus	Spaced-out, man
Quid pro quo	Cheap CD of famous group
Binomial theorem	Tale of two garden ornaments

Earwig
Tant pis
Mannekin pis
Limpopo
Shire horse
Pasteurise

Toupee for the lugholes
Auntie's been on the sherry
A model's been supping with auntie
Not a stiff popo
Not an outgoing horse
Up to your forehead

Nigel Wild

CHURCH FLOWERS AT CHRISTMAS



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH



ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council can report that the monthly Agenda remains busy and progress is being made on a number of issues, these namely:

Helpers of Ascott-under-Wychwood

The volunteer group are now going strong and growing steadily. They have carried out a “bulb planting” event, which was held in October and tidying of the playground in November, with many more items on their schedule to be carried out in the New Year. Should anybody be interested in joining then please do not hesitate to contact Cllr Philippa Carter.

Community Emergency Plan

Work continues on this issue, the snow plough has been delivered and the Winter salt/grit has been received, together with the salt/grit bins throughout the Village having been replenished. The salt/grit bin in the Tiddy Hall car park is scheduled to be replaced and replenished and some additional bins have also been requested.

Sports Pavilion

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.

Planning

This still remains quiet with only a handful of applications. There is currently an application for the Swan Public House, the application number is 11/1870/P/OP. Should anybody wish to view the plans please do not hesitate to contact either of the councillors or the Clerk. These can be viewed online too.

Village Plan

The Parish Council are looking to create a Village Plan and one of the first items was a Questionnaire that was delivered to each household. This was asking for your views on the play equipment. The results were; 50% returned the questionnaire, 91% was positive, 5% did not return and 4% did not support. Thank you for your support and thanks to those who delivered and collected the questionnaires.

Queens Diamond Jubilee 2012

Plans for this wonderful event next year are well under way and should anybody wish to help or have something to offer then please do not hesitate to contact the Parish Council.

Finally, the Parish Council held their annual Carols round the Christmas Tree on Christmas Eve at 7pm on the Village Green. We hope that you have all had a very happy Christmas and we would like to take this opportunity to

wish you a Happy New Year.

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.

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

**DEADLINE FOR
SPRING 2012 ISSUE**

APRIL 5TH

**PLEASE DON'T BE
LATE**

Local Independent Pet Specialist

Reptiles ~ Tropical & Coldwater Aquatics ~ Small Animals ~ Cage Birds

OPEN 7 DAYS



IN2PETS



Healthy Livestock & Quality Pet Supplies



ROYAL CANIN

2 & 4 Corn Street WITNEY OX28 6BL

Tel: 01993 773111

www.in2pets.co.uk



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.

FOR RESERVATIONS CALL

01993 774441

CIRCA 1445

Old Swan & Minster Mill
— on —
THE RIVER WINDRUSH, IN THE COTSWOLDS

Old Minster, Minster Lovell, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX29 0RN
Tel: 01993 774441. E: enquiries@oldswanandminstermill.com
www.oldswanandminstermill.com

Cotswold Wildlife Park & Gardens

Get Closer to Wildlife!

- Giraffe Viewing Platform
- Walk with Lemurs
- Children's Farmyard
- Narrow Gauge Railway*
- Adventure Playground
- Café • Picnic Areas
- Spacious & Glorious Grounds

Open daily from 10am



www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk

Burford, Oxon OX18 4JP
(Mid way between Oxford & Cheltenham)



Windrush Valley School

Ascott under Wychwood

Independent Day School for Boys and Girls aged 3 to 11 years



Samaritan's Purse "Shoe Box Appeal"

Thank you to all the pupils and their families who embraced the Samaritan's Purse shoe box appeal. We delivered over 20 boxes to the Witney drop-off point. We all really hope that the recipients enjoy their gifts and have a wonderful Christmas.



Malvern St James – Pop Lacrosse Tournament

Well done to all Yr. 4, 5 and 6 girls for taking part in the fun Pop-Lacrosse tournament in Worcestershire. We had a great time, coached by some excellent 6th form pupils, staff and England Lacrosse representatives.

A special well done to Bella Lear, Alice Smith and Cassia Belardo, for reaching both the semi-finals and finals.

We have just introduced Pop-Lacrosse within our PE portfolio, and have already had fun learning and playing the game for the first time.



St Hugh's Cross Country event

A group of pupil's from Windrush Valley School recently competed in the annual St Hugh's Cross Country event. Not as cold as last year, the conditions were still very muddy under foot, but this didn't stop us from having a great afternoon. Congratulations to Mark Milner for a tremendous 3rd place in the Under 9 boys event.



Remembrance Day 11.11.11

Thank you very much to Mr Lovell-Meade, music & band teacher, for playing the Last Post to accompany our 2 minute silence. All the children have been learning the reasons for Remembrance Day and supported the school's Poppy Appeal generously.



Mr Wood (Headmaster) with some children from Windrush Valley School

WOW! We're a top 100 Prep School

We are delighted to share with you an outstanding success for Windrush Valley School.

Our Inspection Report in November 2010 state that “.... Pupils obtain outstanding results when compared with the national average for maintained primary schools”.

On Sunday 15th November 2011, The Times list of the top 100 Preparatory Schools nationwide, listed Windrush Valley School at 94, up from 124 the previous year.

This elevation to the top flight of the most successful preparatory schools in the country is double pleasing as, unlike the majority of others listed, we are a totally non-selective school.

This accolade is just reward for all the hard work, dedication and professionalism of our staff, together with the support of parents and children over the past year



St Mary's Church, Shipton

Our school carol concert/nativity in St Mary's Church, Shipton was a huge success once again. The children worked hard during many rehearsals, learnt their lines and songs well and, on the day, all gave magnificent individual performances. Special mention must be made of the fantastic outfits worn by the main performers. Special mention also of the band, always an excellent performance. Mr Lovell-Meade (Windrush Valley School band/music teacher), excelled in bringing the right note of musicality and festivity into the performance.

With many thanks to all family and friends who attended and to the parents for arranging the wonderful mince pies and mulled wine.



Just before Christmas, all children from Form 2 up to Form 6, took part in our annual English Speaking Board competition. We are very proud to announce some excellent results.

Distinction: 31%
Merit Plus: 31% (with several of the children receiving an endorsement)
Merit: 19%
Good Pass: 17%
Pass: 2%

With the quality of some of these performances, we should see many more entries in the Chipping Norton Music Festival - Speech and Drama class Tuesday 13th March: their quality certainly deserves being showcased to a much wider audience.

**ACUPUNCTURE, CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINE,
FACIAL REVITALISATION AND SPIRITUAL HEALING.**

Available at the

WYCHWOOD SURGERY, SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD

With PAM QUIRKE (Lic.Ac. Cert.CHM M.B.Ac.C M.R.C.H.M M.N.F.S.H)

Acupuncturist, Herbalist and Healer Member of the Healing Trust.

HOME VISITS AVAILABLE



**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR
APPOINTMENTS PLEASE CONTACT:**

Pam Quirke

Phone: 07780 572283

Email: pam@wychwoodhealing.co.uk

Web: <http://www.wychwoodhealing.co.uk>

ASCOTT SONGSTERS SING FOR YOU

On March 25th 2012 at 6pm in Tiddy Hall, the Ascott Songsters will be putting on an evening of songs from well – known musicals of the 20th Century. The idea is to bring a smile to your face, and remind you that a good tune never dies! Do join in if you want – we will encourage that.



From the early days of this group, who meet in my house on Mondays to work out our programmes, the size has grown, as well as the enthusiasm. We undertake things that were imagined to be impossible! With cajoling and encouragement from me, (as well as many good natured laughs), we have been able to entertain many, and in the past, raise money for Cancer Research.

Now we turn to the good cause of raising funds for our great Tiddy Hall. How lucky we are to have such a facility and how diverse are the ways of using it! This year sees all of us making the centenary of the hall a special reason for putting on our latest concert. All funds made will be for Tiddy Hall, and we will give you an evening to remember, with rousing choruses, lovely solos, tasty nibbles, and a chance to buy a glass of wine at the bar.

Keep your eyes peeled for where to get your tickets for this ‘not to be missed’ fun evening!

Daphne Abe

BED & BREAKFAST

**Garden Cottage
Fiddlers Hill**

**Two excellent rooms en suite
Twin & Double**

**Parking & Private Garden Area
Quiet Location
Shipton under Wychwood**

**Tel: 01993 830640 & 07803 399697
e.mail: cw@gardencott.co.uk**

NATURE NOTES

To quote Darwin *"It may be doubtful whether there are many other animals which have played so important a part in the history of the world as these lowly organised creatures."*

What creature so excited his interest? Something exotic, an example to prove his evolutionary theories; no it was the common earthworm! Something he had been studying throughout his life. Indeed his last published work printed in 1871 detailed the results of this research. At the time this proved more popular and far less controversial than his work on evolution, eventually selling 8,500 copies between 1881 and 1884.

When Darwin first became interested in earthworms they were generally considered pests of agricultural land, but Darwin became convinced that they performed a valuable role turning over the soil, aerating the land, improving drainage and introducing organic matter. One experiment covered a very lengthy period. He scattered small pieces of coal over an area of pasture land behind his house, left them undisturbed for thirty years and then excavated a trench to see how far below the surface they had sunk on the assumption that this had been caused by the action of worms. From this experiment he concluded that in undisturbed pasture land up to 15 tons of worm casts per acre are brought to the surface by worm activity each year. Recent research suggests that, depend-

ing on soil type and conditions, that anything between 250,000 and 1,750,000 worms may inhabit one acre. When you consider that each worm will bring 10lbs (4.5 kilos) of soil to the surface each year you can begin to understand the potential that they have for changing the surface of our world and why this insight caused Darwin to comment *"when we behold a wide, turf covered expanse, we should remember that its smoothness is mainly due to all the inequalities having been slowly levelled by worms."*

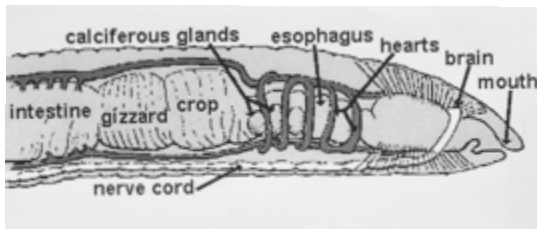
Worm casts may be hated by green-keepers and anyone wishing to maintain a perfect lawn but it's worth noting, that compared with the surrounding soil they are five times richer in nitrogen, seven times richer in phosphates and eleven times richer in potash. So they can act as an effective natural fertiliser. When large amounts of artificial nitrogen are used in the production of cereal crops this increases the acidity of the soil and reduces the worm population.

The earthworm is a highly specialised animal that has evolved to take maximum advantage of its environment, but in doing so has lost many of the features that are apparent in other members of the segmented worm family, most of which are ocean dwelling. Worms have no eyes, although they do have light sensitive cells scattered on their skin. These cells do not see imag-

es just registering changes in light intensity. They are deaf, but are very sensitive to touch and vibration. There are no external appendages, such as antenna, but each segment does carry a ring of backward pointing bristles, which aids locomotion through the soil and also anchors them in their burrow. This is most noticeable when watching a bird trying to pull a worm from the ground.

Internally simplicity is the key. Their brain mainly controls the muscles that allow them to expand and contract, propelling them through the soil and responds to light and dark. They have no heart or lungs;

oxygen is absorbed through their skin, aided by a coating of mucous, and blood is carried round their body by muscular contraction compressing five blood vessels known as aortic arches. Surprisingly like us their blood contains haemoglobin. Their mouth is a toothless opening in the first segment and waste is expelled through another opening in the tail. Internally they have a crop, which acts as a food storage area; a gizzard in which muscular contractions helped by sand and small stones churn the food and finally a simple intestine to absorb the nutrients. Waste is always deposited on the surface. They consume their own weight of food and soil each day.



Worms are hermaphrodites producing both eggs and sperm. Visit your garden on a warm wet night and you are likely to find many pairs joined together by a tube of mucous, although if you are too 'heavy-footed' they will sense your presence and retreat at speed down their respective burrows. During mating they will both exchange eggs and sperm. Once they break apart a second mucous ring is secreted by the clitellum (the saddle that is visible half way along their body) and this is

moved forward towards the head by muscular contractions. As it progresses it collects the ripe eggs from

openings in segment fourteen and then the sperm from openings in segments nine and ten. The eggs are now fertilised and the ring slips off over the head and closes forming a cocoon about the size of a grain of rice. This is left lying in the soil. When conditions are right, after three weeks to five months, the young worms hatch each an exact copy of a mature adult, but in miniature. Potentially they can live from four to eight years and during this time sexually mature adults will produce anything up to eighty cocoons each year.

Like many other primitive creatures they have the ability to replace some lost body parts. Chop off the tail end

Don't forget about the Ascott website:

and it will grow again, but the tail end won't grow a new head!

Darwin was particularly interested in the potential intelligence of earthworms. He noted that when they pulled leaves into their burrows in order to block the entrance or as food, they always pulled the leaf down stalk first, never sideways or front first. These decaying leaves are one of their prime food sources together with nutrients which are extracted from the large quantities of soil they ingest each day.

When we think about nature's abundance we tend to concentrate on the plants and creatures that we see around us, but there is a hidden world beneath our feet that teems with life and is just as important to our environment.



Stuart Fox



**WYCHWOOD
FUNERAL SERVICES**
The Chapel of Rest
Shipton Road,
Milton-under-Wychwood
OX7 6JP
TEL 01993 831557
info@wychwoodfuneralservices.co.uk

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

**IAN MARSDEN
FUNERAL DIRECTOR**



HOME TUTOR
MATHS and PHYSICS
Primary to A level

Qualified Teacher; CRB checked
Call Richard on 830970

DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

Hopefully, you will have read in the last edition about the planned celebrations on Sunday June 3rd, the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen. A pig roast lunch with a paid bar will be taking place in marquees at the Playing Fields, with the anticipation of raising money for the new facilities proposed for the recreation area. There'll be entertainment for the children, singing, a Jazz Band and under 16's are invited to enjoy the pig roast for FREE. Plus all children in the Village under 16 will receive a commemorative mug to celebrate both the Diamond Jubilee and the Tiddy Hall Centenary. (Our thanks to everyone who very kindly collated the names and numbers for us!) There'll also be a limited amount of mugs for sale for anyone wanting to buy them.

Tickets for the event will be sold from March and will need to be bought in advance, as final catering numbers will be required by early May. A vegetarian option will also be available. Mary, Jacquie, Louise and Debra will be selling the tickets (See contacts below) and the cost per person will be £12.00, don't forget under 16's are FREE! This price includes the roast, salad and a pudding. There is just one other thing, we want to enjoy it with you and not be left afterwards with all the washing up, so we would like you to bring your own plates and cutlery. We'll provide the tables, chairs, napkins, plastic glasses for the alcohol and soft drinks

which will be on sale, and of course the entertainment!

Everyone, family and friends are welcome and we hope to see you there!

Debra: 831621

Mary: 832008

Jacquie: 832040

Louise: 831975



Wychwood Wrought Iron

Specialists in handmade wrought iron for the home



**CURTAIN POLES
WALL LIGHTS
LAMPS
FIRESIDE
AND MUCH MUCH MORE...**

We welcome you to visit our showroom and workshop, in Ascott-under-Wychwood, seven days a week by appointment.

Call us on
01993 832850
or to see our full range of products, visit
wychwoodwroughtiron.com

A Masterclass in Voice and Stage Technique for Singers

With International Soprano: Alison Pearce and
International Stage Director: Robin Martin-Oliver
Professional Accompanists: Benjamin Costello & Peter Cowdrey
Open to ALL singers of ALL ages and ability

To take place at the Tiddy Hall on Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th March 2012

There are 20 places available (8 places left)

A unique opportunity to develop your individual vocal and stage personality through 3 songs of your own choice. From musicals and/or opera.

**For full information and application form call Robin on:
07890 948122 or email robinmo@btconnect.com**

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT US

Robin and Alison are hoping to set up a regular singing workshop once a year at Ascott. They have worked together before in Italy, a small town called Cascio in the mountains above Pisa where there is an annual Music and Art Festival and also in London.

Both Alison and Robin have distinguished careers in Opera, Oratorio, Recitals and Musicals. Alison has appeared with the worlds leading conductors and orchestras as well as regular broadcasts on TV and radio. Robin has performed and directed for all the major theatres as well as for all the major festivals, Channel Four and the Proms.

Together they bring their huge experience to offer a fun weekend for singers from all over the country to visit the lovely village of Ascott, and improve their singing and stage technique at the same time. They will be joined by two outstanding professional accompanists: Benjamin Costello and Peter Cowdrey.

There is also an opportunity for anyone wishing to merely observe, plus a final concert open to all on the Sunday afternoon. This takes place at the Tiddy Hall Ascott. Don't miss it!!

Robin Martin-Oliver

GARDENING IN ASCOTT

A Winter's Tale

The smell of wood smoke hanging in the cold evening air. Ash logs in the log store larder; the reassurance of the warmth stored within them for cold times ahead. Holly berries red and shiny ready to adorn the mantelshelf. The sight of the first snowdrops seen through the leaf litter; no flowers but just the green buds of promise. The Long Tailed Tits' twitterings as they blow through the garden like little rose-blushed fluffy seed heads scattered by the wind. These are the joys of the cold months, and not forgetting of course, the return of my Perdita. My Perdita is a moorhen who during the summer months no doubt spends her time on the river, but come the first cold mornings she returns to the garden to tread her graceful gait around the bird feeders in hope of breakfast. Of course I am not an expert on sexing moorhens so she may not be a Lost Princess but a Lost Prince returning. During last years snows I always knew when she was about by her enormous footprints in the snow. For me Perdita represents the return of winter to the garden.

The Winter Garden

I may be imagining this but there seems to have been a greater interest in Winter Gardens in recent years. There have been a number of public gardens created to attract the winter visitor. One of my favourites is Anglesey Abbey near Cambridge. I first visited it on a very cold and misty day some eight years ago. The planting seen in the misty air seemed almost ethereal and quite magical. Since then I have

been trying to think more about plants which look good in the winter and to add some of them to my garden here in Ascott. I had not realised until walking around my garden

recently just how many plants would fit in the category of winter interest. In my small garden I counted over 25 different plants which makes a stroll around the garden at this time of the year worthwhile. Even if the thought of all these plants is insufficient to tempt me out, the Winter Jasmine – *Jasminum nudiflorum* with its cheery yellow flowers against its bare stems can be seen through the window from my desk.

Some Interesting Plants and Planting Combinations for Winter



Heucheras and Plum Puddings

These are persistent perennials by which I mean they keep their leaves throughout the year and are easy to grow being tolerant of sun, shade and most types of soil. They come in a wide range of foliage colours ranging from lime green to orange through to deep bronze and purple. I have a sweep of deep wine-purple ones called Plum Pudding. It is interplanted with *Carex oshimensis* a sedge with yellow striped leaves. And behind these are an unknown *Euonymus fortunei*, possibly Emerald n' Gold, but certainly that name gives you a good impression of its colour. A new shrub for me is *Choisya Goldfingers* with its fine bright yellow foliage which seems to lighten with the cold. It makes a good winter plant, but one which also looks good in the warmer months when combined with summer bedding. Come the early spring there are small *Narcissi* Jet Fire nestled around this patch and the bright warm yellow flower bring another highlight.

Stems

There is good range of stem colour from the various Dogwoods. *Cornus* can be used to great effect in the garden. They do, I admit, look at their best where there is room to plant them in big drifts, although I have just three in a group. However, with careful companion planting they can look great in a smaller space. They need annual hard pruning though, as they can be a bit invasive in a small garden. I have

planted *Cornus Elegantissima* for its bare red stems in winter, and although there are brighter stemmed varieties they do not have the advantage of attractive white edged leaves in summer. Their companions are a group of *Euonymus fortunei* Emerald n' Gold which I hope to keep clipped into five balls.

Some common plants not associated with winter

Polystichum setiferum are lovely evergreen ferns. I have the variety *Herrnhausen* which I feel has the best foliage. They have super textured foliage and seem tolerant of dry conditions under deciduous trees if the ground has been well prepared with organic material. Their companions are *Arum italicum* *Marmoratum* with their shiny arrow-head shaped leaves dappled in white. Come late January, snowdrops start peeking up and their white nodding heads complement the white markings of the *Arum*.

Iris foetidissima keeps its leaves during winter but they do get rather ragged and may need a tidy up. But it is for their seed heads that they are included here. Orange clusters held in papery sheaths which are lovely in the winter border and great for cutting to add to Christmas flower arrangements. I am yet to find the perfect companion for this iris, but I have been thinking about a *Heuchera*. Perhaps a marmalade coloured one. The rounder mound form of the *Heuchera* leaves contrasts

with the sword like leaves of the iris, and the colour matches the orange foliage and the seed heads.


The grass, *Stipa tenuissima*, holds it foliage well throughout the winter months and wafts around like a frosted puff in the breeze. Dotted around in a border it appears to unify the planting both in winter and summer.

Shrubs and Trees

There are so many I covet but my garden isn't large enough so I have to be content with just a few. Mahonia for the beautiful perfume of its bright yellow flowers make it hard to believe it is winter. *Lonicera nitida* Baggesen's Gold with small yellow leaves contrast well with the shiny Mahonia leaves and can be pruned into a low hedge. Ivy forms the backdrop for this planting, and is 'borrowed' from the thoughtful neighbours who planted it on their side of the border. It is a large-leaved yellow and green variety, perhaps Paddy's Pride, but not too invasive and cascades gently over the fence.

I have a love hate relationship with Holly. They come in a great range of colours with different variegations and some have berries but, oh, those awful fallen leaves which prick and puncture all but the stoutest of gloves when tidying the borders. However, I would not be without at least one in the garden. Mine is *Ilex aquifolium* Silver Queen who promises to be a stunner when she matures into a Queen. Patience!

I have asked Father Christmas for 2 matching trees to replace the Moroccan Pineapple Broom trees, *Cytisus battandieri*, lost to the cold of last winter. I hope he can find me the Autumn flowering cherry *Prunus x subhirtella* *Autumnalis*. It has pink buds opening to white flowers which appear on the bare branches throughout winter and early spring, and when seen at Batsford Arboretum last year looked beautiful in the low winter sunlight. There is another form with pink blushed blossom which I think in the right setting would be the favoured colour, but mine has to fit in with my white,



Ivy's
Flowers for all Occasions
Tel: 01993 830 268

- Wedding Flowers
- Funeral Tributes
- Handmade Cards
- Balloons
- Florist Sundries

8 Church Street
Shipton under Wychwood
Oxon. OX7 6BP

silver and gold theme in that part of the garden.

Viburnum x bodnantense. This is the first garden where I have grown these and I wonder how I avoided these valuable shrubs for so long. Their pretty pink and highly scented flowers in the depths of winter are a delight. Mine have been flowering since September and are just getting into their full glory. I have 2 varieties; Dawn and Charles Lamont, Charles perhaps having the larger, showier flowers.

Euphorbia

I just love these and there are so many to choose from. They look good in winter and complement other planting in spring and summer. They are tough and generally grow easily in Ascott. Don't forget to wear gloves when handling euphorbia to avoid the irritating sap.

Silver Swan. Already mentioned in a previous article, so obviously a favourite of mine, Silver Swan gives structure and brightness to the border in all seasons.

Ascot something or other – oh dear, another lost label! Similar in variegation to Silver Swan, but shades of lime green and yellow.

Euphorbia amygdalioides *Purpureum* has great dark foliage followed by lime green flowers in spring.

Box Hedges

I just love their crisp outlines in the snow. They give structure to a garden in the barren winter and act as

'containers' for the exuberance of summer planting.

Bulbs and Corms

Winter Aconites *Eranthis hyemalis*. Bright yellow globular flowers with a ruff of green leaves. Every garden should have some of these.

Crocus tommasinianus so early and brave.

Iris reticulata has little gems of flowers which, when studied carefully, could rival exotic orchids.

Cyclamen hederifolium with its silver marbled leaves are perfect ground cover under deciduous trees and large shrubs.

Narcissi. *Tete-a-tete* is a short stout chap with 2 or 3 yellow flowers per stem. *Thalia* is another favourite with its white flowers contrasting well with ferns and *Euphorbia Silver Swan*.

Snowdrops. Their delicate blooms swaying on their slim attachment to the stems belie a tough character. I like them dotted amongst arums and dark-leaved hucheras.


Final thoughts on Winter Gardens

Now I have started, I wonder how we find space in our gardens for summer plants with all these winter wonders to choose from. I haven't even mentioned the beautiful conifers, the white bark of *Betula utilis jacquemontii*, or *Acer griseum* with its caramel coloured peeling bark or hellebores or daphnes! One daphne I must mention is *Daphne bholua* *Jacqueling Postill*. I first smelt the perfume of a great spec-

imen when visiting the Royal Horticultural Society's garden at Wisley. I tracked it down using my nose and found a stunning plant covered with pink blooms. A native of the Himalayas growing between eight and eleven thousand feet above sea level yet I do not think I have the best conditions in my garden to show it off at its best. I think it is too windy, for the perfume must be captured in still air. So I just dream of growing one and visit Wisley in the winter to smell theirs. Perhaps one day when the tree and shrub-cover provides more shelter, I might just risk planting one here in Ascott.

Thank you everyone who gave so generously to the Pancreatic Cancer Action charity when purchasing the sweet pea seeds from the shop. We raised £20 from just a few packets of seeds.

Madeline Galistan



**COTSWOLD
FRAMES**
GALLERY + GIFTS

individual & inspired...

Market St. Charlbury. Oxon. OX7 3PL
01608 811805
tim@cotswoldframes.co.uk

CHURCH UNDER THREAT

Holy Trinity Church in Ascott is in urgent need of your support. A place of worship for villagers for the past 1,000 years, the church is at the heart of our community and it is now under a very real threat due to lack of funds.

A small but faithful congregation worship regularly while others enjoy the church at key points in the year or pivotal moments in their lives. For many others the church may simply provide a much loved focal point and centrepiece of the village. However you use the church, or whatever it means to you personally, there can be no doubt of its importance to the village as a whole and to village life.

Like many rural churches, Holy Trinity has been hit by a steep decline in funding over recent years. Historically, the national Church met some of the costs of running churches like ours, but this is no longer the case and Holy Trinity has been without central support for a number of years. The situation is now critical and help is urgently needed if we are to save our church from possible closure.

For ten out of the past seventeen years the church has been running at a loss, with expenditure exceeding income, and we have been slowly eating into our reserves to simply keep the church open and its fabric maintained. We are facing a potential deficit of £3,000 on ordinary running costs this year alone.

On top of this, we are now faced with financing building work to preserve the structure of the church. We have recently spent £12,700 on urgent underpinning and stonework and over the next few years will need to spend an estimated additional £17,300 on routine maintenance. This has stretched our existing funds to breaking point. The church is looking into grants and other potential funding sources but our position is precarious.

The simple fact is we cannot secure the future of Holy Trinity without the support of our community. It's always difficult to ask for financial help, and never more so than in current times when so many people have been hit by the economic downturn, but we have little choice. The church is now forced to ask the whole village to think carefully about what they may be able to give to help keep our church doors open.

Holy Trinity has been a place of solace, of celebration and of community and friendship for generations of villagers. The thought of the village without a church is hard to entertain and it would be a tragedy to lose our church now. Please do think about what you may be able to contribute and help secure the future of our church.

How to support Holy Trinity

There are a number of ways of supporting Ascott's Church. The first and most obvious is to come along and join us at a service or one of the coffee mornings held on the first Saturday of the month.

In terms of pure financial support, might you be able to make a donation? This could be a one off donation to help our current position or a more regular contribution. Regular giving of £5, £10 or £20 per month would be a significant contribution to our efforts to keep Holy Trinity open and offering services to the local community.

Donations can be made in a number of ways. Churchgoers can contribute to the collection when in church; one off donations can be made by cheque and made payable to Ascott under Wychwood PCC; or, alternatively, it is possible to set up a Standing Order for more regular donations. It is also possible to request a set of dated giving envelopes to put in the collection at services.

Please do not forget that if you are a taxpayer you can Gift Aid your donation, allowing the church to claim £2.50 from HM Revenue & Customs for every £10 given.

To make a donation, set up a Standing Order, request giving envelopes or pledge your support, simply contact Ash Ismail, Church Treasurer, at aiatcb@gmail.com or Crown Barn, The Green, Ascott under Wychwood.

**DEADLINE FOR
SPRING 2012 ISSUE
APRIL 5TH
PLEASE DON'T BE
LATE**



The new album by Oxfordshire
Singer/Songwriter Mark Pidgeon on sale
now

Price £10.00

12 tracks of modern folk songs, tackling
topics ranging from 'Life in the Military,
Broken Britain,

Broken Dreams, Broken Love, Broken
Promises and even those rare commodi-
ties 'Bent Politicians'

Visit www.markpidgeon.com for further
details and where you can download two
free samples from this album plus free
tracks from his previous works.

CD's Available from 1 Heritage Lane.



MAKE YOUR FIRST STOP ASCOTT VILLAGE SHOP!

**Whatever the weather, come snow or ice,
rain or shine, your Village Shop is here to
serve you**

**We can supply most of your weekly
shopping needs – come and try us**

LOOK OUT FOR OUR SPECIAL OFFERS AND BARGAINS

Ascott Village Shop – run by the community

Cook Row, High Street,
Ascott-under-Wychwood, OX7 6FY
01993 831240
Email: shop@ascottvillageshop.co.uk
Website: www.ascottvillageshop.co.uk

ASCOTT VILLAGE SHOP

In spite of, or perhaps because of these recessionary times, the Shop has enjoyed an excellent year.

With fuel prices hitting record levels, people have found that shopping with us works out cheaper and with less hassle than driving to a big supermarket.

Quality at competitive prices has always been our mantra and we continue to champion local food and local suppliers.

Thanks to our redoubtable fruit and veg team, we are proud of our brilliant Braeburns, crunchy carrots and luscious lettuces.

In November, we had to change bread supplier, as Huffkins could no longer deliver. After many testings and tastings, we plumped for Palace Cuisine of Witney. Their handmade breads, rolls and cakes have proved a hit and drawn many a compliment.

November was also the celebration of our 8th anniversary, with a tastings evening. Table Talk Foods, formerly Hellabys, provided a whole raft of hot and cold dishes and snacks; we enjoyed some truly excellent cheeses and some new wines. All of the foods are now on sale in the shop and our new Bordeaux, Chateau Haut Pasquet, is a brilliant red at a modest £8.25.

Here's to 2012! Come back to us soon.

Nigel Wild

Robert Gripper **Antique Furniture Restorer**

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

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



robgripper@btinternet.com

MARTIN&CO



the UK's N°1 letting agent

LANDLORDS: We have qualified tenants looking for properties in this area

We let most properties within a few days and we maximize the rental potential for you.

63 High Street, Witney, OX28 6JA

T: 01993 708638

F : 0871 714 2660

E: witney@martinco.com

W: www.martinco.com

ASCOTT CHURCH - MY MEMORIES

In the early 1940's, Morning Service was accompanied by the sound of rifle fire as the Home Guard practised their target shooting somewhere behind the Swan. After the service I saw them on parade on the road in front of the Grange. At Evensong, two seats from the front, I listened in awe as Mr Bartlett, the vicar, thundered out his sermon from the pulpit.

At this time the church was lit by a few old gas lamps and the only heating came from a large solid fuel stove which stood near the font.

Most of us who went to Ascott School in the late 1940's, also attended Sunday School every Sunday morning. After this a good number of children then wore cassock and surplice and sang in the choir at the 11 o'clock service and again at Evensong. I was not one of them.

I often had the pew to myself in the evening while my mother played the organ and I remember the collection normally being taken by Bill Benfield of 'pig killing' fame.

The Harvest Festival was a big occasion. The farmers all selected their best looking wheat sheaves to add to the decorations and a neighbouring vicar was invited to preach at the main festival service held on a weekday. Another harvest service was held on the Sunday and the church was full of people on both occasions. The produce

was then taken to the school and sold by auction on the Monday evening.

I somehow always felt reassured by the strength of the age-old prayers and services and the solid old church building, and I personally was dismayed when things were changed to modern language, and, to me, prayers of lesser impact!

The festivals and the coffee mornings are still remarkably well supported today but it has been sad to see the average age of the congregation steadily become more mature. The attendance now, of anybody under 40 years of age at a normal service, is a rarity and the number of regulars inevitably dwindles with the passing years. My own contribution to the life and the upkeep of the church has been minimal and insignificant, but I have always been aware of a small band of people working long and tirelessly to keep it all going and I am grateful to each one of them past and present.

In one aspect we are perhaps more fortunate now than previously. Whereas one vicar worked his way through four services every Sunday, our one main service each month now, is usually attended by two vicars. But I fear that the crunch time is fast approaching and this well worn slogan does now apply to our church – Use it or lose it!

Jim Pearse

HELPERS OF ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD

AUTUMN 2011

I am really happy to say that the 'Helpers' have continued to show great determination and enthusiasm throughout this autumn and we have achieved much more than I had dared hope. Each session has attracted at least 12 volunteers with others helping to do smaller jobs at a time that suits them better. It is a great time to work and chat with local people that you wouldn't see very often.

The tasks on our list come either from requests from residents or from the Village Risk Assessment that the Parish Council has a statutory duty to carry out. Increasingly, there will be jobs that larger councils and organisations are responsible for but have cut out of their current budgets. We shall start to notice the village looking more and more scruffy if we don't just get on and do it ourselves.

In general, residents appear to want the village to maintain its rural Cotswold character and be kept tidy and free from hazards without being turned into a show village. Residents are proud of Ascott's working heritage but also protective of its environment and wildlife.

It is great to have clear direction from the community and we had just that from the results of our recent questionnaire about the Recreation Ground. So our last 'Helpers' session - sprucing up the playground - was particularly satisfying even though we were abso-

lutely shattered at the end! Let's hope that the children notice a difference when the last bits and pieces have been completed.



I do appreciate feedback at all times so please let me have any suggestions for future tasks or any criticisms of anything that we have done. If you are shy, ask a friend to pass on the message – it's much harder for me to work in a vacuum than to take on criticism and find a compromise.

Thanks to a great band of Merry Helpers!!

Philippa Carter
Parish Councillor

WYCHWOOD LIBRARY

Happy New Year to you all and I do hope that one of your resolutions is to make good use of your local library. We offer books for free and reasonably priced DVDs and audio items and it is warm in here!

2012 brings in a concerted effort to get many more of you online or to improve your computer skills. As well as our usual "Introduction to Computers" sessions, we are offering classes consisting of 4 to 5 one hour sessions specialising in Word Processing and Desktop Publishing. Ask at the desk for details.

The new Poetry Club is a lovely addition to Wychwood Library's regular events. This is held on the third Monday of each month at 7pm until about 8.30. Look out for the topic for the evening on the notice board or get in touch with Heather Shute.

Wychwood Wordpeckers is to start up again and we are looking for new and old members. Come in and see Liz to decide the most ideal time to hold these sessions as well as possible topics for discussion. Liz works on a Monday and a Friday afternoon.

You can see what else we have on offer at Wychwood Library by going online to: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries and following the links to Wychwood Library.

Ruth Gillingham

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 Post Office Stores
Milton-under-Wychwood

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

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

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

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

WYCHWOOD LIBRARY IS NOT SAFE!

Thank you all for responding to the Oxfordshire County Council's **sham Library Service Consultation**. On your behalf The Friends of Wychwood Library submitted comprehensive evidence as to why the proposal was untenable; met with council officials; requested detailed information for them to substantiate their proposals and challenged Keith Mitchell's derogatory comments. But did they listen, **NO**.

The 92 page independent report by CIPFA, The Chartered Institute for Public Finance, concluded; "there is little support for using volunteers for roles currently performed by paid library staff: There is a genuine feeling that the consultation was biased against those residing in rural areas: There is a concern that communities will struggle to recruit the required number of volunteers, and that they will not be able to retain those volunteers over time.

Did CIPFA analyse the costs and potential savings? **NO**. Were our suggestions and those of SOL, Save Oxfordshire Libraries, on how to save money considered? **NO**. Did the scrutiny committee listen to the many verbal representations? **NO**.

We have concluded that there will be **NO** savings made and OCC have not refuted our figures! We will be expected as a community to fundraise; recruit and manage volunteers and if that wasn't enough, we will be classed

as a Non Statutory Library! The only change to the original proposal is that we will be funded for 15 hours rather than 10.

Will we continue to fight? **YES**.

We are currently seeking advice and participating in evidence to the Select Committee and other national initiatives.

Please continue to support Wychwood Library. It is one of the most efficient in the County and if you can help the committee in any way your time would be really appreciated.

Rosie Young
Chairman of Friends of Wychwood Library

**DEADLINE FOR
SPRING 2012 ISSUE
APRIL 5TH
PLEASE DON'T BE LATE**

WYCHWOODS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The next three months bring a variety of talks to the History Society, as set out below.

Thursday 16 th February	Shipton Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.
THE OLDEST SHOWMAN IN ENGLAND – THE REMARKABLE JOHN BELLAMY (1808-1893)	Speaker Dr Steven Blake

Thursday 15 th March	Milton Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.
HENLEY AS AN INLAND PORT	Speaker Dr Simon Townley

Thursday 19 th April	Shipton Village Hall at 7.30 pm
SHOPS AND SHOPPING IN VICTORIAN AND EDWARDIAN OXFORD	Speaker David Vaisey

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.wychwoods history .org

FOLK AT TIDDY

On Saturday 22 October 2011 we had another very successful Folk Night in Tiddy Hall making it the 20th Folk Night since we resurrected them in 1996. Once again we had Anything Goes to start off our evening and this was followed by our regulars Bob Buckingham and Robin Saunders. This year we also had Mark Pidgeon, who lives in Ascott, who gave a fine performance accompanied by guitar. Our main guests for the evening were the fantastic QuickSilver, a duo with Hilary Spencer and Grant Baynham. Grant used to play guitar on Esther Rantzen's 'That's Life' many years ago. They were very entertaining with their great singing and lots of humour, creating a wonderful atmosphere. With around 130 people in the audience atmosphere wasn't a problem!

The evening raised a total of £1,050.00 for Tiddy Hall funds. Thank you to everyone who helped make this a memorable evening.

Lyn Collins

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE ANTIQUE TRADE?

When I first started to earn a living in the antiques trade 30 years ago, I worked mainly for antique dealers in Chipping Norton, a busy market town with 27 antique shops. It is hard to believe that such a small town supported so many antique businesses, the diversity was astonishing, one shop specialized in antique radios and sold nothing else! They were all busy. Stow and Burford were even busier, and even small villages such as Charlbury had antique shops.

Today, you are lucky to find any antique shops amongst the plethora of charity shops that dominate the high streets of our market towns, the running costs are too high for most dealers. I am one of the lucky ones, my partner and I run a thriving antique business, "Woodstock Arts and Antiques" in the middle of Woodstock, times are hard but we are still busy, and optimistic about the future.

Until the last few years, it has been a well kept secret that in general, the price of antiques has been falling, there are of course exceptions, the finest and rarest antiques always continue to increase in value.

Everything started to change during the last recession in the early 90's, sales slowed up considerably, which left many dealers with cash flow problems, and with interest rates at 18.5% many dealers were paying the bank more money in interest than they were drawing in earnings. The laws of supply and demand took their effect, prices of ordinary antiques began to fall and inevitably, shops started to close. Before the recession of the 90's many antique shops were run by collectors and hobbyists rather than business people, and some of these were quick to quit once they hit hard times, often these businesses were run with enthusiasm rather than expertise.

As the 90's progressed the age of the computer was upon us, everyone had access to one, technology created huge changes throughout society. The economies of the world converged, opening up retail possibilities unimagined previously. There is now a huge variety and choice of domestic and furnishing products available to us all in what has now become a global market place, many of the products available to consumers have become less and less expensive, and our homes reflect this, with products made from all over the world. The diversity of the modern market would have been unimaginable 30 years ago, and because it can be achieved at a relatively low cost it has become available to everyone, antique furniture has never had such competition.

Many different factors have come together to create changes within the antique industry, the rise in house prices over the last 30 years, and the increases in fuel and food costs has left very little in family budgets for

home furnishings. I have often been told in conversation that antiques are 'out of fashion, people would rather shop at Ikea' In truth, the attraction of Ikea is that it is really cheap, affordable rather than fashionable! In society today young people anticipate being in debt well unto middle age. The average cost of a degree course at university is now £8678.36 and having achieved a qualification, there is then the astronomical cost of buying a home, the cost of renting is too high for many people. The average age of the first time buyer in Britain is now 38years old! I am writing this whilst on holiday visiting my wife's family in Las Vegas, here, you can buy a detached 5 bedroom house with three bathrooms, fitted with air conditioning and all mod cons with a floor area of 280Msquare for about 120K!

Another factor affecting the decline in the antique business is the lack of space available in modern homes. The limited space available for new housing, and the severe restrictions imposed by planning authorities, has meant that new builds are becoming ever smaller, the average floor space area of a new house in the UK in 2009 was 76M square, compared to France at 113M square and Australia at 206M square. Most new builds have such small bedrooms that clothes cupboards are usually built in, I have only sold two wardrobes in the last three years, I remember selling three wardrobes in the same week in August 1987! There

isn't a lot of room for much furniture in a new starter home.

The current recession has depleted the antique industry once again. I have an antique dealer friend who lives in north Wales who used to visit me a few times each year, the trip used to take him three days because he called in on every dealer he passed on his route, doing business all the way. Now his trip takes him about four and half hours, he only has one other dealer to call in on his route.

My enthusiasm for antiques, especially antique furniture (which is my passion, and area of expertise) is unabated, and although it is a difficult time to sell, it is such a good time to buy! In my lifetime I have never had such opportunities to find such wonderful treasures at such reasonable prices. I don't understand why anyone buys reproduction antique furniture when you can now buy the real thing with unique character and history for less money!

Finally, I implore you to support the antique trade, support our heritage and buy antiques, they are living history and furniture has never been so cheap, it is also the greenest and classiest way possible to furnish your home, and instead of being limited to today's modern styles and trends, you can dip back into all the fashions from the past centuries! There is something for everyone.

References:

Size of new builds; BBC news
15/08/2009

Average age of 1st time buyer: The independent
16/03/2010

Average cost of year's degree fees: The
Guardian 18/04/2011

DEADLINE FOR

SPRING 2012 ISSUE

APRIL 5TH

PLEASE DON'T BE LATE

Robert Gripper

CAROLS AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Once again the Carol singing around the Christmas tree on Christmas Eve, hosted by the Parish Council and ably supported by the Ascott Singers, was very well attended with numbers being well up on 2010. Perhaps the fact that it was a mild night had something to do with it. It would be nice to think that it was due to the fact that the villagers of Ascott were taking the opportunity to greet their neighbours and wish them a Happy Christmas. If the numbers next year are maintained the Parish Council will seriously need to look at expanding the venue, perhaps to the other side of the tree!

We are pleased to announce that the collection, which was for the Wychwood Day Centre, raised £167.37 rounded up to £170.00. The Parish Council wishes to thank all the villagers of Ascott, their relations and friends who contributed to the collection and to wish you all a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Rob Morgan



Photos: S Fox

TIDDY

The man stood silently in the entrance,
Tall, curly dark hair, leaning on a cane.
'Thirties', the woman thought as she drew near.
'Can I help you?' she asked.
Gentle eyes crinkled into a smile.
'There used to be a wooden building in that corner.'
'Oh the old Tiddy Hall.
Felt its age. Past its sell by date'.
He looked puzzled but questioned gently, 'The Tiddy Hall?'
'Yes. Built for the village by a chap named Tiddy
A hundred years ago.
He loved the old tunes and dances.
Collected them. Taught the villagers to dance.
Had the Hall built for dancing,
Traditional Morris and Country Dances.
Ascott was famous for its folk dancing in those days.
Still, the new Tiddy Hall serves the village now.
Look. Here to the right hand side.'
The man glanced across, still looking puzzled.
'I'm just going in,' the woman said.
'There's a plaque inside. Explains it all.'
She took a key from her pocket as she reached the door.
'Tiddy died in the Great War,' she said.
'Felt it wasn't right for him to stay in safety at home,
When all the young lads were dying for him.
I expect he was thinking of all the young dancers and students he knew.
He was a don at the Oxford colleges.
Although he had poor eyesight and asthma, he joined up and left for the trenches.
Paid the ultimate sacrifice, as they say.
But Ascott never forgot him.
Renamed the old Hall after him.
Now the new one has taken over his name.'
'How pleasing to be so long remembered,' he said.
She led the way across the Hall.
'There's his photograph.' She smiled.
'He looks such a friendly chap.'
Her eyes widened. She turned.
There was nobody there.

Wendy Pearce

ATTENTION ALL CRICKETERS



I haven't been in the village that long but in the short time that I have been living in Ascott we have lost the two most important aspects of village life (in my humble opinion). They are the Village Pub and most importantly the Village Cricket Team. Now unless I win Euro Millions (which is doubtful because I very rarely buy a ticket) I can't do a thing about the village pub but I can offer any frustrated cricket players the chance of a friendly game of cricket most Sundays, plus some 20/20 games on a Wednesday evening.

Barton Abbey CC (Middle Barton) is set in the beautiful grounds of the home of the Fleming Family (Merchant Bankers and cousin of the James Bond writer)

Our standards are quite moderate and all ages are welcome. There is a small annual fee to help with the maintenance of the ground and the buying of equipment. There is a small charge for each game. We share the making of teas during the season (in pairs).

We do play some away fixtures but they are mostly local.

Sense of humour is a must, ability is secondary.

If you are interested please contact me on 01993831427 or 07870563299

Mark Pidgeon

FARMERS MARKETS

Moreton in Marsh

Every Tuesday 9.00am - 1.00pm

Stow on the Wold

2nd Thursday of every month 9.00am - 1.00pm

Charlbury

3 monthly

Witney

3rd Wednesday of every month 9.00am - 1.00pm

Woodstock

1st Saturday of every month 9.00am - 1.00pm

Chipping Norton

3rd Saturday of every month 9.00am - 1.00pm

Acousticana 2012

Acousticana with Luuuuuuv.

A special Valentines Acousticana returns to the village on Saturday February 11th 2012 as part of the Tiddy Hall celebrations.

This will be the 3rd Acousticana at the Tiddy Hall and after the success of the last two years we are hoping for an even bigger audience when it returns in February.

This year it will be played in a slightly different format. Our usual host '**David Menday**' along with local performers '**Mark Pidgeon**' and **Mike Moyes** performing the first part of the show, with a special guest band "**Rag 'n' Roll**" playing the 2nd set of the evening. The Rag'n'roll Band play a huge variety of upbeat Ragtime Blues, Jump Jive, Fraser's original songs, a bit of 50's rock'n'roll, eclectic Beatles arrangements, and traditional folk.

All profits will be going to the Tiddy Hall

Tickets will be available from the usual sources and 01993 831427, so come along and support the Tiddy Hall celebrations...

Attention All Local Businesses!

***The Ascott Grapevine* will be compiling a directory of local businesses in future issues of the magazine. If you are interested in advertising in YOUR local magazine, then please contact Wendy on 01993 831023 or email: wendypearse@btinternet.com**

The lineage cost is £5 per year but free for all our advertisers with display adverts.

NEWS FROM LEAFIELD SCHOOL

I am writing this on the last day of term and there is a buzz in the air as the children are excited about the Christmas holidays. We have had a busy term with Christmas Concerts and Nativity plays, swimming lessons, Eco workshops, a visit from the Fire Officer and cycling proficiency lessons for our oldest children. Our parents have also been busy with parenting and phonics workshops to help them support their children.

Friends of Leaffield School have been fundraising and the children have enjoyed a dressing up disco and a Christmas party.

In November our year 5 and 6 girls attended an event at Burford School where they met Jo Cotterill author of books for girls. The boys will get an opportunity in the near future.

Many of the staff have attended training courses which ensures continued professional development for our teachers and teaching assistants.

Our children have raised money for Children in Need and The Children's Society through filling a large Pudsey Bear with coins and by making Christingle Oranges for our Christingle Service.

We have also welcomed a piano teacher to the school and now have several children learning the piano.

After school clubs this term have included, football club, recorder club, jewellery club, cookery club and construction club. Our after school clubs change each term to ensure we offer a good range of activities. Our Breakfast Club continues each morning from 8:00 am.

Lastly I have to report that Mrs. Scully, one of our Teaching Assistants is retiring at Christmas. We would like to thank her on behalf of all the children she has worked

with at Leaffield School over the years and wish her a long, happy and healthy retirement.

Deb Brown



**DEADLINE FOR
SPRING 2012 ISSUE
APRIL 5TH**

PLEASE DON'T BE LATE



**Coffee Morning
with Cake / Produce Stall**

**10 o'clock – mid-day
in Holy Trinity Church, Ascott-under-Wychwood
on:-**

Saturday 7th April

Saturday 5th May

Saturday 2nd June

Saturday 7th July

Saturday 4th August

Saturday 1st September

Saturday 6th October

Saturday 3rd November

Saturday 1st December (Christmas Bazaar)

EVERYBODY WELCOME

COOK'S CORNER : ASCOTT'S FAVOURITE RECIPES

CHEESE SOUFFLE

This recipe was given to me over fifty years ago (by a man!) and I have been making it ever since. It is that simple and foolproof. Ideal for a simple lunch or supper dish (especially after the Christmas extravaganza!)

1 oz strong cheddar cheese

2 large/medium eggs

Seasoning

5 fluid ozs. milk (1/4 pint)

Half level dessertspoon cornflour

Mix cornflour with milk in saucepan, bring to boil and stir. Remove from heat. Add seasoning and grated cheese.

Separate eggs and beat yolks in a basin then stir in the cornflour mixture.

Beat whites until really stiff then fold into the cornflour mixture.

Pour into lightly greased soufflé dish. (I use an old Pyrex pie dish.)

Bake in moderate oven (gas Reg. 4) for 20 minutes to half an hour until well risen.

This quantity serves 2 as a starter or one hungry person, served with a simple green salad and some good brown bread and butter.

This quantity may be doubled or trebled etc.

June Holmes

TIDDY HALL

Regular Activities:

Monday - Friday Mornings Pre-school

Contact: Mrs Pauline Plant
07968006451

SPECIAL EVENTS:

See separate 2012 Calendar in this issue

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



To book the Tiddy Hall contact:

Ingrid Ridley
01993 830612

