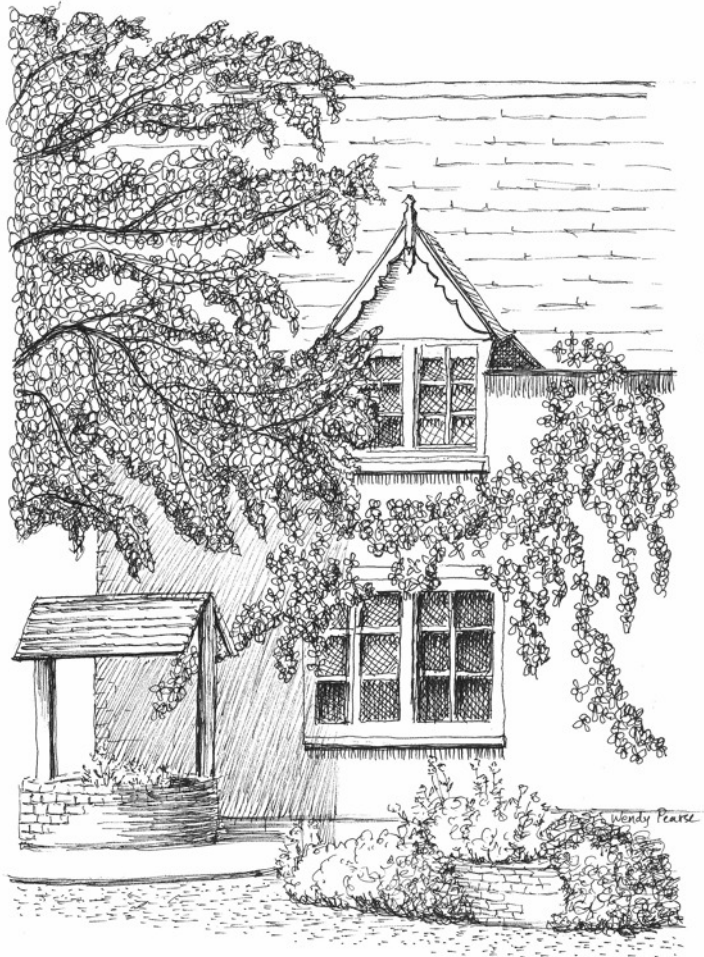


The Ascott Grapevine



Grapevine Appeal

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

Although 'The Grapevine' does receive support from the Parish Council and the PCC, it only raises a limited amount of revenue from advertising. The Ascott Grapevine survives mainly on donations. If you would like to help The Ascott 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 Ascott Grapevine please contact a member of the team to discuss your ideas.

Articles for the next issue of The Ascott Grapevine should be submitted by 5th August 2016.

Articles submitted after this date may not be included.

Call 01993 831023 or email:
wendypearse@btinternet.com

The Editorial Team:
Stuart Fox, Elaine Byles,
Wendy Pearse, Keith Ravenhill

Content & Editorial Policy

If you have an article, story or poem you would like to submit for publication The Ascott 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.

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To advertise in our Local Business Directory (see [Page 68](#)), please contact Wendy Pearse 01993 831023 or wendypearse@btinternet.com. The cost is £5 per year but inclusion is free for our existing advertisers.

SERVICES AT ASCOTT CHURCH 2016

On Sundays when there is not a service in Ascott there are services across the Benefice, normally 1st Sunday 0800 Enstone & 1000 Spelsbury; 3rd Sunday 0800 Spelsbury & 1000 Enstone. For full details see the Church notice boards. You will receive a warm welcome at any of our services.

12 th June	10.00 am	Holy Communion	[CW]
26 th June	8.00 am	Holy Communion	[BCP]
10 th July	10.00 am	Holy Communion	[CW]
24 th July	8.00 am	Holy Communion	[BCP]
14 th August	10.00 am	Holy Communion	[CW]
28 th August	8.00 am	Holy Communion	[BCP]
11 th September	10.00 am	Holy Communion	[CW]
25 th September	8.00 am	Holy Communion	[BCP]

Ascott Church is part of the Chase Benefice, comprising the parishes of Chadlington, Ascott-u-Wychwood, Spelsbury and Enstone. For enquiries please contact the Rector: Rev'd Mark Abrey, The Vicarage, Church Road, Chadlington. OX7 3LY. 01608 676572 or rector@thechasebenefice.org.uk

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Local Churches

Wychwood Benefice

Rev'd Kate Stacey Tel: 01993 832514

St Mary's Shipton

Churchwarden James Walmsley
01993 830842

SS Simon & Jude, Milton

Churchwarden Mike Hartley 01993 830160

St John the Baptist Fifield, St Nicholas, Idbury

Churchwarden Pat Yaxley 01993 831385

Society of Friends (Quakers), Burford

Nigel Braithwaite 01993 831282

Wychwood Baptist, Milton

Pastor John Witts 01993 832865

Burford Methodist

Minister Rev'd Peter Goodhall
01993 845322

Westcote Methodist

Tony Gibson 01993 830699
Mairi Radcliffe 01993831472

Roman Catholic

SS John Fisher & Thomas More,
Burford

Holy Trinity, Chipping Norton

Our Lady and St Kenelm, Stow-on-the-Wold

St Teresa, Charlbury

Chase Benefice

Rev'd Mark Abrey Tel: 01608 676572

rector@thechasebenefice.org.uk

Ascott Church

A poem by Agnes Hickson

Written in 1965

Agnes Hickson was the mother of Sue Hickman

From high on his perch, on the tower of the church, the cock looks down on this, our home town.

Many changes he's seen, many storms have there been, since he first took his place, above the clock face.

The church is quite small and inside each wall is a pleasant shade of cream.

I wonder was it design or coincidence fine that all is in three and yet one?

Three gates and three doors and three level floors, there are three keyholes pressed in a Church Warden's Chest.

Even the pillars you see are divided by three.

The pews as they say can be divided this way.

The windows and rails and I suspect nails, can be divided by three.

The font's sixth side shows once it did hide, this one plain side, to the wall.

Outside the priest's door are holes six by four Here, did they sharpen a spear

Then poach the king's deer or choir boys play games with forgotten now names?

Perhaps boys, long ago, were no different although dad has us think so.

Now to the main door. In the warm south wall, on the right of the hall

Is a sundial so old, that unless one was told, one could miss its existence.

Seems a shame in a sense, in this world of ours, we are ruled by the hours

Passed out by a clock with a steady tick-tock.

Oh what peace could be found, with no modern sound.

The Ascott Grapevine

No planes in the sky, no trains rushing by, no buses or cars or other sound
mars

The peace to be found with just the sound of birds in the tower and a bee on a
flower

Of bulbs planted last year. Bulbs are given each year by parishioners here.

And are planted with care. (There's still room to spare.)

From hard work over the years, the result now appears

Of a tidy churchyard. Yes, the work really was hard but I'd say so worthwhile

When with satisfied smile of menfolk who in summer gave up evening leisure

To give us the pleasure of a close mown sward in the old churchyard.

Lime trees in the spring, their sweet heady scent bring, many flies buzzing
around

And in March, through the ground the crocus are found pushing their heads to
the sky.

The daffodils too, and hyacinths blue make the work that we do, so suddenly
all worthwhile.

Oh the main gate you see really is three. And on one post are the names of the
host of men

Who in War gave their lives that we may enjoy this beautiful, peaceful heritage
of ours.



Churchyard Trees



Above - View of church with Lime trees before pollarding



Above - The avenue of Lime trees before pollarding



The Ascott Grapevine



Above - View of church after pollarding



Above - The avenue of Lime trees after pollarding

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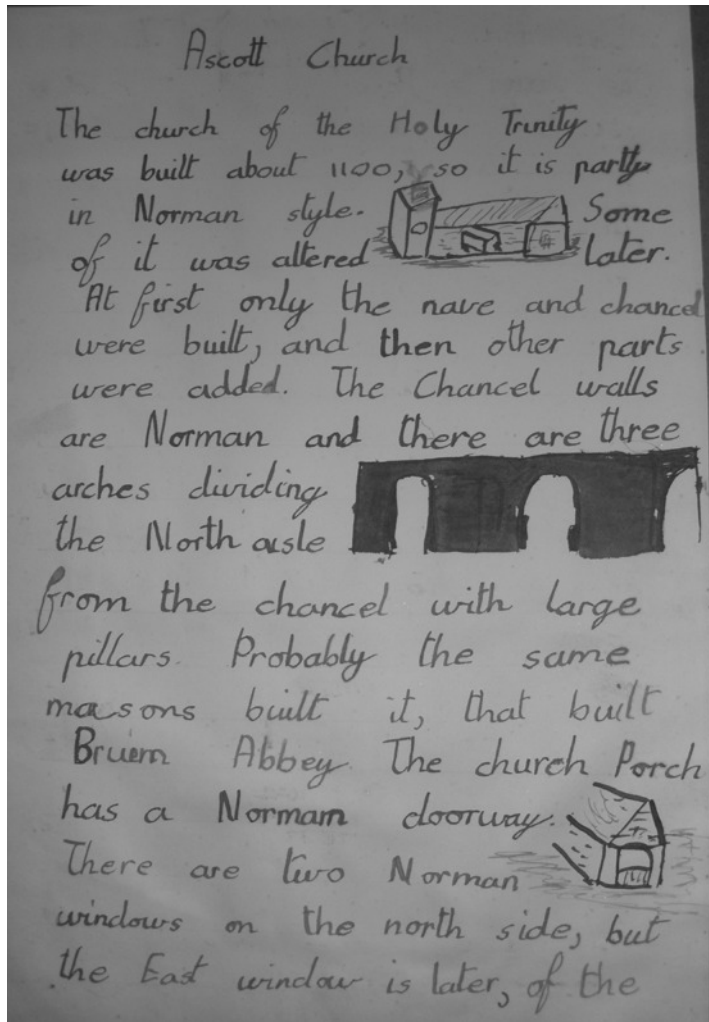
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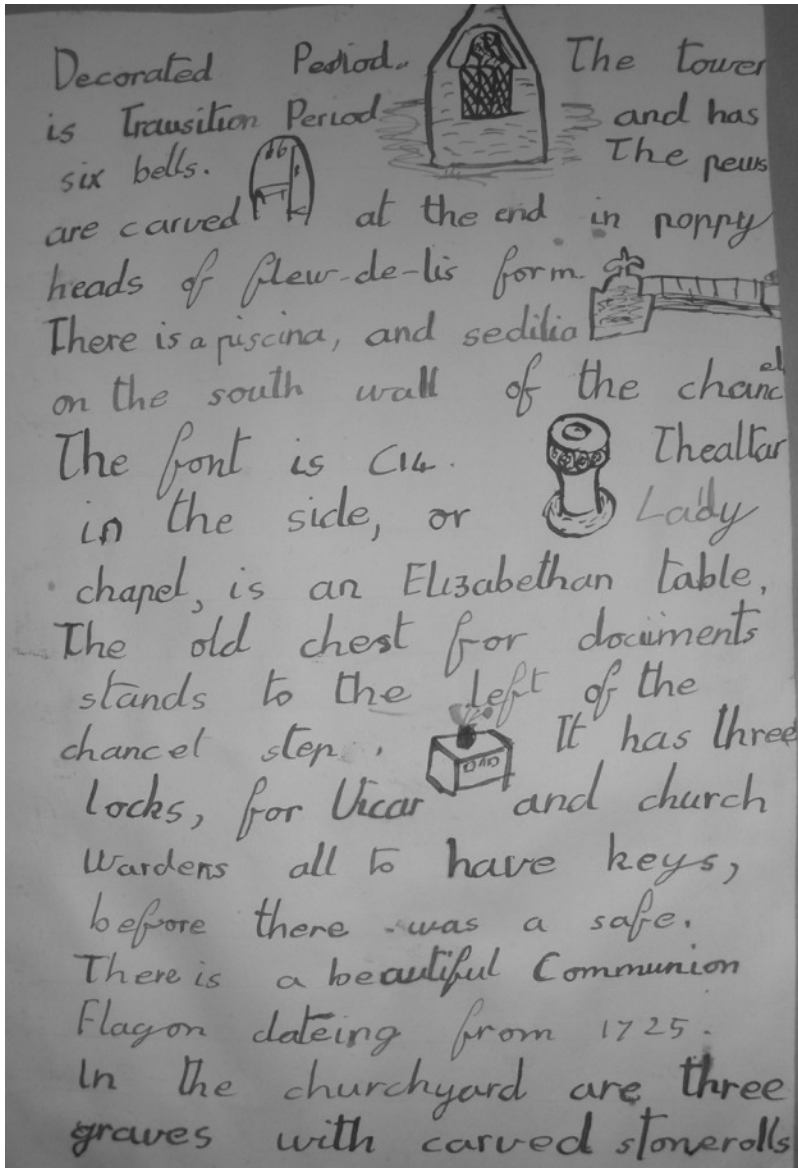
Ascott School Journal c1955

Ascott Church

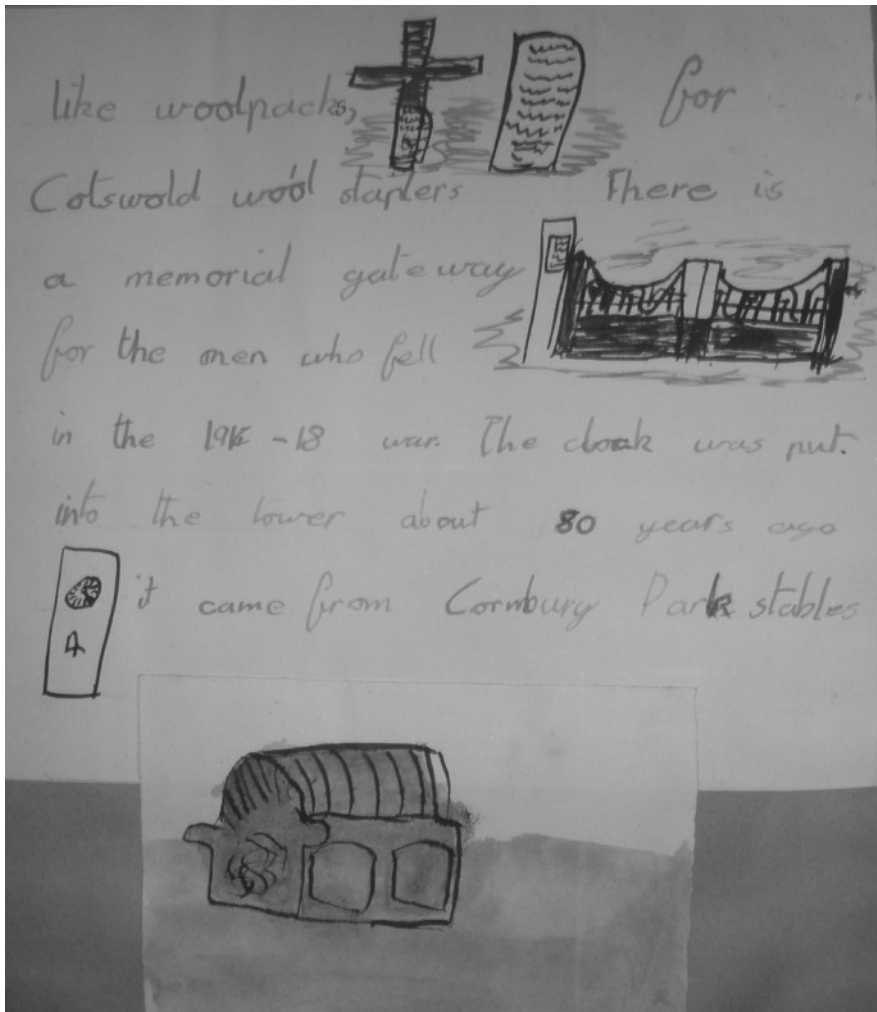


The church of the Holy Trinity was built about 1100, so it is partly in Norman style. Some of it was altered later. At first only the nave and chancel were built, and then other parts were added. The chancel walls are Norman and there are three arches dividing the North aisle from the chancel with large pillars. Probably the same masons built it, that built Buern Abbey. The church porch has a Norman doorway. There are two Norman windows on the north side, but the East window is later, of the

Over page




Decorated Period. The tower is Transition Period and has six bells. The pews are carved at the end in poppy heads of fleur-de-lis form. There is a piscina, and sedilia on the south wall of the chancel. The font is C14. The altar in the side, or Lady Chapel, is an Elizabethan table. The old chest for documents stands to the left of the chancel step. It has three locks, for Vicar and church wardens all to have keys, before there was a safe. There is a beautiful Communion Flagon on dating from 1725. In the churchyard are three graves with covered stonerolls



like wool packs for Cotswold wool staplers. There is a memorial gateway for the men who fell in the 1914-18 war. The clock was put into the tower about 80 years ago it came from Cornbury Park stables.

Over page

In Norman times and long after,
many churches did not have seats.
There were rushes  on the floor, and
people stood or knelt. Then a few
seats were provided for old, or weak
people. Ascott church was one of the
first in Oxfordshire to have seats,
and you can see which are the five
very old pews, as they are a different
colour.



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Nature Notes

Ask anyone to describe what a plant is and they will be sure to use some of the following words; green, leaves, roots, flowers and growing in the soil, but there are some unusual plants where these words do not apply. Some plants that completely lack chlorophyll, obtain their nutrients by becoming parasites of other plants or by other means. Yet other plants have the ability to top-up their own food reserves by stealing from others, these are the semi-parasites.



One group of plants, the Broomrapes, entirely lack chlorophyll and are often overlooked because they look like a dead withered plant. They live by drawing nutrients from the roots of their host.

Greater Broomrape is found on Gorse and Broom and Common Broomrape on members of the pea family and clovers. They have no leaves, only leaf scales but they do flower and set seed. The seed is incredibly small and light and produced in vast quantities dispersal is wind assisted. The seed remains viable in the soil for many years. Once it germinates and produces a root it must quickly find and attach itself to the host plant in order to survive. It is suggested that germination is triggered by the presence of the host plant's roots. Broomrape has been reported in North Leigh and Gaginwell, but is more common in the south of the county.



A close relative of Broomrape is Toothwort, a parasite of tree roots, particularly Hazel, Alder and Willow. Its name is derived from the shape of its un-

opened flowers. The bulk of this plant is hidden underground and consists of a fleshy rootstock that produces rootlets that attach themselves by suckers to the host plant's roots. In April or May a white flowering spike is produced and the half inch long flowers are pollinated by Bumble Bees. Like Broomrape the seeds are very fine and distributed by the wind. Look for this plant under shady hedgerows and hazel spinneys. It has been found in the woodlands of the Wychwood forest.



Two rare orchid species; the Bird's Nest Orchid and the Ghost Orchid, live a mostly subterranean life and completely lack chlorophyll. The Bird's Nest Orchid, so called because of the mass of

thick fleshy fibres that surrounds the main stem, is mostly found in established Beech woods. It forms a symbiotic relationship with a mycorrhizal fungus enabling it to draw sustenance from the rotting leaves of the woodland floor. A flower spike appears during the period May to July and this is pollinated by small insects that are attracted to its rather sickly odour. Locally it has been found on the Ditchley Estate.



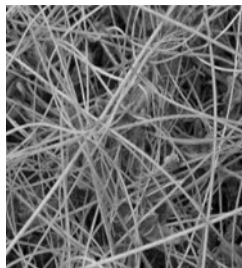
The Ghost orchid, possibly our rarest plant, is also found in Beech woods and is confined to the Chilterns. It too lacks conventional roots and feeds on rotting leaves with

the help of a fungus which surround fine hairs attached to the underground rhizome. Without proper roots it is difficult for it to collect water and so it only occurs in the densest areas of woodland where the soil is unlikely to dry out. The Ghost Orchid spends the bulk of its life underground only producing a flower spike every ten years or so usually initiated by a wet spring. The six inch flower spike bears up to seven yellow flowers each with a pink lip, but rarely sets seed reproducing from buds which develop on thread-like underground stems that grow out of the main rhizome.



Another plant, which has a similar lifestyle, is the Yellow Bird's Nest this is often confused with the Bird's Nest Orchid, but is more closely related to the Heath family. It is found in

Beech and Pine woods and again relies on a web of mycorrhizal fungus which surrounds its fleshy roots enabling it to draw nutrients from the decaying leaf litter. Yellow waxy, bell-shaped, flowers appear annually on a twelve inch flowering spike. Historically it has been found in West Oxfordshire but is now confined to the South of the county.



A truly strange plant is Dodder. It's related to the Field Bindweed whose pretty, trumpet shaped, flowers grace our verges and field edges as well as

becoming a difficult to eradicate garden weed. There are two species of Dodder; one is a parasite of Nettles and Hops and the other of Gorse and Heather. The plant lacks leaves and consists of a tangled mass of stems and tendrils. Each tendril wraps around the stem of the host plant attached by a swollen sucker. Small threads develop from the sucker invading the host plant allowing Dodder access to the nutrients it requires. The stems are crimson and white flowers are produced from July to September. The seed of Dodder germinates in the usual way in the soil. As the seedling grows it sends out tendrils searching for a suitable host and as soon as one is located suckers are attached and the original roots cease to function. Originally found in West Oxfordshire it is now confined to the South of England and is declining.



Not all parasitic plants are quite so unusual. There is a family consisting of Yellow Rattle, Eye-bright, Red Bartsia, Lousewort and Cow Wheat that appear

like normal flowering plants but whose roots attach themselves to other plants to provide part of their nutritional requirements. Locally the most widely distributed species is the Yellow Rattle a native of well drained hay-meadows. It's a parasite of grasses and clover and in dry

The Ascott Grapevine

seasons can do considerable harm to grassland. Its seed is contained within inflated calyces that once the seeds are ripe rattle if shaken, hence its common name. The seed sets and is shed before the grass is cut for hay.




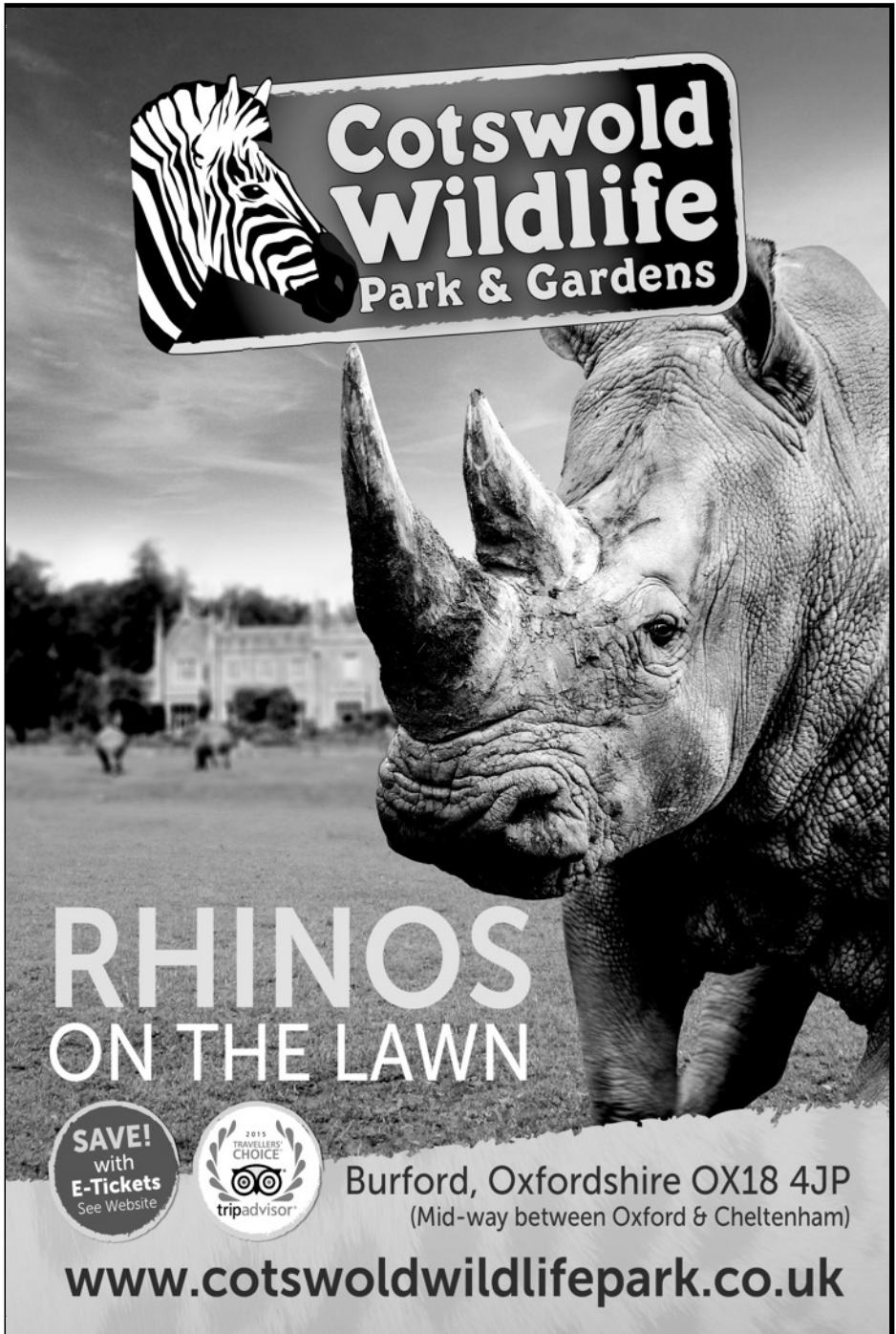
Finally I must mention the most well-known partial-parasite, Mistletoe. A plant found mainly on apple trees, but also Poplars, Hawthorn and many other native trees occasionally including Oak. In the early part of its life cycle Mistletoe does rely on photosynthesis, but once established it is more reliant on nutrients drawn from its host. Once the Mistletoe seed germinates a 'root-like' appendage grows into the bark of the host finally reaching the connective tissue. A heavy infestation can eventually cause the branch beyond the Mistletoe to die and it can weaken the whole tree. Historically Mistletoe has been credited

with extraordinary powers and was regarded as a magical plant and no wonder; it grew without roots, high above the earth and stayed green all year. In the middle ages it was believed to be capable of curing epileptic fits, dispelling tumours, keeping witches at bay, protecting the crops of its host tree and was also thought to be an aphrodisiac. Women who wished to conceive would wear a sprig round their waists or on their wrists. Today, apart from Druidic rituals, the custom of kissing under Mistletoe is the one remaining superstition associated with this plant. Mistletoe needs a mild, humid climate to thrive together with a concentration of trees with soft bark full of crevices. The sticky seeds are 'planted' by birds scraping the seed from their bills after having eaten the berries. In the UK these conditions are found in a wide area around the Severn Valley and in the orchards of Herefordshire. Locally isolated groups of Mistletoe can be seen in Shipton, Charlbury and Oxford. Like that other Christmas decoration, Holly, Mistletoe can be either male or female and the white berries are only found on the female plants.

Nature and evolutionary pressure ensures that every possible habitat is used however extreme or unusual.

Stuart Fox

PS Otters have been seen in the Evenlode close by Foxholes nature reserve.



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ASPARAGUS QUICHE

Now that the Asparagus season is upon us why not try this quiche using rice instead of pastry.

300g. cooked rice

Large knob of butter, melted

50g breadcrumbs

Handful of grated Parmesan

3 eggs beaten

150ml creme fraiche

150ml double cream

150g grated Gruyere cheese

Handful skinny asparagus tips

1. Combine rice, butter, breadcrumbs, Parmesan and about half a beaten egg to bind. Season and flatten into base and sides of 21 cm flan tin. Cook at 180c / gas 4 for 15 minutes or until lightly browned.
2. Combine remaining egg, creme fraiche, cream and Gruyere. Pour into flan tin, lay on asparagus and bake for 25 - 30 minutes more, or until set.

Serves 4 people

This is an interesting twist on a traditional asparagus quiche.

Kathy Pearce.

Wychwood Singers

The Wychwood Singers have a busy programme of events planned and hope many of you will be able to join us. Look out for local publicity and ring 01993 830090 for tickets.

June 11th 7pm Sing for the Queen at Church Westcote Parish Church

July 2nd A carnival themed appearance at Milton fete

July 8th 7pm New Beaconsfield Hall Concert in support of the Wychwood Day Centre Tickets £10 to include a glass of bubbly and strawberries with cream

November 4th Concert 7pm New Beaconsfield Hall

December 15th 7pm A Miscellany of Christmas Music at St Simon and St Jude Parish Church Milton under Wychwood

DID YOU KNOW

One hundred years ago, Ascott, along with almost all villages, towns and cities in the British Isles, lived through probably their saddest year ever.

1916, in the middle of the Great War, saw the largest number of young fighting men from our village, lose their lives. In fact the first to die in that year met his fate on one of the most significantly disastrous days ever for this country, July 1st, the first day of the Somme Offensive. This young man, was 19 years old, his name was Cecil Beck and his mother and aunt lived at 16 Shipton Road. Only nine days later, Frank Thornton whose family lived in Yew Tree Cottage, High Street, died of wounds, another casualty of the continuing battle. Then on 10th August, Lieutenant Reginald Tiddy, whose name is a continuing presence in Ascott, was killed by a shell whilst inspecting his men in the trenches. 22 year old Corporal William Claridge, whose family lived in the top row of Church View, died of his wounds on 29th September. And finally, the last death in the village to be notified that year was 21 year old Harry Honeybone. His mother lived in Church Close and his young wife and one year old daughter were probably living in Shipton. He died on 2nd December. At that time the death of Sargeant Fred Smith who had endured terrible conditions in Mesopotamia, a little known or reported arena of war, also died on 15th August 1916, but because great secrecy was preserved about that disastrous campaign, his family, living in Appletree Cottage at the west end of the village, were probably not notified of his death until the following year. 1916. A truly, sad significant year in the life of Ascott village.

Wendy Pearse

90th Birthday Celebrations!

There are parties planned up and down the country this Summer to help celebrate The Queen's 90th Birthday weekend, so on Sunday June 12th, Ascott under Wychwood will be holding a Village Afternoon Tea between 2.00pm and 5.00pm at Wychwood Manor

Further information and ticket prices are available, so look out for flyers on notice boards .

DOCTOR, DOCTOR

Young woman: Doctor, doctor, when my boyfriend walks me home and kisses me good night, he pleads with me to let him go the whole way. Should I let him go the whole way?

Doctor: Certainly not, don't let him through your front gate.

Man: Doctor, doctor, when I see the postman coming up the path, I start barking and scratching the back door.

Doctor: Pull yourself together man and stop cocking your leg against my desk, and take these Bob Martin's tablets three times a day.

During the autumn there did not seem a week went by when we were not being told, we were eating or drinking all the wrong things. It was too much sugar, or cook with lard rather than sunflower oil. But the warning that amused me the most was when we were told the first signs of dementia was a change in our sense of humour. What is important to me is to find whether we have one in the first place. Someone once said, "You can accuse an Englishman of many things but never accuse him of not having a sense of humour."

I am wary of people who say, "Life is too short, I enjoy a good laugh." I suppose life is too short if you're under four foot. Many who say I enjoy a good laugh, it's often at other's expense. Someone once asked me, "What do you think you have to do to write humour?", I said, "You have to learn to be miserable." So I wonder what kind of test will we have to take for signs of dementia? Will we go to our GP, who will read us a list of jokes? And if we laugh at the wrong ones, a black mark will go against us, and we will be on the slippery slopes of no return.

It was suggested the sign of change in humour was when the patient laughed at pain or tragedy. One of my favourite cartoons is of a man being tortured on a medieval rack, and the caption reads, "Would you mind repeating the question please?"

We are bombarded week after week with health warnings. It's a wonder the whole country doesn't suffer from deep depression.

So I will end again by trying to be funny.

Memories of National Service.

A young man said, "Don't try and alarm me

If you do, you'll drive me half barmy."

But the doctor said, "Drop 'em.

Cough. Yes you've got 'em

I'll pass you A.1. for the Army."

Fred Russell

LORD HELP US

I was annoyed when during the lead up to Christmas 2015, many cinemas throughout the country refused to play The Lord's Prayer. I am someone who believes, for better or worse the heritage and character of the British people is born out of the Christianity of the West of Europe.

I thought was there any way in which the Church could retaliate. A very unchristian attitude I know. There is one way that Christendom would not be the simple pushover. What if they made the words Christmas and Easter copyright? So whenever the secular or commercial world used these words, they would have to pay a fee. What would develop would be interesting. Who would have the bigger cut of the funds raised, the Catholics or the Protestants? There would be no more leaking church roofs. The Salvation Army could afford a bigger base drum and tambourines. The Quakers wouldn't want much, a simple table and plain chairs, so long as they were as uncomfortable as possible. This also applies to wooden church pews. It is a sin to worship God in comfort.

There are so many non-conformist churches, it would take a whole page to list them all, but they would all be entitled to their cut of the copyright fee. The love of money is the root of all evil. Would this lead to another Holy War over who should get the most? Where would the Church of England stand in all this? Would they be sitting on the fence like they most often do? I have attended church for many years and I have reached the conclusion that Anglicans don't know whether they are Protestants who ought to be Catholic, or Catholics who want to be Protestant.

The best prayers are those without words. It would be easy for me to say my prayers up the chimney on a Sunday morning before listening to the Archers.

Fred Russell

Births, Deaths and Marriages

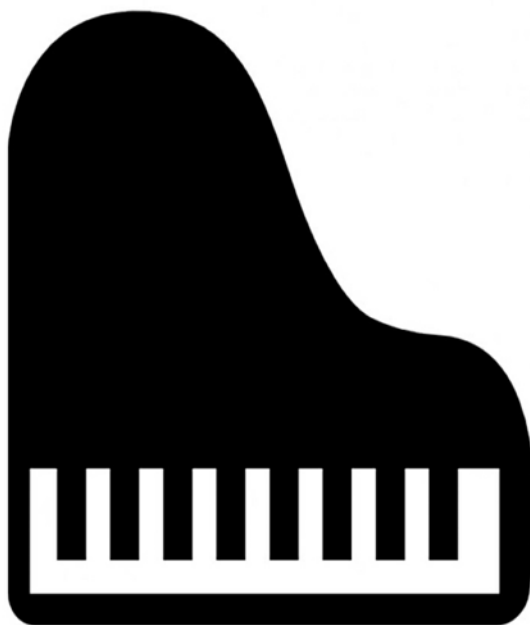
On the 4th February 2016, Dorothy Cook aged 97 years.

On the 27th February 2016, Doreen Mary Smith aged 69 years.

On the 19th March 2016 Jean Schwarz aged 87 years.

On 18th March 2016 Robert "Bob" Barrett aged 87 years. (See [Page 23](#) Memories of Bob)

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Seasonal joy

I dropped Ruben, a lovely little dog, back at his home after he had been with us for a few days on an intravenous infusion. Ruben had developed diarrhoea and vomiting, and had been admitted feeling very weak, unable to even get up. After a few days we were no wiser as to why he had been so ill, but Ruben was back to his old self.

As I left his home I noticed a large number of blue particles around the new bedding plants in the garden. Good old slug pellets containing the notorious metaldehyde! These had only been placed after Ruben had become ill, but I warned the owners that they could be fatal to Ruben should he ingest them. The container of slug pellets was labelled 'pet friendly' on the front of the canister. By this the manufacturers mean that they have made it less tasty for animals. On the back in smaller print the word 'fatal' could be found.

There is no antidote to metaldehyde. Our only option is to induce vomiting if we

are aware that the pet has recently eaten slug pellets, and then to give fluids intravenously and treat the symptoms that arise.

So, please think twice about using those lovely blue pellets. There are alternatives available which probably aren't quite as effective and might involve more work, but are safer for pets. And could even encourage a hedgehog to move in.

On the subject of inducing vomiting - we had another marvellous Easter, with a number of dogs stealing chocolate Easter eggs, and one dog eating a complete pack of hot cross buns. And she wasn't even a Labrador. Fortunately I have a strong stomach and the smell of semi-digested chocolate has not put me off my own chocolate habit.


Every season brings with it specific problems. Spring brings out the allergies, fleas, and ticks. Can't wait for summer and all the grass seeds that will need removing from ears and between toes!

Karen Kappen

THE CHEMISTRY OF SLUG PELLETS

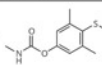
Slugs and snails are common garden pests, and gardeners often turn to slug pellets in order to fend them off. But what exactly are those blue pellets made of?

ACTIVE COMPOUNDS




METALDEHYDE

Metaldehyde is a compound that was originally used in solid fuel tablets; its slug-killing ability was discovered by accident. It is used exclusively as a pesticide against gastropods, and is the most common compound used in slug pellets.



METHIOCARB



Methiocarb is a more toxic alternative to metaldehyde, but was banned by the EU in September 2014, as it is also toxic to birds.



ACTION OF METALDEHYDE

Metaldehyde works by affecting the slug's ability to absorb water. It causes a massive loss of water, leading to dehydration, which leads to death.

4-6% of the pellets are the active ingredient - the rest is inert, along with a colourant. High levels of metaldehyde repel slugs, so piling it high can actually reduce its effectiveness.

HARMFUL EFFECTS

Metaldehyde is not just toxic to slugs and snails - it's also toxic to mammals, and pets are often made ill by eating pellets. It's toxic to humans too, causing unpleasant symptoms if consumed. Low concentrations have been found in drinking water, but below the level that would cause harm. Its residues are not permitted in crops for human consumption in the UK.


ALTERNATIVES

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ALUMINIUM SULFATE

$FePO_4$

IRON PHOSPHATE



CAFFEINE

Alternatives used include aluminium sulfate, which is only effective against small slugs, and iron phosphate, naturally occurring in our soils. Iron phosphate can also be used. Oddly enough, caffeine is also surprisingly effective at killing slugs and snails in a 10% solution.

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Slug pellets made by CH Green. For more information, please visit www.chgreen.co.uk, shared under a Creative Commons Attribution license.

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CHILDREN'S CHARITY CEILIDH

Coming to Tiddy Hall in September

A ceilidh is coming to Ascott...

The event is in support of 'Jennie's Children's Trust', a charity that was formed over twenty years ago by Jennie Jones to give the experience of a seaside holiday to children in need of respite care.

The concept is simple, to provide a place where children who have suffered trauma can relax, recover and enjoy freedom and fresh air within the peaceful countryside and beaches of Pembrokeshire. The reality is, of course, complex. The children arrive tired with a myriad of recollections

which might include long stays in hospital, painful operations, bereavement or, for refugees, memories of war and of leaving home, family and country.

All come with the expectation of seeing the sea and of having a holiday. It is also a holiday for their parents. The Trust provides the care, accommodation, food and outings that include horse-riding, boat trips, picnics and beach games. Also available is a listening ear and by the end of each family's week there has usually evolved a great deal of laughter.

The Trust gained the support of some well known names: Dame Judi Dench, Julie Christie, Sir Harry Secombe, Dr. Anthony Storr among others and over the years they contributed to fund-raising concerts and events. This year an entertaining **ceilidh** is planned at **Tiddy Hall on 17th September** which will include **a two-course meal** and cost **£15.00**. A bar will be available and notices will go up in the village nearer the time. For now, please put the date in your diary – and remember how it felt to frolic about by the sea!



Memories of 'Bob' Barrett

1928 – 2016.

Although age and ill health slowed him down in recent years the Bob who we remember was like a supercharged human being, always on the go, never still, he faced all aspects of life with keen enthusiasm.

Many of us face up to setbacks with a moan and a groan but with Bob such problems were quickly tackled with a joke and a smile.

One of the leading farmers in the district, formerly of Home Farm, later of Fernhill Farm, Shipton, he was also very active on the social side, amongst other activities he served on the Shipton Parish council, he represented Ascott and Shipton on the District Council, he became a chapel preacher and was not only involved in supporting Shipton Cricket Club, he also provided sons and grandsons to boost the teams.

On the personal side, on Honeydale Farm in the middle of the 1950s, we still harvested our crops in the traditional way, with a binding machine tying the sheaves which were then stood up to dry before being carried on a wagon to the rickyard. The ricks were then thatched and later threshed. A lot of work was involved and by the 1960s my parents were no longer young so we decided to have the crops combined. Our usual contractor was too busy to come to us in the foreseeable future. We said, "Let's ask Bob Barrett." Bob's answer was, "Yes. We can do your harvest," and with family members he did it for about 50 years. Most small farmers had to wait for a harvest contractor. Not us, we usually had a phone call from Bob. "How ripe is your corn? How soon can we come out and cut it?" On many occasions he was prepared to leave his own crops and cut ours while they were nice and dry, also finding us storage room and handling facilities.

He also did our crop spraying, manure spreading and came with a forklift to offload our bags of seed and fertiliser.

He greatly enjoyed the view from Honeydale Farm and we had a very friendly arrangement.

I know that my life on the farm was made much easier by all this timely help!

Thank you, Bob. A friend indeed.

Jim Pearse

How Times Change!

By the time you read this, it could be the telephone kiosk which stood just around the corner at the bottom of Church View, may well be gone. A notice informed the village the telephone had not been used since 2012. I remember when the first one was installed soon after the Second World War. It was a traditional one, bright red with small glass panels. After the War there was a great need for a public telephone in Ascott. Until then people would go to the Swan or Churchill Arms if they wanted to make an important call.

The telegram was still in use as an important way of getting news quickly to family or friends. Mr Wiggins at the Shipton Post Office provided this service. For many when we saw his car in Ascott we would think what family was going to receive bad news of someone's death. This anxiety must have reached its peak during 1914 – 1918.

In the mid nineteen forties a family moved into Church View, the father worked as a farm labourer for Ivor Warner at College Farm now Meadowbank. The family could be described as being a bit rough, that being a bit poorer than the rest of us manual worker or blue collar workers' families in the village. The eldest boy in this family was about fourteen. Soon after the kiosk was installed it became a novelty for the boys in the village, and boys like to get into mischief. A pane of glass was smashed in the kiosk. The police were involved. The fourteen year old boy was

charged with the offence.. He was sent to Approved School and called a juvenile delinquent. Even in those days of the cane still being used in schools and harsher discipline generally for children, many people in the village felt sorry for the boy.

Growing up in Ascott in those early post war years, for me, most of the time were the days of bliss. But there were some things I now feel ashamed of. Some of us going to school were told to keep away from certain families who were poor and irresponsible. Poor innocent little souls. They ran around with hardly any clothes even on a cold winter's day and often had no shoes on their feet, and they smelt. They had not seen soap or water from one month to another. I have mentioned no-one was flush with money and Ascott was always the poorer of the Wychwood villages. Jacket and trousers were often patched but we were kept clean.

My conclusion. We are not born equal although the church may preach we are. How can we all get an equal start? Maybe it will be impossible but it doesn't mean we should stop trying. I don't think equality will be achieved by giving everyone a mobile phone.

Fred Russell.

P.S. Does anyone remember Jimmy and his wonderful magic patch in the Beano comic? The magic patch on the seat of his trousers transported him back to events in history.

Ascott under Wychwood PC News

I am writing overlooking a garden full of colour, new beginnings and optimism. And that is how I feel about the Parish Council news this season. We have been working away at several projects for quite a while and at times have felt that there was no end or progress in sight, but now with the cold seasons behind us, the picture is clearing and we have some good news.

PLAYING FIELD DRAINAGE

We were set a challenge by Sport England to raise more funds within the community and through other grant funders before they would consider raising their offer. We are thrilled to report that the community did rise to the challenge and so far has raised £14,350 through its organisations, personal pledges and fund-raising events. We are particularly grateful to Windrush Valley School which has pledged funds equal to the Parish Council contribution. Sport England was impressed by our pledges and has raised its grant offer to £65,000. This means that we have raised the required amount for the main project (with other fundraisers to come). The Parish Council has agreed unanimously to go ahead with the scheme this summer. Timings are yet to be confirmed and notices will be posted.

If you would like to support this project do think about coming to Juliet Heseltine's Art Talk on 24 June in the Swan at Ascott (full details within this Grape-

vine), holding an event yourselves or making a personal pledge. Absolutely every little helps to build the total and we would still love to raise more so that we can achieve a few extra improvements to the site while contractors are there.

THE POUND WALL

Work has started on re-building the last derelict wall of the Pound. So far the work has involved stripping all the old stone and vegetation; re-building begins mid-May and will take around 2-3 months, depending on the number of volunteers. Tremendous thanks must go to the Cotswolds Wardens who are providing most of the funds and the Wychwood Project whose expert volunteers are taking the lead and teaching our Ascott volunteers. It is a wonderful way of helping to conserve our local environment and history, so come along if you are interested – every Monday or Tuesday, 9.30-3pm, weather permitting. Wear strong gloves, strong shoes, working clothes and knee pads if you have them.

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL CUTS

Is it the sun or do I detect a slight lifting of the gloom!!.....

HWRCs (or 'tips' to normal people)

OCC did consider reducing the number of tips down to 3 within the whole county and that would have meant losing the tip beyond Witney (Dix Pit). Their autumn consultation convinced them that this would end up being more costly than the current

arrangement and so they will not close any HWRCs at the moment. Sadly, they will also not build a new tip to replace Dean Pit. They have introduced a slight change to times to all HWRCs – open every day from 8am-5pm extending to 8pm on Thursdays and this extension runs from 7 April - 29 September. We have just learnt that Dix Pit is doing some renovations until late June so only half the bays are in use.

Roads, Pavements, Kerbs and Verges

OCC had considered asking Parish Councils to undertake all jobs in this category. But, after many local consultation meetings around the County, OCC has accepted that small Parishes cannot undertake certain work safely and to a County standard which would be safe to road users and pedestrians. The Highways Dept is impressed by a machine called the ‘Dragon’ (seen on local TV) which deals with potholes and cracks more efficiently than the current system and they hope to purchase one to keep permanently within Oxfordshire.

We have had regular complaints about large vehicles spoiling our kerbstones, pavements and verges. On each occasion we have lobbied the company involved and we have had many conversations with OCC about safe and sustainable ways to stop large vehicles mounting the pavements and verges. So far we have not found an easy answer but we will keep trying. OCC has responded well to replacing the kerbstones. They are wanting to devolve responsibility for cutting the verges on the edge of villages and we are in discussions now. This gives us an opportunity to develop wildflower verges in places but consideration must also be

given to safety. If we do not take on this task OCC will only cut the verges around the main road junctions (‘splays’).

OCC has responded to the problems of more and more unsuitable vehicles passing through the villages by launching a free online mapping tool to help companies select the most appropriate routes for their journeys in Oxfordshire. It’s a start!

Buses

All subsidies have now been removed. This does not mean that all rural buses will stop but the companies will have to find ways of making the buses viable. The GoRide service to Charlbury has announced that it will stop. Villager services can continue unchanged until next year. We are liaising with the Villager under the umbrella of Oxfordshire Together – a scheme set up by OCC to find ways to keep essential services despite OCC budget cuts and led in this area by C Cllr Rodney Rose. We are trying to find a way for Ascott to link into routes at times that our village bus users really want. Pulhams have yet to engage with discussions.

Wychwood Day Centre

Funding is secure for the time being but they will lose their OCC grant in 12 months’ time. The trustees are working very hard to find a way to keep the Day Centre viable for years to come and are very grateful to the Wychwood villages for their support.

PHONE BOX

BT applied to WODC Planning for permission to remove the phone box in Shipton Road. It has not been working for over 2 years as the electricity supply

was damaged during the floods of 2007 and the BT temporary fix did not last. The PC has never received a complaint about the phone being out of order and there were no objections to the Planning Notice. Consequently, the phone box will be removed within the next 12 months.

VILLAGE HELPERS

A lot of groundwork in the village is undertaken by a large band of volunteers and we are extremely grateful to everyone involved. This quarter we have concentrated on cutting back vegetation around the perimeter of the playing field and continuing to develop the bank opposite the Signal Box.

There are so many jobs that have been done, large and small – cutting, weeding and planting; installing hard landscaping and maintaining wooden structures; donating plants and manure; removing vegetation and offering bonfire space; supplying hot drinks and doing repairs the list goes on. Not everything involves groundwork – there will be quite a lot of painting to be done within the next 12 months. We do call specific sessions but many of our Helpers prefer to be given a task which they do when it suits them.

If anyone would like to put their name on the list of Helpers there is never any pressure to turn up or give masses of time. We appreciate any time and effort you can give and everyone seems to take pleasure from the improvements we have made.

Contact Philippa Carter.

STATION GARDENING

Work here is obviously not on village public land but it was started in 2012

upon request from a resident and the Chair of the Village Charity. The resident, Yvette Keaufling (*now moved away*), had organised an Open Gardens event in the village and wanted the money raised to be used to improve the appearance of the village, particularly around the station after the line had been re-doubled. The Village Charity has been custodian of this money. The garden at the station also attracted money from Network Rail and First Great Western and this has been kept in a designated fund by the Parish Council.

We also started to clear the bank opposite the signal box to improve traffic sight lines, to keep the pavement free from brambles, to keep the newly lined culvert clear and to improve the welcome into the village. Most plants and some landscaping materials have been donated and any money needed is supplied by Network Rail, kept in the same designated fund.

We hope that you take time to enjoy our efforts and may want to help us on occasions. Do get in touch.

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

This was held on 25 April and attended by a number of representatives of the village organisations. The Parish Council, County and District Councillors and Organisations report on all their activities for the year and there is chance for questions and answers. If you are interested in village activities and politics this is the meeting to attend next year!

PLANNING

Many of the questions at the APM were about the possibility of housing development and were directed at our District Councillor, Tom Simcox. He has always been clear that Ascott-under-Wychwood is rated by WODC as not suitable for large

development as its amenities, infra-structure and access are very limited. Also, this Parish Council has taken every opportunity to remind the Planning Department of the dangers of too much extra building causing run-off flooding. Cllr Simcox did not rule out the possibility of

a small number of new houses being built but there have been no planning applications to date. Some residents believe that some increase to our population would be a benefit to the village, giving more support to our shop, pub, church, organisations, events etc. Food for thought.

Joint Councillors' Surgeries

None forecast for this period

Parish Council:

Philippa Carter (Chairman)

830344

Peter Rance

831113

Sandy Timms

831870

Mark Tribe

359769

Angela Barnes (Parish Clerk)

01608 641045

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MID-MONTH MEDITATION IN ASCOTT

‘Meditation enables us to take a step back from ourselves, and put things in perspective.’

‘Meditation is seeing things as they really are, rather than as we think we want them to be.’

‘Above all, meditation belongs at the heart of life.’

(Nicholas Buxton, *The Wilderness Within – Meditation and modern life*)

Not many know about the new monthly event in the centre of our village, held at the church but designed for anyone of any faith or worldview who would value a time of silence. The Mid Month Meditation (MMM) is currently scheduled for the third Wednesday of each month and lasts for about 35 minutes, from 6.15pm. For those of us whose lives are generally fast, frantic and noisy, as well as for those whose inner life has some of the same characteristics, this can be a welcome period to sit quietly and still our minds.

The three quotations above illustrate what unites us. If you go along to a MMM, you’ll find on your way in a laminated introductory page of A4 which invites you to ‘join this period of quiet in whatever way suits you’. It goes on:

We may start with some sentences from a Christian or spiritual source but the substance is about meditation or contemplation and the words will hopefully either inspire us or just help us to learn from those with more experience.

Borrowing from the form of a Quaker meeting, anyone is welcome to break the silence in order to share thoughts or the inspiration of the moment.

Or you may just want to practise mindfulness or any other form of meditation which works for you.

Exploiting this beautiful old sacred building to the full, we tend to sit in the choir stalls in monastic or collegiate fashion. Very often, after the introductory words to mark the start of the meditation, there is a relaxing half-hour of silence broken only by birdsong from the churchyard or a passing train on the Cotswold line. There may only be a handful of us and it is very informal.

To know more you are welcome to call **Nigel Braithwaite on 831282** or to email **david.soward@gmail.com**.

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The Wychwood Singers

The Wychwood Singers, your local choir, now has 58 members and we meet every Tuesday in the New Beaconsfield Hall Shipton under Wychwood from 1pm to 2.30pm. We sing to enjoy ourselves but also strive to improve our ability and enhance our repertoire. New members are always welcome and no audition is necessary.

We are in need of some help and would ask if there is anyone locally who could help us.

We need an accompanist for our weekly practice - if you can help please contact Robin Martin Oliver on 01993 830313 or 07890948122.

We would like to find someone who could refresh our website - if you could help please contact Joanna van de Poll on 01993 830090.

C'EST LA VIE

Nigel Wild looks back after three years of living in south-west France

When we came to Ascott in 1996, I said I didn't want to move house again for at least five years, That's why we stayed for 16!

Our long term aim was to settle in France and with every visit, our love of the country grew stronger. We viewed houses from Normandy to Narbonne and we fell hook, line and sinker for the Midi-Pyrénées region and in particular the Aveyron, some 80 miles east of its capital Toulouse.

Warm coloured stone houses, fortified towns and villages known as bastides, rolling hills and valleys, rivers and streams, often breathtaking scenery, coupled with a temperate climate, it just ticked all the boxes. To cap it all, we were 99% hooked on a house we had seen and which we could rent while we decided.

In April 2013, we moved lock, stock and barrel to Vabre Tizac, becoming the 18th British family in and around the village. Spring in this part of the world is usually well established by April, with temperatures cracking 20C, but the icy tentacles stretching across Europe stubbornly refused to relinquish their grip. Day after day, it rained and the normally splendid 360 degree views from our house were blotted out. Scarcely an inch of floor was visible, with cartons, furniture and a host of accoutrements taking up all the available space. So we bought a lot of wine, cranked up the log fire and the central

heating and set about creating some order from the chaos.

Somehow though, it felt immediately like home. Much to our delight, our two cats, who had flown in courtesy of British Airways, obviously felt the same. So we bought the joint.

The house, a 19thC barn converted in the 1970s, had been home to maman, who had died some three or four years previously. Elderly and infirm, she had lived on just one of the three floors and the family had kept things ticking over. She left the house to her three daughters, Marie Rose who lives within sight of the property, Nicole who is a Paris resident and Françoise who inhabits nearby St Salvadou.

Buying French property is much easier than in England and Wales and consists of the *compromis de vente* or exchange of contracts, followed by the *acte de vente* or completion. The French end went very smoothly, but our British bank made serious errors, despite us spending much time and effort on setting things up before we emigrated.

Marie Rose and a whole squadron of her family spent an hilarious day with us clearing out maman's furniture and effects, a day which included dismantling the staircase twice to extract large bits of furniture.

Empty houses gather dust and vacant stone ones even more, so Operation Augean Stables began. The major living area is the first floor, which contains a spacious lounge/diner, the master bedroom, a bathroom and toilet and the kitchen. The second storey contains three

bedrooms and a small bathroom. The entire ground floor is given over to a garage and *caves*. Cleaning the living areas was no mean task and for the time being, we paid little attention to the second floor, as it was then purely storage. But – and it was a big but – the *caves* were something else. Papa, who had died quite some while ago, was not only an electrician but a tinkerer and inventor. Over 40 years, he had accumulated mountains of junk. While I salvaged any valuable bits, we calculate that we took some 200kgs of scrap metal to the local tip for recycling. Floors and walls were inches deep in dust. Add to that his habit of punching spikes and nails into walls as shelf supports and hooks, which made walking around a hazardous business. My angle grinder more than earned its keep in removing hundreds of protrusions and preserving my eyesight. All told, it was 18 months before the *caves* were finally shipshape.

High on our agenda was finding tradesmen to demolish the walls between the main bathroom and toilet, to rewire the house, to plumb the new en-suite and a supplier to make new windows and doors. We also needed a new *fosse septique* or septic tank, but that had been resolved prior to purchase as a new *fosse* within a year of the sale was a legal requirement. *Fosses septiques* are very common in rural areas, with mains drainage to be found only in towns and villages. These are not tanks that need pumping out, they biodegrade waste matter into grey water.

Finding the good guys in France is just the same as UK. Word of mouth is the best advertisement, the top ones are always busy and there is a French version of the book of excuses as to why they have not come to site as agreed. A local

company made us superb double-glazed fenestration in an oak effect PVC so life-like that many visitors cannot believe it is not real wood. Installation was done in two days with little disruption, but strangely, window installers in France do not make good as in UK. I sealed off the external gaps within days, but filling in over the foam rubber interior sealing took quite a while longer.

The king of *fosses septiques*, one Claude Foissac, seamlessly installed our new drainage in a week. An amiable bear of a man, he did it all himself, saying he only trusted his own work. The sole trace left behind of his presence was a bald expanse instead of lawn, but it all reseeded successfully the following Spring.

After several false starts for a builder, an electrician and a plumber, we were recommended to a couple of Brits, one a locally based builder and the other a qualified electrician and plumber. The sparks had emigrated to France with his family as a child and was bilingual English/French. All went well for the first few days and the demolition was completed. Then we had a major falling out with the builder over the contract and he stormed off, handing over the entire job to his mate. Fortunately, sparky had acquired some building skills and I helped him; also, I have a considerable armoury of power and hand tools, which filled the gaps left by the builder.

The old electrics were completely shot and the more sparky delved, the more horrors came to light. French electrics are totally different to UK; ring mains and daisy chain lighting systems are banned. The familiar grey twin and earth we see in UK is absent, instead there are single wires of various colours and strict rules about the use of each colour. Because we had to

keep the existing circuits going to provide power during the rewire, it meant cutting new chases and boxes in stone walls. Day after day, week after week, the house resounded to the sound of the diamond saw and the Kango drill, accompanied by dust clouds of Saharan proportions. In hindsight, we should have rented a bolthole while the work was being done. Our cats found hidey holes to escape the mayhem, but it really upset them.

Whoever had wired the house was an A-grade bodger. French wiring demands junction boxes at certain points and these he had created by chiselling out spaces in the stone walls. Into these he had fed conduits and wires; the latter he joined by twisting them together and taping the bare wires. The coup de grâce was to jam them all into the space and screw a wooden board over the top. We were sitting on a time bomb and the number of scorched wires and insulation we uncovered were legion.

Sparky worked his socks off, but he worked in chaos. When all our attempts to make him more organised and clear up at day's end came to naught, we resigned ourselves to doing it for him. It was murder, the whole four and a half months the nadir of our time in France. But just before Christmas 2013, it all came together and we got our house back. So exhausted were we that there was no Christmas tree, a mere handful of decorations and we simply enjoyed a sumptuous Christmas dinner, good wine and the chance to be a family once more.

Our local roofer is a lovely man, but makes the Scarlet Pimpernel look like an amateur. His promises to come and fix the various leaks were rarely honoured because he was choc a bloc with work following a mega tempest that had torn

off whole roofs in nearby villages. Roofs hereabouts – ours included – are lauze, stone tiles half to three quarters of an inch thick. These are nailed to elm roofing boards and despite no sarking felt, such roofs are watertight if correctly set. Over time, we did manage to get Mr Bousquié to sort out a number of problems and we now enjoy a leak-free existence.

Buying such things as new kitchens in France is not the same as dear old Blighty. For starters, hardware of any kind is generally far more expensive en France. Big stores like IKEA are to be found only in large cities like Toulouse and delivery charges are steep. French businesses hold less stock than we Brits are used to and buying anything in May or August is a nightmare. May has no less than six public holidays and while the actual day may be at a weekend, people tack on days before and after the event. Thus businesses may be closed before and after the holiday itself. France goes on holiday en masse during August, so any item not in stock will not appear before mid-September.

We bought our new kitchen from IKEA, bringing back 60% in the Focus. The balance was put on order and delivered free of charge a month later. Fortunately, this included the worktops, as we could not have carried three metre lengths of worktop on the car. This is why trailers are so popular in France.

But enough of this building malarkey! We both retired from busy, often hectic careers to enjoy a slower pace of life in France. So, does the dream of *la vie française* match expectations? Certainly. Living in l'Hexagone, as the French often term it, is rather like Britain in the 1960s or 70s. Everyone has time for everyone else and stopping for a chat is *de rigueur*.

Bar the big cities, there is not the rushing around and pressure of the UK, nor the density of traffic. This is a resolutely rural area and it is not uncommon to drive for several miles without encountering another vehicle, even on the equivalent of an A-road. France is four times the size of UK and about the same population, so the inhabitants are scattered over a far wider landscape. Farming is big business, such that France contributes 18% of the EU's agricultural output.

The French are truly lovely people, proud and delighted that we have chosen to live in their country and bend over backwards to help us *rosbifs*. Our farmer neighbours are peerless, helping to fell trees, build a drive and parking area and providing logs. They turn up at regular intervals with all kinds of produce, pots of honey or a dozen eggs. This they are pleased to do as our neighbours and demand nothing in return. Nonetheless, a bottle of whisky or a wickedly sticky tart from the *pâtisserie* as a thank-you go down well.

A proud and strong race, they enjoy powerful bonds of community. The recent terrorist attacks have served only to strengthen those bonds and they refuse to be cowed.

Save the odd curmudgeon to be found anywhere, they are exceedingly polite. A handshake is the minimum greeting and male and female friends exchange three kisses on both cheeks.

The key to success for expatriates living here is to integrate, when in Rome and all that. To do so, you must learn the language. Fluency is not essential; if you try, the French will meet you half way. Compared to ten years ago, more French now speak English to some degree and

want to practice their skills. Thus conversations can often be in both languages. Learning French is not that easy and the people themselves will tell you it is a difficult tongue that many French do not speak well. I spoke good but not fluent French before I came and my grammar and vocabulary have improved markedly. I continue to study by Linguaphone, watch French TV and read French newspapers. My wife Cathy had little of the language, but found a good language school and made a quantum leap. Now our *amis français* remark on her skills. I have to say though, that we are surprised at how many expats pay little attention to acquiring French, even after being here for years.

Good food is a mainstay of *la belle France* and in this region, the beef, pork, veal and lamb are succulent. Fruit and vegetables are similarly good and found at any of the innumerable markets in the Aveyron. Eating out is inexpensive, a typical three course lunch costs around €13 which includes a carafe of wine. The wine, ah the wine... At €4, you are spoilt for choice for really good wines that would set you back £10 or £11 in Britain.

The healthcare matches its reputation. Hospitals and clinics are well staffed and GPs do not suffer the huge pressures of a typical NHS doctor. Your doctor has time for you and the emphasis is on preventative medicine. Every visit involves a checkup and there are well established screening programmes for cancer and heart disease. Consultants are just a phone call away and appointments are usually within days rather than weeks. The only downside is that such care comes at a price and social security charges are pretty heavy.

Regrettably, France struggles to pull out of recession. Years of socialist ideals, tax, social security and employment law regimes that are not business friendly, all combine to hamper competitiveness and encourage the black economy. Mr. Hollande has been a very poor president. Yet France has many really good ideas and products just aching to be given the chance to shine. We can only hope that in

2017, a new president will be elected who will take the draconian steps necessary for widespread reform.

We still love our native country and naturally, there are things that we miss. But this is now truly home. Would we recommend moving to France? *Absolument!*

Nigel Wild



**WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Photographers invited to capture the Oxfordshire Cotswolds

With Spring almost upon us and the focus on tourism, the Cotswold and West Oxfordshire District Council tourism team are on the lookout for some iconic images of our glorious rural landscape, lively events and wonderful local towns.

A newly launched 2016 competition is offering keen amateur photographers of all ages the opportunity to capture stunning images of the local area. There are five different categories and competitors can enter up to ten images.

The winning photos will be used to promote local tourism in the coming year and will also feature in 2017 publications that entice visitors to the area.

One overall winner will receive a fantastic prize package which includes a luxurious spa treatment and refreshments voucher at The Cotswold House Hotel in Chipping Campden, and a family pass to Adam Henson's Cotswold Farm Park.

Additionally, the owner of the winning image will receive a special canvas picture of the photograph, courtesy of Blueprint Imaging in Witney who have been a regular supporter of the competition over the years.

Over page

Martin Adams from Blueprint Imaging in Witney said, “We are proud to be sponsoring the competition once again. The standard of photography is superb and something we look forward to being part of each year”.

Cllr James Mills, Cabinet Member responsible for Tourism at West Oxfordshire District Council said, “We are looking forward to seeing entries coming in that will show off our heritage and beautiful countryside, which will of course, help us promote and encourage tourism. We are very grateful to our sponsors for donating such generous prizes”.

Entry information

Competition entrants can focus on any of the following themes:

1. Village life – capturing rural life in our beautiful villages, local people and distinctive character.
2. Beautiful towns - showcasing our market towns across the area.
3. Taste of the area – featuring the best of local food and drink, local produce, farmers’ markets, pubs and inns, restaurants, and tearooms.
4. Live events – encompassing village fetes, food, music, arts, literature festivals, sports, quirky events.
5. Stunning rural landscapes – our glorious countryside and outdoor pursuits, such as for walking, horse riding, and cycling.

So, if you are an amateur photographer with some fabulous shots to share, or a beginner with a unique image you are proud of, then pick up an entry form from your local Visitor Information Centre or visit www.oxfordshirecotswolds.org/photocomp for details about how to enter.

Closing date for entry is Friday 10 June 2016.

Previous year’s competition winner

West Oxfordshire District Council has been running the competition for many years. The 2015 winner was Guy Austin of South Leigh for the photograph he took in the ground of Blenheim Park on a cold winter’s day.

The photograph was picked from more than 270 entries to the competition. It has been used during the year to help publicise the local area as a tourist destination.

Further information:

Communications: T: 01993 861615 / 861616 or Email:
communications@westoxon.gov.uk

Visit our news centre at www.westoxon.gov.uk/news

Ascott Football Club

Ascott men's football club is thriving with a new reserve side starting this year in division 4. It has done fantastically well and is holding its own. The first team has stormed through the Division 3 league this year becoming champions with 2 games left and has also got into the final of the Supplementary Cup final on the 7th May, which is being held at Northleigh football ground with a 3 o'clock kick-off. They would be grateful for your support.

The Ascott youth football team is growing in size with 3 new coaches and 2 new teams being created; the under 14s and the under 10s which is fantastic. If there are any children in that age group we would like see you on a Sunday morning. We are still continuing with the 5s 6s 7s and 8s mini soccer which is going really well, so if there are any young boys or girls wanting to start playing football or are not very confident of their ability, don't worry we take all abilities because it's all !!FUN!!

The youth team and parents has just completed a sponsored walk in aid of the recreation ground drainage scheme raising £700 pounds. The boys and girls did really well completing a 6 mile route to Chilson and back to the village, so well done to the kids. I would also like to say a BIG THANK YOU to the parents who have raised £2,000 pounds to fund kit and equipment to keep us going. We are looking for a sponsor or sponsors so we can continue to develop our teams, so if you would like to see your local side grow please come and see us or contact us. Also I would like to say a massive THANK YOU to the SWAN pub in Ascott who took the two men's teams in after the games every Saturday and has sponsored us with a new football kit and track-suite tops for both teams.

I would also like to thank Laurence Mellor and Pippa Carter who have been working very hard on the drainage scheme for the football ground hopefully turning the ground into a little WEMBLEY instead of a paddy field! This will help the football club develop. Unfortunately we will have to vacate the ground whilst work is going ahead so we will be gone for a season to Burford pitch for the men's team. We are still seeking venues for the youth's teams.

If you are looking for a club or a team to play for or to sponsor or you want get involved with work behind the scenes you would be very welcome, please contact Mike Ody on 01993830170 or 07928722367 or email finalgoal7@aol.com.

Mike Ody





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HARRY HONEYBONE

A BOY GROWING UP IN ASCOTT IN THE LATE 1880s Part 6

(Harry continues his Life History in his own words and punctuation.)

“I will mention here that to the allotments or in connection with the allotments was a barn, where the allotment holders stored corn, wheat, barley whatever it may be; barley was grown to feed the pigs, wheat to make bread. After the harvest each one in their turn threshed their corn in this barn by using what they called a flail. This consisted of two stout sticks joined together in the centre, end on, so that taking hold of one stick and swinging it round, the other could be brought down its whole length on the floor. By this means the corn was knocked out, quite primitive this method.

Another means of ploughing perhaps you do not know about, was by the breast plough. This consisted of a thick beam of wood, about five feet in length, perhaps four inches in diameter, round or square as the case may be. There was a T piece at the manual end with sufficient handhold for both hands, the other end had an iron or steel plate, perhaps a foot in width, triangular in shape with a sharpened edge on two sides of the point; the angle with which it was shaped caused the iron plate to lie on the ground when the other end was the height of the back of the man using it. Round his waist he wore a body belt to which was attached a square piece of leather. Fastened to this vertically were two thick pieces of wood which took the force of the impact when the person using it butting into it much as an intermittent arm of a pump pumping

up against the cylinder end. After taking two or three jerks at it there would be sufficient soil on it to fill the plate. This was turned over much in the same way that the shape of the ordinary plough turned over the soil as it progressed along the field. This article was very primitive and it could not turn the soil over to any great depth. As you can imagine it was hard laborious work ploughing along the soil three or four inches deep and about nine or twelve inches in width, the only means of propulsion being by butting it along by your body.

Sometimes during wet days, it rained in the morning and looked likely for being wet the whole day, we did not turn out in the morning with the horses. We were set to do odd jobs about the farmstead but nearly always as soon as the household was aroused and out and about. It used to be the cowman's job every morning to waken the Master. He used to call, “Master, Master,” until there was a response. Then the keys were let down on a piece of string to unlock the various establishments. As soon as breakfast was over when they knew I was not in the fields, they used to send for me into the kitchen, there they would plonk about twenty pairs of boots and shoes all covered with soil and dirt of all descriptions. I must mention here that they, anytime both winter and summer took boarders in from town. They came there for their holidays, no doubt it was cheap. They had the privilege of roaming about anywhere they liked on the farm, the straw in the barn hummed at times through the idle beggars

passing their urine there-on, too idle to go outside. There were ladders to get to the top with and there they were, youths and maidens, men and women romping about in semi-darkness, rolling each other about on the straw. These people, some of them, came year after year. But I think it was really my own fault. I was always as thorough as possible with my work. I used to clean their boots too well, in fact I made them shine (and it was with old fashioned Martin's blacking) so well that one day some-one opened their purse string and sent me in the large tip of two-pence, the only time anyone gave me anything. In addition to boot cleaning there was coal to get in, wood to chop and all the necessary drudgery work about the home. I detested the very idea.

On one occasion during Christmas time, the blacksmith invited we farm boys (we used to take him all the year round various implements to repair, finding him plenty of work to do) to supper. With his house being small a few of us were invited each night. There was cold meat, cheese, pickles and in addition, over the fire, he warmed up some elderberry wine. When sweetened it was quite palatable. After supper we went out to go home but I had not got very far when up came the ground and hit me in the face, but I soon got over it. I lost one of my friends rather suddenly, he worked on the farm across the railway line, Lardner's. One day they were leading manure from the farm to the fields, a very rough day. He had to cross the river by means of an old flat wood bridge, a gate at one side of the river for the purpose of keeping in the cattle. It was surmised that he was opening this gate when there came a gust of wind which took him and the gate across the river, smashing down the post which was erected to prevent the gate from going

right back, the river at this particular point being twelve feet deep. No-one saw it happen but when he had not turned up where he should have done at the proper time they went in search. There were the horses but no driver. They recovered his body by dragging with drags. His name was John Pratley.

Another thing I used to detest was going, at the end of a day's work, to the saddlers at Shipton, which meant being on the dark lanes by one-self, and it was dark about there, not a glimmer anywhere. I don't know how it was but I suppose it was because they had confidence in me and could trust me to fulfil my duties honestly but I was always the one appointed to do this kind of work, especially where there was any responsibility attached to it. It was the same with the horses, all the spirited horses were put under my charge. One day whilst leading manure I was nearly done in. Just in a moment of forgetfulness (we had to lead the manure from the farm to the fields, on the highway chiefly), I was approaching the village school when something suddenly startled the horses. They sprinted to the left on which side I was, but luckily I was close to the head of the first one. In an instant I had hold of the rein and checked their progress but not before me, horses and cart were in a collision with a stone wall which retarded their progress somewhat. There was no help for it, I was between them and the wall but I held on to the rein and checked them. There was some kind of affection between me and my team, they would follow me anywhere and rub their noses against my jacket. They would do anything for me, even if they were loose in the farm-yard or in the field and I went and called to them they would come along and allow me to fondle them, these were the ones I

was always with. Some people say animals have no sense but one day I went to feed an old mare and an old horse, the oldest on the farm; they were loose in what we called a loose box, it was spring time, their feed being lints or vetches as they were commonly called. I took one fork full, as much as I could carry, and placed it in the manger by the side of the old horse. Going back to fetch another lot for the mare but on turning round before leaving the place I saw the old horse take hold with its mouth the portion I had placed for him and pull it up to the manger towards the old mare, then they both commenced to feed off it; there is socialism even amongst horses.

On another occasion I was nearly done, we many times, during the winter months, had to go to Chipping Norton with loads of barley for malting purposes, to Hitchman's Brewery. It was always a day's work, six miles each way, with a heavy load one way and mostly uphill and it was always our team which was allocated to the task, of course it was a welcome change from field work. We always put up at the pub for lunch, putting the horses up in the stables for a feed. I had to walk both ways seeing that the law said that you must have control of the horses, either in close attention or in close proximity to them or their reins; being four horses in single file, it meant someone being near the first horse continually, although it was lawful had I been riding the first horse. But the wagoner got into the wagon, perhaps the drop of beer he had had, not being used to it, had something to do with it. He used to wrap himself up with the bags and left me alone in charge of the four powerful spirited horses. Of course everything went well, only on this occasion we were passing a row of beech trees. This row

alongside the highway was a mile or more in length and right at the end was a fir plantation just where another road from Churchill and Sarsden forms a fork with the main road we were on. I could see through the trees, which were deciduous and deprived of their leaves, two cows coming along in the charge of a man and my horses also sensed them and they pricked up their ears. I held firmly on to the first one and kept her in check. Of course you can humour horses and take fear out of them to a certain extent, but however, things would have been alright but just as they came in sight, one of the cows mounted the other; that did it. For a second I did not know what had happened, there I was, standing in the middle of the road by myself. How they missed me I do not know, they must have sprinted somehow right to my left behind me. All four horses and wagon completely missed me. There I stood dazed in the middle of the road. I can tell you I had no sympathy with the horseman. When I came to my senses, I saw the horses tearing up on the grass verge about a hundred yards in front and going as fast as they could. I saw the horseman clinging to the wagon frightened, but I did not feel sorry for him because of his selfishness in making me walk. But however the horses stopped and all was well with the exception of some broken harness. This brings me back to the saddlers. I was sent chiefly with a donkey and cart seeing there was always a lot of broken harness; we used to carry on until we could no longer do so. This business usually meant me being alone on these lonely roads long after dark; at that time there was no compulsion to have lights on vehicles after dark, although those who could afford it had lights on, either an old horn lantern, perhaps one more up to date with glass

instead of horn. Some had paper carriage lamps which fixed in sockets in the side of the carriages, all these burnt candles. Although there was no law compelling people to have lights they had them for their own safety and to light up their way when it was exceedingly dark. I had no lights and really I was scared to death, my hair used to stand on end and my flesh go all goosey with the thought of it, I will tell you why later.

On one occasion this same team of horses that were ploughing in another field belonging to a large farmer at Leafield, whose fields adjoined that of ours. This was an extremely large farm, at one time it was all forest. One of his fields alone was more than one hundred acres in extent, he had as many as twelve to fourteen pairs of horses ploughing at one time in one field and being of various colours dotted all over the field, I think it was this that startled our horses but luck would have it they turned to the off, had they come towards me they would have got me there being no way of escape. They raced down the field smashing the plough behind them.

I have seen in this morning's paper an account of a motor smash at Northleach, this is the place where I am of the opinion that Grandad John Honeybone originated from. It is on the Oxford to Cheltenham road.

As far as recreation was concerned there was plenty of our own making, there being no organised sport apart from one cricket team: the usual amusement caterers were often on the village green, they could remain there indefinitely. It was a piece of ground, triangular in shape, well covered with grass, bounded on three sides with the highway. A man named Forrest being the chief caterer; he had the

usual merry-go-rounds, mostly rigid horses in those days often pulled round by a donkey or pony, sometimes manual labour by turning a handle with a spindle and cogs geared up to the centre. There were also swing boats, coconut shies, shooting galleries, a few stalls etc. However it paid them to come there I cannot imagine, because there were only a few coppers about. Perhaps a Penny Show would make its appearance. I have seen kiddies in our back yards give better performances many a time. The whole affair consisted of a few uprights with canvas hung around, a penny to go in. There were sometimes a few juggling tricks and sleight of hand tricks. Sometimes an old fella with a peg-leg, who came from somewhere Leafield way, would pay three or four visits in the year. He had an old booth or tent, six or seven yards long by about four or five in width. He would sit all evening playing an old fiddle, sometimes the charge would be a couple of coppers, sometimes a whip round. The old fiddler would sit there as long as anyone would stay usually a pint or quart jug by his side, he was as happy as a king. He would sleep in the old tent during the night. Most young people would turn out in the dancing booth. Many times the green would be occupied with gypsies, some with caravans others without. Of course it was free lodgings for them, plenty of good drinking water close at hand, and the public house, the Churchill Arms, not more than 50 yards away. We once got possession of a football from somewhere but we knew nothing about the rules of football. We used to kick it about anyhow, we had sides of course. There was swimming and bird nesting in the summer in addition to orchard robbing and walnut stealing. I have been seen many times but only once caught

and that was when stealing walnuts. I ran along one field over the hedge, then doubled back over another hedge into another field but along this field I could see I was losing ground so I did the next best thing, I crept into a ditch in the hedge bottom and yelled; he tried to hit me but could not manage it on account of the

hedge being in the way. During the nutting season we were always loaded up with hazel nuts but it was a risk even this bit of recreation. We used to get seen by the keeper and also by their dogs, gooseberries, currants and other small fry were a side line."

Wendy Pearse

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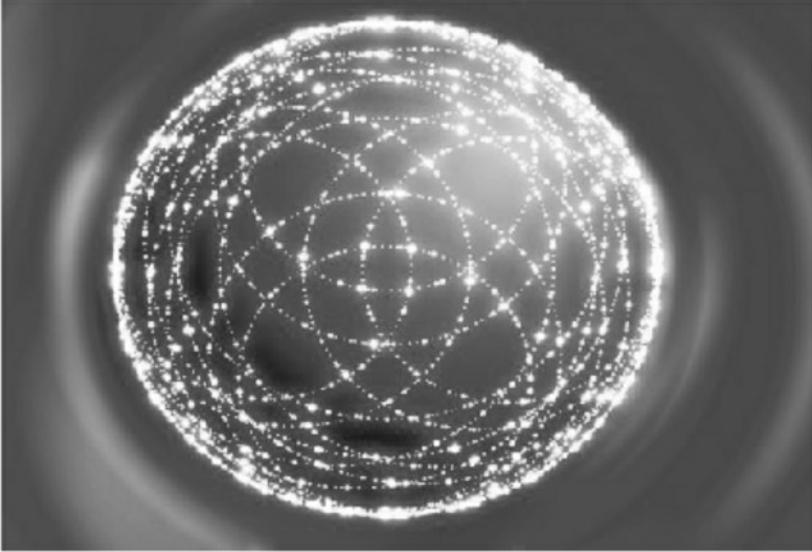
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Geese and Goslings



This pair and their family were photographed on Gripper's lake

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Wychwood Library

JUNE JULY AUGUST 2016

The Milton Fete is to be held in just a few days and Wychwood Library will be manning the book stall selling all of your wonderful donations. Come along and buy. The money raised goes towards purchasing new books for the library. We are very proud of the quality of our bookstock with lots of new items and well maintained and current reference books for you to use.

This time of the year also heralds the Summer Reading Challenge which runs from July 16th to September 17th. This year we will be celebrating 100 years of the world's greatest storyteller Roald Dahl with

“The Big Friendly Read”.



As usual children will be encouraged to read at least six library books of their choice over the summer holidays. There will be six stupendous Quentin Blake illustrated cards to collect – some are even smelly! Complete the challenge and you will get your own medal and certificate.

Join up here at Wychwood Library. It's fun! It's free! And it's local.

Look out for fantastic new books and fantabulous activities at the library throughout the summer holidays. There's a website (www.bigfriendlyread.org.uk) and an App to add to the fun too!

And, we are offering a volunteering opportunity for 13 to 24 year olds to help run this year's Summer Reading Challenge.

There will be training, workshops and support. We can provide you with references for your CV and you can work towards the Oxfordshire Young People's Award. Come in and talk to a member of staff for more information.

There is also a reading challenge for adults, A Midsummer Night's Read which is linked to Shakespeare inspired events that are being held all over the county this summer. Come in and find out more.

Just to remind you. We now have WIFI here at Wychwood Library. This is free to use and if you are here on a Wednesday morning you can have coffee and cake as well. If you would like a quiet space to get on with your work though, Monday and Friday evenings are quieter!

We have had a number of young people come along and help as volunteers in the library as part of the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. If you would like to volunteer your time, usually one hour per week, please come and see us. We really value your efforts.

We look forward to your visits at Wychwood Library.

From Ruth Gillingham and all of our wonderful volunteers. □

Opening Times

Monday 2.00 to 7.00 pm

Tuesday Closed

Wednesday 9.30 am to 1.00 pm
2.00 to 5.00 pm

Thursday

Friday 2.00 to 7.00 pm

Saturday 9.30 am to 1.00 pm

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The Ascott Village Charity



Your Village Charity- What does it do, and does it help the poor?

The village charity is still in the position to offer help to any person in the village who is embarking on further education and is in need of books or equipment for the course. They can apply to the charity to assist with the cost. All applications are dealt with in strict confidence.

Another project that may be within the charity's remit is assisting with the repair to one of the walls surrounding the Pound.

If any villager feels that the Charity could help anyone in the village with financial aid then please contact one of the trustees to discuss the application procedure. The trustees will review all applications to determine if they are within the Charity's power to assist.

johncull@wowmatters.com
elaine.byles@bioch.ox.ac.uk
keith.ravenhill@talktalk.net
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The Village Shop

Owned by the village, Run by the village, There for the village
In our 12th year of trading, the management committee, volunteers and staff send their greetings to the village community and we thank you for your continued support.

SHOP NEWS – Spring 2016

On 10th March the management committee of Ascott Village Shop welcomed Sam Stonach from Cottsway Housing to show her the new blind which had been partly financed by a £500 grant received from Cottsway's Wellcommunity Fund.

The shop management committee thanks Cottsway for their support.



Bridgette Crundwell on the left and Sam Stronach on the right



Bridgette Crundwell on the left and Sam Stronach in the middle and on the right Sally Jordan.

Maybe this is being a bit over-optimistic but with May upon us, I was expecting some warmth in the air. And yes, I can report, it has finally arrived! Let's hope an upturn in the weather is a sure sign for a wonderful summer's trading at the Village Shop.

Trading update

As you know from our regular communication, the shop is 'holding its own' albeit we are trading nearly 10% down on sales compared with 2015. Even so, we are in a stronger position for the first four months of this year compared with the corresponding period last year. Again, this is because of the amazing support and commitment of our volunteers. We have around strong cash reserves, which in a very challenging and competitive environment, is good news! Our major objective is to grow sales and very simply, we will be looking to achieve £2,500 each week. If we can do this, we will protect our cash position and this allows us to build our stock and make improvements, as we need to do so. **Please come and help us – we all have a stake in the shop's success and sustainability!**

Sales promotions

At our last management meeting, we agreed to run a flyer advertising the shop, which will go into each Grapevine edition. We want to take advantage of new season fruit and vegetables, as this will be our main promotion. We need to make the Village Shop a destination shop, in other words give our customers a reason to come to us because being where we are; passing trade is not an option! Now we have our new canopy, we have asked Pete Moss to build a folding shelf where

we can display fruit, vegetables and possible plants too. The fresh flowers have been going down a storm and we will look for local, interesting produce that will excite our regulars. Our manager, Bridgette, is also trying some new local suppliers and you will see regional food from Cotswold Traiteur. This will include fresh soups, picnic sausage rolls & tray bakes amongst lots of other goodies.

Volunteer update

We are pleased to welcome Rowena Gul-land to our team. This is in addition to Anne Asquith from Wootton and Bel Lov-el, our newest, youngest volunteer who has joined the Saturday team. Welcome to you all, we really appreciate having you with us. I would also like to say a big 'thank you' to Kathy and Rosemary who have been doing a wonderful job as our trainers. I certainly learned a lot and had some of my bad habits corrected! Finally the rota; we are so lucky to have had Jane taking care of the rota who in turn, has now safely passed the baton to Gaynor. I love the way the communication works with the shop team and the positive responses that results from it. We are indebted to you both!

Shop AGM

This will be held on Tuesday **June 21st at the Swan**. We would like to offer everyone a glass of beer or wine from 7pm and the AGM will start at 7.30pm. Sally Jordan has organised the paperwork and this will be distributed to all shareholders. As with previous AGM's, we will need nominations in advance and once the committee have been elected they, in turn, will vote in the officers. Please come along

with your views to improve the shop and consider joining our team of volunteers. Interesting to note from a recent survey that those who give service for free live longer and enjoy greater happiness!

Spotlight on a Volunteer

As one of our latest recruits, I would like to place the spotlight on Anne Asquith. Anne joined the team at the end of last year having worked previously as a volunteer at the Village shop in Wootton. Anne is a member of Mark

ing for such a long time and that we never close! Having volunteered at Wootton since its opening, Anne is well placed to make a comparison and notes many similarities such as shop attractiveness, stocking her favourite products (Woodland yoghurts & Upton Smokery) and a regular supply fresh fruit & vegetables. Anne also commented that she is very impressed with the years of commitment given by our team and had a special word for Bridgette for her all round organisation and a warm welcome!

And its goodbye from me ...

After three truly enjoyable years, first as a committee member and then as Chair of the management committee, it is now time to move on and fully engage with my day job! As this is my last shop newsletter, it just remains for me to say thank you. Thank you to our manager Bridgette who has transformed and streamlined back office support which, makes our job easier on the 'front-line'. Thank you to my management committee (past & present) for your hard work and unstinting support. A HUGE thank you to all our volunteers who keep the shop running and profitable. Finally, THANK YOU to all of you, our customers, who make the shop what it has become – a special place we can all be proud of!

I look forward to 'serving in the shop' for many years to come.

John Cull
Chairman



Tribe's Saturday team and this, after working all week, at Oxford's Balliol College where she is responsible for the alumni magazine amongst others. Anne is impressed that the shop has been go-

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Aug 20th **Jez Lowe** Tiddy Hall

£10.00 in advance/£12.00 on the door

Sept 3rd **Johnny Coppin & Mike Silver** Tiddy Hall

£12.00 in advance/£14 at the door

Sept 17th **Mark Harrison** The Swan

£6.00 in advance/£8.00 on the door

Oct 1st **Sunjay** Tiddy Hall

£10.00 in advance/£12.00 on the door

Doors 19:30hrs Start 20:00hrs

If you would like to be added to our mailing list or want any further information then please visit www.wychwoodfolkclub.com,

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NEED A LIFT LOCALLY?

A group of us have got together, calling ourselves

Ascott Car Lift Club

One of us was recently quoted a price of £15.00 for the run between Ascott and Charlbury by taxi (one way).

This is surely unacceptably high? Our names are up on the board in the shop and here we are:

Sara Arkle	831978
Ann Burleigh	831377
John Cull	831621
Nicky Coldstream	831123
Juliet Craig	831578
Sally Jordan	832003
Anne Smith	832933

Please don't hesitate to call us if you want a lift locally – we'll run you there. We may be planning a trip anyway. Some of us go regularly past the station in Charlbury or do an evening school collection in Oxford or do a shop-up in Chipping Norton or Witney. We might just feel like the ride and the company!

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Wanted: Eyes & Ears in West Oxfordshire!

Do you have an interest in the local landscape and/or planning issues? If so, the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) would love to hear from you!

CPRE West Oxfordshire District has a small committee of volunteers who monitor and respond to planning and landscape issues across the area, and provide advice and support to local communities.

We are on the lookout for a few more people to be our 'eyes and ears' on the ground, reporting back on concerns within the local area and helping to feed in to District-wide policy.

The committee meets on a quarterly basis. The input in between can be as little or as much as you like, but we would ask for a minimum of a few hours per month. You don't need any previous experience or expertise as we can provide information and training as required.

A great deal of development is proposed in the District over the next few years. CPRE is fighting hard to make sure that it is appropriate development, helping to provide genuinely affordable housing and necessary infrastructure, whilst protecting our much loved landscapes and the area's rural character.

Time to add your voice!

Want to find out more?

Just email campaign@cpreoxon.org.uk or T: 01491 612079.

We'd love to hear from you!

Helen Marshall

Director - CPRE Oxfordshire

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ASCOTT WALKERS



Ascott Walkers switches to 3rd Sunday of each month.

The village's walking group has switched to the 3rd Sunday in the month to avoid Bank Holidays so next walk is 9am on Sunday 19th June.

Visitors and dogs are welcome for a 4/5 mile walk finishing in time for a drink or optional lunch at a local pub. **PUT THE DATES IN YOUR DIARY NOW!**

Investment Club

Wychwoods Investment Club completes its first year.

After a volatile period on the UK Stock Market the new Wychwood Investment Club based at "The Swan" at Ascott under Wychwood (where a very large screen is available) is ahead of the main indices.

Chairman Designate Richard Squires from Ascott says "Considering the "crazy" market we have held our own. Like everyone else we didn't see the collapse of the oil price and the related commodities but we also made some good investments in the technology and pharmaceuticals markets."

The portfolio is now well spread looking for an upturn after the EU referendum with investments in property, commodities (looking for a recovery?!), the challenger banks and a new budget airline as well as banking on more stay at home holidays in the UK

The group which is 13 so far is seeking 2 or 3 new members who are interested in the equity markets. The joining investment is £500 with £50 added each month. The group meets over dinner the last Wednesday of the month.

Anyone who is either trading regularly and wants to exchange views, or wants to start learning, is welcome to the next meeting without any obligation to join, should call Richard Squires....01993 830 970.

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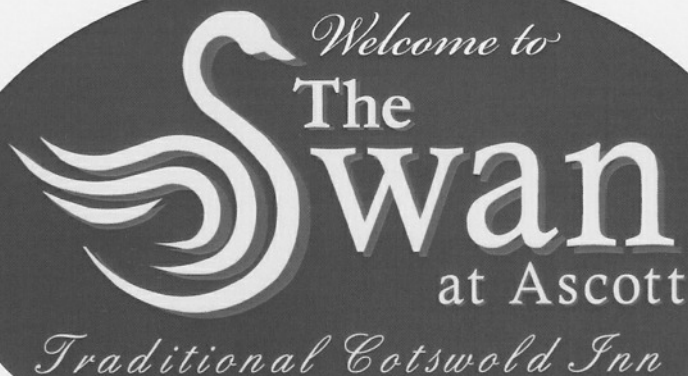
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TIDDY HALL

The Wychwood Folk Club seems to be growing from strength to strength. Early May saw the acoustic blues guitarist **Wizz Jones** mesmerise the audience with his skilful guitar playing. Jones, who has been playing and recording since the late 1950's, is said to have inspired the likes of Eric Clapton and Rob Stewart. April 2nd saw the return of **Gigspanner**. I'm told it was an excellent evening and the band played new material from their latest CD, 'Layers of Ages' which is out mid-May. **Richard Digance**, always popular, pulled in another great crowd for his second gig at Tiddy Hall while in February, English poet **Les Barker** make us laugh with his comedic poetry and parodies of popular song. All great gigs at Tiddy Hall – if you haven't yet been, give it a try – you'll have a great night!

Upcoming gigs at **Tiddy Hall**:

June 4th – Ninebarrow

August 20th – Jazz Lowe

September 3rd – Johnny Coppin & Mike Silver

If you have a child aged between 7 -14 years, don't forget **TLights** takes place at Tiddy Hall on Thursday afternoons. These are fun filled workshops, aimed at children who are interested in developing an enthusiasm for theatre, performance & the arts and help them to build confidence through drama, singing and dancing whilst encouraging communication, cooperation and team work. Please contact Jess on 07814 524069 to book a taster session.

The **Roseneath School of Music** will be holding their **Annual Summer Concert** on Saturday June 11th with special guest

Mervin Crawley on piano. Tickets, to include complimentary refreshments, are £10 and £5 for under 18's. Please contact Mrs Pauline Carter on 774568 for further information and tickets.

There will be another four sessions of **Qigong** starting on Thursday May 26th. Please contact Pam Quirke to book your place – 07780 572283.

Summer Yoga returns to Tiddy Hall on Tuesday 19th July (7.30pm-9pm) and will run for six consecutive weeks. You can contact Nikki Jackson, nikki@yogafocus.co.uk or on 07816 786656 to book your place or visit www.yogafocus.co.uk to find out more about yoga and classes in and around our area.

Sunday Tea Dances are proving popular!

Please join us on the 1st Sunday of the month, unless otherwise stated, £3.50 per person to include tea and homemade cakes! Each session starts at 2.30pm and should finish by 5pm.

And don't forget Saturday August 6th –

August 10th 2016 marks the day, when 100 years ago, Reginald Tiddy lost his life in Laventie. We are in the planning stages of arranging an evening with a Morris Side from Oxford University, with a connection to Reginald Tiddy, plus poetry, plays and music all commemorating the life of Reginald Tiddy. Please look out for posters around the village nearer the time or contact Roger Shepherd for further information – 01993 830227.

A date for your diary - Saturday September 17th! A fundraiser for a very worthy cause (please see article in this edition

of Grapevine), **Jennie's Children's Trust**, Plenty going on throughout the summer a Ceilidh with two course meal. Get those months at **your** village hall! We hope to dancing shoes on! Tickets are £15. Please see you at one of the many events!! ring Juliet on 01993 831578 for tickets and further information.

Special Events:

Saturday June 4 th	Folk Night with Ninebarrow
Saturday June 11 th	Roseneath School of Music Summer Concert
Thursday June 23 rd	Polling Station - Referendum
Tuesday July 19 th	Summer Yoga starts 7.30 pm - 9.0 pm
Saturday August 6 th	Folk in Memory of Reginald Tiddy
Saturday 20 th	Folk Night with Jezz Lowe
Saturday September 3 rd	Folk Night with Johnny Coppin & Mike Silver
Saturday September 17 th	Charity Barn Dance
	Contact Jenny Jones for tickets 01869 347962

Regular Activities:

Monday – Friday Mornings Contact: Mrs Pauline Plant 07968006451	Pre-school
Monday Afternoons 3.30pm – 6pm Contact: Pauline Carter 01993 774568	Piano Lessons
Wednesday Night 6pm – 6.45pm Contact: Simon Gidman 01993 831479	Circuits
Thursday Afternoons 4.45pm – 6.45pm Contact: Jenna McKee 07983 378883	Drama Workshop
Thursday Night 7.30pm – 8.30pm Contact: Pam Quirke 07780 572283	Qigong
Friday Afternoons 3.30pm – 6pm Contact: Pauline Carter 01993 774568	Piano Lessons
1 st Sunday of each Month – 2.30pm – 5pm Contact: Jess 07827 235457	Sunday Tea Dance

How have sports and pastimes been represented in
the art of the past?

Juliet is giving a new talk with slides in support of the

Playing Fields project:

“PLAYING GAMES”

Friday 24th June at 7.30 pm

The Swan at Ascott

Donations will be welcome

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Gardening in Ascott - Summer 2016

Tomorrow is the first day of May and it's been such a cold start to the Spring it is hard to remember that summer always does eventually arrive. I hope by the time you read this we will all be bathed in warm sun, and the memories of winter and a cold spring are long forgotten. Looking back over my gardening diaries of the last few years to find hope that summer will be with us again, I noted on the summer solstice in 2010 that I was gardening until 9:30pm. On the following day, 22 June, I see that I was in the garden all day, hedge cutting and watering, and it was a beautiful day. Also, Julie came round with a recipe for elderflower champagne and cordial. So what heralds the beginning of summer? I suspect that it is many different things for different people. For me it is the first new potatoes from the garden, strawberries of course, the wearing of sandals, picking the first sweet peas and cutting the first lettuces. The evenings will be warm enough to sit out with a glass of wine and admire it all. The joy of waking up to sunshine pouring through the bedroom windows and hearing the call of the garden, the primal need to be outdoors, to pull on clothes and to rush into the garden to see what has changed overnight. Our wedding anniversary on 22nd May always marks the turning point from early spring into summer, and we note that this is the week that our Ash tree comes into leaf.

Dressing-up the garden for summer.

I have been thinking about making some garden sculptures to place at the end of a vista or in the middle of a border, adding another dimension to the green structure. A quick search of the internet provided many ideas for sculpting from recycled items, indeed anything from old tyres and empty wine bottles, but frankly it all looked rather like rubbish rather than art.

I have recycled with some success an old round stainless steel kitchen bin. By dismantling it and just using the steel tube topped with an attractive coloured glazed ceramic pot-saucer, it makes a splendid bird bath. This Spring the deep blue saucer contrasted well with the surrounding planting of the burnt orange of tulip 'Cairo' whose colour was increased by their reflections in the steel tube. We have had a problem with the bird bath during the early spring, when a visiting male pheasant resplendent in his mating apparel, was surprised to find an equally handsome chap already installed in his garden! His reaction was to continuously peck at the bin and display to his handsome, if somewhat, distorted reflection in the shiny steel.

I have seen some beautiful Moore/Hepworth style sculptures made from carved breeze-blocks, which being soft, are easy to work with. Perhaps with the warm summer evenings I may feel inspired to have a go. Look out for some Easter Island Moai gazing out from the front garden!

With the, hopefully, balmy warm summer nights, we should all be spending more time in the garden in the evenings. So it is a perfect time to look at lighting to enhance the twilight garden. We have been most impressed with the new type of solar lighting which is available these days. They seem particularly effective at charging themselves even on overcast days, and provide a soft romantic light which can highlight perhaps a table or a particular specimen plant. There are also several LED light-strings which run for many hours on just a couple of batteries, and look attractive threaded through shrubs and trees, or perhaps woven in the spokes of a garden umbrella. Candle-light is still the most beautiful, and a simple group of tea lights placed in old jam jars still makes the garden glow on a balmy night.

Argyranthemums

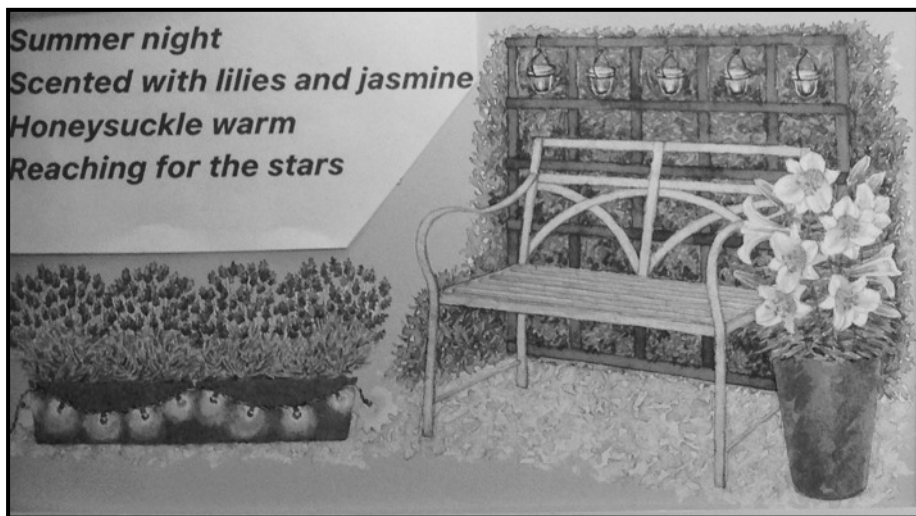
The addition to the garden of sculptures and lighting are fun, but the most important element is of course the plants, and no matter how carefully we plan the garden there is always a gap to fill or a pot of flowers needed to brighten up the patio. In recent years I have come to value the use of the lovely tender perennial plant *Argyranthemum*, which is more commonly known as marguerite or petite pink. A native to the Canary Islands, these tender perennials flower for a minimum of five to six months with very little care required. They are happy in sun or light shade, and come in a range of colours. They are an instant

fix for a dull patio or gap in the borders. If you fancy white, pink, yellow, red or very deep pink, look in a nursery or garden centre at this time of year. They vary in size, but usually range from about twelve to thirty inches high, and with regular deadheading, and application of a watering can of liquid feed, they continue to flower until the first frost of the year. They look particularly fine planted in containers with pelargoniums or used in the borders, perhaps planted with dwarf lavender for a lasting and easy-to-care-for display.

An update on the new herb bed

As I write this in early May, the new herb bed is slowly taking shape. I have divided up some large clumps of chives and redistributed them around the perimeter of an area which is approximately twelve feet square. Parsley, coriander, chervil, dill, golden marjoram, garlic-chives, thyme and summer savoury (all grown from seed) are safely tucked up in the cold frame. They will all be planted out when the weather is a little warmer. I have grown some alpine strawberries from seed, which I hope will make a pretty dividing 'hedge' between the different herbs. Colour will be added by some bright orange annual-flowering *Calendula*. The new herb garden should be providing herbs for the kitchen by the end of May.

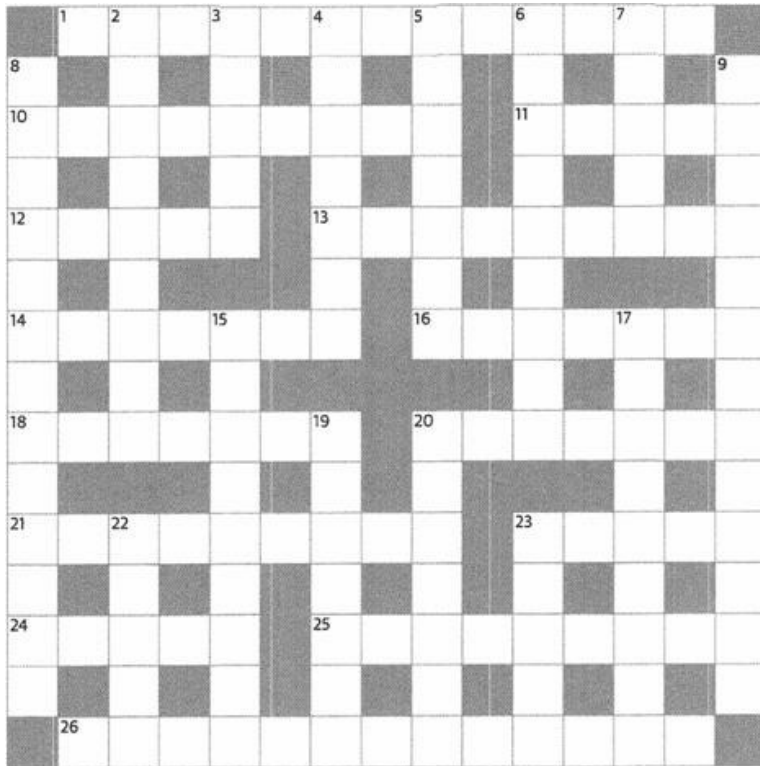
Madeline Galistan



Solution to Crossword in Edition 89

Across		Down	
9	Censoring	1	Scotch mist
10	Adieu	2	Knock off
11	Tacking	3	Nudity
12	Rake off	4	Wing
13	Hooky	5	Aggressive
14	Dishonest	6	Back down
16	Information desk	7	Nicole
19	Transpire	8	Buff
21	Fools	14	Drawing pin
22	Backlog	15	Takes a seat
23	Maracas	17	Resolved
24	Close	18	Exorcised
25	Indonesia	20	Anchor
		21	Firing
		22	Back
		23	Made

Crossword



Across

- 1 Unable to pass motion about phenomenon that's worth it (4-9)
- 10 Silvery toff I introduced to composer (9)
- 11 Slow start for legendary ship (5)
- 12 Linguistic habits from America disheartened Greece (5)
- 13 Latch onto undergarments with temerity (5,4)
- 14 Tire of guitar not entirely cast in iron (7)
- 16 Writer of notes on American hospital section's weapon-carrier (7)
- 18 Affliction of headless insects (7)
- 20 Where to queue for kiss on head (3,4)
- 21 Snack derived from no new origin (5,4)
- 23 Bearer of cable from some happy Londoners (5)
- 24 Suppress cover within borders of Eire (5)
- 25 Trace (rope) designed to be fruitful (9)

Down

- 2 agic love is crazy and wild (9)
- 3 Suspicion of unrest in Germany (5)
- 4 Crumbling myth about Scripture (7)
- 5 English trees are rubbish! (7)
- 6 Cold calling for two little boys in river (9)
- 7 Bound over (say) cleric (5)
- 8 1 exchange rate? (5,3,5)
- 9 Bird bath in turn consumed by dog (6,7)
- 15 Relation swallowing three pills, keeping note of vegetable (5,4)
- 17 Excite poorly-fed bird first (9)
- 19 Artistic effect of second drink (7)
- 20 Racist maybe securing return of hairy giant (7)
- 22 Nationality of Murdoch before her end? (5)
- 23 Former president from whom no traveller returns (5)

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Events Calendar - 2016

Date	Time	Event	Venue
June 2 nd	7.30pm	Qigong	Tiddy Hall
June 4 th	8.00 pm	Ninebarrow	Tiddy Hall
June 5 th	2.30 - 5.00pm	Sunday Tea Dance	Tiddy Hall
June 9 th	7.30pm	Qigong	Tiddy Hall
June 11 th		Rosneath Summer Concert	Tiddy Hall
June 12 th	2.00 - 5.00pm	Queen's Birthday Village Afternoon Tea	Wychwood Manor
June 16 th	7.30pm	Qigong	Tiddy Hall
Jun 19 th	9.00am	Village Walk	Village Green
June 24 th	7.30pm	Talk "Playing Games"	The Swan
June 25 th	11.30 am	JCS	The Swan
July 3 rd	2.30 - 5.00pm	Sunday Tea Dance	Tiddy Hall
July 16 th	from 1.00pm	Swanfest	The Swan
July 19 th	7.30pm	Summer Yoga starts	Tiddy Hall
August 6 th		Reginald Tiddy Evening	Tiddy Hall
August 7 th	2.30 - 5.00pm	Sunday Tea Dance	Tiddy Hall
August 20 th	8.00 pm	Jez Lowe	Tiddy Hall
September 3 rd	8.00pm	Johnny Coppin & Mike Silver	Tiddy Hall
September 17 th		Children's Charity Ceilidh	Tiddy Hall
September 17 th	8.00pm	Mark Harrison	The Swan
October 1 st	8.00pm	Sunjay	Tiddy Hall
October 15 th	8.00pm	Mitchel & Vincent	The Swan
October 29 th	8.00pm	A. J. Clarke	The Swan
November 5 th	8.00pm	Vin Garbutt	Tiddy Hall
November 19 th	8.00pm	Clive Gregson	The Swan
December 3 rd	8.00pm	Hatful of Rain	Tiddy Hall
December 17 th	8.00pm	Ewan McClennan	The Swan

JCS Joint Councillor's Surgery