

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION - FRIDAY 4th OCTOBER 2002 TO ANNE BRAITHWAITE AT THE MILL, TEL. No: 831282; [e-mail: Mill@auwoxon32.freemove.co.uk].

THE CURATE'S PROFILE

Hello! I have been asked to write a few words about myself and my family as we prepare to move to the Chase Benefice. It seems to me that this will give you all something of the advantage over me when we meet, since I will know little about you, but you will all have detailed knowledge of my background! But I suppose this is what it will be like being a member of the clergy, so here goes... My name is Nigel Hawkes, I am 43 years old (young?) and I was born and bred in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire – the home of the ‘funny roundabout’ and Kodak – my parents still live in Hemel, but I moved to Reading in 1985 with my job. I studied Environmental Science at Norwich and then Meteorology at Edinburgh before working for 17 years in the Water Industry, most recently for the Environment Agency where I specialised in Water Resources Management. I met Julia at church when I moved to Reading (we both sang in the choir) and we married in 1988, we have two children: Rachael is 10 and Andrew 8. Before the children were born Julia worked in the Education Library Service at Shire Hall in Reading, and since they have been at school she has worked as a Learning Support Assistant and most recently as School Librarian at Headington Middle School in Oxford.

For the last two years I have been studying full time at Ripon College Cuddesdon. This has been a wonderful experience and I feel greatly privileged to have had the opportunity to live and work in such lovely surroundings.

We are all looking forward to living and working in the Chase Benefice and to learning about the communities and people we shall encounter here. Please remember us in your prayers as we move and as I prepare for my ordination on 30th June.

Nigel Hawkes.

From the Rector....

July is a special month for us in the Chase Benefice as we welcome the Revd. Nigel Hawkes as our Curate. I am delighted at Nigel's appointment to the Benefice and I look forward to working with him over the next three years.

Bishop Colin has asked me to explain Nigel's role in the Benefice. He is not a replacement vicar for Tony Moore. He may be living in Enstone Vicarage but he is not the vicar. And just as I am not the property of Chadlington because I happen to live in Chadlington, he is not the property of Enstone because he resides there. We both work equally across all the parishes of the Benefice.

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He is also not just ‘an extra pair of hands’ in a busy parish or for a hard-pressed vicar, and his arrival – at least in the short-term – does not mean that my work load will diminish. Nigel is here as a continuation of his training and the purpose of a curacy is to provide a working relationship alongside an experienced priest who can provide supervision. Through this experience of ministry curates can take up their ordained role and find the fulfilment of their vocation, not only within the parish but also in the context of the wider Church. The purpose is to provide an experience of learning and development.

We are very privileged to have Nigel as Curate – there are only two rural curacies in the whole of the Oxford Diocese! – and I hope that you will join me in welcoming Nigel, Julia, Rachel and Andrew and pray that their time with us will be happy and fruitful.

With every blessing.

Mark Abrey

SERVICES AT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH,

ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD

Full details of times of services in Ascott and the rest of the Chase Benefice can be found on the notice board in the Church porch and on the various boards around the village. Our normal pattern of worship is:

Sunday	Time	Service
1st	11.00 a.m.	Matins
	4.00 p.m.	Family Service *
2nd	8.00 a.m.	Holy Communion
3rd	11.00 a.m.	Holy Communion
4th	11.00 a.m.	Holy Communion

* There will be no Family Service on 4th August

Morning and Evening Prayers are said in Church every Friday at 8.00 a.m. & 4.00 p.m.

For further details, or to book a Christening or Wedding, please telephone Mark Abrey on 01608 676572.

Thank you to all who helped and supported the Church Fête on Saturday 13th July. We raised approximately £2,000.

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ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

Since the last report there has been an election and your new Parish Council is as follows: Nigel Braithwaite Chairman, Mike Pearce Vice Chairman, Councillors: Wendy Pearse and Stuart Fox. There was initially a vacancy but this has now been filled and Elaine Byles has been co-opted.

The Parish Council would like to express their thanks to the Committee and everyone who worked so hard to make the Jubilee Celebrations such a success.

The events on the playing field and the dinner in the evening were extremely enjoyable and will provide many happy memories for years to come.

I am sure no one has missed the bright red speed restrictions signs. We hope they will at least make motorists more aware of the speed limit when driving through the village.

We have a smart new signpost near the level crossing with a circular Oxfordshire sign at the top and an arm to the Tiddy Hall.

Conservation kerbing has been ordered to go all the way around the Green. Due to lorries and cars going over the edges they are becoming very eroded and this seems to be the only solution. We are fortunate that West Oxfordshire District Council has agreed to pay £2,000 towards the cost.

The new Church gates are now finished and it is hoped that they will be erected very soon.

We are hoping to put more information from Parish Council meetings onto the web site. Minutes of meetings will be on the site but since minutes have to be agreed at the next meeting they cannot be put on until the following month.

The Parish Council is here to represent everyone in the village so please let us know if we can be of help.

Margaret Ismail, Parish Clerk

THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE - CELEBRATION MUGS

To mark the Jubilee the Parish Council, with the help of a very generous anonymous donation of £700, have given special commemorative mugs to all the children in the village aged 15 or under. Babies born during the remainder of 2002 will qualify. If any child has not received their mug please contact Nigel Braithwaite [831282]. Claims for new arrivals will be welcome!

WYCHWOODS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Our June speaker was David Eddershaw. To mark their 150 Anniversary, Hook Norton Brewery had commissioned David to write a history of the Brewery and this was the subject of our meeting. The talk was very enjoyable and a prelude to a visit to the Brewery arranged for the members the next week. We can thoroughly recommend this visit, not only were we made most welcome, but

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were conducted over the whole building by very efficient guides. There is so much to see and despite the fact that the Brewery rises to six floors, the tour was conducted with breaks in between so that the actual height was barely noticeable. Of course the great attraction was the steam engine which still works on a commercial basis after 100 years and is kept immaculately whilst still coping with all the stages of the brewing. Free tasting and a beer mug completed the visit which had lasted nearly three hours.

The new season begins on 19th September when Tim Porter will talk about The Cotswolds in the Wars of the Roses at Milton Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. Then in October Peter Coveney returns with more Magic Lantern Slides following the A.G.M. in Shipton Village Hall on the 17th at 7.30 p.m.

Old and new members are welcome. Subscriptions are £5 for an individual and £8 for a couple which includes a copy of Wychwoods History when published. Visitors welcome at any meeting at £2 per person. Further details from Wendy Pearse on 831023.

REV. SAMUEL YORK - A VOICE FROM ASCOTT'S PAST 1879

1879 began on a bright and exciting note for Ascott's school children for on the 4th January they were entertained in the school room by a Magic Lantern Show, the room resplendent with a gaily decorated Christmas tree. Then on the 8th, the adults were treated to a musical entertainment with readings, the proceeds of which were to go to the Reading Room Funds. This had re-opened two days previously coinciding with the first payments to the Coal and Clothing Clubs, and the first night of the new term of the Night School.

On 20th January a new venture for the village when a Penny Bank was opened. This was in connection with the Post Office Savings Bank and deposits of a penny upward could be received every Monday afternoon from 4 till 5 by the Vicar the Treasurer, or the school master Mr. Nutley, who was the Secretary.

All persons could deposit or withdraw money in their own names, they were furnished with a bank book, strict secrecy was to be observed and interest would be allowed. Rev. York hoped that many people would be keen to take up this method of saving their pence and that parents would encourage their children to practise the good habit of saving.

Notice had been received that the Examination of the Night School would be on Monday evening 3rd March. Thirty six evenings of the Night School had been held during a very severe winter and the attendance of the 31 youths had been extremely good, so the Rev. hoped that their employers would give all help to scholars to enable them to attend on all three evenings a week until the Examination. This remark was followed by a commendment to the parents of school children. New Government requirements regarding education specifically the teaching of grammar and geography, had increased the workload

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to the extent that the children must undertake home lessons and it was hoped that the parents would provide the required amount of encouragement and supervision.

In February the Benefit Club was considering the adoption of the new rules laid down by the Register of Friendly Societies whilst the Annual Conservation Association Dinner at Shipton was attended by almost all Ascott's farmers as well as Rev. York and Sir Morgan Crofton then in residence at the Grange. On 27th February the Night School closed after 47 evenings and the number of depositors at the Penny Bank had reached 26.

The Night School Examination on 3rd March brought good results. The scholars ranged in age from 26 to 11 but because Government requirements only allowed those between 13 and 21 to be examined, only 24 out of 32 could take the examination. Following the Night School, more than 83 school children faced their examination by the Government Inspectors on 18th March.

Early in April there was a draughts match in the Reading Room won by W. Honeybone, the Cricket Club met to elect their officers and extend a vote of thanks to Mr. Lardner of Manor Farm for the use of his field by the railway, the new rules were adopted by the Benefit Club and the Reading Room was closed for the season. 10th April the result of the School Examination. A grant of £2 more than the previous year was received due to the good results, Geography and Needlework were commended but great fault was found for lack of accommodation for the infants. Obviously difficulties had arisen with donations for the new school room. The children were awarded prizes for good attendance - Olive Edginton [432 times] and Frank Puffett [431 times]. Many longstanding village names were included amongst those obtaining examination prizes, Jane and Reuben Honeybone, John Chaundy, James and Harry Edginton, Mary and Charles White and Anne and Jane Moss. Rev. York was also very pleased to report that Mr. Groves of Milton had sent in a revised estimate for the building of the Infants' classroom following a great fall in the cost of the materials during the past year. This had enabled him to make a considerable reduction on the first estimate.

13th April, Easter Day, was distinctly unseasonal. Snow fell in the morning with a cold biting wind but the font was resplendent with white flowers, sent to Ascott by a niece of Mrs. York, from Cape Town, South Africa. Two days later during the Annual Court Leet and Vestry Meeting, Rev. York observed that during the past year, the first time for many years, no Church Rate had been levied. However this situation could only continue providing the weekly offertory should continue to be well supported.

Another letter from Rev. C.E. York aboard the H.M.S. Temeraire near Constantinople, dated the 11th March 1879, had been received. "At length the word has come and within a few hours the British Fleet will have started on its way to leave the Sea of Marmora. Much pleasure is expressed amongst the

ships at the prospect of a change. It is a matter for great thankfulness that the cause which first of all brought us to the Dardenelles to watch over Constantinople, has, at last been set aside: and that Russia is really carrying out the stipulations of the Berlin Congress. I visited yesterday the Cemetery at Ismid where we buried those who were killed at the bursting of the gun in the ship, the Thunderer. Shortly after the accident I held a service on board the ship, near the spot where the terrible disaster happened. We shall sail tomorrow for Besika Bay, and thence, probably for Salonika, the Piraeus, and Malta".

May Day like Easter Day was capricious, hail storms and copious raindrops, but Ascott's children kept their festival right merrily. Like the year before, they carried their flowery garland [an exceedingly pretty one] in procession around the village with the 'Queen of May' sitting in regal state. The proceedings concluded with tea and cake in the school room "and through the liberality of those who paid to see the 'Queen', a nice little sum was distributed amongst the children".

On the first of June Thomas Honeybone married Naomi Cross. These were the parents of Harry Honeybone who in 1916 died on the Western Front near Arras. At the end of the month a cricket match was held between Ascott and Chadlington. The latter were victorious "but chiefly through calling to their aid two skilled bowlers, not of their Parish and not members of their Club".

By July the number of Penny Bank depositors had risen to 30 but to encourage more, Mr. Nutley would receive sums between 7 and 8 on Monday evenings as well as the afternoon. Ascott Benefit Club held its Feast Day on the 22nd when the Banner preceded by the excellent Chipping Norton Rifle Volunteer Band was marched from the Vicarage to Church for a Service, before a dinner in the afternoon at the Churchill Arms where Mrs. Morris provided one of her excellent repasts. The same month Rev. York made one of his trips to London, to visit the Great Agricultural Exhibition, the greatest the world had ever seen. "2000 cattle and sheep, 800 horses, immense number of farming implements and machinery, shedding extended to 12 miles, a long walk especially as the ground was soaked by heavy rains into a mass of sticky mud. Met. Mr. John Gomm of Coldstone, inspected a meat preserving wagon, undertaking to keep food packed with ice for six months. The magnitude of the show gave abundant evidence that British agriculture is still the finest in the world".

The first fortnight of August brought sad days to Ascott when three young village women, Annie Holyfield 36, Mary Ann Sherwood 32 and Ann Selina Kirkland 27, all died following the birth of a child. Unfortunately they all left families of little children to be brought up without a mother. Happier events followed. An Excursion Train to the Fête at Blenheim Park, a cricket match between Ascott and Churchill which Ascott won by 34 runs, and at last the commencement of the Infants' school room following a donation of £10 from A. Brassey of Heythrop Park.

School holidays only commenced on 5th September due to the extreme lateness of the harvest. Ascott's fields were in a sorry state. A summer of little sunshine, low temperatures and copious rain had left wheat green and unfit for cutting even by the end of the month. "Two or three of the ancient of days in the village say they remember a season when harvest work was prolonged even into December and the sheaves were white with snow. Let us trust for a speedier conclusion to the present harvest".

In October 1878 Fanny Honeybone had married Robert Smith in Ascott Church. Now one year later, aged 24, she suddenly died leaving Rev. York to comment "In the midst of life we are in death". Robert, one of Ascott's first Parish Councillors, remained a widower for the rest of his long life.

At last by October, the new School Room was virtually complete and was pronounced a truly valuable addition to the school. Behind the fireplace was erected a new porch with pegs for drying clothes on a wet day and the new west end window in the big school added greatly to the lighting of the room.

During the year a party of surveyors had been quartered in Ascott to prepare the new Ordnance Survey Map of 25 inches to a mile. When published the map of Ascott would be about six foot square extending north and south from Five Shilling Corner to Priest Grove and east to west from Shipton Station to Ascott Hill.

There follows a comment about Ascott Station. "In consequence of many mistakes which have accrued through goods and parcels having been mis-sent to the Berkshire Ascot [of horse-racing fame], it has been suggested to the G.W.R. Company that the name of our station be changed to "Wychwood", and the matter is now under consideration. In the original plan of the Line no station was marked out for Shipton, and that at Ascott was to have been on a much larger scale, but through the influence of the late Mr. Langston, of Sarsden, a Station was also erected at Shipton. The Line was constructed about twenty five years since, and has proved a very great boon to the neighbourhood. It was opened as the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway: through bad management it did not prosper well at the first, so that from its initials [O.W. & W.] it obtained the ignominious name of "the old worser and worser", but after a while it was amalgamated with the Great Western Railway, and now forms a portion of that great system. This grand line, the largest in the kingdom, extends at the present time to 2,140 miles, with a weekly traffic of about £70,000 derived from Passengers, and £75,000 from Merchandise, or over seven millions and a half of pounds in a year. Some of its trains run at the full pace of sixty miles an hour: the express train, known as the "Flying Dutchman" performs the journey from London to Exeter, nearly 200 miles, at that rate of speed".

The Harvest Thanksgiving was observed on 19th October with a goodly array of corn and flowers despite the bad season, the contribution given to the Radcliffe Infirmary. The Reading Room opened and the Night School re-commenced

early in November, and it was decided to continue the Sunday evening service throughout the winter. Just imagine these stalwart villagers trudging along muddy roadways in the darkness with probably only a dim lantern to aid their way, to enter a cold and candlelit church through the long dank and dreary months of winter. It seems to me that the spirit of Rev. York must have radiated a huge degree of warmth which was keenly felt by a good number of his loyal parishioners, not only through these winter services but also through the number of various village achievements during 1879.

Wendy Pearse

ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD SPORTS CLUB

Fund Raising Events for the Sports Pavilion:

The coffee morning on 22nd June raised £127. Thank you to everyone who helped.

Bank Holiday Monday 26th August - on the recreation ground

CAR BOOT SALE 10.00 a.m. – 1.00 p.m. £5 per boot

Refreshments

Contact: Mary Barnes Tel. 832008 or

Roger Shepherd Tel. 830227

TIDDY HALL

The Abe Singers concert on the 18th May was a very enjoyable and well attended event. This bi-annual fund raiser raised £474.50 towards our own funds and an additional £141 raised on the raffle was given to the choir for their chosen charity, The Hospice in the Weald, Kent.

Thank you to everyone who accommodated members of the choir and their partners on the Saturday night.

Forthcoming Events:

Saturday 2nd November - **FOLK NIGHT** with The Yetties

Saturday 9th November - **CRAFT FAIR** - If you would like a stall please contact Ros Harbour - Tel. 830227

Booking Clerk: Rosemary Dawbarn - Tel. 831632

SPORTS CLUB

Following our recent AGM, we are pleased to report that our finances are now in order with benefactors paid and funds in the bank. This is largely due to some excellent fundraising efforts during the past 12 months.

Our thanks go to Lyn Collins who hosted a folk night and coffee morning, which raised nearly £700. We also put on a rock n' roll evening that raised a

further £300 plus, thanks to free donations from the band and the disco. Thanks to band front man, Keith Bowerman and DJ Gary Doggett.

On the playing front the recreation ground and pavilion are getting full use with the Football Club and Wychwood Boys using the facilities in the winter and the Cricket Club and Shipton 3rds occupying the summer season.

Looking ahead we are running a car boot (first in the village for about 10 years!!) on August Bank Holiday Monday (26th) together with the possibility of some fun events plus bar & BBQ etc. Watch out for the posters!!

Looking further ahead to 2003, Lyn Collins has again offered to run a folk night (all proceeds to the Sports Club) and we have been offered a rather special celebrity charity cricket match. This is currently hush, hush, but as details and availability become clearer we will let you know more

In summary, sport in the village continues to flourish, but we can't be complacent and we must also be mindful of always counting on the same willing souls to keep the Club on track. So, if you can't offer your time (helping or playing) then dig deep and come and support our fundraising events.

John Cull , Sports Club Secretary

NATURE NOTES

For me, one of the pleasures of living in a rural community is watching and feeling part of the steady progression of the seasons. Spring, with fresh green fields and Easter celebrations: summer, with the arrival of migrant birds and insects coupled with an explosion of flowers in the hedgerows: autumn, with the Harvest Festival and crops being gathered and winter with Christmas celebrations and long evenings by a warm fire.

This year many fields in the valley had been placed in the set-aside scheme, not cultivated and by early summer sprayed with weed killer. In one particular field this gave an excellent opportunity to watch a group of hares that would normally have been hidden by the growing crops. I assume that this was a young family that had not dispersed to the surrounding countryside.

Another unusual sight, in this same field, was a small group of Lapwings, involved in excited displays of aerial gymnastics. This bird, with its stubby, rounded wings could easily out-manoeuvre the "Red Arrows Display Team" although not match them for speed! Usually this behaviour, together with feigning an injury is a means of distracting birds such as magpies and crows that are searching for eggs or young chicks and drawing them away from the nest. Lapwings nest in grass-lined scrapes on the ground and so their nests are very vulnerable. I don't think that these birds were nesting as it was late in the season and they moved on quite quickly. Lapwings once bred in large numbers in Oxfordshire's fields, forming colonies of many hundreds but a change in farming practices, sowing winter crops rather than spring sowing, meant that at

breeding time, in early spring, the crops were already too tall and too dense to allow nest building. This change in farming methods has affected other ground nesting birds, such as the skylark.

Summer arrives when the first cuckoo and other migrant birds, such as swallows, house martins and swifts appear, having spent the winter in Africa. This year, perhaps because of the cold wet spring, the cuckoo wasn't heard until May 2nd and unlike last year was not very vociferous.

The swallows and house martins started to arrive towards the middle of May but it wasn't until mid-June that they appeared in large numbers. I haven't seen many swallows this year, although the martins and swifts are here in reasonable numbers. Swifts are best seen flying to and from their breeding sites, which are usually in old buildings or late in the day when they fly lower over the village. They never land on the ground or perch on wires, like swallows, as their legs have no strength, and once grounded have little chance of getting airborne again without assistance. All their life, apart from breeding is spent on the wing, even sleeping occurs whilst they are airborne.

House martins build their bowl-shaped nests under the eaves of buildings, often forming small colonies. They collect mud from roadside puddles, streams & ditches, mixing it with their saliva to make their nests, which they then line with leaves and feathers. One of the best sites locally is on a pair of farm cottages just outside Chadlington, where in a good year there are over twenty nests. When they have young the sky around these cottages is full of birds busily collecting insects.

Swallows are the masters of the air swooping and gliding, at high speed, often only a few feet above the ground. Over open water they will dip down to the surface to drink or bathe. Like martins they build nests of mud, but unlike martins these can be inside buildings as well as outside.

All three of these birds feed as they fly, relying on their wide gapes to catch small insects. Trawler-men of the air!

Surprisingly, although similar in appearance swifts are not related to swallows and martins. Their similarity is determined by their lifestyles. In flight they can be easily confused. Swifts fly high and have sickle-shaped wings. Swallows swoop low, especially over open fields and water and the adults have long forked tail streamers. Martins can hunt at both high and low level but have a more fluttering flight than swifts and seen at close quarters have a distinctive white rump.

I found a slightly different flying creature at the beginning of June, a hornet. These members of the wasp family are not often seen in this area but are usually associated with woodland, where they live in small colonies in tree hollows. Hornets are the largest British members of the wasp family, with a body length of 30-40mm. Although large and imposing in appearance they tend to be less aggressive than the common wasp that disturbs our late summer picnics.

Whilst the wet weather may not have been to everyone's liking it has certainly been popular with the local slug and snail population, most of whom seem to regard my garden as a banqueting hall! This area, particularly high up the valley sides has a calcareous soil rich in the lime that snails require to provide the minerals to build their shells. In places where there is an acid or peat based soil you find very few snails. The most common snail in this area is the brown-lipped with its creamy shell marked with darker brown spirals. Around Witney, close to the course of the old Roman road, Akeman Street, you can still find the edible or Roman snail, which was introduced at the time of the Roman occupation.

Having started by talking about hares and ended by talking about snails, I think that I've covered a wide enough range for this article!

Stuart Fox

PRE SCHOOL SPORTS DAY & BBQ

We had a wonderfully successful day at this year's Pre School Sports Day and BBQ. The weather was even kind as the sun came out mid afternoon. All the families and pre school children came and ran their races. There was then a chance to enjoy a drink from the bar, BBQ lunch and locally picked strawberries and cream. The attractions included flying teddy bears, face painting, bouncy castle, raffle, tombola, penalty shoot out, jousting horse, treasure map, blindfolded tasting - with a few nasty surprises for the adults of mustard and salt, guess the weight of the cake and a White Elephant stall, which all provided great entertainment. Then everyone was able to sit in the sun and have home made cakes and tea.

We were delighted to see so many people including some of those who had attended the pre-school in the past and a few local Ascott residents and we look forward to welcoming you all next year.

The star raffle prize of dinner and wine at the Lamb Inn was won by Marianne Barrett which seemed very appropriate as she resigns this year as Secretary to Pre-School after several years in the post. Many thanks.

And to add to the success of the day we raised nearly £1,000 for new equipment for the Pre-School. A fantastic total and many thanks to all those who came and helped make it such an enjoyable day!!

**Do you need a BABYSITTER?
If so, ring Leisha Braithwaite on 01993 831282**

LEAFIELD SCHOOL NEWS

There has been so much activity during the month of June with the Jubilee celebrations swiftly followed by the World Cup and Wimbledon and excitement levels have been running high! The children have played an enthusiastic part in all of the celebrations and still had heaps of energy to participate and enjoy the Science Week which the School organised in June. There was a full programme of events for the week which included a visit from the Old Curiosity who presented their WOW show – Fur, Feather and Flippers. This was followed by the Rainforest Road Show which entertained everyone and included guest appearances from huge stick insects, and a tarantula which we could all stroke! The Oxfordshire Science team attended our Science Week and were extremely impressed with the quality of models made by the children who in Years 5 and 6 created models of their own showing how an arm moves, and Years 3 and 4 who created their own sun dials.

The Inter-School Cricket competition held at Charlbury was very well supported by 8 teams and Leaffield School Cricket Team comprising 5 boys and 4 girls came second – a wonderful achievement. This week the School Football Team is playing a match against Brize Norton – all the players have been enthusiastically tweaking their skills and picking up tips from the international players screened in the world cup!

Academically the children have also been performing exceptionally. The Year 6 SATs (statutory tests) results were outstanding with 100% success in Maths and Science and 92% in English, with the majority of our children superseding the average level 4 and achieving level 5, with one achieving level 6. We are rightly proud of the children and staff who have worked so conscientiously, and the children will move on to their new secondary schools with pride in their achievements.

A reminder about Leaffield School Drama Club's production of **Oliver** - it will be held in Leaffield Village Hall on 11th and 12th July at 7pm – we hope to see you there. Tickets are free, but seat reservations advised, and programmes can be bought in advance for £2, available from the school.

For further information on Leaffield C of E Primary, please contact our school secretary Mrs Brown or Head Mrs Ryde on 878273.

Cindy Chapman - Governor

**Accommodation available in friendly BED AND BREAKFAST
THE MILL, MILL LANE, ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD
Please contact: Anne and Nigel Braithwaite [01993 831282]**

It was late 1940's when first I visited the river Evenlode armed with one of my father's bean sticks, a length of thread for a line and a knop pin for a hook, worms in a tin and a few slices of bread.

Off I went with some of the older lads from the village, my first day fishing was no great shakes with the older lads fishing the best places, nevertheless I learnt quickly and was soon catching dace and roach - no monsters but at the age of eight they were exciting times.

The more I went the better the fishing became, walking to the river from Chilson at the age of eight in the heat of a summer's day seemed like an eternity, but the fishing when we arrived was most times worth the trek.

As time passed and the fishing tackle improved, more and more fish were caught.

At the age of thirteen I became friends with a boy from Charlbury whose name was Malcolm Smith, he was a year older than me and a very good angler, we used to go to the mill where Nigel Braithwaite now lives. My first visit there was most exciting - we were greeted by this fantastic mill pool. At the head of the pool was a pair of sluice gates and when they were lowered they would divert water to the mill and when open would flow over a wonderful waterfall. This mill pool quickly became our favourite spot as you can imagine; the fishing there was excellent with roach, dace, chub, perch, eels and pike. Eels in those days were common in the Evenlode river - sadly today they are never to my knowledge caught.

Leaving my childhood days now to present times; the river sadly has changed, the mill pool, that marvellous waterfall and gates are now a distant memory, what used to have water depths of roughly fifteen feet is now in the region of probably four feet.

On the plus side the quality of the fishing in general is probably as good as it's ever been.

The chub, perch, roach and occasionally large bream have certainly with the introduction of the American signal crayfish increased in size quite dramatically over the past few years.

Starting out on this article with bean stick, thread and bent pin to modern times, with poles sixteen metres long common place, high tec rods and reels, you might ask which were the best times? Old or new. Well hopefully the next time will be.

D. Barnes, Coldstone Angling Club

UNCLAIMED MILLIONS

Every year millions of pounds are unclaimed from thousands of people, who struggle on low incomes, but fail to claim state benefits that are theirs by right.

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Many are reluctant to claim because they feel it is charity but this money comes from taxes that you or your family pay when you are able to contribute. It is like putting money into a bank for a "rainy day". So when you claim benefit you are in effect withdrawing funds that were previously paid in by you.

The range of benefits range from help to pensioners and families on low income, to people off work due to illness, an accident, redundancy or a business failure or disabled people who need extra care. Are you one of them?

Staff at West Oxon. District Council, Benefits Office advise on Housing and Council Tax Benefits as well as on other welfare benefits. If you are unable to attend the offices our Visiting Benefits Officer can visit you at home. An Officer from the Benefits Agency is at the Council's Benefits Office on the 2nd Monday of every month between 10 a.m. to 12 noon and Benefits Advise is also available at The Guildhall at Chipping Norton 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. the first Wednesday of every month.

Please call us now on 01993 770022 or write or visit us at West Oxon. District Council, Benefits Office, 26 Church Green, Witney, Oxon. OX28 4AU.

TREE SURGEON
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Ascott-U-Wychwood
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ROMAN CATHOLIC MASSES

Burford - Church of SS. John Fisher and Thomas Moore
Sundays at 9.15 a.m. & 11 a.m.; Holy Days 10 a.m. & 7 p.m.

Chipping Norton - Holy Trinity Church
Sundays at 10.30 a.m.; Holy Days 9 a.m. & 7 p.m.

Charlbury - St. Teresa's
Sundays at 11 a.m.; Holy Days 9.30 a.m. & 7.30 p.m.

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SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

Burford - Friends Meeting House, Pytts Lane (off Witney Street) Sundays 11 a.m.

For further information, contact Nigel Braithwaite on 01993 831282

Charlbury - Friends Meeting House, Market Street - Sundays 10.30 a.m.

For further information, contact Andrew or Patricia Pymmer on 01993 882848

THE “POST OFFICE” STORES

Milton-under-Wychwood

Open: Mon.-Fri. 7.a.m. – 5.30 p.m. (Closed 1-2 for lunch)

Open Saturday 7 a.m.-1.00 p.m. & Sunday 8 a.m.-12 noon

POST OFFICE SERVICES AVAILABLE AT

“THE SWAN”, ASCOTT

MONDAY 10.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. Bank Holiday Excepted

John, Edna & Staff will be pleased to serve you with newspapers and magazines, greetings cards, fresh bread.

Fresh flowers for all occasions

Agents for: **LOCAL SHOE REPAIRS and SUPA-SNAPS PHOTO PROCESSING**

Tel. No: Shipton-under-Wychwood 830213

Dates for your Diary:-

Monday 26th August

*Car Boot 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
on Recreation Ground*

Saturday 2nd November

Folk Night, Tiddy Hall

Saturday 9th November

Craft Fair, Tiddy Hall

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