

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION FRIDAY, 3rd
OCTOBER 2003 TO ANNE BRAITHAITE AT THE MILL
Tel. No: 831282 [e-mail: ascottmill@bopenworld.com].**

To: The Parishes of the Chase Benefice

Over the past few weeks I have been asked by various people from the parishes what has happened to your Rector, Mark Abrey, and what is going to happen in the future. I thought it might help therefore if I put pen to paper to explain something about where we are at present.

First and foremost Mark is ill, and has been now for a number of months. I am not his Doctor but Mark tells me that it's a form of M.E. which, as you will know, is a particularly horrid illness, leaving the sufferer with low levels of energy in every part of their lives. The nearest I ever got to what he is experiencing was in the weeks and months following a bout of Glandular Fever and, judging by that experience, I can only underline several times over how much he is in need of your thoughts and prayers.

Another of the major problems with M.E. is that it can last a long time and any prognosis is notoriously difficult to make. Nobody knows, therefore, how long it will take before he is fully fit again. That, in turn, makes planning very difficult indeed.

Unlike some other jobs where a person would be simply replaced the same cannot happen to a Rector in this sort of circumstance. He or she remains the Rector and I, for one, am glad to be part of a Church which treats people in this kind of awful situation so well. However there is a price to pay and clearly a great deal of extra work has fallen on the shoulders of the Churchwardens, Nigel Hawkes, Mac Dick and other members of the Team.

Mark, I know, is very grateful for all they are doing. I share that gratitude and am trying to do what I can to support them through this difficult period. Nigel's ordination as a Priest on 29 June 2003 will, of course, help things in some ways but there is always the danger that he will be expected to do too much and I have asked him to keep me in touch with how things are going. In addition, the Revd Judy French, Vicar of Charlbury, has kindly agreed to help Nigel in terms of his training as a priest which, in normal circumstances, Mark would have done.

In the meantime I know that many of the things Mark has been

working on with you are bearing fruit in the lives of your parishes and I am only sorry that he is not around to share the joy with you and to work with you in developing them further. Let's hope that 'normal service' will be restored sooner rather than later.

Finally, as a number of you know, Mark suffered something similar to this in his time in Liverpool. Knowing that, those of us who were involved in his appointment checked this out with his Doctors and were told by them that there was no reason why he should not take on his present job.

Sadly they, like we, did not know what the future held.

Let us pray, therefore, for all those shouldering extra burdens in these months and for Mark, Becky, Alice and Toby, for Mark to be restored to full strength as a Husband, Father, Friend and Rector.

With my love *Colin*

The Rt. Revd. Colin Fletcher OBE, Bishop of Dorchester

**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:

Day	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

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

For further details, or to book a Christening or Wedding, please telephone Nigel Hawkes on 01608 676572

Church Fête

Having completed our first fête on the Recreation Field, we should like to thank everyone who contributed towards its success, especially those who helped on the stalls and the many who gave bottles, cakes, preserves, plants, raffle prizes etc.

Financially, it was an encouraging result, with a net profit of £2,200. The Recreation Field offers us much more space with the possibility of added attractions, safe conditions and the facilities which are available in the pavilion.

ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

We are pleased to report that the kerbing and road repairs around the Green are now complete making the area look much tidier. We hope that that this will protect the edges of the Green from further erosion. The repairs to the footbridge over the river near Manor Farm are now finished and walkers are pleased to be able to use the bridge again. The Annual Parish Meeting was held on 14th April when eleven village organisations reported on the year's activities. Our local Police beat officer PC Badrick attended the meeting and reported that Ascott is a relatively safe place with 14 incidents reported last year. The problem of flooding and sewerage in Shipton Road is still a concern. Representatives from the Environment Agency attended the last Parish Council meeting to discuss the situation. They reported that new pumps were installed in March and Thames Water has carried out an extensive survey of the problems. A report has also been compiled by the County Council Engineers and the Parish Council and District Councillor are endeavouring to move the situation forward.

Margaret Ismail, Parish Clerk

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Many of you will be aware that we have had a spate of vandalism, graffiti etc. in the village over the last few months. As usual it is a small minority who are determined to spoil the village for the majority.

The Parish Council are not prepared to accept these goings on and in an effort to stop it we have been in contact with Thames Valley Police and the Community Action Officer at West Oxfordshire District Council.. We have agreed with them that we will take action on all reported incidents under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, which

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ultimately could lead to Acceptable Behaviour Orders being taken out against offenders.

We do need the help of all of the village in reporting any incident be it loutish behaviour, swearing, writing graffiti or vandalism. Anyone reporting an incident would be asked to keep an 'Incident Diary' which would be collected together and sent to the Community Action Officer at WODC for him to take the matter further. This could lead to an Acceptable Behaviour Contract being applied.

Any incident should be reported in the first instance to Margaret Ismail on 832829. Margaret holds a supply of Incident Diaries and, together with Mike Pearce, will be happy to give you more details.

Anyone who would like to see more information about Acceptable Behaviour Contracts should again contact Margaret for a leaflet.

AGE CONCERN

Age Concern are trying to recruit local volunteers for the Local Link Network Scheme. Volunteers act as links between older people in the community and the resources of Age Concern Oxfordshire supported by the Rural Development Manager and a part time Support Worker. They provide information and advice between the organisation and older people. This includes befriending, collecting pensions or prescriptions or occasional shopping, accessing safety checks and equipment in partnership with the Police, Fire and Trading Standards. Age Concern have recruited, trained and supported a large volunteer based service which now covers the whole country and Link volunteers are key in local service development. If you would like further information please contact Penny Thewlis, Rural Development Manger on the helpline number 01235 849400

POLICE REPORT

The subject I would like to write about today is nuisance and how it may affect your quality of life, youths on motor cycles /cars youths hanging around making noise and dropping litter. In itself not on the major police priority, however I do know from first hand experience over my years of policing that it does cause anguish to people when it

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is continuous outside their homes or nearby. I have no magical cure for this but what I would advise against is for you to take matters into your own hands. All my details of contact are included in this article please contact me I might be able to nip it in the bud but if it continues I can get others to help. Please don't sit there stewing on it, let me know. If you want to remain anonymous just drop me a line without your details included.

We have had a couple of offences locally involving bogus callers, particularly aimed at the elderly. Please let me know if you know of someone vulnerable, I will be more than willing to give them advice. Remember do not let anyone into your house unless you know them and that you have asked them to attend, however sweet and genuine they may sound there are baddies out there. If you feel that a caller to your house is suspicious please help by taking down as much information as you can a description of the person and any vehicle details. You may just save another person having an unwarranted visit.

If your area is not in a neighbourhood watch scheme and you would like details how to get started please contact me.

Hopefully over the next few months we will have some warm weather remember to keep windows closed on your ground floor and try to restrict your first floor windows, particularly if you leave your house unoccupied during the day and at night

e.mail: jon.badrick@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Tel. No: 01993 893951; Fax No: 01993 840251

Control room Tel. No: 01865 266000

THE OLD WORSE AND WORSE

Running alongside High Street and Shipton Road, west to east through the valley and village are of course the River Evenlode and the Railway. From time immemorial the river has bisected the valley but this year of 2003 marks the 150th anniversary of the opening of the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway, the Old Worse and Worse.

This railway scheme had not been the first proposed through the valley. In 1825 the interest of the locals was probably aroused when a horse tramway was submitted for approval. This would have run

from Moreton-in-Marsh through the Evenlode Valley to Oxford, a link via canal with the Industrial Midlands. But nothing further happened, the proposal following the same fate as an earlier canal application. However rumours must have started flying when the great Brunel himself arrived with a party of surveyors to plot the route of a steam railway through the area. Brunel a short sturdy man, bullet head crowned by an enormous top hat, shabby clothes habitually coated with cigar ash, he exuded confidence and ability. His presence was surely a source of great speculation.

The Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway plan was duly deposited at the Sheriff's clerk's office in all counties where the line ran and eventually a copy reached all the parish clerks concerned. It is unlikely that any really strong feeling was prevalent locally since the sole reason for the proposal of the railway was the desire of Black Country Manufacturers to achieve a rail link with London and overseas trade. This route through the Evenlode Valley and the Cotswolds linked Oxford and London with the pits, furnaces and glassworks situated in the West Midlands. The plan received Royal Assent on 4 August 1845. But this was also the era known for the Great Railway Mania and by November of the same year two more local railway plans had been submitted proposing to connect with the OWW not far from Langley Mill. One plan on the Rugby to Swindon or Direct Junction Railway proposed to cross the Windrush at Burford on a viaduct 70 ft. high with arches 30 ft. apart, run alongside the Burford to Chipping Norton Turnpike Road past Fulbrook and Waterloo Farm, enter the Downs by an embankment and tunnel emerging in the Evenlode Valley halfway down the hill to Shipton. It would have been carried over the Evenlode by a 14 ft. high 25 ft. span arch to join the rails of the OWW. The Cheltenham and Oxford Railway Plan approached through Taynton, ran south of Crow's Castle, tunnelled through the Downs and emerged in Milton Field. It then continued just to the south of Shipton village and also joined the junction near Langley Mill. Perhaps fortunately for our valley, these lines never came to fruition. But the construction of the OWW Line was a certainty and as with all new ideas favourable and unfavourable views existed. Some saw advantages of better communication, profitable investment and land sale. Opposition was expressed by canal operators, road carriers, landowners who resented intrusion on their land, innkeepers foreseeing less road traffic and clergymen who

felt concern for the impact of trains and the outside world on their parishioners' souls. All manner of rumours ran the gauntlet. Maimed and suffocated passengers, stampeding and injured horses and cattle, vegetables and corn dying in the remorseless fumes and not least the dangerous power of these fire disgorging monsters soon to invade our quiet valley.

By 1847, 2,800 men were at work on the line with the northern section Pershore to Shipton well advanced by September 1848. However at that moment in time a world wide financial panic erupted causing concerns over the availability of the necessary money and work stopped whilst a great deal was still left to do on the Shipton to Wolvercote section. However the sudden discovery of the Californian goldfields causing a surge in demand for English goods broke the deadlock and a new Act was passed authorizing the OWW to raise more capital. Dissent during the earlier work had been very prevalent, instigated partly by the railway contractors and a large step forward was made when contractors of renown, Peto and Betts, took over. Few lines were built within the original estimates and Brunel with his general flamboyance and lavish use of funds was instrumental in over-riding the available capital. In 1852, he resigned and John Fowler was appointed in his place. Now the work progressed apace. Village talk must have centred almost entirely on the railway as the process evolved. The mammoth undertaking was largely manual. The digging, cutting, building up embankments were all performed by railway labourers who could shift up to 20 tones a day each, with an average of 3s. for their pains. Some tub wagons on contractors' lines with horses trained to dodge the tipping wagons, and some pulleys, sheer legs and gins were used, but most labour fell to sheer muscle power. Not just labourers were affected by this giant undertaking, other trades gained revenues. Quarrymen, toolmakers, brick and timber merchants, iron founders, horse traders, as well as craftsmen, smiths, masons, carpenters and bricklayers. Much of the facing for the bridges came from Taynton Quarry. The Turnpike Road from Burford to Chipping Norton necessitated a 20-28 ft. deep cutting for the railway. Perhaps some of Ascott's agricultural labourers viewed their own lot a little less harshly when compared to the almost slave labour of these railway navies.

By spring 1853, the line south of Evesham was virtually complete and was generally acknowledged a fine example of railway engineering.

It was signalled by simple semaphore signals and equipped with telegraphic equipment supplied by the Electric Telegraph Company. Staff were appointed in April, porters receiving 16s. a week and clerks, depending on the importance of their station, up to £60 per annum. Mr. Bunn of Ascott received £52 per annum. Landslips caused some delay but the great day of opening arrived on Saturday 7th May 1853. As the mammoth special train approached, the long drawn out hooting of the whistle announced its imminent arrival. Locals must have waited in awe. Out of the smoke the twenty six, four wheeled coaches hauled by two locomotives rattled and roared into view. The assemblage had left Dudley picking up dignitaries and directors en route and as it steamed majestically through the somnolent Cotswolds, for some villages their previous peaceful existence was dispelled. Even more dramatic stories were told of its fiery return late at night after due celebrations at Oxford. As it thundered back along the valley the piercing headlights and exhausts spitting flames must have struck terror in the hearts of many quiet country folk.

A fresh landslide delayed the regular service until Saturday 4th June 1853. There were five workings each way daily from Dudley to Oxford. Expresses were timed at 1 hour 50 minutes, the stopping train at 2 hours 17 minutes over the 57 miles of line. The majority of traffic was in goods, coal, minerals, Stourbridge glass, Kidderminster carpets and Worcester porcelain. However the Old Worse and Worse did not last long. In 1860, it was absorbed by the West Midland Railway and in 1863 became part of the Great Western Railway.

Initially few local people would have used the railway. But the delivery of coal by rail was one bonus which could be enjoyed by several. Travelling by train was undoubtedly a lure to the young despite the uninviting conditions in third class carriages which were considered almost lower than stock wagons. Even drivers and fireman were given little consideration with regard to the vagaries of the weather. It had originally been Brunel's contention that train driving was boring and the footplate crew were to be denied any shelter in case they dozed off or missed signals. The Post Office soon took advantage of the rail facilities and one of the main advances was the rapid distribution of news. National newspapers could be delivered. Also cheap mass produced goods and mail order came into existence. The clocks could be set to GMT coming along the

telegraph from London. Many migrants from the Wychwoods in the harsh days of the 1870s began their long journeys by train. And eventually young girls from Ascott left to go into service at destinations well away from home. The focus of life in this ancient agricultural village was beginning to stretch towards far horizons.

Wendy Pearse

WYCHWOODS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The new season for the History Society will begin on Thursday 18th September 2003 at 7.30 p.m. at Milton Village Hall when Russell Cherry will speak about "The Thames from its Source to Oxford". Then in October George Hatwell whom many locals will remember from the numerous fairs held on Milton Village Green will give a talk entitled "Memories of our lovely Valley". This talk will follow the AGM at Shipton Village Hall at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday 16th October 2003.

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 head. Further details from Wendy Pearse on 831023.

NATURE NOTES

High summer brings an explosion of colour to the roadside verges and uncultivated land as Scabious, Knapweed, Meadow Cranesbill and Woolly Thistles flower. These showy flowers, which would not be out of place in any garden border, are set-off by a background of frothy white Hedge Bedstraw and waving grasses.

Our verges are something of a refuge for plants whose natural homes are under threat. The hedgerow and verge is a good substitute for woodland rides and woodland edge habitats; indeed many of our older hedgerows would once have been part of a wood. We are fortunate to have wide, species rich verges on many of the roads that cross this area and the County Council has designated some as local nature reserves. Watch-out for the green and white marker posts which show where these reserves start and end. This year in June and

July, on the reserve by the pumping station on the Burford to Charlbury road there was a magnificent display of twenty Pyramidal Orchids.

Whilst we enjoy this summer "flower-show" our forefathers would have seen this natural bounty as a resource to be exploited.



Hedge Woundwort, with its soft heart-shaped, slightly downy leaves and purple flowers, was used to treat cuts and abrasions. Sometimes the leaves were bound directly onto a wound or incorporated in a poultice.

Recent research has found that oil, with antiseptic qualities, can be extracted from the leaves. By the way, if you crush the leaves or the stem of this plant it smells revolting!

A hedgerow climber, White Bryony, which is usually only noticed in autumn when strings of red berries are seen weaving through the hedgerow, acquired a reputation both as an aphrodisiac and an aid to fertility in man and horses. Its large tuberous root, which weighs up to 25kg, was dug up and in the 18th century was used by herbalists as a substitute for the much more expensive mandrake. Apparently when given to horses the dose had to be carefully controlled, as too much would make them uncontrollable. There is no record of the effects of an overdose on a man! A warning, all parts of this plant are poisonous.

Lady's Bedstraw, with its yellow flowers was once collected, dried and used as a filling for mattresses. It was reputed to discourage bed bugs and other nocturnal dwellers of mediaeval bedrooms. This plant together with Hedge Bedstraw could be added to milk to make it curdle and was used in the making of Cheshire Cheese. It was said that if cows ate the flowers of Bedstraw their milk would sour very quickly.

Why, you might ask, were nettles created? Surprisingly they too have their uses. Not only do some more adventurous cooks pick tender young shoots, which when cooked are said to resemble spinach, but until the eighteenth century fabric was woven from its fibres and ancient Romans are supposed to have beaten parts of their body with sprays of nettles to alleviate the symptoms of rheumatism. Today the Nettles main function is as the food plant for Peacock and Tortoiseshell butterflies.

In the damper spots Meadow Sweet, with its heads of small white flowers, can be found. The dried flower heads, when steeped in

boiling water, provided a remedy for headaches and fever, used long before painkillers were available from the chemist. The plant contains salicylic acid the main constituent of aspirin.

Growing in the same situation you will find Comfrey, a plant that was introduced by Knights returning from the Crusades. This herb has many uses. Its common names are Knitbone and Bruisewort indicating that it was widely believed to aid bone setting and promote rapid healing. Apart from its use as a medicinal herb comfrey is an excellent plant to add to the compost heap or to use in the production of liquid plant food. Fill a bucket with Comfrey leaves and cover with water, wait until they rot down and use the liquid, well diluted, as a plant tonic. Warning, the smell is very pungent!

Not all wayside plants are limited to medicinal use, some like the Horsetails have more practical properties. This isn't a flowering plant but a prehistoric survivor that reproduces by means of spores, like ferns and mosses Look for its feather-like leaves in damp spots on undisturbed land. The leaves are dotted with microscopic silica crystals that make them very abrasive. Bunches were gathered and used to scour pots and polish brass and pewter.

Our ancestors knew how to use what nature provided, we have lost that art but gained much more knowledge on how to produce powerful and effective medicines but it is still interesting to understand some of the properties of the "weeds" that grow around us.



TREE PLANTING

Thanks to the generosity of a local farmer the Friends of Wychwood will be planting half an acre of mixed woodland in late October and early November.

If anyone would like to lend a hand and at the same time get some exercise and fresh air contact me on 01993 832004 or email stuart@wychwood.me.uk and leave your name

and contact details. The planting will be completed during one weekend if we have enough volunteers.

Stuart Fox



Village Shop - Newsletter 3

July 2003

What a busy time it is right now with the date for the shop purchase getting closer and closer. We have now around £12,000 in the bank towards our village total of £20,000. (The remainder, some £108,000 is being dealt with by mortgages and grants). One of the main grants has been confirmed for £45,000 and we have a mortgage offer for £30,000.

This is a fantastic effort given that the decision was made only four months ago to go flat out to buy the shop, fit it out, stock it and staff it.

We also have (at the date of writing this newsletter) 180 shareholders signed up which is nearly one in two of the village population. This has given all of us serving on the various organising committees a huge lift, knowing the commitment is out there to make the shop work.

We are indebted to the many villagers who donated a total of £4620 to the newly formed village charity through our Gift Aid scheme. (We can now claim back around £1300 from the Chancellor!!)

However it is not too late if you still wish to buy a share for £10 or donate to the village charity. If we missed you over the sign up weekend (31 May/June 1) you can still contribute by calling Stuart Fox (Treasurer) on 832004 or John Cull (Chair) on 831621.

Fundraising

Sandy Markwell and her team continue to keep the momentum going with a diverse mix of interesting and innovative fundraising ideas. We started with the more traditional coffee mornings, car boot and raffles. Other events such as farm walks organised by Wendy Pearse and the open mills day and river walk hosted by Anne & Nigel Braithwaite helped keep everyone's interest going.

During June we ran our most ambitious project to date, an Open Gardens weekend, which netted £2,300. Not only was the weather on our side, but also we were able to attract visitors from far and wide. In fact over the 2 days we attracted 306 visitors to the gardens. (One

couple were on their way to Stow for the day, saw the signs and stayed all day in Ascott. Oh well, no doubt they will revisit Stow another weekend!!) Huge thanks go to Mike & Kathy Pearce who masterminded the event and everyone who contributed over the weekend by opening their gardens, selling cakes & plants, Pimms, teas etc.

Future events for your diary

Why not put these dates in your diary ...

Aug 31: Champagne brunch at The Tiddy

Sept 14: Fun Run (starting from the playing fields)

Oct 11: Race night at The Tiddy

We also plan to run an Antiques Road Show, possibly in the spring of 2004, hosted by a couple of the known experts from this hugely popular television programme. Watch out for more information later this year. It promises to be a big hit!!

Once the shop is open we will need ongoing funds to flow into the shop fund. The way we plan to do this is by organising a 100 Club, which will be affiliated to the Village Charity. To begin with the shop will be the main beneficiary, but in time we would like to think it could help other projects in the village. At some point during the autumn, we will let you know what we have in mind and how it will run.

Fancy being a volunteer?

Debra Harvey and her team on the Operations sub committee have been following up those of you who said you would like to work in the shop. Obviously, things change and although you may not have had your name on the original list, we would dearly wish to hear from anyone who has NOT had a call so far. In addition, we will be planning a training programme for all volunteers. By the time we start training the volunteers, we plan to have a shop management structure in place to support the volunteer team. If you would like to know about working in the shop, call Debra on 831621.

If you would like to help Mike Pearce (who is taking on the role of project manager prior to opening) with the final fitting out, plumbing, painting, electrics, shelf fitting etc call Mike on 830058.

Thanks again to all of you have contributed so generously – we will continue to keep you informed of progress.

John Cull, Chair – Village Shop Project

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LEAFIELD SCHOOL NEWS

DfES Achievement Award

We are pleased to say that the school has received an achievement award from the Department for Education and Skills for substantially improving our results. Thanks to Mrs. Ryde and all the teaching and support staff who, through their hard work and dedication have made this school a real success.

Just before Easter Mr. Staines took a group of Years 3 and 4 children to compete in a cross country event at Cokethorpe School with all of them completing the course - well done. Following their trip to the STEAM museum Class 4 had a Victorian afternoon looking at the life of a child in the Victorian classroom, using artifacts and role play.

Thanks to Mrs. Kenyon for organizing these.

We welcomed after Easter 5 new children who have settled in very well, and the older children worked very hard with their SATS and progress tests exceeding all targets. Science 100% with 11 children achieving level 5, Maths 93% with 6 children achieving level 5 and English 77% with 4 children achieving level 5. Many thanks to Mrs. Kenyon for all her hard work enthusing the children to succeed.

After working hard with their tests the children have enjoyed the last few weeks of term and for Year 6 their last few weeks before they move on - we wish them all well. Years 5 and 6 trained for their Cycling Proficiency and passed with much praise from the police who tested them. It is essential that the children learn to ride bikes safely so thanks to all the parents who kindly ran this for the school. Mrs. Cain and Mrs. Flear took the younger children to the Green Roadshow in Witney which was much enjoyed and very informative, and Mrs. Cain had an interesting trip when she took the Years 4 and 5 to Kids on the Web at Brookes University.

We had a splendid Leavers' Service in Leafield Church with the Year 6 children showing many talents and confidence in their individual and group performances. Unfortunately Mrs. Ryde was unable to be there as she had been in hospital with eyesight trouble, but she would have been very proud of the children - we wish her a speedy recovery.

Events

The Friends of Leafield School held a very successful Spring Fair with specialist plants, hand made cards, dolls house pieces, decorative

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glass, locally produced soaps and bath bombs, pashamana knitwear and lots of children's activities and stalls to name but a few. There was something for everyone including lunches, strawberries and cream and for those keen on football the "FA Cup Room". We held a super sports afternoon on the Green in glorious sunshine and then the Year 6 children, together with Mrs. Flear and Mrs. Kenyon organized a fun games and sporty morning for the younger children which they thoroughly enjoyed. A successful Fashion Show was held in the Village Hall one evening when valuable funds were raised to go towards some new desks for one of the classroom.

New Building

We are pleased to report that plans to include provision for the foundation area and a new classroom are now well under way and we anticipate work starting in the very near future.

When the final plans are available they will be on display and we will invite any interested parties to come and have a look - watch this space!

Sadly, David Staines will be leaving the school at the end of this term. He has worked at Leaffield for four years and had become a valued member of the team. We are all sorry to be losing David and saddened that he is leaving the teaching profession. However, we are pleased to say that after seeing a number of excellent applicants for the post we have appointed a new teacher, Miss Reeves, who will be starting in September. School starts back on Thursday 4th September. As this is the last news for the academic year, the Governors wish to thank Mrs. Ryde and all the staff, together with all the parents and volunteers who come into school and of course our enthusiastic Revd. Jane Knowles, all of whom help Leaffield School to provide the thriving, happy environment where all the children learn to achieve their full potential and more what ever it may be. For further information please contact the School Secretary, Mrs. Deb Brown on 878273.

Vicky Greves, Governor

LOW COST HOUSING

As Empire Homes press on with the new development at Cook Row at the end of High Street the two low cost 1 bedroom flats are now being promoted by West Oxfordshire District Council. The units are being sold at 70% of real open market value, and this discount will attach to them at all times in the future. One is priced at £85,166 and the other at £85,633 [after the reduction has been applied]. These were intended for local residents, and if anyone in the community is interested they should register as quickly as possible. The decision on allocation rests with West Oxfordshire District Council, and applications should be directed there. Anyone requiring help, advice or support should contact one of the Parish Councillors or our District Councillor, Mrs. Hilary Hibbert-Biles [831822].

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

14th September 2003 at 11 a.m.

FUN RUN!

6.5 km from Ascott to Chilson & back!

[1.5 km for younger runners]

Lots of great prizes!

BBQ, Refreshments, Licensed Bar, Raffle & Toddler Races!

All proceeds to Village Shop

For your application form please visit our website at:

<http://www.ascott-under-wychwood.org.uk/~shop>

or apply in writing to:

PO Box 73, Chipping Norton, OX7 6FL after 1st July

As a fundraising project for the shop I am hoping to put together a historical miscellany of Ascott mainly using existing material and old photographs. If you have any local scenes or old family photos of Ascott people that perhaps haven't already been published I would love to hear from you. Any contributions in the form of memories, research or family documents would also be appreciated.

Sue Richards 830122

CO-ORDINATOR

**needed for the Wychwoods Day Centre
New Beaconsfield Hall, Shipton under Wychwood**

This part time post involves arranging the activities and care of twenty elderly people at the Day Centre helped by a team of volunteers

For more details of this well paid and interesting post **please ring 01993 832723 during office hours**

TREE SURGEON

Andrew Jackson

Ascott-U-Wychwood

Tel: 01993 832607

Mobile: 07816 901455

**All Tree Surgery & Hedge Cutting Considered
Fully Qualified & Fully Insured**

Is your electric blanket safe?

Unsafe electric blankets can cause fires.

**Oxfordshire County Council are offering FREE
safety checks at the following venues:-**

WITNEY 8th September 2003

CHIPPING NORTON 17th September 2003

**To book your appointment telephone 01993 861060
[strictly on first come, first served basis by
pre-booked appointment only]**

www.westoxon.gov.uk

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 Pymer on 01993 882848

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.

SUMMER EVENTS PROGRAMME 2003

Children from across the district will have the chance to have fun this summer thanks to West Oxfordshire District Council's Summer Events Programme.

This Programme gives young people the chance to get stuck into activities such as trampolining, basketball, lawn bowls, cycling, archery, fencing, golf, sailing and various team games.

The holiday programme is for children aged from 6 to 16 years old.

For more information about the different schemes or to book contact Cultural Services on 1993 861080 or email cultural.services@westoxon.gov.uk. Alternatively pick up the Summer Events 2003 Programme at Council reception points

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**

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