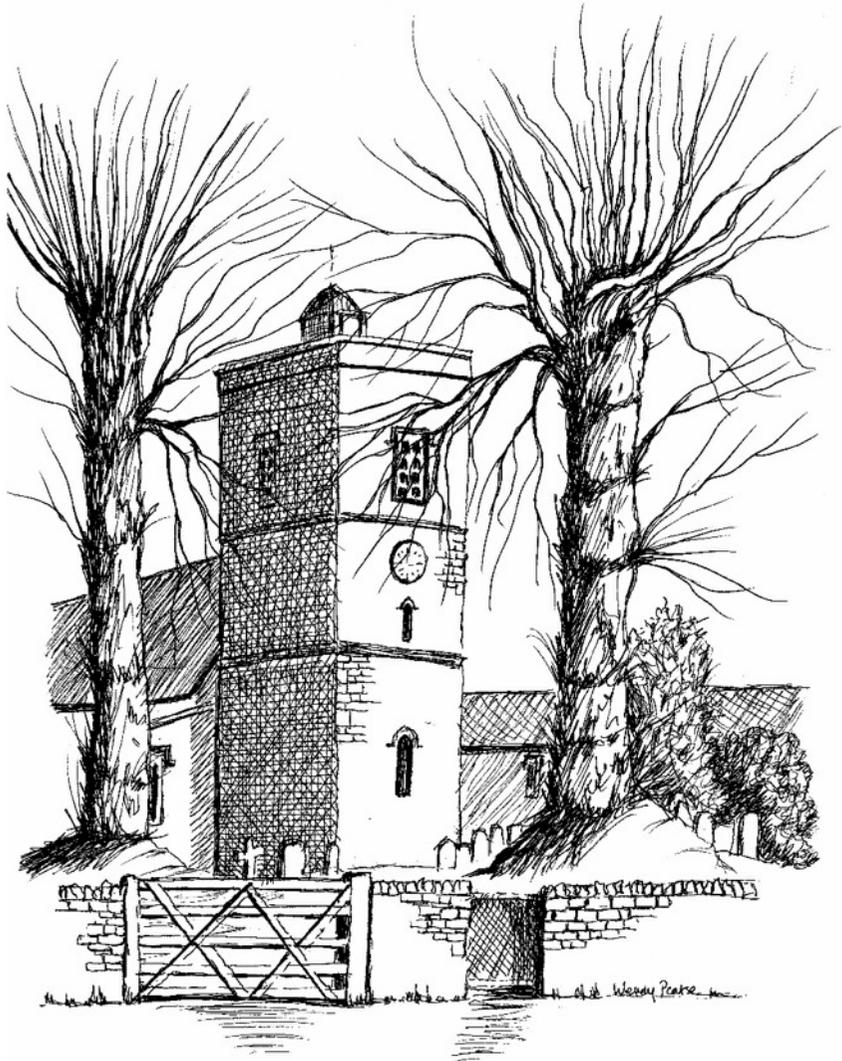


# The Ascott Grapevine



## 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 5<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

Articles submitted after this date may not be included.

Call 01993 831023 or email: [wendypearse@btinternet.com](mailto: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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## SERVICES AT ASCOTT CHURCH 2015

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.

13 <sup>th</sup> December	10.00 am Holy Communion [CW]
27 <sup>th</sup> December	10.00 am Holy Communion [CW]
10 <sup>th</sup> January	10.00 am Holy Communion [CW]
24 <sup>th</sup> January	8.00 am Holy Communion [BCP]
14 <sup>th</sup> February	10.00 am Holy Communion [CW]
28 <sup>th</sup> February	8.00 am Holy Communion [BCP]
Christmas Eve:	
Crib Service	3.00 pm
Midnight Service	11.30 pm
Christmas Day:	
25 <sup>th</sup> December	10.00 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](mailto:rector@thechasebenefice.org.uk)*

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Rev'd Mark Abrey Tel: 01608 676572

[rector@thechasebenefice.org.uk](mailto:rector@thechasebenefice.org.uk)

## ***News from the Church***

### ***New Associate Priest for the Benefice***



A new chapter in the life of the Chase Benefice opened today with the Licensing of the Revd. Marian Needham as our new Associate Priest. St. Nicholas Church, Chadlington was full as members of the Benefice gathered with clergy and laity from the Deanery and some of Marian's family and friends as she began her ministry amongst us.

The service was conducted by the Rt. Revd. Colin Fletcher, Bishop of Dorchester and Acting Bishop of Oxford, in the presence of Mr. Rod Walker, DL, representing the Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire. The Benefice Choir, directed by Rosy Nixon and accompanied by Jill Greer on organ and piano, helped to lead the worship with beautiful music and set the tone of the service with a prayerful Introit by Hildegard of Bingen, the Twelfth Century Abbess, whose Feast Day we remembered.

# Rev'd MARIAN NEEDHAM

Having recently moved into the Chase Benefice as its new Associate Priest I have been invited to introduce myself to the readers of the Ascott Grapevine – so this is something of a potted history. I moved here from the rural parish of Dodleston and Kinnerton which is about 6 miles outside Chester and where I was Assistant Priest for three years. Being on the Welsh border meant that it was an international parish with one of our two churches in England, and the other in Wales – an interesting combination! Before that I served my training curacy in the urban parish of Blacon, Chester, for four years after ordination in Chester Cathedral in 2008.

Apart from parish ministry in Chester Diocese, I was an occasional Honorary Chaplain at Chester Cathedral, and as a member of the Chester Diocesan Committee for Ministry I also delivered and examined parts of the three-year course for Pastoral Workers. I was involved in setting up the Arts and Faith Network in the diocese with the aim of “*exploring and responding to God’s creativity through our own*”, and chaired its Core Group. The idea behind the Network is to connect and encourage people whose immediate personal response to God and faith may not always be through words read or heard, but might be experienced more personally and profoundly through painting, sculpting, music, poetry, photography, or any other creative artform. With the support of the diocese we offered workshops and a residential weekend led by guest artists as part of the growing Network activities

My husband Chris is a retired lawyer. Originally Londoners, we have moved around the country for his work which took us to Bristol, then Horsham, and when his job moved to Liverpool, we went to live near Chester. At this point I found myself unexpectedly exploring a more formal role in the Church which led on to ordination. Fortunately for me, Chris conceded that it was now ‘my turn’ and was happy to agree to move again, this time to Church Enstone.

My working background is in the arts. I studied classical music and Arts Management and worked in music publishing and concert management in London, gathering marketing, sponsorship and fundraising experience along the way. I was Chester Cathedral’s Press Officer for several years, and have taught singing and piano privately alongside my other activities. My hobbies tend to be music-related and I sing in a major London choir which offers wonderful opportunities to sing in famous venues all over the world, make recordings, and take part in exciting events. Asked if I have any favourite highlights, I would have to say singing in Sydney Opera House, and in the choir behind Dame Kiri Te Kanawa at the wedding of Prince Charles and Princess Diana.

I am greatly enjoying getting to know this beautiful area, and very much look forward to meeting as many of you as possible in the months ahead.

With good wishes

**Marian**

# ***Sardine Special***

## ***Overcrowding in the 5.37 pm Oxford to Kingham train.***

Passengers complain they cannot get seats because the number of carriages has been cut from three to one

## ***Ray of hope for travellers in the Sardine Special***

There was welcome news last night concerning the future of what passengers have come to call “Beeching’s Sardine Special.”

The train -is the 5.37 pm from Oxford to Kingham – all of it in one coach. But a two-coach train will replace it from February 8, a Western Region spokesman said last night.

The new train was luckily a spare one from Bletchley and the Western Region would incur no extra costs from the change-over, he said.

He did not know whether the train would have been introduced if it had involved extra costs. “We are asked to keep our costs as low as possible and, when a diesel train is adequate for a large number of daily journeys, we cannot always provide for the abnormal journey,” he said.

“Cattle-truck conditions” and “Another black hole of Calcutta” are the criticism of two passengers, Mr. D. V. Cook and Mr. R. Edginton, of Ascott-under-Wychwood, who are only too familiar with the train.

Complaints first flared up last September, when two of the three carriages were taken away from this peak evening train to Hanborough, Combe, Finstock, Charlbury, Ascott and Shipton – a service Dr. Beeching wants to close.

Johnson and I arrived yesterday just as 77 passengers fresh from work were surging through the doors of this 60 seat diesel carriage. They were squeezing through some doors two at a time in their dash for seats.

## ***No chivalry***

“I’m afraid chivalry rather goes by the board,” said Mr. Edginton. “Some of us some times give up our seats to women and elderly people, but mostly it’s every man for himself.”

As the train started, six standing passengers were enabled to sit down by cramming four people on to seats made for three. This left ten people standing, including me – and a girl sitting on the lap of her cousin.

The girl, Miss Rosemary Edginton, aged 17, of Spelsbury, whose cousin Pauline of the same age lives in Milton, is not related to the Mr. Edginton mentioned above. She said “Pauline and I often sit on each others’ laps because, if you stand, you get rocked about such a lot”

We soon got her message. There were no straps above the narrow gangway and, unless you stretch over and grab a luggage rack, the swaying of the train will send you sprawling, especially when it crosses points.

## ***Woman faints***

“Things aren’t bad today,” said Mr Edginton. “I’ve often counted 92 passengers, which means 32 people standing. Once a woman fainted and we couldn’t get through to her in the crush.”

Mr. Cook said “The only way you can stand on your feet when it’s really crowded is to brace yourself against other people. No, I can’t say I feel like standing after a day’s work. I’m a hospital porter.”

One woman, a shop receptionist, had won a seat by getting to Oxford station 20 minutes before the train left. “Even then, you have to fight and push to get a seat. If you have to stand you find someone to hang on to.”

## ***‘Undignified’***

Miss Wendy Gunter, of Station Road, Shipton, described conditions on the

train as “shocking and completely undignified.”

Mr. William Nutt, of Kingham, said that he had to stand for three journeys out of five every week. The next train is not until 7.15 pm

This standard of travel will cost passengers up to 30s a week under the increased fares. Mr Edginton has protested to the Western Region’s divisional manager, Mr. F. D. Pattisson.

Mr. Pattisson replied “I am sorry to learn of the difficulties you are experiencing in obtaining a seat. A recent census showed that a number of passengers alighted at Hanborough and to provide an extra coach for such a short journey would be too costly, bearing in mind that it would be required only in peak hours.”

Yesterday two of the 77 passengers got out at Hanborough – the others say this is the average – reducing the number stand-



ing to eight. Only after Charlbury were there seats for all.

On the return journey Jonny and I had the coach to ourselves. We relaxed like kings.

### ***Complaint 'just'***

The Oxford stationmaster, Mr. John Atkinson, said today "These passengers have just cause for complaint. I have been pursuing the matter very actively. I don't think it's one of policy."

"The trouble began with the winter service, when we were expecting to get a two-car train from Birmingham district for this Kingham journey."

"But this train was allocated to a bigger job and we got the one-car train instead. Since then I've been seeking ways around the problem."

Story by JOHN EZARD Picture by Jonny Johnson

## ***Romance, Passion and Tragedy Concert***

On Saturday evening the 12th September, we had a wonderful taste of classical piano and vocal music performed by three 20 year old students from the Royal Academy of Music, William Diggle (baritone) Milly Forrest (soprano) and Amiran Zenaishvili (piano). William has grown up in Ascott and was first taught singing by Daphne Abe. Amiran Zenaishvili has studied the piano in Moscow and obtained a scholarship to study at the Royal Academy of Music in London.

William with his rich baritone voice and Milly with a sparkling soprano voice, who was also a delight to watch, gave a memorable recital. This included operatic arias by Donizetti, Bellini, Puccini

and Mozart, sung with dramatic expression as either solos or duets. They were accompanied by the pianist who also played lively pieces by Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov with great feeling and precision.

The musical ability of all three was exceptional and we should expect them all to be established professionals before long. We felt very fortunate to have heard them in the Tiddy Hall and if they should return here to perform, we can recommend that you should take the opportunity to see and hear them, if you have not already done so. Finally, we must thank Daphne Abe for arranging this excellent concert.

**R and S Stedeford**

# ***Recipe***

## ***Sausage & Cranberry Stuffing***

Serves 8 – Preparation 15 Mins. – Cooking 50 Mins.

### ***Ingredients:***

- 1 Onion - Finely Chopped.
  - 25g Butter.
  - 2 Slices of White Bread, Whizzed to Chunky Bread Crumbs.
  - 200g Sausage Meat.
  - 1 Apple – Peeled and Grated.
  - 200g Cranberries.
  - 50g Pistachios.
  - 50g Chopped Parsley.
  - 4 Sage Leaves – Finely Sliced.
- Salt & Pepper.

### ***Method:***

Heat oven to 200C /180 Fan /Gas Mark 6.

Cook off onion in butter until soft & golden brown. Add breadcrumbs to soak up excess butter & let the mixture cool.

Tip into a bowl with the sausage meat, apple, cranberries, pistachio, parsley and sage and add salt & pepper. Mix well – then roll into balls.

To cook – place in a roasting tin and bake for 50 mins. Make sure to turn a few times or until brown & golden all the way round.

**Recipe by Mike Annesley  
Sous Chef**

**The Swan Inn, Ascott under Wychwood.**



# Nature Notes

One of the pleasures of living in an historic village community, like Ascott, is the variety of buildings that exist side by side all adding to the character of the parish. Grand ancient houses along-side small cottages, converted farm buildings next to modern houses and all in a mixture of styles and construction materials. Look up and this variety continues at roof level with Welsh slates mixing with a variety of different tiles. Some of the older houses have a very distinct type of roof covered with uneven Cotswold stone slates, much enjoyed by the resident house sparrows who find the gaps excellent places to look for a nesting place.



Many of these 'slates' will have been mined locally in and around the village of Stonesfield. Although referred to as slates they should be more properly called tilestones or fissile limestone tiles as they consist of a fine-grained type of middle Jurassic great oolite limestone which occurs in a strata across certain parts of the Cotswolds, including Miserden, Naunton and Ablington near Bibury and was probably deposited in a shallow marine environment.

In Stonesfield the slate bearing rocks consists of two beds of yellowish or grey limestone two to three feet thick, separated by a bed of loose calcareous sandstone

of a similar thickness. Production of the 'slates' began in a small way in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but it was not until a building boom in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that production increased dramatically by which time there were up to two dozen underground and one open cast working mines providing a source of full and part-time employment in the village. The work for the miners was hard. To access the stones they had to descend narrow shafts from twenty to seventy feet deep, often on rickety wooden ladders and then crawl along galleries that might only be three to five feet high to reach the working face. Despite the discomfort this was a popular employment as mining tended to take place during the months when work on the land was not readily available and working underground in the winter months the miners were sheltered from the winter cold, rain and snow.

Digging in the mines took place from Michaelmas until January. The slabs of stone, called pendles, were loaded onto wheeled trolleys and hauled along the mine's gallery and lifted to the surface using a windlass. At this stage it was very important to keep the stone wet and so the newly mined stone was piled-up in the nearby fields and covered with earth. In dry seasons the mounds were watered to keep them moist. This was important as the actual splitting of the stone was caused by the action of sharp frosts on the damp stone. If the stone dried out it became 'bound' and frost wouldn't move the layers to allow the rock to split to form the thin sheets of stone required to make the slates. Once frosted the stone split easily allowing the slaters to shape and finish the tiles at any time. This work usually started in

## The Ascott Grapevine

February/March and continued throughout the year.

It required three or four good frosts to split the stone and so the whole village was always watching the weather. Sometimes the stones needed to be uncovered several times until there was a sufficiently long period of sharp frost. To make the most of their chances to take advantage of freezing weather the miners employed a man to run through the village ringing a bell to summon all available workers to turn out day or night to uncover and spread out the stones. If there was a sudden fall in temperature leading to a frost late at night the church bells would be rung to summon people from their beds! A warm winter would be a disaster both for the mine owners and the slaters they employed during the summer months to shape the slates.

If the hard frost didn't arrive an inferior slate product could be made from a fissile layer of sandstone that was found between and above the slate strata. This was manually split and produced thicker slates of poor quality and was not produced in sufficient quantities to keep the slaters in employment throughout the summer.

As Lord of the Manor the Duke of Marlborough owned the mineral rights and in 1774 a lease was issued by the Duke granting Robert Fowler the right to sink a shaft and stone to be extracted for a period of 10 years. Robert paid the Duke 30 shillings (£1.50p) per annum and the tenant of the land 15 shillings per annum (75p). In return he was contracted to supply the Duke with 10,000 slates each year for which the Duke would pay a guinea per 1,000 (£1.05).

The Stonesfield slate industry was at its peak from 1800 to 1871. By 1895, fol-

lowing competition from Welsh slates, the production of clay tiles and the wages offered were too low to attract men into the industry. Only two pits were in operation and the last one of closed in 1911. Looking at the census figures gives an indication of the rise and decline of the Stonesfield slate industry. In 1801 two slate makers were registered, in 1811 this had risen to 51, only to decline to 20 in 1831 and 10 in 1851. In 1871 nine were listed, but with a note that one was unemployed. These figures do not include the miners as these were shown in the census as labourers as they worked on the land in the summer and some worked in the mines in the winter. Working in the slate industry was a family affair where son followed father. In 1781 a Joseph Griffin was recorded as a slater and his descendant Thomas Griffin, one of the last slate makers, died in 1946.

The closure of the last mine saw a sharp increase in the price of Stonesfield slates as demand grew for the correct materials required for the repair and restoration of older properties. Many barns were stripped of their slates to service this market. Today, some stone slates are still produced in small quantities at quarries in other parts of the Cotswolds, but they are produced by manual splitting of the rock, rather than relying on the frost to do the work. This tends to produce thicker slates.

Apart from slates the mines also produced a wealth of fossils including, Ammonites, together with remains of Plesiosaurs, Marine Crocodiles, fossil insects, Turtles and various dinosaurs. Historically, this was one of the richest sites in Britain for fossils from the Middle Jurassic era. From this site the geologist William Buckland DD FRS (1784 to

1856) obtained the first dinosaur *Megalosaurus* remains ever to be recognised and described.

*Stuart Fox*

## ***Faith***

Most of the time he seems just out of view,  
Hiding in the shadows, calling catch me if you can.  
But I have seen him in the glory of the dawn,  
Heard him in the music of the spheres,  
And between the tears of sad goodbyes.  
I have glimpsed him before he quickly slips away,  
Again to play.  
Dancing in the shadows singing.  
Now you see me, now you don't.  
If you love me  
Don't let your faith  
Become self idolatry  
For I, not you  
Will choose who my friends should be.

**Fred Russell**

## **ALL OUT FOR FOUR!**

I noted with interest the report of a cricket match played between Ascott and Leaffield. It took my memory back many years. For a while I was Secretary of the Cricket Club.

One Saturday we took a side to Fieldtown to play Leaffield in a Witney League match. I have to report, Leaffield bowled Ascott out for **four** runs Keith Vizor scoring three of these runs. Mike Shayler, a stalwart of the village team, said to me, "We might as well go home before tea." I told him we couldn't do that, our team was booked in at the George pub. I also remember it was a typical English summer's day, overcast and cold. The score and weather made it doubly depressing.

Ascott's top scorer that day, Mr Vizor, is still with us. He is now the oldest male in the village to be born and bred in Ascott. If you see a dear old gentleman wandering up to the shop each day, it could be Mr Vizor. Why not stop and say hello? He will be only too pleased to reminisce about years gone by in Ascott.

**Fred Russell**

PS When Lady Chatterley's Lover was dramatized recently on TV, I wrote to the BBC asking what time the dirty bits came, so I could turn over from Downton Abbey.



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## ***Wedding***



***Ben and Rowena  
Greatbatch***

## ***Birth***

On the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015, to Susie and Jack Morgan, a son, Peter Stephen John.

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# **ASCOTT CHARITY 10k & 5k**

## **RUN 25<sup>th</sup> October**

After a rather damp Saturday we woke on Sunday to a crisp and sunny autumn morning with a light breeze, ideal conditions for our charity run. Nearly one hundred runners took part with both races starting together on the playing field at 10.30am. Our youngest competitor was 7 years old and our oldest was 73.

Over £1,500 was raised by the event. This money will be used towards the cost of pollarding the churchyard Lime trees and improving the church path.

This event would not be such a success without the help of so many volunteers; the marshals keeping the runners on track, the ladies providing refreshments including home made cakes and bacon baps, the time-keepers working on the finishing line and especially those responsible for designing and laying out the two courses.

Financially, we are very grateful to our sponsors, Pennington Manches, Cotswold Wildlife Park, The Swan, Meadowbank House B & B, The Rooflight Company, Wychwood Folk Club and Ascott Village Shop.

### ***The results of the main races are:***

#### **5k Male**

1	Mathew Lock	time	21 mins 38 sec	16 years old
2	Rupert Smith	time	23 mins 29 sec	11 years old
3	Cosmo Cooper	time	23 mins 35 sec	11 years old

#### **5K Female**

1	Sally Howard	time	23 mins 15 sec	
2	Harriet Howard	time	25 mins 50 sec	11 years old
3	Sophie Ayres	time	26 mins 30 sec	7 years old

#### **10k Male**

1	Gary Crone	time	40 mins 06 sec	
2	Fraser Howard	time	40 mins 40 sec	
3	Simon Pritchard	time	42 mins 14 sec	

#### **10k Female**

1	Andrea Finnigan	time	47mins 37 sec	
2	Anna Jones	time	51 mins 34 sec	
3	Rowena Verity	time	52 mins 20 sec	

# 5k Winners



# 10k Winners



## 5k Runners

<b>Name</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>M/F</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>M/F</b>
Matthew Lock	95	21.38	M	Millie White	179	31.21	F
Sally Howard	66	23.15	F	Richard Smith	83	31.35	M
Rupert Smith	84	23.29	M	Anne Smith	88	31.53	F
Cosmo Cooper	87	23.35	M	Clyde Kay	178	32.04	M
Rocco Allen	94	24.49	M	William Ayres	80	32.06	M
Paul Allen	93	24.5	M	Abi Norgrove	91	32.12	F
Harriet Howard	64	25.5	F	Philip Norgrove	90	32.34	M
Chris Godfrey	77	26.1	M	Sue Richards	85	32.41	F
Seamus Thurlow	2	26.15	M	Jonathan Ayres	78	33.21	M
Sophie Ayres	79	26.3	F	Clive Applebee	75	34.00	M
Jamie Wickens	73	26.49	M	Emilija Malova	176	35.59	F
Harry Cooper	86	27.00	M	Arthur Boyd	69	36.06	M
Oliver Lang	72	27.04	M	Madie Paterson	174	37.06	F
Brad Wickens	74	27.05	M	Wyatt Downey	96	37.51	M
H Thurlow	81	27.11	F	William Downey	97	37.52	M
Adam Lang	71	28.13	M	H Arundel-Walker	175	38.52	M
Douglas Lang	70	28.17	M	Ella Haynes	177	39.41	F
Kyle Buchanan	92	28.49	M	Hilary Bowman	62	39.52	F
Joel Mileham	89	28.49	M	Nicholas Bowman	61	39.52	M
Emily Howard	65	29.51	F	Jenny Evanson	173	41.08	F
Elsa Stanley-Evans	99	30.31	F	Mica Trowbridge	76	42.29	F
Rachel Stanley-Evans	98	30.32	F	Anne McGill	67	43.47	F
Amillie White	180	31.06	F	Zena Howse	68	43.47	F

## 10k Runners

<b>Name</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>M/F</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>N°</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>M/F</b>
Gary Crone	553	40.06	M	Charlie Stanley-Evans	572	50.48	M
Fraser Howard	545	40.40	M	Neil Wallis	573	50.55	M
Simon Pritchard	549	42.14	M	Mick Garland	547	50.55	M
Chris Colbeck	556	42.25	M	James Haworth-Booth	589	51.31	M
Rupert Haworth	586	43.00	M	Anna Jones	551	51.34	F
Josh Rhodes	562	43.41	M	Ben Olney	555	51.36	M
James Finnigan	577	43.57	M	Rowena Verity	570	52.20	F
Nick Dalton	574	44.22	M	Jayne Mumford	557	52.35	F
Duncan Lynchsmith	588	45.02	M	0 Forbes	575	53.33	M
Robert Green	566	45.18	M	Rosie Farr	552	54.01	F
Peter Wright	582	45.40	M	Stephen Sutton	540	54.20	M
Martin Pink	559	45.55	M	Jessica Wright	569	54.36	F
Paul Ainslie	568	46.23	M	Sheela Hobden	558	55.35	F
Andy Peniket	565	46.48	M	Stuart Warwick	571	55.47	M
Nick Prior	587	47.05	M	John Vickers	561	56.18	M
Rob Dyer	563	47.13	M	Andrew Smith	578	57.00	M
Graham LeGood	579	47.16	M	Christopher Harrison	544	57.07	M
Andrea Finnigan	576	47.37	F	Johnnie Wraith	567	57.12	M
Neil Preddy	554	48.01	M	Alan Davidson	541	57.29	M
Sonnie Jane	560	48.17	M	Paula Booth	546	57.36	F
Guy Tucker	585	48.32	M	Kester Harvey	581	57.41	M
Stuart Craft	583	48.53	M	Peter Ratcliffe	543	60.09	M
John Vickers	561	49.00	M	Jeremy Newton-Mold	548	60.40	M
David Kingham	584	49.18	M	Judith LeGood	580	62.50	F

# Vet's Advice

## Tick borne disease

Recently our practice took part in a nationwide survey of ticks. Our nurses randomly examined dogs for ticks and these ticks were sent off to the researchers to 'do their thing'. This is part of ongoing research into tick prevalence and tick borne diseases. We were surprised by how many ticks we found.

As a result of climate change it is expected that the tick population will not only increase, but that we will soon find ticks that previously could not exist in our climate. This will also bring along some new tick borne diseases.

At the moment our biggest problem is Lyme's disease. This is an infection caused by bacteria called Borrelia. They are transferred from an infected animal by the tick. So basically the tick sucks up blood from an infected animal, a deer for example, then falls from the deer and gets onto its next meal ticket, the dog, or, very infrequently, a person, and in the process of sucking blood injects the bacteria into the new host.

Recently the billionaire owner of Phones4U revealed that he and his children suffer from Lyme's disease which can be very debilitating. Initially all that is seen is a rash which looks almost like a bull's eye on the skin. Recently 'water on the knee' has been found in some cases as the first symptom of the disease. Other early symptoms include headache, fever and joint pain. If antibiotic treatment is started early 99 % of patients are cured.

Our patients, with their hairy coats and limited ability to communicate a headache, are not the easiest when it comes to diagnosing the disease. So, we base our

attack on the 'prevention is better than cure' route. There is a large number of very good products available at the moment to prevent tick infestation. The latest, my favourite, comes in tablet form and therefore cannot be washed off when the dog jumps into the river or walks in the rain. Collars, spot on products and sprays are also available.

Should you find a tick on your dog (or on yourself), try to remove it by using your fingers or tweezers as close to the skin as possible. Most vets stock little plastic tick removers which are easy to use, particularly if you are a bit squeamish. It is not a good idea to burn the tick as the head is often left behind and can cause inflammation.

Now for the good news. Our area is not considered to be a high risk region for Lyme's disease. We should not be complacent with the ever changing world, and still be very careful when undertaking little trips to, for example, the New Forest, where the disease is endemic.

### A tick



## Another tick



Tick removal – photo courtesy of Tri Lake Animal Hospital

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# ***Communion Service under the Lime Trees***





## Churchyard Trees - have your say!

Readers of The Grapevine will know that since May Ascott Church has been raising money to do work on the avenue of Lime Trees in the Churchyard which are in need of urgent attention. We have been advised that there are two courses of action: a full re-pollarding to the crown of the trees - which is how the trees have been managed in the past - or a less dramatic 'managed pollarding' over the next three years. The latter would have less visual impact, but is more difficult to do and a lot more expensive.

The Church wishes to follow the pattern of previous years and to do a full re-pollarding the trees. However, before this work can be done we need permission from West Oxfordshire District Council. As re-pollarding the trees will have a dramatic visual impact for a few years, WODC have asked that we seek the views of the whole village. We therefore invite people to comment on these proposals by completing a 2 minute online survey at [www.thechasebenefice.org.uk/ascott-trees](http://www.thechasebenefice.org.uk/ascott-trees) or by writing to Mark Dawbarn, Brambletye, 18 High Street, Ascott-under-Wychwood by December 14. It is hoped the work will be completed before the end of February 2016.

## ***HOW MANY LORDS A-LEAPING?***

The first Commandment states “You shall have no other God but me.”

Throughout Christendom the prayer most widely used is called “The Lord’s Prayer.” In the Church of England the response to many prayers is “Lord have mercy”. So what I want to know is, “Why do we have the second chamber in Parliament called the House of Lords?” Who would really want to be called Lord unless they have a desire to lord it over the rest of us proles?

One of the definitions of lord in the dictionary is a feudal superior. I think all humanity is flawed so no one should be called lord, only the Lord himself.

I have no objection to a second chamber but it should be filled with people of stature from science, technology, medicine and arts. The title of Professor or Doctor should be sufficient. Sport should be excluded, especially footballers. Most have the intellect of a moron whose intelligence is not much greater than my own.

The established church is full of hypocrisy over this. If you were to meet a bishop who serves in the House of Lords, the correct way of addressing him would be My Lord Bishop. While up and down the country parsons in pulpits put the fear of Christ into their congregation preaching, there is only one Lord, God.

I have not forgotten the dear ladies in all this. Whenever I hear of a woman being made a Dame, the first question I want to ask is, “Where is she playing Widow Twanky this Christmas?”

**Fred Russell**

## ***DID YOU KNOW***

In 1891 Church View, then known as The Row, consisted of 14 households containing 75 people in all? Their ages ranged between 4 months and 75 years. Also, at that time the lower terrace of houses had no doors facing the road, so the flow of people along the back of the houses must have been almost constant. The heads of the households were variously described as agricultural labourers, shepherd, stone mason, carter, road constructor, charwoman, gardener, sawyer and road contractor. There were 5 plough boys, 2 gloveresses, a lady carrier and 10 children under 5. Peace and quiet must have been in short supply.

**Wendy Pearse**

# *Ascott under Wychwood PC* **News**

## **Hidden Treasure**

During August the PC took a break from meetings but it did not mean that we were idle! Instead we all spent a morning rifling through the PC cabinet where all the papers are stored and discovering all sorts of interesting documents and snippets of information. The most exciting discovery of all was Ascott's original Enclosures Map dating from the 19<sup>th</sup> century – we thought we should have been wearing those white gloves of David Dimbleby's while studying it. We felt rather privileged and hope to organise an event at some point when others in the village will have a chance to see this wonderful old map.

## **Transport Questionnaire**

In response to the County Council consultation on subsidised bus cuts Peter Rance and I organised a transport questionnaire throughout August and subsequently responded to the consultation with 2 letters – one letter written jointly with Shipton and Milton Parish Councils and the second written solely on behalf of Ascott and that included detailed information taken from the results of our questionnaire. It was clear from your answers that the current services are not fit-for-purpose – they miss connections and leave people stranded for hours, they do not always turn up, they do not run on Chippy market days, they allow people only 1 ½ hours in Chippy, the station bus takes forever and can be a white knuckle ride..... no wonder few people use them these days! We have

established where people want to go and at what times and have suggested to OCC that they can make savings by paring down the number of buses but still run a service that passengers want. We have offered to work with them to create a service that truly suits our residents.

## **Christmas shopping trains**

The second part of the questionnaire included questions on the train service. Peter has been regularly putting pressure on Great Western Railways (as it is now re-branded) to allow one or two more trains to stop at Ascott. The Cotswold Line Promotion Group has been supporting this. Thank you to Peter for persuading GWR to allow certain existing trains to stop on the 4 Saturdays leading up to this Christmas. Please refer to the separate article for details and if you want a Saturday train to continue throughout the year then **PLEASE use these Christmas trains.**

We share the concern of residents about lack of car parking space in the village. More Ascott commuting trains are in reality a long way off and would have to be accompanied by an acceptable plan for parking facilities. Those who have trouble parking in Charlbury may like to try Kingham which has recently expanded its car park enormously.

## **Footpaths**

There has been concern in the village about the footbridge over the river at Ascott Mill and the footpaths north of the river. Mark Tribe has been badgering the OCC Rights of Way department and we are told that they are due to start work on

the footings of the bridge very shortly. The October PC meeting was visited by Mr Simper, Cotswold Warden and he clarified the position of the new owners of Pudlicote House. The well-used footpaths along the north river bank at Ascott Mill are not public rights of way and Mr & Mrs Wickens will not agree to walkers turning east. However, they will 'turn a blind eye' to walkers turning west and being able to complete the circular walk back to Ascott. The public right of way is straight on from the bridge and Mr Simper has explained to the owners that this should be kept passable at all times. We are grateful to Mr & Mrs Wickens for allowing the Charity Fun Run to keep its traditional route which runs eastwards along the river bank.

### **Memorial Recreation Ground**

The Recreation Ground drainage scheme is in its final stages of development. In September we held a public meeting to address all the concerns of local residents and we are extremely grateful to our expert speakers from Sport England and the County Council road drainage team for attending. Huge thanks must also go to Laurence Mellor, who has been working tirelessly on this project, keeping the planning process moving while always making sure that residents' properties are considered. The meeting was extremely well attended and the experts grilled thoroughly. It seems that residents were satisfied that the scheme might in fact reduce the risk of 'run-off'. Subsequently, the drainage team has started mapping the line of the underground pipe leading from the playing field to the river, so that is an added benefit of undertaking this project. Nothing is a 'done deal' though – the final design and costings will have to be presented to Sport England again

before we know whether they will agree to fund it. If we are successful we hope that work will commence around April/May 2016.

Talking about the Recreation Ground ..... Please can you remember that **NO DOGS ARE ALLOWED** at any time on or off the lead. We understand that it might be a nuisance when you are walking children to the park with a dog but it is particularly for the sake of the children's health that we have this rule.

### **County Council budget cuts**

We have entered the annual period of financial planning and are very much under the cloud of County Council proposed budget cuts. Last year we raised the precept in anticipation of this as we might well need to pay for services especially important to Ascott but which County Council will no longer fund. OCC consultation on all cuts finishes on 30 November and their decisions will be taken early in the New Year. We already share some costs of the Wychwood Library and Sandy Timms monitors this. Also, we take responsibility for our own gritting during times of snow, thanks to Chris Badger's team at Crown Farm, and ask for your help by parking your cars just inside your drives if overnight snow is forecast.

### **Ascott Helpers making Ascott even more beautiful**

On a happier note our volunteer team of Ascott Helpers have been making wonderful progress on the bank opposite the Signal Box. Thank you so much to all those who have given time, enormous effort and plants. In fact, for 2 days recently Network Rail joined in the fun and did a brilliant job of cutting back around the culverts under Shipton Rd and the railway line – first time for years. Many of you have enjoyed the

## The Ascott Grapevine

flowers on the station bank and made very kind remarks. Hopefully, as the culvert bed develops it will bring us all just as much pleasure.

PS – If you are throwing away any snowdrops or winter aconites please throw them my way – they are best planted after flowering ‘in the green’, i.e. early spring. Contact Philippa on 830344.

A new Parish Councillor please

Talking of volunteering ..... we are still looking for a fifth Parish Councillor. The most important contribution is to attend the meetings as often as possible and there are 12 in one year. We make everyone welcome and are not very formal. After that the amount of work is up to

you, your interests and the time you can give. As you can see, our work is very varied.

Carols on the Green, Christmas Eve at 6pm  
Last but definitely not least have a wonderful festive season and don't forget Carols on the Green complete with free Mulled Wine, mince pies and Brass Band. A collection will go to the Wychwood Day Centre – a very special organisation much appreciated by its elderly members. Bring everyone and don't forget a torch.

We have two allotment plots that are now available to rent. If you are interested please contact your parish councillor or Angel Barnes, the Parish Clerk.

## *Merry Christmas from the Parish Council*

### Joint Local Councillors' Surgeries

Saturday 28 November, 11.30-12.30 at the Swan Pub, A-u-W

December no surgery

### 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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# **Leaffield C.E. Primary School**

## **Admission to Leaffield C.E. Primary School**

If your child was born between 1 September 2011 and 31 August 2012, you need to apply for a Primary School place. Applications for entry to Reception in September 2016 can be made on-line via [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk). The closing date for applications is 15th January 2016.

### ***Have you visited your local catchment school?***

*“Children in Reception develop their early literacy and numeracy skills well.”*

*“Adults in the Reception class provide a good range of activities that capture children’s interest.”*

*“Teachers create a high level of interest and instil a love of learning.”*



OFSTED June 2014.

*“How can we make your lessons even better?”* asked Mr McGuinness.

*“Make the day longer, so we can stay and learn even more.”* replied Class 4.

Headteacher’s pupil interviews June 2015

Want to know more or see us in action?

I would be delighted to show you around our wonderful school. Please call the office on 01993 878273 to make an appointment. I look forward to meeting you.

**Christian McGuinness**

**Headteacher**



# ***Leaffield School Memural- by Sam Branigan***

Back in April Leaffield C.E. Primary School held a weeklong celebration, marking our 175<sup>th</sup> birthday. The school was first opened in 1840 during Queen Victoria's reign and has lasted through the Victorian era and two world wars.

During the milestone week we held a Victorian day where we dressed up as 1840 pupils and our teachers were very strict. We were all glad that the "5 strikes and a good shaking" highlighted in the old punishment book were no longer allowed!

We enjoyed a visit by the Bishop of Oxford, who showed us what a Victorian Bishop would wear. We also welcomed some members of Leaffield Evergreens to come and join in the fun, some of whom used to attend Leaffield school.

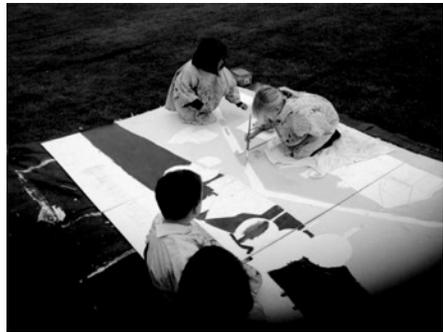
In September the school arranged for local artist Emily Cooling to help students

create a piece of artwork to commemorate this special anniversary. A large mural was created which shows the school and church at the heart of the village, with a view of hills and fields in the background.

The colourful picture was made up of painted dots and thumbprints. This clever design meant that every child was able to have a go - maybe in a few years time when the year ones are year sixes they will be able to tell the new starters which dots they added.

The mural hangs in pride of place in the school hall and every child sees it in assembly. It is incredible to think that in 25 years time the school will be 200.

So Happy Birthday Leaffield School – we leave you a "Memural" to remember this amazing event.



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WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## **Cabinet's go-ahead for cost saving programme**

Cabinet members at West Oxfordshire District Council have voted unanimously to proceed with a shared working programme that will deliver additional annual savings of over £1.25m by the end of 2018/19.

The programme, called the 2020 Vision, will extend existing shared working with Cheltenham Borough Council and Cotswold and Forest of Dean District Councils.

The four councils already share a human resources, finance and payroll service and are working towards building a common ICT structure.

Although there will be structural changes as to how the councils operate, the 2020 programme is being designed so residents will not see any changes to their Council and the services it runs.

Each Council will retain its own separate identity and its own democratically elected members. Staff will continue to work at each location; some will provide a service predominantly to one Council, whereas others will provide a service for more than one Council.

Sir Barry Norton, Leader of West Oxfordshire District Council said: "Our pioneering approach to shared working started over seven years ago with sharing a Chief Executive post with Cotswold District Council. Since then it has developed considerably and is now delivering significant savings of over £1.2m a year. The new programme, if approved by Council, will increase these annual savings to almost £2.5m a year and are essential during these financially challenging times.

"Above all, it has not had any adverse impact on residents and is enabling us to continue delivering the same valued frontline services to them. Decisions will still be made by our elected district councillors taking the needs of the local community into account, as at present."

Most local authorities are examining ways of delivering efficiencies through closer partnership working.

The Cabinet's decision to enter into a Shared Services Partnership structure with three other local authorities follows a period of consultation with staff and residents

Cllr Colin Dingwall, Cabinet Member responsible for overseeing shared services said, "The 2020 Vision Programme is a major and complex undertaking that we expect will take several years to deliver fully. We are going into this with our eyes wide open, as the Programme development is based on the years of experience and knowledge we've gained. We have government support and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy has undertaken an independent review of our business case and found it to be very robust."

(Continued over page)

The report with Cabinet's recommendations will be presented to Full Council on 21 October. A similar report has already been agreed by Cotswold District Council and is being considered by the Forest of Dean and Cheltenham. Below are the report dates:

### Key Dates

- Cheltenham - 13 October (Cabinet), 19 October (Full Council).
- Cotswold - 17 September (Cabinet), 29 September (Full Council).
- Forest of Dean – 15 October (Cabinet), 22 October (Full Council).
- West Oxfordshire – 14 October (Cabinet), 21 October (Full Council).

The 2020 programme is guided by the following vision of the four partner councils: *“retaining their independence and identity, but working together and sharing resources to maximise mutual benefit leading to more efficient, effective delivery of local services”*.

### **Additional notes**

If all the partner councils agree to go-ahead, they will aim to set up a joint committee in Spring 2016 to effect the changes and, if agreed, they will look to establish a local authority company to take over the running of the services in 2017.

In addition to sharing human resources, finance and payroll services and, building on this foundation, the plan is to extend the shared services to include:

- Information Technology
- Public Protection
- Building Control
- Legal
- Property
- Customer Services
- Revenues and Benefits

(NOTE: Not all councils will necessarily be involved in each of the above projects as some already have different arrangements.)

Further information:

Communications: t: 01993 861615, m: 07771965360, e: [communications@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:communications@westoxon.gov.uk)

Visit our news centre at [www.westoxon.gov.uk/news](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/news)



**WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **Residents asked for views on waste and recycling collections**

Residents in West Oxfordshire are being asked for comments about their household waste and recycling collections to help the Council plan for any future changes.

A short survey asks residents for their views about the containers they use, the types of materials that are collected for recycling and how they use the service.

Cllr David Harvey, Cabinet Member for Environment said, “Thanks to our residents, we’re one of the top recyclers in the country, but with our current contract up for review in 2017 we’re taking the opportunity to evaluate our household waste and recycling collections. We’d like householders to tell us how we could improve our service and make recycling easier for them.”

When the Council last renewed its contract in 2010 it introduced a weekly food waste collections and a fortnightly garden waste service. These have proved to be very popular and recycling rates have risen in West Oxfordshire from 34% to 60% in the past five years.

In addition, a range of other recyclable materials are collected weekly at the kerbside, including plastics, paper, card, tins, aerosols, glass, textiles, shoes and batteries. There are fortnightly collections for rubbish (non-recyclables).

The survey can be completed online at [www.westoxon.gov.uk/binsurvey](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/binsurvey) or in person at any of the following places: the Council’s reception points, Burford Visitor Information Centre, Carterton Town Hall, Woodstock Town Hall.

Deadline for completion of the survey is midday on 7 December 2015.

The Council’s current contractor is the Kier Group (formerly May Gurney)

# **Christmas 2015: Waste and recycling**

## **Christmas trees and festive greenery**

From Monday 18 January 2016 real Christmas trees and greenery such as holly, ivy and wreaths can be put out and recycled with garden waste.

Place your tree in your garden waste bin, or if it is over 4ft/120cm cut it up and leave beside it. Please remember that all pots and decorations need to be removed.

You don't need to be signed up for garden waste collections to do this - simply leave your tree out on your green collection week.

**Please note there are no garden waste collections from 25 December - 17 January.**

Over the festive season our crews will collect more of your recyclable waste

- Extra recycling can be put out next to your black recycling boxes in open cardboard boxes or clear sacks, but not in black bin liners. Please ensure

that there is only one type of recyclable material per bag. (For safety, glass must be put inside recycling boxes.)

- Your kitchen caddy **and** your outside food waste bin can be put out for collection over Christmas. Don't forget your food waste bin can be used for any raw or cooked food waste, such as peelings, bones and meat – ideal for turkey carcasses.

## Waste and recycling calendars

Your waste collection calendar is available to download from [www.westoxon.gov.uk](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk). Simply type your address into the postcode search box to find your calendar. You can also sign up for free bin day reminder emails here.

If you do not have online access, printed copies are available from:

- Our Elmfield offices or Town Centre Shop in Witney
- The Guildhall, Chipping Norton
- Or by calling 01993 861000.

# **Christmas collection dates are over page**

<b><i>Normal collection</i></b>	<b><i>Revised collection</i></b>
Friday 25 December	Tuesday 29 December
Monday 28 December	Wednesday 30 December
Tuesday 29 December	Thursday 31 December
Wednesday 30 December	Saturday 2 January
Thursday 31 December	Monday 4 January
Friday 1 January	Tuesday 5 January
Monday 4 January	Wednesday 6 January
Tuesday 5 January	Thursday 7 January
Wednesday 6 January	Friday 8 January
Thursday 7 January	Saturday 9 January
Friday 8 January	Monday 11 January
Monday 11 Jan	Tuesday 12 January
Tuesday 12 Jan	Wednesday 13 January
Wednesday 13 Jan	Thursday 14 January
Thursday 14 Jan	Friday 15 January

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# **Great News! Pre-Christmas Trains from & to Ascott on Saturdays**

The “GWR” (ex First Great Western) franchise will also put up notices on the station but summarised below are the dates, times and destination details they have given in advance to the Parish Council

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November only (for Worcester Christmas Market):

Train from London 11:12 & Oxford 12:25 **calling at Ascott 12:48** for stations to Worcester Foregate Street arriving there at 13:43.

Return from **Worcester Foregate Street at 18:02** arriving Ascott at 18:58 then going on to Oxford 19:23 and London 20:36.

Saturdays 28<sup>th</sup> November & 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> December inclusive:

Train from Hereford **calling at Ascott 08:59** for stations to Oxford arriving there at 09:25 and London 10:42.

Return train from London departing **from Oxford at 12:23** for stations to Great Malvern calling at Ascott 12:49.

Return train from London departing from **Oxford at 16:23** for stations to Great Malvern calling at Ascott 16:47.

These services, are only possible because they are additional stops at Ascott for existing scheduled services on this line.

We will only retain them, and support the case for very modest, throughout the year, weekday services of this kind, by sufficiently using them.

Please spread the word and enjoy a day or days out, without having to use your cars!

**Peter Rance**

for Ascott Parish Council

He was a gentle man that much I

Beautiful

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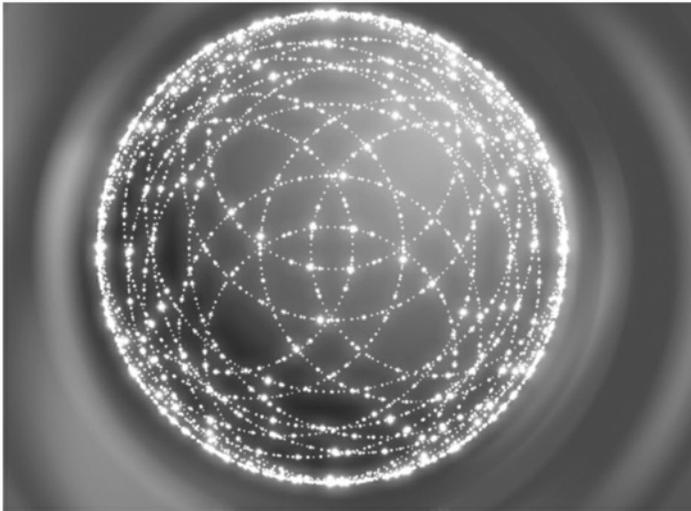
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# **HARRY HONEYBONE**

## **A BOY GROWING UP IN ASCOTT IN THE LATE 1880s Part 4**

*(In his own words Harry continues his history.)*

“I well remember the Rev. Samuel Yorke paying visits periodically to school. I think he must have been the sole proprietor of the establishment, he seemed to boss middling. I shall not forget him or his lady friend, his wife. I have cause to remember them both. If we met either one or the other, or both, anywhere or anytime in the street and did not make a bow, the girls an obeisance, to them, the next time we attended school we could expect wheals on our hands from the master’s cane, especially those who attended the Sunday School at the Baptist Chapel. He was not so keen on the ones who attended the Church School on Sundays. I can remember him coming to school and as soon as he made his appearance inside the door, no matter what we were doing, everyone had to rise and make a bow or obeisance to him. I can see him standing in front of the classes now, we immediately had to sing either some church or patriotic songs when he came. He used to stand in front with his hands across in front of him, his eyes closed, mouth wide open and all awry. His mouth was pulled to one side, the left nearly touching his left ear, as though he was in possession of an apopleptic fit, bellowing away as though he was hurt.

On May-Day annually we used to parade the village, singing May songs. The older scholars a day or two previous to the 1<sup>st</sup> of May went into the forest to gather vio-

lets, primrose and all the wild flowers that were in bloom at that season of the year. These with home grown flowers such as polyanthus and the like used to be made up into a garland, a kind of sedan chair arrangement, with two long poles through either side, so that four boys could carry it. This was trimmed up with these flowers with a large doll inside representing the May Queen. We paraded the village to all the places likely I suppose where our efforts would be welcomed, and then went to the vicarage for tea. You cannot guess what took place there, it is almost unbelievable. All those who went to the Baptist Sunday School on Sunday were put on one side; there was a drive up to the vicarage and further on it continued along to the out buildings, carriage house, stables etc. The sides of the drive were banked up with a grass verge behind which were box trees, laurels and other decorative shrubs and flowers. As I said we were divided like the division of the sheep and the goats, we were the goats, as it happened in this case, on the right. The Church Sunday School children were picked out and sat on the left. We had jam and bread; they had bread, butter and jam and other things besides. This action made an impression so indelible on my mind that it will never be erased. First impressions are lasting impressions it was so in this case. After the tea we adjourned to the field attached to the vicarage for games, cricket, bat and trap, racing and all the other customary field games that were

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indulged in at this season of the year. Bat and trap perhaps needs some explanation. It consisted of a wood trap, arranged so that was a piece of wood pivoted into the sides of the trap. In its normal position one end was down in the box arrangement. In this end was a recess to hold a ball rather less than a tennis ball, the other end protruded out of the box at an angle of 45 degrees. A ball was placed in the recess, then taking a bat, a small one to use with one hand, with the edge of the bat you gave this protruding end a sharp tap, thus causing the ball to be ejected into the air, then what you had to do was strike the ball as hard as possible, those knocking it the furthest of course winning, something like the game of peggy. We used to enjoy ourselves in spite of what took place. The Rev. Samuel Yorke was one of those slim, genteel, slender sort of individuals, his wife one of those thick-set stodgy creatures.

He always wore a long silk hat with a dog collar and frock coat complete. Of course in London in that period the silk hat was all the rage, a silk hat was worn even though the boot heels were down and the trouser bottoms frayed. There were several old fogies in the village who used to copy this example. I suppose they were cast offs sent by some of their friends who lived in the town, because I knew the wages earned in that period would not run to silk hats and swallow tailed coats. I cannot imagine what kind of impression the Reverend Gentleman and his consort tried to impress upon us lowly beings but the impression that my mind conceived of them was as to Satan and his wife, their antics created this life-long impression. It is wonderful, although young, what the tender mind conceives, if it could only express itself in words, what amazement and astonish-

ment would be created. On Good Fridays and other Saint's Days we were marched off to church for service, a thing I used to detest. Whether it was because I was brought up at the Nonconformists (known then as the Dissenters) I cannot imagine but I detested all forms of formality although so young. Perhaps I possessed the brain of an adult in a youthful body but necessity is the mother of invention. My mind had to be alert to hold my own in those days.

We used to experience some very hard winters at that period, the school in wintertime closed for lessons for a week or fortnight at a time. It was open for those who braved the elements, but we were snowed up on more than one occasion, all the roads having to be dug out. There was a nice warm fire at the school for those who could get; we used to have games hiding oranges and apples etc. and those who found them, had them. The schoolmaster at one of those periods was named Hirst. He was fond of his alcoholic beverages and often came to school "tight" as it was termed then. If he was in a good humour things were alright but let it be the reverse, then we had to mind our Ps and Qs. Whilst he was at the Churchill Arms his wife and daughter took charge at school. He was very fond of fishing, the river swarmed with fish of all kinds of freshwater fish; not many people troubled about them although at periods of the season the farmers' sons used to get a net, it was circular in shape, weighted with lead plugs all round the bottom edges. This they used to cast into the river in a semi-circular fashion, when it was pulled in, the lead weights closed in on the bottom and held the fish, the net formed a kind of bag round them. I have seen it full when brought out. This kind of fishing is now prohibited in fresh water. They kept a

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few, others, if they were spawning, were cast back. Our schoolmaster was fond of fishing too but not with rod and line. There was a farm on the other side of the railway, the only dwelling of any description on the north side of the railway in any connection with the village. The people at this farm were called Lardner. This Mrs Lardner and the schoolmaster palled on together; the family had two sons who attended the school at that time and after Mr Hirst had been imbibing too freely he was not very discreet in his conversation. These two sons were in the same class as I was and instead of lessons he would be talking to these two brothers about visiting their house, having bread and cheese and going fishing. Of course we were paying very particular attention to what was being said, it suited us because he was always good humoured on these occasions and we were not having lessons. To describe any further events of my school-life would be a repetition of what I have already described. I can remember once playing truant for a few lollipops (lollies as we called them) sweets as we knew them then. A man in the village weekly from Charlbury, a rather picturesque village four miles to the east; it was situated on the hillside, surrounded by hills and dales and thickly studded with woods all round, in fact it was, as it were, planted amidst the forest sloping down south along the bottom of which ran the river and the railway line. I went with this man to deliver his goods which were groceries and stayed away from school for a few lollies. I think that this had something to do with reforming me because I asked myself, was it worth it?

Another outstanding event during my school life, it was in the late 70's or ear-

ly 80's, that a comet made its appearance, which was a sight to behold. I can remember being awakened one morning about 3 or 4 a.m. and in the south, south west was the comet lighting up the whole countryside. I believe it was wintertime but I would not vouch for this now. There was like a huge star with a long fan shaped tail spreading out across the sky. The star end was pointing west, the tail end spreading eastwards, similar to a huge magnificent rocket passing through the sky spreading out its discharged sparks as it passed along ever increasing in width. It was so magnificent, so marvellous and fascinating that I was so captivated by it to be rooted to the spot on which I stood. This was no idle expression but it was the sight of a lifetime. It stood out bright, clear and distinct obliterating all the stars in the neighbourhood by its brightness; a sight to behold.

It was nothing extraordinary for the land and everything to be locked up for weeks on end in wintertime. One outstanding snowstorm happened I believe in 1881, I should be nine years of age then or thereabouts. All roads and approaches were snowed up and we were isolated from everywhere until the roadways were opened out by gangs of men. You can imagine the length of time it took to clear miles and miles of roads with shovels. There was nothing else to do it with because all walls were buried, as were the hedges. I was anxious to earn a few coppers so I went and offered my services but I was told I was too young. I came away very disappointed. There was some of this snow about until April of that year. My Aunt Naomi, Uncle Thomas' wife, was taken ill and I was deputed to go to Charlbury to the doctors to ask him to come and get some medicine. I started off in a beeline for Charlbury, over walls

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and hedges until I came to where I knew there was a quarry, this was about half-way. I thought to myself, "Supposing when I was crossing this quarry the snow gives way and lets me in, I shall be buried for all time until the snow melts." This put fear into my mind, so I turned back and would not take the risk. Although I could see men in the distance digging out the roadways. It was quite an experience walking over the frozen snow over walls and hedges etc. and everywhere covered with beautiful snow. The grandfathers at that time used to tell of their experiences during the winter months. They said they could take a beeline over the frozen snow with horses and carts; it was frozen so hard they could go with ease anywhere they wanted across country. Most winters the business people and doctors would take the wheels off their vehicle and put on sledge runners and skid along over the frozen surface. This was a common event when it was possible for the horses to get along when the snow was not too deep. One year especially for weeks on end it seemed skating was available. I had no skates but I used to indulge in sliding because facilities were numerous, the flood water often was frozen over leaving acres of extent available for either sliding or skating. This particular year the frost was so keen, the temperature so low that even the river was frozen over. I believe that some year an ox was roasted on the River Thames at London. We went miles on the river but had it given way I should not be recording it here.

We had some glorious summers but I think the outstanding one was the summer of 1887, the year of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. I was working at the time and was given a part-time holiday to be present at the celebrations. We had to be

in the fields working with the horses that morning, two hours earlier than usual (4.00a.m.) on purpose to have two hours off at the end of the day. What generosity! A dinner was provided and served in the barn on the farmstead I was working. I am not in possession as to where the funds came from to provide this treat but I do know that all those who could afford it were expected to contribute towards the expenses. After dinner we adjourned to a field for sports.

All through the summer months I had to turn out to do something to get a few coppers to help eke out our meagre living. As soon as I could make bands in the harvest field I had to go, or to use a hoe, or do some weeding, from early morning 'till late at night. One summer I had to go to Milton to make bands in the harvest field for Uncle Ned, as he was called, his name being Edwin or Edward, this was Auntie Fanny's husband. Mostly, as a rule in the harvest season, all the family turned out to do their bit at that time before so much machinery was in use. The corn was cut chiefly with either the scythe, sickle or similar cutting instrument to a sickle only much heavier and larger called a fagging hook. Under those circumstances the farmers let out their harvesting to those who were willing to take it on by so much an acre, probably round about 3/-, 3/6 or 4/6 per acre to cut, tie up and put into stooks, so you can see it was necessary for all hands to the pump. So I went to make bands and in the meantime look after the baby. Other times I would be engaged by a man who had no family of his own, the pay was a few coppers a day.

Other times I was engaged on the allotments. Uncle had two, most everybody had one or more and used to grow potatoes and all other kinds of vegetables. Nearly every-

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body also grew some kind of wheat, barley or oats, the pieces of land being a quarter acre or half an acre in extent, so you could see there was always something to do. The allotment was half a mile distant on the south side of the village so unless people were provided with barrows or hand carts for the heavier work, a horse and cart would be hired. It was rather hard work carrying all the necessary things to and fro, there being no sheds whatever built on the allotments. You can see the example of the avaricious landlord over these allotments for the poor farm labourer, when they took over the field from the farmer, the rent to the farmer when in his possession was 12/- to 15/- per acre, but the poor farm labourer had an increase in rent by the generous landlord from £2 to £2/10/0p per acre. There was always something to do even after school hours. Sometimes I would spend a few weeks at Shipton, other times I would

have to walk to Enstone, a distance of seven miles. A remark just here. Grandmother and I have walked to Enstone on more than one occasion when she was approaching her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. But this is what I was going to say. Before we reached Enstone we had to pass through another picturesque village known by the name of Chadlington, south-east of Ascott. This village was divided and detached completely into four divisions, rather unique. Sometime last week (1933) it was recorded in the press that a very old lady who lived at Chadlington, Oxfordshire, had hand sewn a patchwork quilt. These patchwork quilts were all the rage when I lived there, very few households existed without their patchwork quilts. This particular one the press said had no less than a thousand different materials in its make-up. I can assure you they used to be very popular and very fascinating indeed."

**Wendy Pearse**

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## ***Church Harvest Festival Display***



# The Ascott Grapevine



# **Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund**

## **Your money really helps**

Shortly after having completed the London 10 k run in July, collecting more than £1,500 thanks to many villagers of Ascott-U-Wychwood (and beyond) I received the PRCF newsletter with some encouraging news. Hopefully this makes it clear that donating to this charity really bears results. This is from Maggie's blog. Please read it, as it makes clear that we actually do make a difference.

**Harry Kappen**

**3 August 2015**

## **Blog by CEO Maggie Blanks**

I'm delighted, excited and proud about these developments for an early diagnostic test for pancreatic cancer. PRCF has been funding this research since its early days, so seeing the results of this work is very rewarding. Our congratulations go to Dr. Crnogorac-Jurcevic and her team. We also want to thank our supporters, whose generosity made the research funding possible. And thanks also to those supporters who contributed in a very practical way, by donating pancreatic urine samples as part of the healthy volunteers group!

Diagnosing cancer early is a major challenge and we can all be enormously proud of making such an important con-

tribution to progress in this area. But there is still much to do. Further research is needed to validate the findings from this project. And early diagnosis is only one part of the puzzle of how we defeat cancer. The benefits of early diagnosis can only be translated into improved survival if there are effective treatments to call on. There are few treatment options for pancreatic cancer, so we still need to press ahead with research into new treatments. Earlier diagnosis may mean more patients are eligible for surgery, but currently many pancreatic cancer patients who undergo surgery to remove the tumour find the cancer returns, so we need other lines of attack when that happens. So we're not resting on our laurels. We're hugely grateful to all of our supporters who have pounded the streets, baked cakes, shaved heads, swum, cycled, sky-dived and so on, and by doing so, raised the money to fund world-class research into beating pancreatic cancer. The momentum is building that will make more progress possible. A cure can't come soon enough and it's research that will deliver it. Research is at the heart of what we do and is all that we do; this is why we're still asking you to carry on supporting us and fundraising for us so that we can reach that goal as soon as possible.



TIDDY HALL

# Piano Lessons

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# ***Wychwood Library***

## **2015**

A merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you all and very many thanks for your continuing support to Wychwood Library during 2015.

Nearly a year has passed since we started our new way of working with our band of volunteers coming in on Mondays, Fridays and Saturdays to help with the workload. Everyone seems to know how the library operates by now and are just able to come in and get on with whatever needs doing. So very many thanks to all of you who give up your valuable time.

Good news. Owing to a successful bid to the Arts Council, all libraries in Oxfordshire should have Wifi by March 2016! So you will soon be able to check your emails and use the internet with a laptop or tablet in our warm and comfortable space. We are also looking to fulfil the need to help our customers with their computer skills on these devices. Watch this space for the launch date in the New Year.

“What’s your Story?” This is the title for the eBook Short Story competition 2016. You have until 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016 to get your entry in. There are two categories, adults aged 18 and over and young adults aged 11 – 17. The winners in each of the categories will receive an Android tablet plus, their stories will be published as eBooks for library members to borrow. Visit the website for more information: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/shortstorycompetition](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/shortstorycompetition).

Congratulations to Heather Shute for winning a prize in the Summer Reading Challenge for Adults. Heather won two

tickets for a trip around the Wychwood Brewery which she is very much looking forward to.

An introduction to Tai Chi classes started at the beginning of November and they are proving to be very popular. We hope to continue with more sessions in the New Year so if you would like to join in come in and we will put you on the waiting list. Easy exercise for the over 50s!

The volunteers and Friends of Wychwood Library held a craft morning for the children of the local parishes during the autumn half term and they made bats and ghosts for Halloween as well as pom-poms, star decorations and basket weaving. The local Chipping Norton yarn bomber was present so everyone went home with one of her special novelty items. Thank you to all who helped. The young people had a lovely time.

It’s not too late to join the computer classes held here at Wychwood Library during the winter months. Of particular interest at this time of the year could be to learn to shop online and save having to brave the slippery pavements. You might also like to use the Find My Past and Ancestry websites. These are a fascinating way to learn more about your family history.

One of the hidden gems at Wychwood Library is the monthly forum “Wychwood Circle”. Proposed speakers for 2016 include Mark Williams, John Bell, Angela Tilby, Alister McGrath and David Nixon. Go online to Wychwood Circle to find out more.

Come and visit us at Wychwood Library.

## 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**  
**Saturday**

**Closed**  
2.00 to 7.00 pm  
9.30 am to 1.00 pm

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# THREE PIECE SWEET

FRIDAY, Dec 4<sup>th</sup> 2015

@ The Swan Inn - 9pm

Tickets £10 in Advance

Tickets now on sale behind the bar

Fancy Dress Optional

# ***The Ascott Village Charity***



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

Over the years you will probably have read in these pages about some of the Village Charity's activities. Many of these are concerned with village amenities and helping to improve our environment. We try to consult widely with you, our fellow residents, on causes of this type.

But every so often the trustees of the Charity also take a look at our wider responsibilities. The history of the Charity goes back several hundred years, and there are documents to prove it. As the village in the old days consisted largely of farm labourers' cottages, there was a strong bias in the purposes established for the Charity in favour of education, and of course the relief of poverty. On the other hand, times have now changed, and the education of our people, as well as the relief of poverty are no longer thought of as mainly the responsibility of private charities.

So how do the trustees in modern times meet this part of their responsibilities? Firstly we have actively tried to help with education by making grants to local causes and by operating a book purchase scheme to help students living in the village to buy their necessary books. This has worked quite successfully and we continue to en-

courage students to apply to us if they think they may be eligible.

But it is sometimes more difficult to find causes to support under the heading "relief of poverty". Partly this may be because people sometimes shy away from using the word in the context of a village like ours. The trustees take a slightly different view of this. We think that in a village the size of ours it is likely that there are people with material needs that could be met; and that this is not necessarily the same as long term deprivation, which would certainly be well beyond our remit. For instance, a modest cash grant from the Charity might help a family, which has suffered a sudden or unexpected misfortune, to buy some toys for the children, or perhaps an item or two of essential furniture. Such help can be invaluable if it can be provided quickly, and in the right place without fuss.

There may well be other examples and we always have to remember that this kind of help has to be discreet. We would simply ask you as local residents to bear in mind that such help can sometimes be found if they, or someone they know, could benefit from it. If you need further

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information, talk to one of the trustees: their names are on village notice boards.

Students who are moving into further education are reminded that the Charity still has funds available to award grants for books, equipment etc.

If you have an idea that you would like to be considered by the trustees you can write down your idea, put it in an envelope, address it to Stuart Fox and post it

in the shop or email any of the people listed below:

johncull@wowmatters.com

elaine.byles@bioch.ox.ac.uk

keith.ravenhill@talktalk.net

stuart.john.fox@gmail.com

mark@dawbarn.co.uk

se.timms@btinternet.com

pollymarshall@gmail.com



## 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 – 2015

You know Christmas is around the corner when the John Lewis advert hits the screens! In this edition of the Shop Newsletter, we look ahead to OUR Christmas.

### Finances

At our recent volunteers' evening we were able to show a contrast of our performance from 2012-2015. With all our collective efforts it is somewhat disappointing when our sales do not match profits. Although our indicators show that sales are down compared with 2012, our profits have been ahead year on year. Our profits are up again this year to the tune of £1500 and this adds to our cash position, which stands in excess of £26,000. This is really important because it means we can replace old and inefficient equipment. In the last 12

months we have bought two new chillers and we already have cash set-aside for further improvements in 2016.

### Christmas

Yes, the turkeys are back! We have been building an excellent trading relationship with Wykham Farm Shop and their farm fresh meat is proving very popular with our regular customers. More often than not, there will be fresh meat available at weekends and orders taken by 10am each Wednesday are delivered to the shop Thursday afternoon courtesy of one of our volunteer drivers. **We will be extending this service for Christmas with a deadline for orders Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December for collection December 22<sup>nd</sup>.** Do try us and you will be guaranteed ex-

cellent farm fresh quality at the same price you will pay if you travelled to Wykham and we will collect for you too at no extra cost! In addition, we will have fresh seasonal fruit and vegetable, chocolates, cheeses, beers, wines and spirits and many other food goodies. Great for presents! Why not get the shop to put a hamper together for you?

## Feedback from customers and volunteers

We would not survive without our loyal customers and volunteers. That so, we decided to ask both groups how we rate. We were able to analyse 36 questionnaires from customers and 19 from our volunteers. Here are the results (and some comments) and we are really proud of what people are saying to us. We also have some comments that will help us improve and we are grateful for everyone who took the time to tell us what they think.

### Customers

Wide range of goods	65%
Competitive prices	77%
Friendly & welcoming environment	94%
Layout & presentation	91%
Will I remain a loyal customer?	98%
Did the shop meet your needs today?	90%

### Comments

(what I like about using the shop)

*The shop is outstanding; opening hours are generous and staff are always so friendly; stock for a small shop is outstanding.*

*Nice friendly staff within walking distance*

*Shop is a great asset to the village; fruit & veg much improved with new supplier*

*The shop is the most important aspect of where we live – I think it's excellent*

*Being able to get cash-back. I'll happily buy things in order to do so*

### Volunteers

Pleasant & friendly working environment	84%
Providing guidance & Direction	73%
Providing motivational feedback for a good job	73%
Providing developmental feedback (when mistakes happen)	61%
Meeting your needs as a volunteer	87%
Intention to remain a volunteer	86%

### Comments

(what I like about working at the shop)

*Meeting & chatting to people; hearing village news*

*Community spirit; helping the village*

*Helping to maintain a village shop*

*Working with a partner; being part of a team*

*Bridgette (manager) makes the shop more efficient, nice to have her support*

*Having a busy shop*

### News & views

- **The Saturday Club** – This has now been running since September and we have a rota running (with the odd gap) until February next year. Thanks go to Mark Tribe who has done a great job getting this off the ground.
- **Training** - Kathy and Rosemary will be holding refresher sessions for till volunteers in early

January. The format was presented at the recent volunteers' evening and will cover a list of approximately 20 important items. If you want to be included, please contact Kathy and Rosemary.

- **Car park** - Sally has taken this on and we have appointed a contractor to cut back and generally tidy up this area
- **Maintenance** - We STILL help with shop maintenance – especially defrosting the freezers. If you can help, please contact Bridgette.
- **Annual stock-take** – Don't forget to join the team Sunday January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Bridgette will update you with times.

## Spotlight on the Volunteers

This month we have decided to honour ALL volunteers who attended the recent evening at the Swan. The management committee were able to give an update on shop performance, present the results of the surveys and look at plans for Christmas. We had around 30 volunteers present and we were able to have an open discussion with many constructive ideas for improving OUR shop. When you consider that around 400 village shops shut each year leaving many, many people without easy access to household essentials, we can all feel mighty proud of the contribution we all make for our community.

Have a wonderful Christmas and do come and see what we have to offer – we don't have a glossy ad to show you but who needs an ad when you can have the REAL DEAL!

**John, Sally, Bridgette, Stuart & Mark**  
**The Shop Committee**



## WYCHWOOD FOLK CLUB

In association with Wychwood Brewery

(At The Swan or Tiddy Hall, Shipton Rd, Ascott-u-Wychwood)

*Showcasing an eclectic mix of*

*Folk, Roots, Acoustic & Americana Music*

Dec 5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Paul McClure</b> £6.00 advance/£8.00 on Door	The Swan
Jan 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Phil Beer</b> £12.00 in advance/ £14.00 on door	Tiddy Hall
Jan 23 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Paul Downes</b> £8.00 in advance/£10.00 on the door	The Swan
Feb 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Fergus Elliot</b> £6.00 in advance/£8.00 on the door	The Swan
Feb 20 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Les Barker</b> £8.00 in advance/£10.00 on the door	Tiddy Hall
March 5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>15 String Trio</b> £6.00 in advance/£8.00 on the door	The Swan
March 19 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Richard Digance</b> £10.00 in advance/£12.00 on the door	Tiddy Hall
Doors 19:30 Start 20:00		

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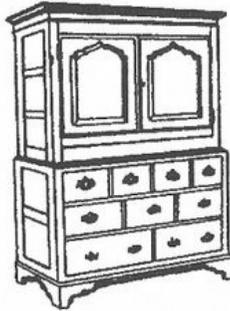
# ***Ascott Runners***

There is a voluntary Lift Service/Village Taxi to/from Charlbury station for regular commuters. At present there are three names on the list displayed in the village shop. Please add your name to the list if you would like to join the scheme. This scheme should help to reduce running and parking costs for those of you making the regular journey.

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A walk round

### **TREES IN ART**

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The Swan at Ascott

on

**Friday 27th November at 7.30 pm**

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## ***Hearing dates set for Local Plan Examination***

West Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plan examination is underway and dates are set for two separate hearing sessions.

The first session dealing with strategic matters will begin at 10am on Monday 23 November and will run until Thursday 26 November. The second examination session will begin on Wednesday 3 February 2016.

All hearing sessions will be held at the Council's Woodgreen offices in Witney

The District Council formally submitted its draft Local Plan to Government for independent examination by the Planning Inspectorate in July 2015.

Responses were received from around 150 individuals and organisations during the final 6-week consultation stage which was held earlier this year (27 March – 8 May), and all these were submitted for consideration together with the draft Local Plan and a range of supporting documents.

Planning Inspector Mr Simon Emerson BSc DipTP MRTPI has been appointed and he will determine whether or not the plan is 'sound' in light of the representations received and national policy.

Further information on the process and copies of the documents that have been submitted are available on the Council's local plan web page at [www.westoxon.gov.uk/localplan2031](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/localplan2031)

Cllr Warwick Robinson, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing, said: "We are approaching what we hope will be the conclusion of a Local Plan for West Oxfordshire. Although it has been a long and complex process, we have been very thorough, consulting at each stage, investigating every detail presented to us and providing the evidence needed to support the Plan.

"We have a lot to thank the public for all their representations, contributions and proposals along the way. However, we recognise it will never be possible to produce a Plan that pleases everyone, but we believe that what is being put forward to the Inspector is the best for West Oxfordshire."



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## ***Pantomime***

**Don't forget, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>  
December at Tiddy Hall, doors  
open 19:00 (7:00 pm) for 19:30  
start.**

## ***ASCOTT WALKERS***



### **Walkers group to continue through the winter**

The newly formed Ascott Walkers has decided to continue their Sunday morning walks through the winter.

Meeting at 9.30 by the village green on the first Sunday of each month the group will take a local walk of 5 to 7 miles finishing at a local pub for an optional lunch etc.

Next walk will be around Bibury on Sunday December 6<sup>th</sup>.

There is no need to book in advance and dogs are very welcome.

Transport can be provided.....call Paul Jackson 83 1967

## ***From The Grapevine Editorial Team***

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# TIDDY HALL

We hope that many of you will have noticed the improvements made to the car park at Tiddy Hall! Over the summer, John Greatbatch carried out a number of works to improve drainage, remove years of limestone build-up, replace it with a binding layer and cover the entire car park with hard wearing golden flint gravel. Not only does it look smart, but we no longer need to clean the patio area; because after heavy rainfall silt used to be deposited from the car park onto the patio and then trampled into the hall. Certainly a job we do not miss! We are now working to upgrade the lighting of the car park area and looking to replacing the old carpet in the committee room.

A few months ago, Tiddy Hall received a generous bequest from David Baxter, Katherine Gidman's father. It was decided to put this money towards the purchase of a pull down screen and also a sound system. Chinnick Theatre Services installed this during the October half term. This is a wonderful addition to the hall to be used for our film evenings and other events.

The last **Stix in the Flix** film, shown back in early October, was **Far From the Mad-ding Crowd**. Lovely food was provided by Ceci Magee and puddings by the committee to make another successful film night. We hope to do another one next spring.

Since term has started, there have already been a number of musical events. Another two outstanding Folk Nights have taken place. Local man and member of Fairport Convention, Chris Leslie, took to the stage in early September and played songs from his latest CD 'Origins' while October saw young Jim Moray performing solo at Tiddy Hall. And a fantastic, sell-out evening on

Halloween night – **Martin Carthy**, one of Folk music's greatest performers!

**[Forthcoming** gigs at Tiddy Hall: **November 21<sup>st</sup> – Marie Dunn** – Canadian singer/songwriter whose music blends Celtic folk with North American bluegrass and country influences. **January 9<sup>th</sup>** – Phil Beer from Show of Hands, a dazzling instrumentalist and top flight fiddler, also plays in the all-star line-up, Feast of Fiddles. **February 20<sup>th</sup> – Les Barker** – a poet best known for his comedic poetry and parodies of popular songs. **March 19<sup>th</sup> – Richard Digance**, a rare performer in that he's respected by comedians for his original material and by musicians for being an accomplished performer/guitarist. Richard Digance is also a world-acclaimed poet, an author and an artist. Tickets, as always, from Mark & Elaine - 01993 831427.

Not only do we have stars of the folk scene perform in Ascott, in early September we were also privileged to be entertained by 3 upcoming classical stars! Ascott's very own **William Diggle** sang Lieder and arias from the operas along with his contemporaries at the Royal Academy of Music, soprano **Milly Forrest** and Russian pianist **Amiran Zen-aishvili**. A delightful evening enjoyed by all!

**Stop Press!!** We are pleased to announce a new regular feature at Tiddy Hall starting in the New Year. On the first Sunday of every month (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in January) there will be an afternoon **Tea Dance**. New comers are more than welcome and there will be someone on hand to show

## The Ascott Grapevine

you the steps! 2.30pm – 5pm, beginning Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January, thereafter the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every month. £3.50 per person to include tea and homemade cakes!! For more information, please contact Stephen Mott, 07827 235450 - Strictly Come Dancing comes to Ascott!!

And....keep those dancing shoes on for the **Annual Dinner Dance** - a ceilidh - taking place **Saturday February 13<sup>th</sup> 2016. Tickets £12 per person to include supper.** For more details contact Ingrid 830612 or Simon 831479.



Don't forget the **Annual Village Panto** which takes place on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> December, 7.30pm!

**Simon Gidman**

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# Gardening in Ascott



Sitting at my desk in mid-October looking out at the low sun of yet another warm autumn afternoon, I am reflecting on the beauty of this season which in a good year appears a long drawn-out period which can last well into December before we properly feel the icy chill of winter. It seems to me that autumn is marked more than anything by a change in the light. As the sun goes down, the light softens, and the low angle casts long shadows of trees across the fields. The warm colours of the late flowerers such as sunflowers, heleniums, rudbeckia, and ornamental grasses, and especially *Stipa gigantea*, are enhanced by this soft low light. But then one day I will awake and look out of the bedroom window and see the flowers are hanging their heads. The grass will be white. The first frost has come.

## **Winter flowers - Shrubs**

The days shorten and darken and the sap in the trees and shrubs retreats. The leaves fall, and most plants begin their long slow winter sleep, alive but not visibly active, all through the cold winter. But there is still much to see in the garden and many plants flower at this season. Muffled against the chill, a walk around our gardens reveals many winter

flowers to admire. Sometimes there are surprises such as pansies, wallflowers, primroses, and even a brave last and unexpected rose.

For many shrubs and bulbs this is their moment to take centre stage, and remarkably many of these winter flowering plants are fragrant. From China we have the deciduous *Viburnum Fragrans*, or as it is now known *V. Farreri*, to commemorate the plant hunter Reginald Farrer who introduced the species from China. With their soft pink heads of flowers which are deliciously scented, there are many varieties worth planting, but a favourite of mine is 'Dawn'. In some years the viburnums in my garden start to flower even before they drop their leaves in October, and continue into February.

Another native of China is *Chimonanthus praecox*, or as it is commonly known Wintersweet. It is sweetly scented with a golden starry bloom, lasts from November to March, and is well worth its place in the garden. It is fast-growing and prefers a position in full sun. Highly prized by floral arrangers, the cut stems of these yellow bowl shaped blooms make a wonderfully fragrant indoor display.

If you have a warm sheltered spot the *Daphnes* are ideally suited to this small

microclimate, with perhaps *Daphne bholua* being one of the best. However, *Daphne Odora* 'Aureomarginata', with its dark green-gold rimmed leaves, may be more readily obtained from the local garden centre, and *D.Bhola* may require some searching out. A *Daphne* bush full of scented flowers is one of the wonders of winter, stopping you in your tracks to find the source of the tropical perfume.

### **Winter flowers - Bulbs and Corms**

Winter flowering shrubs add form and structure to the garden, but dwarf bulbs providing colour beneath and around the shrubs tempt us gardeners out even on a cold dull day. The winter aconites are the first to appear with their flashes of gold, and then come the snowdrops followed by *Cycalmen Coum*. Finally there is the great flush of the small iris and then the first *Crocuses*, before the early-flowering *Naricissus* open their cheery faces to the winter sun.

The Dwarf Iris which flowers in February and March deserves to be more widely grown, and these little gems can be fully appreciated by getting on ones hands and knees to catch their elusive scent. Their delicate almost exotic looking flowers are very hardy and their bright splashes of colours, coming in a range of blues and purples, shine in the dark days, no matter what the winter weather. They look good around shrubs and trees, but also they make a fine display in shallow pots, placed in view from a window. After the foliage has died back in summer, they can then be planted out into a suitable spot in the garden. The blue and gold flowers of

Iris 'Harmony' are a particular favourite of mine.

The winter aconites, *Eranthis Hyemalis*, are dwarf members of the buttercup family with bright yellow globular flowers. Their small tubers are sometimes difficult to establish, but when they are settled, they will seed around the border, and are best planted while they are 'in the green'. They prefer some shade and seem impervious to snow and frost.

It is possible to have hardy cyclamen in flower from autumn and winter if you plant two species *Cyclamen Hederifolium* and *Cyclamen Coum*.

*C.Hederifolium* flowers in the autumn on bare stems before the leaves which emerge after flowering. As they are happy on dry shade, that difficult area under shrubs and trees is the ideal spot for them.

*Cyclamen Coum* appear later than *C.Hederifolium*, in December and early January and have rounded leaves with the texture of polished leather which vary greatly in their markings from shades of green to silver-grey. In their wild habitat of the mountains of Turkey, the Caucasus and Northern Iran their flower and leaf colour vary widely, and perhaps that explains the large number of different cultivars available to us gardeners. Just one word of warning - it is probably wise to keep the two apart in the garden as the more robust and vigorous growing *C.Hederifolium* may crowd out the *C.Coum*.

Among the earliest flowering of the crocuses are the *Crocus Sieberifrom* Greece, and the *C.Sieberi* 'Albus' which has pure white flowers with an orange throat. These crocus require good drainage and like to be baked in the summer.

## The Ascott Grapevine

Little needs to be said of one of the gardeners' and non-gardeners' favourite winter flowers, the snowdrop. We all admire those deceptively delicate spikes of green and white which can pierce the frozen earth to warm our hearts. Many large gardens with massive snowdrop

plantings are open to the public at flowering time, and to see snowdrops grown in great snowy drifts across the landscape is one of the highlights of winter, and foretells the coming of spring.

**Madeline Galistan**

## Solution to Crossword in Edition 87

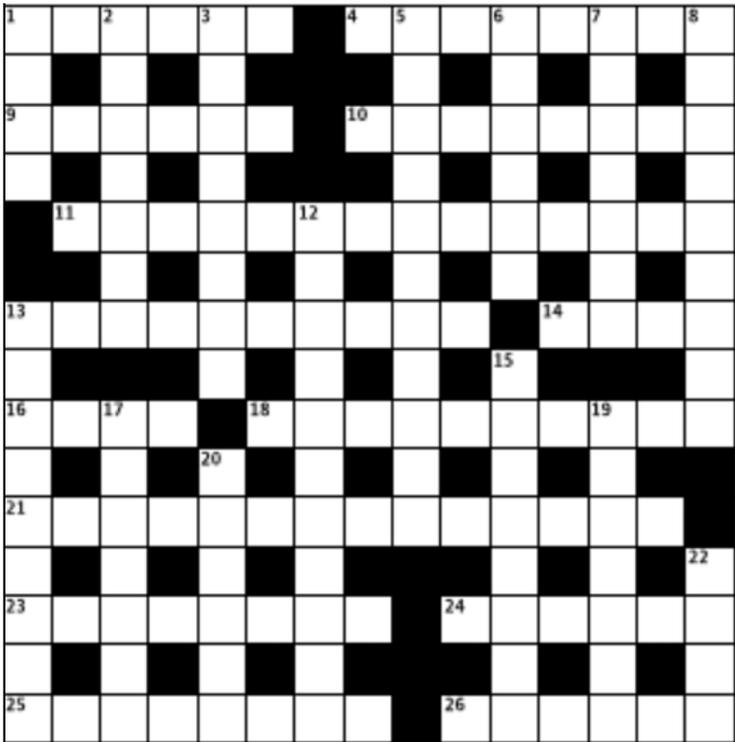
### **Across**

- 1 Emperor
- 5 Stilted
- 9 Chaplet
- 10 Ruffian
- 11 Prescribe
- 12 Rhine
- 13 Synod
- 15 Variables
- 17 Patriarch
- 19 Therm
- 22 Ambit
- 23 Shangri La
- 25 Trefoil
- 26 Stadium
- 27 Rounded
- 28 Dresser

### **Down**

- 1 Escapes
- 2 Phase In
- 3 Relic
- 4 Retriever
- 5 Spree
- 6 Informant
- 7 Trivial
- 8 Donkeys
- 14 Driftwood
- 16 Rehearsed
- 17 Psalter
- 18 Tableau
- 20 Elixirs
- 21 Myanmar
- 23 Solid
- 24 Graze

# Crossword



**Across**

- 1 Greasy stuff very foolish for American writer to eat (6)
- 4 Girl needs a soft drink, somehow going from do to do (8)
- 9 Walk by river? (6)
- 10 Distress when train set gets damaged (8)
- 11 A little comic, he contrived something lavatorial (8,6)
- 13 Theatrical demand for silence right in manner of ancient Greeks (10)
- 14 Irishman given a spooky experience abandoning church (4)
- 16 Snide comment of Spain against its neighbour (4)
- 18 Solemnly declare situation when donkey had insatiable appetite (10)
- 21 Potentially wretches with a gram being gained? (14)
- 23 Those out for pleasure wanting seductive lady start to finish? (8)
- 24 One to criticise smallest cut with little hesitation (6)
- 25 Cover with new trees for trees destroyed (8)
- 26 Bold attack in which one must keep quiet (6)

**Down**

- 1 Headlong fall when important lady drops off edge (4)
- 2 Male facing stress when leaving US city (7)
- 3 Author in a state, one of the characters flipping over (2,2,4)
- 5 Brilliant batting, say — one little old-style amateur? (11)
- 6 Each party's beginning with trifle around small table (6)
- 7 Whip up a story to deceive girl (7)
- 8 City woman offering opposing position (9)
- 12 Ultimately, ambiguities in puzzles may make one argue (5,6)
- 13 School servant I dismissed may have left a mark (4,5)
- 15 Hotel man mixed something very dangerous for drinker (8)
- 17 Officer in trouble caught by punch (7)
- 19 A mainstay thus set up is to the purpose (7)
- 20 In some measure bullish, a person who would set the pattern? (6)
- 22 Carrier to deviate, avoiding double bend (4)

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# ***Events Calendar - 2015/6***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>		
November 27 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Trees in Art	The Swan
November 28 <sup>th</sup>	10.00 am	Ascott Christmas Fair	Tiddy Hall
November 28 <sup>th</sup>	11.30 -12.30 pm	JLCS	The Swan
November 28 <sup>th</sup>	08.59 am	Train Ascott - Oxford	
	12.23 & 16.23pm	Return Oxford - Ascott	
November 28 <sup>th</sup>	12.48 pm	Train Ascott - Worcester Xmas Market	
	18.02 pm	Return Worcester - Ascott	
December 4 <sup>th</sup>	9.00 pm	Three Piece Sweet	The Swan
December 5 <sup>th</sup>	08.59 am	Train Ascott - Oxford	
	12.23 & 16.23 pm	Return Oxford - Ascott	
December 5 <sup>th</sup>	8.00 pm	Paul McClure	The Swan
December 12 <sup>th</sup>	08.59 am	Train Ascott - Oxford	
	12.23 & 16.23 pm	Return Oxford - Ascott	
December 13 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	Ascott Pantomime	Tiddy Hall
December 19 <sup>th</sup>	08.59 am	Train Ascott - Oxford	
	12.23 & 16.23 pm	Return Oxford - Ascott	
December 24 <sup>th</sup>	6.00 pm	Christmas Carols	Village Green
January 9 <sup>th</sup>	8.00 pm	Phil Beer	Tiddy Hall
January 10 <sup>th</sup>	2.30 pm	Tea Dance	Tiddy Hall
January 23 <sup>rd</sup>	8.00 pm	Paul Downes	The Swan
February 6 <sup>th</sup>	8.00 pm	Fergus Elliot	The Swan
February 13 <sup>th</sup>	8.00 pm	Annual Dinner Dance	Tiddy Hall
February 20 <sup>th</sup>	8.00 pm	Les Barker	Tiddy Hall
March 5 <sup>th</sup>	8.00 pm	15 String Trio	The Swan
March 19 <sup>th</sup>	8.00 pm	Richard Digance	Tiddy Hall
April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	8.00 pm	Gigspanner	Tiddy Hall
April 16 <sup>th</sup>	8.00 pm	Kelly Oliver	The Swan
May 7 <sup>th</sup>	8.00 pm	Wizz Jones	Tiddy Hall
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	8.00 pm	Steve Ashley	The Swan