

THE CHRONICLE

316

Aston Abbots Parish Magazine - December 2011



A HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS

Editorial



My efforts towards raising funds and awareness of prostate and testicular cancer as part of the Movember campaign (the Aston Abbotts effort has been spear-headed by James Perkins; see page 5) has produced one of the most insignificant moustaches ever grown. I think people were embarrassed to ask whether I was growing one or had absentmindedly missed a bit when shaving. I've spoken to friends who

have also grown moustaches during November and the monies they have raised have been very substantial.

The mower donated to the Church in memory of Geoff Curnow has been delivered. Not sure if the Church's mowing rotor is still going - but I was mowing my lawn on Saturday 19th November. Is this a record? Probably means that this winter is going to be hard. I notice there are a lot of berries on the holly trees this year - or is that an 'old wives tale'.

This is time of the year when I thank all those involved with the production and distribution of the Chronicle. Firstly the regular contributors; Alison Lewis for 'Alison's Gossip Column', Peter Shorrocks for 'Allotment Diary', Colin Higgs for 'Whats On', Paul Bruton for Parish Council Minutes, Alan Jones for 'Nature Watch', James Henderson for 'Countryside Matters', Bob Carvey for 'Community News', Nigel and Sally Palmer for numerous articles and Phil Spooner for the Back Page. Many thanks also to Phil Corrigan who handles the Chronicle's advertisers who generate part of the annual income needed to pay the Chronicle's printing bill - other income comes from the continuing generosity of the Fete Committee.

Many thanks are also due to the small army of villagers who distribute the Chronicle every month under the guidance of the Chronicle's right-hand-man Andy Bystra who also contributes many articles of interest.

I wish them and you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

John

IN THIS ISSUE

- NEW ZEALAND TOUR
- WHAT'S ON in DECEMBER
- COUNTRYSIDE MATTERS
- ALLOTMENT DIARY
- THAILAND ADVENTURES & CHINA TRACTORS

THE CHRONICLE
Issue 316
December 2011

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A note to all would be advertisers-
More than 205 households receive
The Chronicle 11 times a year and with
rates from just £25 per annum (far
cheaper than some local Parish
Magazines). Can you afford not to be in?

Copy date for the next issue

Friday 23rd December

Please pass items to the
Editor John Hardcastle or to a
member of the Production
Team as early as possible.

Printed at Waddesdon School
and distributed free of charge
to all Households in Aston
Abbotts, our local Doctors'
Surgeries and to Wing Police
House.

Alison's Gossip Column

BIRTHDAYS

December

Ivan Greenaway	2 nd
Phil. Spooner	2 nd
Jo Perkins	4 th
Pam Hewitt	5 th
Allison Hewitt	11 th
Brigitte Gutierrez	11 th
Simon Smith	11 th
Rosie Manning	12 th
Stella Howell	14 th
Kevin Copping	15 th
Claire Barnett	18 th
Derek Ludlam	19 th
Michael Ellis	19 th
Peter Curry	19 th
Robert Smith	20 th
Jane Copping	22 nd
Shirley Hanlon	22 nd
Nicholas Osborn	25 th
Val Smith	25 th
Harry Hunter	30 th
Mollie Poulter	30 th

We were very sorry to hear of the death of Vera Towle earlier this month. The full church at her funeral on 17th November was an indication of her quiet popularity. Our condolences to the Towle family.

Rena Coleman has been enjoying the hospitality of Stoke Mandeville hospital but is now home. Get Well soon Rena.

The brand new gates at Abbottsview Farm were vandalised. Fortunately nothing was taken and no alpacas escaped. If anyone saw anything suspicious on the night of 16th November please inform the Police.

Christmas Greetings to all friends in the village from Alison & Dave Lewis, Deirdre & John Whyte, Liz & Ivan Greenaway, Francesca & Bob Bean, Bridget Brandon, Margaret & Tony Hinds, Brigitte & Juan Gutierrez, Carol & Phil Spooner, April Curnow, Rita Robinson & Andy Bystra, Ann Goodman & Gordon Kemp. Donations will be made to charity in lieu of xmas cards.

HOLIDAY REFUSE COLLECTION DATES

Thursday 29th Dec	Normal collection
Thursday 5th Jan	Friday 6th Jan

Community News

Aylesbury Parking – AVDC have again this year made parking free for the run up to Christmas 4.30pm onwards. Please note this does not include the Friars Square car park.

Queens Diamond Jubilee – 2,012 Beacons will be lit across the UK to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee on Monday 4th June. In Buckinghamshire, the aim is to have 60 Beacons throughout the county. The first 60 Buckinghamshire Beacons to officially register by April 30th will have the location of their Beacon in a special book given to the Queen. Would you like to be involved in this for Aston Abbotts?

See www.buckscc.gov.uk/sites/bcc/leisure/jubilee.page

Neighbourhood Plan – there is a government consultation in progress. The Localism Bill leaves various procedural and technical requirements of the neighbourhood planning system to regulations. This consultation seeks views on whether the proposed neighbourhood planning regulations are fit for purpose. Want to know more? Go to www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/planningregulationsconsultation

Home to school transport consultation - public meetings announced! The meetings, being held at locations around the county, will allow parents and residents to hear detailed information on the proposed changes to mainstream school policy and ask questions and discuss options with Mike Appleyard, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, and Buckinghamshire County Council officers.

The meetings follow the announcement last Monday (14 November) that Cabinet had approved a further consultation on the proposed changes to home to school transport.

Thurs	01-Dec-11	Wingrave Combined School	5-7pm
Mon	23-Jan-12	Sir Henry Floyd School, Aylesbury	5-7pm
		Haddenham Junior School	7.30-9.30pm
Wed	25-Jan-12	Buckingham Upper School	5-7pm
		The Winslow Centre	7.30-9.30pm

Council Tax liabilities Bucks CC would like to make you aware of a consultation paper that discusses options in relation to the council tax liabilities of second home owners, and of the owners of empty properties. It also covers potential reforms of several details of the council tax system including modernising arrangements for payment of council tax by instalments, for delivering the information to be supplied with demand notices, and the treatment of annexes to dwellings; and some broadly administrative matters. To comment please go to the link: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/20192051.pdf> All the above links are also on the Aston Abbotts website. *Bob Carvey*



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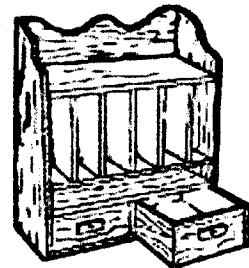
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VIC SCOTT'S DIARIES - DECEMBER

Birds: Distribution, etc. in the Parish of Aston Abbotts

Taken on the whole, this year (1948) has been a very good year for the great majority of species. The extremely mild winter (47/48) allowed many species which suffered badly the previous winter to get well on their way to their former status of distribution.

The green woodpecker nested again, as also did the two other woodpeckers, the whinchats, and kestrel: but the highlight of the year was the breeding of the Barn Owl. At least one young was reared successfully.

Protection: Large numbers of rooks were shot at the beginning of the year, also a few magpies, jackdaws, etc, but considering the great density of the rook population(100 pairs to the square mile) this is not alarming.

From approx 340 nests found in Aston Abbotts the number that were robbed or interfered with was only 20. No young birds were interfered with seriously, and there were no instances of wanton cruelty.

Nests robbed were Blackbird 5 Robin 1 Song Thrush 3 Greenfinch 2 Chaffinch 2 Hedge Sparrow 1 Moorhen 6.

Although the number of nests robbed of eggs was slightly higher than the previous year it is certainly not serious, as the nests were those of very common birds, most of which would make another attempt at nesting.

Report on certain species in Aston Abbotts.

Strigiiiformes: Owls

Tawny owl bred again, but in fewer numbers than usual. Pair deserted nest with eggs (2) for no apparent reason.

Little Owl nested.

Barn Owl bred, first time for a number of years, reared at least one young.

Piciformes: Woodpeckers

Green Woodpecker bred again, though not as many as before the severe weather (1946-47). Several broods were successful, and this bird is now almost back to its former status of distribution.

Great Spotted Woodpecker: No great change, though probably increasing slightly.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker: No appreciable change – at least one pair.

You look like.....Boycee, Ned Flanders, One of the village people..

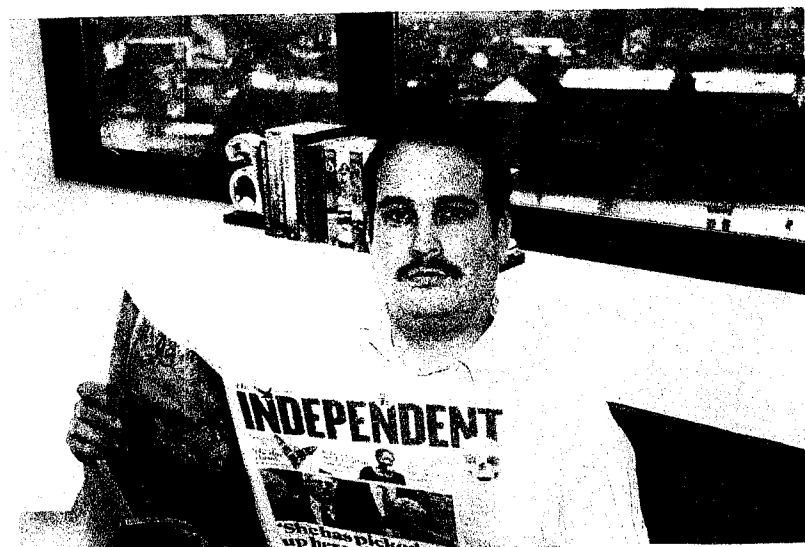
These are but a few of the people I was compared to in the month of Movember but all in the name of a great cause.

This was day three by the way!

The Aston Abbotts Mo Bro's this year consisted of John Hardcastle, Stephen Hardcastle, Frank McManus, Alex Perkins and Mike Simister and boy did we grow some great big tashes.

The serious side of Movember is to raise vital funds and awareness for men's health, specifically prostate cancer and other cancers that affect men. I am pleased to report that as we go to press the team have raised over £500.

Great work...now where's that Mach 3!
James Perkins



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Aston Abbotts Parish Council
Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 26th October 2011

Present: - Cllrs. P Shorrocks (Chair), C Higgs, B Carvey, Mrs J Hardcastle, P Bruton (Clerk), County Councillor Mrs N Glover and District Councillor P Cooper. Two members of the public were in attendance.

Apologies were received from Councillors, Mrs K Curry, R Clarke and J Perkins.

Correspondence to note – The Clerk updated the meeting on correspondence received from AVDC in particular the current 2012/2013 budget consultation being conducted by BCC details of which can be found on the following web link: www.buckscc.gov.uk/budget.

The 63rd AGM of the BALC was taking place on the 11th November 2011 – 7:30pm – 9:30pm at the Judges Lodgings, County Hall and 2 councillors from each member council were invited to attend, interested Councillors would contact the Clerk.

The Clerk reported he was receiving correspondence in relation to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and as the matter had been raised at the Annual Parish meeting was requesting guidance on Council's intentions and potential involvement in any locally organised events. There followed a discussion around possible grants that may be available and it was noted that AVDC was not making any funding available and should any Parish Council wish to make funds available then this would have to be included within next year's Precept. It was AGREED to include for discussion at the next Parish meeting when more details of potential events would be available.

The Clerk reported he had received a note from BCC regarding the results of the Switching off street lights to save energy trial – consultation. This was relevant to the Parish as the trial included the A418 crossroads. The proposals and recommendations were that road lighting was not required and they would remove street lights. Upgrade lit signs on central islands to LED for longer life expectancy, and liaise with Parish Councils to transfer responsibility for the two low level lights at the bus stops. Our response was required by the 11th December. Councillors would consider and the matter would be included on next month's Agenda for our agreed response.

County Council and District Council matters - County Councillor Mrs N Glover gave a summary of her report for the month and the following points were noted – Thames Valley Police were changing its non-emergency number to 101 on the 14th November, the 0845 number will work till April next year – Final comments from the public in regard to the Street light consultation can be made via the following link www.bucksconsultation.buckscc.gov.uk/bucksccp/kms/dmart.aspx

District Councillor P Cooper advised that AVDC had announced the Christmas parking arrangements, from the 27th November to the 22nd December parking would be free on Thursdays from 4:30pm at all car parks with the exception of Priory Square. The Waterside Theatre had just announced their results for the first year and these were very encouraging with the number of seats sold exceeding expectations. He advised that it was important we responded to the Street light proposals and confirmed that he had already given his comments and reminded Transport that there were 4 lights in total and that should they decide to put in shorter lamp posts this should be at their expense not the Parish. He had attended the Development Committee meeting at which the retrospective planning application for the Egg packing plant was discussed and advised that the applicant had agreed to put in a 15 metre passing bay within 6 weeks.

Planning

11/0792/APP (77 The Green, Mr A S Rashid)

First floor side extension and conversion of outbuilding into garden room ancillary to the main dwelling and a covered canopy roof to provide access to main dwelling.

The above application was discussed noting the smaller scale of the extension in comparison to previous applications and it was RESOLVED to raise no objections to the application. Council would add the comment that consideration be given to neighbours in respect of overlooking windows and doors and in accordance with relevant regulations specify obscure glass if required.

Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Carvey reported that he had delivered 2 questionnaires per household and we had received resident's responses that now needed analysis. Cllr Shorrocks suggested Mike Wenble who kindly carried out the analysis of the Village Plan responses may assist and he would contact him to see if he would be willing to help. It was noted it was important we complete our Village Plan before sending in our response which is due at the end of December, a meeting would be required to finalise.

Village Plan – A report from Cllr Perkins had been received advising that the analysis of the final consultation had begun. We had received 60 replies and he hoped to circulate the findings in the next couple of weeks. We would then be able to either ratify or amend the current actions within the plan and once this has been done and a final draft has been signed off we can move to print. The results from the survey and the confirmed actions will go into the December Chronicle.

Bulk Refuse Container – The Clerk advised that at the last LAF meeting it was reported that the provision of Bulk refuse containers to Parishes would cease next financial year. District Councillor Cooper advised he

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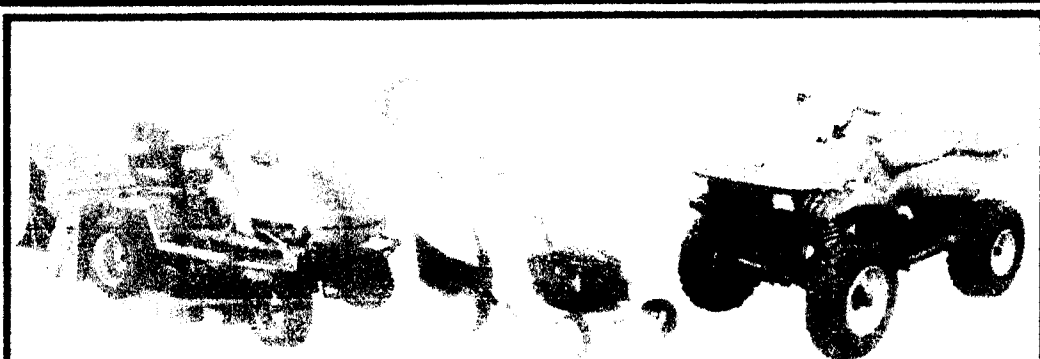
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would check, confirm or otherwise and advise what options we had as a Council to continue providing the service to residents as it was a popular facility and well used. County Councillor Glover would send details of a possible alternative.

Salt Bins – The Clerk gave details of the recent correspondence received from BCC regarding the provision and restocking of approved location salt bins. There then followed a discussion of the situation within the Parish at it was AGREED to take no action at this time and review if necessary in the New Year.

Street Cleansing – The Clerk reported he had received an email from the Clerk at Winslow Town Council to see if we were interested in taking on our own Street cleansing as the contract at AVDC is due for renewal in 2013. It was noted our roads are swept twice a year and it was felt that this was not relevant to a Parish of our size.

Scrutiny review – Transport for Bucks. The Clerk advised that Transport for Buckinghamshire are conducting a Scrutiny review into transport for Buckinghamshire services, and the views of the Council were invited in respect of the highways and transportation services in our Parish. It was AGREED the Cllr Higgs would respond on behalf of Council as our transport representative.

Recreation Safety Check: The Clerk reported that Cllr Clarke had delivered the monthly safety check report and there was nothing to highlight. There was some concern over a reported weakness in the aerial runway structure and the Clerk would contact Cllr Clarke with details. It was noted that no comment had been made in the recent Annual Safety inspection.

Annual Safety Check report review– In Cllr Clarke's absence it was noted that this item would be carried over to next month's meeting.

Budget 2012 – Precept – The Clerk distributed the Budget document to Councillors and requested they review in order that Council can decide on the Precept for 2012.

It was confirmed that the next Parish Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 7th December 2011 at 7:30pm in the Church Room.

COUNTRYSIDE MATTERS

The RSPB have more than a million members and 355,600 acres, covering 209 reserves and it still blames most of the decline of garden, woodland and farmland birds on intensive farming. What a load of hogwash! All they have to do is ask anybody with a bird table or a bird feeder, filled with peanuts or bird seed, why the garden bird population is declining. They only have to ask gamekeepers, farmers, countrymen, gardeners and walkers why this is. The answer is simple, the more species you protect the more the protected will hammer the vulnerable. Blue tits, house sparrows, finches, blackbirds, mistle thrushes, yellow hammers and believe it or not woodpeckers, all suffer. Legal protection was handed to the sparrow hawks in 1962, now they have become rampant and increasing by 99%. Throw in an increase of 96% in egg thieving magpies and jays, carrion crows by 81% and there is your answer. Why don't all the ornithology charities look beyond the bottom line of their balance sheet, their donations and legacies' and the thought of upsetting the blue rinse brigade? Instead they need to push for a change in the law and help sort out the real issues of the predators?

The same applies to the predation of ground nesting birds such as bitterns, stone curlews, lapwings, English partridges and snipe. It is now in some echelons of society not politically or conservational correct to support fox hunting and game keeping. However, how it kept the vermin down and controlled foxes, stoats, mink and grey squirrels, all on the increase, and a curse to free range egg production, shooting and outside lambing. I read today in the Mail that the British Trust for Ornithology want to cull the poor old deer population because they eat shoots and shrub leaves that nightingales need for nesting sites, unbelievable, they, the RSPB, need to get their house in order, 'Every man can see things far off, but is blind to what is near'.

James Henderson

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December Sat. 3rd-Sun 4th, Sat 10th Sun 11th, Sat 17th Sun 18th & Sat 24th

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Village Orchard

The orchard now has a shed - the roof had to be replaced. Peter Knight and Les Smith were the carpenters and Les later applied a fresh coat of wood preservative.

There are a few trees still to be planted - these include two walnuts and some greengages. There is still the opportunity for you to have a tree planted this winter - get in touch with any of the undersigned and we will enquire if it's possible to get things organised for this season.

Approximately half the orchard will have been planted this year which is a fantastic achievement. That's 70+ trees!

It is proposed to have an open meeting in the Church Room on Tuesday 10th January at 7.30pm when you can hear our further plans and ideas and for you to air your views regarding the future of your orchard. Please put this date in your diary as the January Chronicle will probably not get to you until the 6th or 7th of January.

Peter Knight 681478 John Hardcastle 688070 Gordon Smith

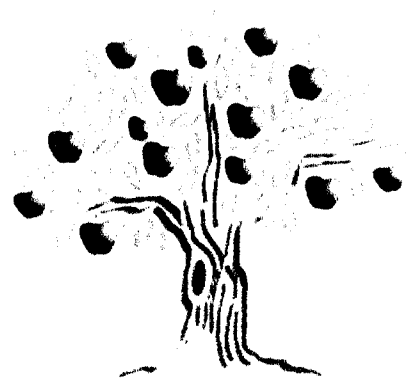


Photo shows Andrew Ford planting a pear tree in memory of his Dad John

A Weekend section of The Telegraph had a QI article about apples.

The first apples originated in Kazakhstan (the capital Almaty derives from *alma-ala*, "apple father"). Travelers on the silk routes developed a taste and spat their pips out wherever they rested. Now ecologists are attempting to create a gene bank from the unprecedented collection of wild apples they have found growing there, including *Malus seiversii*, the ancestor of most western apples.

Some are as large as small pumpkins; others are the size of peas, with colours from yellow to lime green, chocolate brown and burgundy.

Modern apples have been genetically weakened by selective breeding, and are subject to many diseases and pests. The wild Kazakh varieties contain up to 85 per cent more genetic material and are virtually disease free.

The One Off

ASTON ABBOTTS NEW YEARS EVE PARTY

You do like a party don't you Aston Abbotts, with a month or so to go we are pleased to report that the New Year Eve party is nearly **sold out** and with over 100 people confirmed it should be (as always) a ruddy good night!

As this is the last Chronicle before the end of the year we thought it would be good idea to give you a few more details about the evening.

The marquee is to be set up in the field behind Hunters Way, which is on the road out of the village towards Lines Hill and Weedon.

We will aim to make the transition from concrete to field to marquee as clean as possible but if you wish to wear travelling footwear and then change into your party stilettos in the marquee (Frank) this seems a good idea.

The marquee will be open throughout the 31st December for people to drop off their drinks if they wish. Party goers will need to supply their own glassware however there will be a municipal freezer facility for people to use for storing ice or champagne that needs to be really really cold (wink) so please help yourself. The team have arranged for some burly chaps led by Dave Lewis to supervise this process and apparently the only cost will be the odd taste of your wares (cough)!

Some people have asked about dress code so to clarify we are banning the following Hawaii Shirts, Shell Suits, Romper Suits and men wearing leather trousers. However we will be applauding the following beautiful frocks, dinner suits, cat suits, lounge suits and Christmas present shirts (brought by partners).

The evening will kick off at approx 7pm, we have a gourmet three course meal followed by music from the 60's 70's 80's up to the present day before the count down to midnight begins.

For anyone who thinks they may have missed the boat on tickets we do have a couple of tables that can be squeezed in; just speak to either Frank McManus (681599) or John Whyte (681685).

It promises to be a great night, I mean with great friends, great food, great music and a bucket load of drink what more could you ask for!

See you on the Dance Floor!

James Perkins



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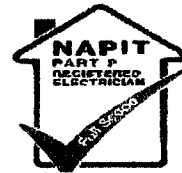
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ASTON ABBOTTS BOOK CLUB

The November meet was held at Pam Hewitt's house to discuss 'Life of Pi' by Yann Martel.

This book won the Booker prize in 2002. It relates the amazing saga of 16 year old Piscine Molitor Patel's struggle to survive for 227 days at sea in a life boat with a bengal tiger, hyena, zebra and an orang-utan. Many of us had read the book some years ago and found a second reading just as enjoyable and as mystifying as before. The gory bits worried some, but generally the pace and extraordinary situation Pi manages was exciting and miraculous. Quite what was the message of the book we could not fathom.

We look forward to our Christmas Quiz evening hosted by Val Smith on Friday 9th December.
January's book, chosen by Sally Clarke, is 'A Tale of Two Cities' by Charles Dickens. *John Hardcastle*

Sin' auld lang syne.

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

And there's a hand, my trusty fiere,
And gie's a hand o' thine!
And we'll tak a right guid-willie
waught

For auld lang syne.

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne.

WINE TASTING AT THE "OAK"

On seeing the 'news from the Royal Oak' in the Nov. issue of the Chronicle, we couldn't resist popping along to the 'wine tasting evening' on the Sunday the 6th. However, having been to evensong, we were a little late but non-the-less delighted to see the event so well attended when we eventually arrived. There wasn't time to sample the varied and generous cheese board provided by the pub since we were immediately 'invited' to sample the dozen or so wines available to identify their country of origin, grape type and to categorise them for taste/quality. No sooner had we finished than the results were gathered up and marked.

Top marks for correctly judging the reds went jointly to Vanessa, and Phil & Carol; the Rose to Lol & Tracy and for the white wines to Mike Bush.

The overall winner however was Lesley.

Many thanks to Terri and Garry for arranging such an entertaining and enjoyable evening; also to their 'helpers' Mike & Simon. We understand the results of the various 'tasting categories' will be used to select future wine stocks; what a good idea!!!

Pythagorean Theorem: 24 words. Lord's prayer 66 words. Archimedes' Principle: 67 words.

Ten Commandments: 179 words. EU regulations on the sale of cabbages: 26,911 words.

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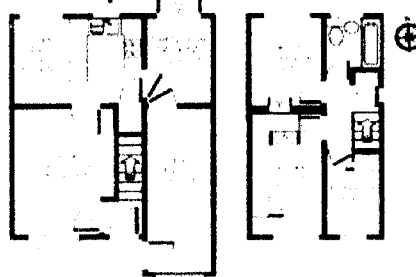
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WINGRAVE CE COMBINED SCHOOL

As we approach the festive season the Key Stage 1 and Foundation children are busy rehearsing for their Nativity performances, a happy reminder that Christmas will soon be here. The PTFA are also preparing for the Christmas Fayre to be held on Saturday 3rd December.

Early in November the school held a cross curricular week; 'Take one picture' as promoted by the National Gallery. Children linked a full range of activities to the painting including, writing, drama, art, design and technology and ICT. Children spoke confidently about their learning and were eager to share.

The School Council, a group of children elected to represent their class mates, worked together to organise a day of fund raising for Children in Need. All activities were organised by the children; from a penalty shoot out to the traditional cake sale. These were fully supported by their peers clearly demonstrating the generous and considerate nature of them all.

Val Britnell Headteacher

Dick Whittington

The Wingrave Players have been presenting pantomime for many years, and, discovering that a work colleague was appearing in the cast, I purchased tickets for the Friday evening performance of Dick Whittington, the second of four performances. The Community centre was decorated by photos of past productions, including Mother Goose and Humpty Dumpty.

Neil Gurney's well thought out full length script was packed full of jokes straight out of a Christmas Cracker, with ample opportunity for audience participation. I particularly liked the way in which some of the younger members of the audience were encouraged to take part in the banter. Neil also doubled up as the musical director playing keyboard.

The script required a number of scene changes, including the appearance of the Pickled Herring. No, not something that you eat but a ship set fair to sail the high seas. The colourful backdrops were a delight as we switched from the streets of London to the sewers, under the sea after the good ship Pickled Herring was cruelly wrecked by the Queen Rat, to the Sultan's palace in Morocco and back home to good old London town. A testament to all the hard work put in behind the scenes as were the excellent colourful costumes.

The cast of twenty, too numerous to mention all individually, gave us an inspired performance. Included in this number were ten children who sang a number of tuneful songs with great confidence and musicality. Bron Hughes as Fairy Bow Bells knew her lines so well that she was able to ad lib and return to the script with impunity, delivering in a way that brought back memories of the voice of Frank Spencer, although fortunately with none of the calamitous consequences. Star of the show, playing Dick, was Andy Targell with another strong performance and a fan club at the back coming all the way from Surrey.

I should especially mention the performance of Sylvia Francis as a colourful parrot, an innovation I do not recall from the original story. Not only did she repeat lines delivered by the cast at appropriate times, but was also able to reverse the procedure on occasion such as when the Alderman said, "I feel I should be saying something at this point".

Actually the script was quite daring as they do say never work with children and animals. Not only did we have ten children and a parrot on stage but also the villainous Queen Rat, Tommy the cat (I thought tom cats were ginger, not blond) and several luminous swimming fish.

In summary, this was a thoroughly entertaining evening and every credit is due to Neil, the cast and the backroom team for the making this production possible.

Nigel Palmer

GOLFING STAR

At an Annual Gala Dinner and presentation evening, and in the presence of almost a hundred club members and their guests, our very own Anita Parker's golfing talents were officially recognized. During the dinner, the Lady Captain awarded trophies to all the major prize winners including Anita who received the coveted P. Randall Grannies Cup!!!!

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ALLOTMENT DIARY

My visits to my allotment have been infrequent recently, because of my current hip problem. I have been concentrating on work that is urgent. This has included digging up my final rows of potatoes (a relatively new variety called "Druid", which I would recommend, both from the size of the crop, and its use as an all-round potato), and picking the odd red cabbage; but has not included as yet doing any weeding – although I think I will have to devote some time to weeding around my leek crop, which will be in the ground for some time.

The new orchard in the field beyond the allotments is looking very good, and I occasionally see villagers coming out to water their trees in the current relative drought. The strip of land between the allotments and the orchard has been allocated as further allotments, and one of the new allotmentees, Chris Phillips, has already started work, weed-killing and then weeding his patch, in readiness for next spring, which is impressive.

Something I discovered from my Sunday paper last week-end, is that the recession is driving people to allotment crime. It's not a case of "Dig for Victory", it's "Rob for Recession!" Incredibly, police in Cambridgeshire recently held an identity parade . . . of vegetables! They had been notified by owners of local allotments that their crops were being stolen; and stopped two suspected thieves with a bag full of vegetables, in the village of Brampton. They then arranged for these owners to come in to study a parade of the marrows, cabbages, and other vegetables taken from the thieves' bag. One of the owners, Roger Hall, was able to identify his own leeks, squash, rhubarb and beetroot – apparently because of their "very distinctive" colours and shapes. As a result, the two men concerned were convicted at Huntingdon Magistrates Court. But the criminals were fairly pathetic individuals – more Dick Turnips than Dick Turpins, as the article put it – both unable to work because of injuries, and both on benefits. Each was given a conditional discharge and ordered to pay compensation and costs only.

Nevertheless, vegetable crime is so prevalent in some parts of the country that allotment holders are erecting CCTV cameras, and setting up allotment watch schemes. The British Crime survey reported last month that there had been a 13% increase in allotment crime since last year (whereas other crimes are only up by less than 1%). However, it is suspected that the actual crime level must be much higher, since most allotment thefts go unreported, and the police do not keep statistics. The area containing 420 allotments at Fulham Palace has 6ft spiked railings all round the allotments, and the gate to the allotments is kept locked, with only the allotment-holders having keys. However, despite this, some thefts have occurred – some, apparently by one allotment holder from another (which has resulted in expulsion). Feelings are running high. One of the allotment holders said, darkly, that there have not been any heads on the spikes – yet!



Another news item that attracted my attention was a report that Lucy King, a researcher at Oxford University, has been honoured by the UN for inventing a fence that keeps elephants away from crops in Africa, by making a noise like buzzing bees. My first thoughts were, how extraordinary it was that an animal the size of an elephant could be driven away by the fear of an animal as small as a bee – and how on earth did a bee sting penetrate deep enough in the elephant's skin to cause it any pain? My second thought, however, was to wonder if this principle could be used here in the UK? What noise would deter a hungry pigeon? Or a swarm of cabbage white butterflies? The cry of a sparrow-hawk might work for pigeons, but I suppose that having this noise going off regularly might tend to irritate other allotment-holders, and owners of houses neighbouring the allotments. The noise that swifts make when they are indulging in a feeding frenzy in a crowd of insects might do it for butterflies. But again, would p*ss off any human-beings in earshot, if it continued often enough. And do butterflies have ears, anyway? So, I have left it there. But if anyone of my readers thinks of a noise that will scare such pests away, without antagonising everyone in earshot, and makes a fortune out of it, please remember that you read it here first! A bottle of scotch will suffice.

Peter Shorrocks

December 2011

The Chronicle

17



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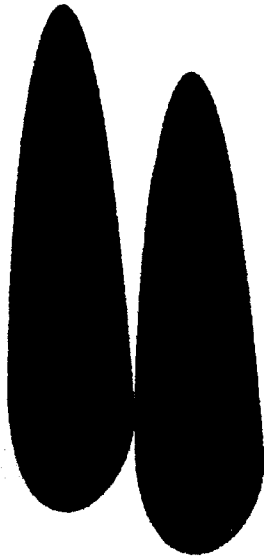
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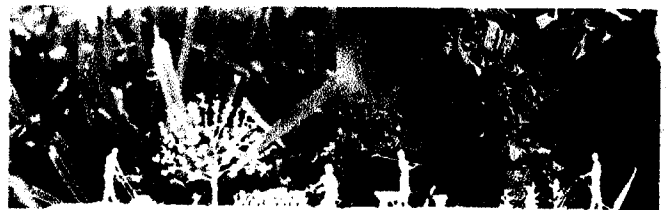
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adventures in Thailand with the Smiths

Travel has been an important part of our lives, from the time I spent a 3 week exchange in Paris in the early 1960's and Val undertook a 3 month medical training course in Athens in the late 1960's. However, the travels have not always been straight forward. We were caught up in Hurricane Andrew when Miami was evacuated to Orlando. We were caught up in an earthquake in Turkey and with all the phone lines down, were unable to let our family know that all was well. Earlier this month, due to fly to Thailand, we contacted the Foreign Office to be assured that there was no real problem with flooding in Bangkok. Yet on arrival, the local news was telling residents to beware, they had caught 6 crocodiles in the streets of Bangkok and sightings of pythons had been reported. The moral of the tale, perhaps, is don't book to go on holiday with the Smiths.

Nevertheless, we had a fascinating trip to Thailand. A day visit to the Floating Market outside of Bangkok was more like the floating market coming to visit us. Yet the sounds, colour, smell and sights of the market, and in particular the characters, were so exotic. Two elderly women in separate narrow, long-tail boats both cooking coconuts and vying for our custom were magical; weather-beaten, funny, happy, industrious – they reminded me of Val and her best friend!

We flew north out of the capital over miles of flooded countryside. The remnants of rivers were visible having leached into the surrounding villages and fields over mile after mile. However, reading local newspapers, the causes seem worryingly familiar. Flood water from the hills in the north are normal, but had been managed in the past with canals and ditches around the farms. Now, there had been the concreting of the land with roads, factories, car parking. There was nowhere for the water to go, so river banks were breached the suburbs of the capital city were inundated. Thankfully, the centre of Bangkok was spared.

The northern city of Chiang Mai was built around a square mile of a walled and moated ancient city. The old city is a modern day mix of ancient Buddhist temples, old teak houses built on stilts and more restaurants than I have ever seen in a single city before. It is also a modern, developing regional centre with a large university and student quarter along with an enormous, modern hospital. Eating and shopping options reflected this mix. Val couldn't help but find her Tesco Lotus shop; we could eat expensive and chic or out of plastic bags sitting in the street for next to nothing.

There is no public transport system, but a network of red, flat-back Japanese trucks, with a canopy and a bench seat along each side. These act as both taxi and bus. You hail a "cab", negotiate a destination and price – yes I do mean negotiate a destination! – and set off. The taxi/bus will then stop en route to pick up another passenger – destinations are reached circuitously. Nevertheless there are advantages. Whilst it is common to sit in a bus and never communicate with the indigenous people, when you are sitting knee to knee with one other passenger, even the British traveller's reticence is broken down. We met, amongst others, a young, Thai orthopaedic surgeon on her way to work and an ex-pat Brit who had spent her life teaching English around the Far East and had just bought her retirement house in Chiang Mai. She was having problems with builders, so no change there.

We really enjoyed our short stay in the north, perhaps needing to spend more time exploring the hill tribes and their ancient cultural ways of living in and with the forest. However, we flew south to the much more commercial island holiday resort of Koh Samui. We had been to the south before, but had to go in the monsoon season in August. Yet we seem to have managed to hit the wet season once again – "Ah, the monsoon season is different on the island!". This leg of the trip was a more fly 'n flop; sit on a beach, eat, read and drink. With more than one million visitors to the island this year, it seems most people had the same idea. We were lucky in finding a beautiful, secluded, small hotel which would give us the peace we needed. But once again, the curse of the Smiths struck. The hotel's water side restaurant was being dug up because there was a drain problem. Drilling, sawing, hammering; it reminded us of home on Lines Hill. However, the hotel managed the problem really well. It's surprising what an apology, change of room and a bottle of fizz will do. We did have our seemingly usual mix of holiday experience – enlightening, surprising, relaxing but fun.

Les Smith

**What are brown and sneak round the kitchen?
How does Good King Wenceslas like his pizzas?**

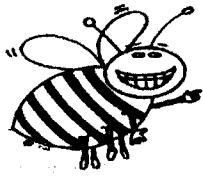
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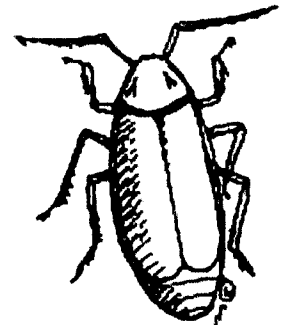
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NEW ZEALAND TOUR

Simon Guy very kindly gave me access to his holiday blog recording his adventures in New Zealand at the time of the Rugby World Cup. If you would like to see the whole unexpurgated story then go to <http://www.travelblog.org/Bloggers/NZTiger/>

8th October First stop Whangamata, where lunch was a very reasonable fish & chips (using a fish called Tarakihi). We were heading for Whitianga via Hot Water Beach (the tide was in so we couldn't dig our own hot tub) and then onto Cathedral Cove. We didn't quite make the Cove (yes, you guessed it the tide was in!) but we could get to Stingray Bay which was spectacular.

Tonight its into town in time to watch Wales v Ireland in a bar and then the big one.

9th October It's Sunday morning and I'm feeling crap. Not from a hangover but from the knowledge that England are out of the world cup :-)

What happened? to be fair France deserved to win but we were more than capable of beating them.

So now the big question who do we support now?

Tonight we go and watch the All Blacks vs the Pumas and then its off to Dunedin for the next stage of our trip.

9:30 am flight tomorrow to Dunedin and then a coach trip to Te Anau. Overnight there and then overnight cruise on Doubtful Sound.

10th October Having watched the debacle that was England v France (why play Flood and Wilkinson together?) the next day saw us rise late and take it easy until the evening then it was off to Eden Park again for the All Blacks versus the Pumas. What should have been a relatively simple match turned out to be a bit of a struggle for the kiwis as Argentina put up a reasonable fight as can be attested to by the mad Argentinian fan in front of us who despite continually jumping up and down like a demented frog and praying was ultimately to be disappointed.

Very much looking forward to the kiwi /wallaby semi next Sunday.

13th October Doubtful Sound was fantastic. The weather picked up and the scenery was spectacular and I even managed to kayak on it! Words cannot describe it so you'll just have to ask me to show the photos.

14th October We'd luckily got the earlier bus out of Te Anau so we had plenty of time to arrange the next days adventures. We duly booked the 'Skippers Canyon Jet Boat Safari' for the morning leaving us the afternoon free in case the weather cleared and we fancied a scenic flight over Milford Sound.

Having done all that we wandered through Queenstown until a little known, but highly recommended restaurant called 'The Bunker' opened at 6 pm (thanks to Josie Frosell for the tip). We arrived in time to make a booking for 6:30 so as we had half an hour to kill we made our way upstairs to the cocktail bar where Chris (from Pembury, Kent) was waiting to serve us. One splendid G&T later we made our way down and enjoyed an excellent dinner (I had the Venison, very good) and a very good bottle of Cloudy Bay. As it was early we then decided to have one for the road back upstairs with Chris in the Cocktail Bar - big mistake!

This was approx 8 pm - I'm told (although I have absolutely no recollection) that we left at 11:30. Certainly the credit card voucher I discovered the next morning bore testament to that as we couldn't possibly have drunk that amount in any shorter time frame.

I vaguely remember at one point having 4 large slices of cucumber in one glass of Hendricks Gin from which I surmised that must have been my fourth! (and that was after several Tanquerays)

No idea how we got back to the hotel or what time it was - deplorable behaviour (but a bloody good night!)

15th October Oh my head! Actually on reflection it's not too bad (although it deserves to be). My mouth feels like a badgers bum and I'm a tad queasy but considering what we drank last night it's OK.

I cannot remember how we got back or what time it was but we managed it somehow. We've also managed to wake up in time to get dressed and head back into Queenstown to catch the 4wd safari bus which will take us to the Skippers Canyon Jet Boat.

Fantastic scenery and a very hair raising descent into the canyon (no barriers, no passing places and sheer drops) just what my stomach needed.

We are kitted out in capes & beanie hats and then we're off on a 30 minute jet boat ride where the driver delights in taking us as close to the cliffs as possible before spinning 360 degrees. It's very exhilarating as I hang on for dear life. We arrived in Christchurch and before being dropped off at our hotel we travelled through the earthquake affected area. Quite a sobering journey to see the devastation still evident. It was also weird too to see houses destroyed and yet next door seemingly untouched. I sincerely hope they can recover ok.

Tomorrow it's another early start as we fly back to Auckland for the semi finals

16th October Lovely relaxed lunch at the house where we are staying and then preparations begin. I've decided to support Wales so it's on with the red shirt and we head off into Auckland.

We had dinner at a restaurant on the quay called Wildfire. It's the kind where they keep bringing skewers of all sorts of meat which you can keep eating till you burst. Very nice too washed down with Speights ale (I do wish they could make a beer that tasted nice at room temperature, this cold stuff is not good. Oh for a pint of Chiltern Ale at the Royal Oak!)

Tomorrow it's the big one. Really looking forward to the All Blacks v The Wallabies.

17th October Never in doubt was it?

It was, in fairness, a very good match but the All Blacks always looked in control. I imagine they'll beat the French with ease on Sunday (but you never know!)

18th October Extremely good meal at the White Morph restaurant (I'd recommend the seafood chowder) & another excellent bottle of Cloudy Bay (of course!)

Early start the next morning (no time for breakfast) as we have to be at the whale watch place at 7:15.

The first doubts arose when the noticeboard suggested we buy sea sickness tablets from the gift shop. (which we did)

A quick coach transfer took us to the boat on the windy side of the peninsular.

continued on page 25



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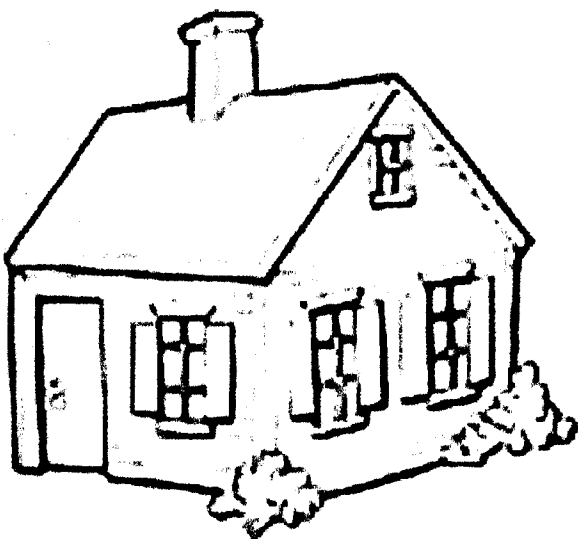
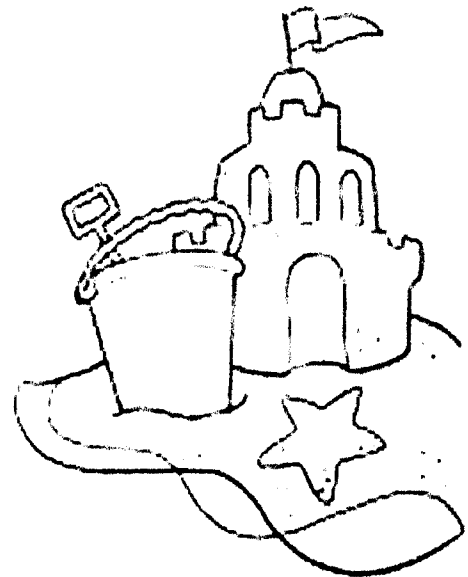
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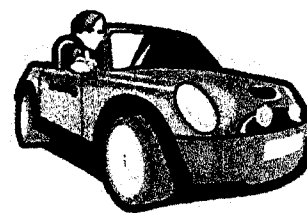
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Readers of a delicate disposition may wish to stop reading at this point.

Within 15 minutes of setting out the first passenger was sick. When we were moving everybody had to sit inside so it with some relief when the boat stopped to look for sperm whales. However that just meant the boat rocked even more so more people became sick. No whales sighted so we carried on inside the boat.

To cut a long story short we stopped twice more and still no bloody whales. I saw an albatross, one petrel and lots of bloody seagulls.

Before we leave Kaikoura there's one more thing I'd like to add about the Whale Watch - our Trainee Guide.

As we were coming back to the sanctity of the harbour she was still bibbling away and then she said this -

"I'm sorry we didn't see any whales today but I hope you still enjoyed the trip"

As she was saying this there were 32 out of the 38 passengers still throwing up into their sick bags - Unbelievable!!

20th October The trip was advertised as one of the great railway journeys of the world passing through the Southern Alps of New Zealand with breathtaking scenery. Guess what...

It was bucketing it down. The rain was absolutely pouring down from a low leaden sky and you couldn't see a bloody thing!!

The train left on time, stopped after 30 seconds, waited for 5 minutes, and then reversed back to the platform. It was going to be one of those days. Apparently there was a "clunking noise" (technical term). Not to worry we left (again) 5 minutes later and we were off. Good job I brought the Sudoku book!

I can only imagine that the journey was spectacular as we couldn't see a thing but as we came over the pass to the other side things started to brighten up. In the distance the west coast of the island was definitely looking better so the last 3rd of the journey was much more interesting.

22nd October It had been over 3 weeks since we'd left England but time seems to have flown by. We decided to just have a snack in Blenheim with a couple of jars of Speights. One night cap g&t back at the hotel and then early to bed.

Today was spent on a late breakfast, preparing to leave and a quick visit to the shops in downtown Auckland. Every one is preparing for tomorrows final and it's a public holiday on Monday so when (if?) the All Blacks win against France there'll be an almighty party.

23rd October The score line of 8 - 7 would suggest a boring match but it was anything but. The French could've just squeaked it in the end but were unlucky.

24th October If you get the opportunity go and visit New Zealand. It is an awesome place. There are only 4 million people in a country bigger than Great Britain. The sights and sounds are spectacular and I would certainly go back again (but not for the rugby!)

Highlights? Well here is my top 6:

1. Scenic Flight to Mount Cook
2. White Island Volcano - Bay of Plenty
3. Overnight cruise of Doubtful Sound
4. Rotorua mudpools and geysers
5. Queenstown - especially the Jet Boat
6. Vineyards and Mussel farm

I'm sure the whale watch would have been brilliant if it wasn't for the sick bags and the fact we saw no whales! and if I do go back I would do the scenic railway journey again and pray for good weather!

Simon Guy

Aston Abbotts Website - further updates

www.aston-abbotts.co.uk

This is a website for the village and I want it to be useful to villagers as well as to people looking up Aston Abbotts on the internet. If there is something you would like to see on the site then please email me - you will find contact details on the site. I would also be interested in adding more photo galleries, so if you have taken some interesting pictures of Aston Abbotts or village events please get in touch. I would also like to add any pictures of Aston Abbotts in the past and I'd be grateful if I could borrow any for scanning - they will be returned unharmed and very promptly. Thank you. *Phil Spooner*

Festive Greetings from the Royal Oak!

We LOVE this time of year because lets face facts it's all about celebrating and there is nothing better to help celebrations than a visit to the pub!

Firstly thanks so much to everyone who attended our wine tasting event in November. It was a great night enjoyed by everyone (some more than others!). We look forward to you enjoying more nights sampling wine up the pub in the future!

In December we have so much going on with Food so here is a little taster (get it!)

Tuesday Lunch - Old Aged Friends Offer

Tuesday - Home Made Pie Nights

Thursday - The New Curry Night with special meal deal

****STOP Press****

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SATURDAY 17th December 2011

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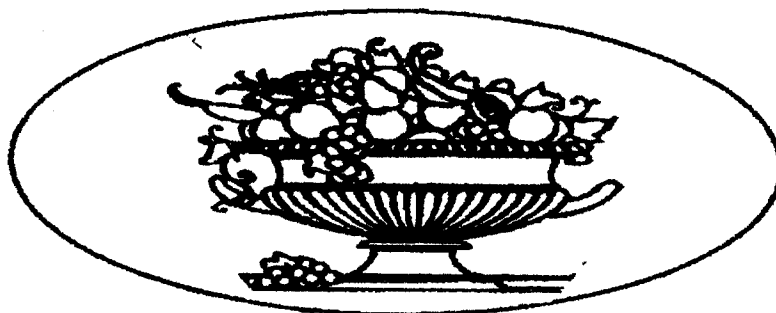
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CHINA TRACTORS

I recently visited China to attend the large Canton Trade Fair and to look at the factories that build the Siromer and Jimna Tractors. My traveling companion was Kath Howard from Siromer Tractors, Preston and we met early on the morning of 12th October at Manchester Airport, where we were to catch our first flight to Frankfurt and from there to Beijing on the Lufthansa Airbus 800. We arrived in Beijing after an eleven hour flight and, as most tourists do, we visited Tianamen Square. Yes, it is a large square surrounded by many state owned large buildings. The day we visited seemed to coincide with about 100,000 other visitors! Beijing has a population of around 20 million and the impression I got was that I saw most of them during the 36 hours I was there. 5 million driving cars, coaches and lorries, 5 million walking, 5 million on scooters, bikes and even rotovators pulling a trailer carrying a child in a box! The most passengers I saw on a scooter were 4, Mum, Dad and 2 children - none had crash helmets and the scooter had no lights! There seemed to be another 5 million running micro-businesses from the sides of the road and I sat outside one cafe watching one enterprising chinaman engaged in a lengthy discussion with a moped rider who had stopped at the roadside. After a very lengthy conversation, a wheel was removed from the moped and a new tyre fitted, more chatting and money changed hands. The scooter drove off and shortly afterwards a lady stopped and pointed to her shoe. Lots more chatting and the lady sat down on the ground, giving her shoes to our entrepreneur. He used the old tyre taken from the moped to sole and heel the lady's shoes. There was more chatting and eventual payment and the lady walked away in her mended shoes - so a happy ending for all concerned.

The next day we had a 4 hour internal flight to Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong Province to attend the Canton Export Machinery Fair. This took place in a purpose built modern building covering 1.6 million square metres housing every sort of machine you could imagine. We were there for two and a half days and still did not see it all. Buyers from all over the world attend this fair and a great deal of business is done. Our next stop was in the city of Nanchang, capital of Jiangxi Province to attend the Mahindra Training Factory. After being shown around the factory we were taken for a meal. We sat around a typical Chinese traditional spinning table. I was encouraged to take a bowl and help myself to what looked like small bones with meat at the end. I ate several of these morsels before noticing that, what I had taken for bones, was in fact a serrated bird beak - so a completely different meaning to the phrase "bird brain"! In general I found most of the food quite pleasant apart from the bird heads just mentioned and the chicken leg with feet still attached. There was one occasion when we lifted the lid from a tureen of rice, noodles and broccoli to find a whole frog on top as a garnish!

We did a huge amount of traveling including a 600 mile journey in a bullet train to Dalian, a large sea port in north east china, then to Changzhou, where we visited the Hanmey and Townsunny Factory and Yanchang to the Jimna factory. Some of these factories were small, traditional ones that made 3 tractors a week and others were massive new factories employing 600 workers and making 250 tractors a week.

The Chinese government want to industrialise the whole of the country and our Chinese translator/guide Yinhong told us that every city is growing by one square mile per year from brown field sites to fully working factories, apartments, shops and schools. She showed us a new 10 square mile city that had been built on land where once her father and many hundreds of others had grown rice. At wages offered of 50 dollars a week and a new apartment for rent at 50 dollars a month, there is no shortage of farm labourers flocking to these new cities to start a new life.

I eventually arrived home on 28th October. The trip was very exhausting but an amazing experience and happily I survived the food, the traveling and the Chinese massage.

Richard Clarke

ASTON ABBOTTS AND CUBLINGTON LADIES CLUB

The ladies club AGM was held on 10th November and the committee was re-elected for another year. There followed a bring and buy sale which raised money towards the cost of speakers for the coming season. The next meeting will be the Carol Service on 15th December at Cublington followed by afternoon tea at the chairman's house.

The programme for the rest of the season is as follows:-

January 19th	--	King Zog of Albania	-	Neil Rees
February 16th	--	Mouth and Foot Painting Artist		Keith Jansz
March 15th	--	Spring Lunch		
April 19th	--	Deaf Awareness and Sign Language		Dr. Kirsty Rees
May 17th	--	Fund Raising Coffee morning		
June 21st	--	Summer Outing		
July 19th	--	Garden Party		

April Curnow

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PLACE YOUR ORDERS NOW!



The 1st Wingrave Scout Group would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who contributed items, helped at or attended our Autumn Fair at the Community Centre last month. We raised over £750, which is fantastic. Thank you!

Beavers, Cubs and Scouts are open to girls and boys aged between 6 and 14. We meet weekly at the Scout Hut in Chiltern Road. Anyone interested should contact the Group Scout Leader, Michelle Parker, on 01296 681911, or via email : quaveriw@yahoo.co.uk

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The Eagle
The Foresters Arms
The Falcon

The Green Man
The Grapes
The Greyhound
The Gullivers
The Hen & Chickens
The Little Vic
The Market Tavern
The Nag's Head
The New Zealand
The Plume & Feathers
The Prince of Wales
The Queens Head

The Rockwood/Red Lion
The Railway
The Saracens Head
The Ship
The Star
The Three Pigeons
The Two Brewers
The Windmill
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Colin Higgs

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MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE

The Mobile Library stops on The Green every other Tuesday between 10.30 and 10.45

6th & 20th December

For more information about Neighbourhood Watch or Community Watch contact your local Watch Office on:

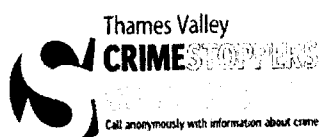


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or log on to the website at

www.tvpcommunitymessaging.org



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£20 per hour for non residents
(plus metered electricity - a returnable deposit of £50 at the time of booking is required)

Please note that an additional hour over and above the period of the event must be booked to cover setting up and clearing away.

Weddings and Christenings -
a fixed charge of £50.

Please contact Tracy Hinds on
if you wish to book
688479

YOUR

PARISH COUNCIL

Peter Shorrocks (Chairman)
Oak Farm House - 681260

Paul Bruton (Parish Clerk)
51 The Green - 682322

Colin Higgs (Vice Chairman)
6 Wingrave Road - 681343

Richard Clarke
Maplewood, The Green - 681007

Judy Hardcastle
Marloes, Lines Hill - 688070

Kate Curry
2 Norduck Cottages, Moat Lane - 681137

James Perkins (co-opted) - 07882 980415

Bob Carvey
12 The Green - 681053

District Councillor
Peter Cooper
Brewhouse Lane, Rowsham - 681250

County Councillor
Netta Glover - 688357

Parochial Church Council

Rev. Philip Derbyshire 01525 240287

Caroline Abel Smith 681001 - *Churchwarden*

April Curnow 681459 - *Churchwarden*

Colin Higgs 681343 - *Deputy Churchwarden*

Shirley Ford 681865

Andy Bystra 681690

Ann Goodman 681763

Anita Parker 681325

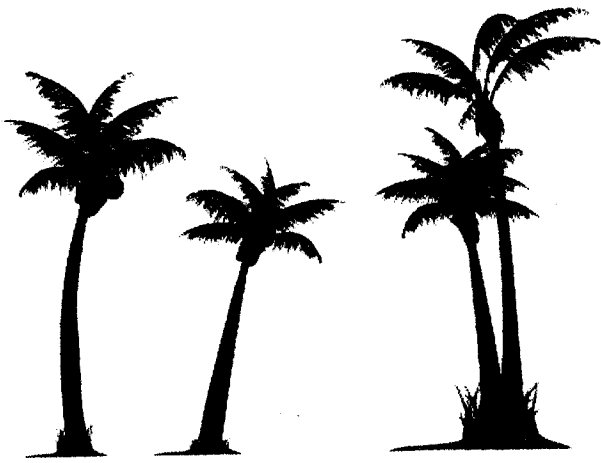
Gordon Kemp 681763

Caroline Lane 681373 - *Secretary*

100 Club Winners for November

£50 Mrs P Gray

£10 Mrs L Clarke



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Wingrave Pre-School offers sessional care for 2-5 year olds.

Children's learning is promoted in a friendly and fun atmosphere.

New Premises:

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Contact: Kelly Targell – Pre-school Leader 01296 682217

Or

Sandy Roost – Chair 07932 121317

Session times:

Morning sessions: daily, 9am - noon

Afternoon sessions: Tuesday and

Wednesday, noon - 3pm, or 1pm - 3pm

Lunch club: daily, noon - 1pm

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Dear Friends

Hello from all at St. James,

As you know, worship is offered every Sunday in your Parish church, and to which you are most warmly invited and welcomed.

We, however, are aware that not all that we offer necessarily 'hits the spot' for you. This might be because you feel church is not for you anyway. You might not think that what you believe is the same as us - none of us is exactly the same, even in church! It might be that you only like 'specials' like Harvest, Remembrance, Christmas, Easter. All that's okay, but we don't want to miss people because of ignorance of their needs. We are therefore proposing to put on a more informal form of worship, appropriate for children, parents, single people, old and young alike, say once a month. This could be a morning or an afternoon (probably the better option knowing how busy many people's Sunday mornings are!).

So, we would like to know how you feel, and what you might like, etc. We therefore ask you to spend a few moments thinking about this, and answering the following questions / ideas:

1. I / We would like to have a Family Worship Service once a month. Y / N
2. I / We would attend this if offered. Y / N
3. Preferred time am/pm
4. Your questions and/or suggestions

We look forward to hearing your responses which can come to me direct (revphil5@btinternet.com or 01525 240287) or to one of the churchwardens; *April Curnow Caroline Abel-Smith*

God bless and thank you

Rev. Philip Derbyshire Priest-in-Charge

KEEP THE WINTER COLD AT BAY AND RAISE MONEY FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Local charity Iain Rennie Grove House Hospice Care (IRGH) is asking people to support its fundraising activities this winter to help keep the cold at bay while raising money to support families in this area facing the challenges of life-limiting illness. Whether it's a fundraising supper at home with friends and family or an energetic run or cycle ride, there are plenty of ways to get busy throughout the coldest months of the year and do something worthwhile at the same time.

Sometimes the long winter nights stretch emptily ahead of us, but one way of beating these winter blues is to take part in our brand new **Come Dine at Mine** initiative. Loosely inspired by the hit TV series 'Come Dine With Me', people are being encouraged to devise their own recipe for success by creating an event at home for their friends and/or family. Community Fundraiser Louise Hewitt explains:

"We really don't mind how you organise your event. You are the people who know what your friends and family will enjoy. Maybe you could host a one-pot supper and ask for a donation or you could hold a party and invite people to donate instead of bringing a bottle. You could even run a contest along the lines of 'Come Dine with Me' with a group of friends each hosting a dinner and paying a fee to take part, the winner gets their money back and the rest is donated to IRGH. Alternatively you could award pounds for points. The world really is your oyster but it should be a really great way to have a good time but raise money too."

So dig out those cookbooks, pop on your pinny and get thinking about your very own recipe for success. Contact the Fundraising Team on 01442 890222 for more ideas and inspiration. Louise adds:

"It's really fitting that by gathering your friends and family around you and having fun while raising money, you can also help other local families stay together for as long as possible. Please do join us and support this really important fundraising initiative."

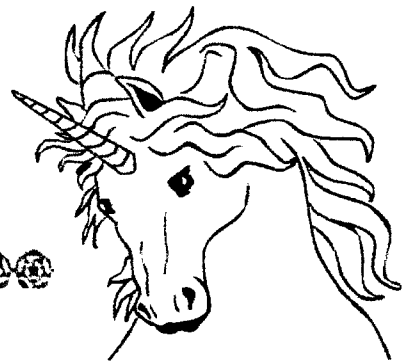
Festive Fun at The Unicorn

December is a time for parties and annual dinners and dining out with friends and family. In the build up to Christmas, The Unicorn has a host of special events and an exciting Festive menu for you to enjoy whatever your taste.

We look forward to welcoming you at The Unicorn and would suggest that particularly at this time of year you contact us to reserve a table



THE
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at Cublington



Award winning pub & restaurant!



What's on in December

- Monday 5th Quiz - 8pm**
- Sunday 11th Come Dine with Me Awards -**
Our Chefs cook the winning menu – 7.30
- Monday 12th Quiz - 8pm**
- Tuesday 13th Folk Music with Halfway House – 8pm**
- Thursday 15th Sloe Gin Competition - 8pm**
- Monday 19th Quiz - 8pm**
- Friday 23rd Spokes Christmas Special – 8.30pm**
- Saturday 24th Christmas Eve Dining and Party**
from 7pm
- Sunday 25th Christmas Day Lunch**
- Monday 26th Boxing Day Quiz**
and set menu – 8pm
- Friday 30th Dinner and Jazz**
with Anything Goes 8pm
- Saturday 31st NYE Dinner Party 7.30 onwards**
- See The Unicorn web site for full details – why not join us on Facebook?

PLUS enjoy these Unicorn Regulars:

Shop now open for milk, butter and other essentials. Pre-orders required for freshly prepared produce.

Coffee & Homemade cake
Every morning from 10.30am

Monday Night is Quiz night
The Unicorn Quiz 8pm - 10pm
Why not bring a team?

Free drink for winning team and the great accumulating jackpot!!

Saturday Breakfasts -
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Booking always advisable!



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Please see web site for full details www.theunicornpub.co.uk

St James Church

4th December	-	6.00pm Evensong	-	Rev. Philip Derbyshire
11th December	-	10.00am Communion	-	Bishop John of Oxford
		AT WING followed by a soup lunch		
18th December	-	5.30pm Christingle and Carols	-	Rev. Philip Derbyshire
25th December	-	8.30am Communion	-	Rev. Roger Hale
1st January	-	11am Lay Led Benefice Service at Soulbury.		

Evensong in January and February will be on the third Sunday of the month at 6pm led by Rev. Philip Derbyshire.

Dear all,

Well it looks as though Winter might have started to kick in at last. As I drove to Church on 20th November it was through a considerable amount of murk with quite a chilly edge to it all! Could this all mean that Christmas is on it's way?

It doesn't feel terribly Christmassy with the news about the economy and every other country in North Africa/Near East imploding under the weight of rebellion. But things weren't exactly ideal when Joseph and Mary set off from Nazareth to Bethlehem 2000 years ago. Just imagine traveling on a donkey at 8+ months' pregnant---not a comfortable or comforting thought really.

As we approach this special season once again I just wish you all the season's best and take some time to think of those for whom this is just a really hard time to be got through. All best wishes, Philip (Derbyshire).

CHURCH NEWS

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE - 13th NOV.

On a beautiful sunny morning, villagers made their way to the remembrance service. It was conducted by the Rev. Peter Binns, well supported and when at 11.00, we stood around our war memorial, there was a great sense of poignancy as the names of the fallen from our village and those of Cublington read out.

BISHOP OF OXFORD

There won't be a church service at Aston Abbots on **Sunday the 11th Dec.** since the Bishop of Oxford will be conducting a special service at Wing Church, to which all in our benefice are invited. It will commence at **10am.** This is special occasion for the benefice, and since he's a particularly good orator it's expected to be well attended. A 'soup lunch' will be served afterwards to all who come along.

VILLAGE CAROL SINGERS

Anyone interested in joining the Carol singers on the **16th Dec.** will be most welcomed. The intention is to meet on **The Green 7.00pm.** and then sing carols around the village, ending up at The Royal Oak at about 8.30 to sing a few more and enjoy some well earned refreshment. Everyone's cordially invited to come along and help start Christmas in a traditional manner. (All monies collected will go towards much needed church funds)

CHRISTINGLE & CAROLS

Our very popular Christingle & Carols service is to be held on **Sunday 18th Dec. at 5.30pm.** As usual it will involve singing those traditional Christmas carols we all love and maybe even a few new ones. There will be lots of candles and the giving of 'Christingles; families and children of all ages are especially welcome. This is always a good way to get well & truly into the Christmas spirit

CHRISTMAS MORNING

The Christmas day service will commence at **8.30 am,** hopefully leaving plenty of time to complete the preparations before enjoying a Christmas drink with family & friends at the pub!!
of our share of the 2011

CHURCH DUTIES

	<i>Cleaners</i>	<i>Flowers</i>
3rd Dec	Colin Caroline L	No flowers
10th	Ann Gordon	in Advent
17th	Shirley Andrew	Christmas flowers
24th	Anita April	Christmas flowers

Saturday 3rd December

Churchyard Clean Up

10 - 12 noon

(any and all help appreciated)

NEW CHURCH MOWER

The new church mower, paid for by donations made to the memory of Geoff Curnow, was delivered on Wednesday 9th November.

The Aston Abbots Telephone List

100 Club	Colin Higgs	681343
630 Club	Andy Bystra	681690
AVDC	Switchboard	585858
Baby& Toddlers Group	Kim Gayler	681123
Bingo	Pam Dixon	681626
	Sheila Humpreys	681649
Book Club	John Hardcastle	688070
Bus Enquiries	Travel line	0870 6082608
Buses	L & S	415468
Chronicle Advertising	Phil Corrigan	688191
Chronicle Distribution	Andy Bystra	681690
Chronicle Editorial	John Hardcastle	688070
Church Mowing Rota	Gordon Kemp	681763
Church Room Hire	Tracy Hinds	688479
Citizens Advice	Aylesbury	0870 1264056
Bucks County Council	Switchboard	395000
County Councillor	Netta Glover	688357
Dial-A-Ride		330088
District Councillor	Peter Cooper	681250
Doctor	(emergency out of hours)	331511
Fete Coordinator	TBA	
G.N.O.M.E.S.	Carol Spooner	681544
Hospital	Stoke Mandeville	315000
Ladies Club	Shirley Ford	681865
Member of Parliament	John Bercow MP	714240
Milkman	Ron Miller Dairies	482838
Mobile Library	Buckingham	01280 813229
NHS Direct	24 hr Advice Line	0845 4647
Parish Clerk	Paul Bruton	682322
Parish Council Leader	Peter Shorrock	681260
Police	Emergencies	999 or 112
Police	Non-Emergency	0845 8505505
Police	Wing Police Station	396163/4
Railways	Chiltern Railways	0870 5165165
Ramblers Club	Colin Higgs	681343
Rector	Rev Philip Derbyshire	01525 240287
Refuse Collection	Enquiries	585510
Royal British Legion	Alan Jones	682366
Royal Oak	Teri & Gary Moulton	681262
RSPCA	Enquiries	08705 555999
Scouts	Nikki Reeve	681372
Whist	Colin Higgs	681343
Wingrave Pre School	Paul Weston	681127
Wingrave Post Office	PO Only	682964
Wingrave Post Office	Stores	681696
Wingrave School	Office	681436

please advise of any errors or omissions

The Chronicle

Advertising rates per annum

FULL PAGE	Back	£100
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HALF PAGE	Inside	£ 40
	Inside	£ 25
QUARTER PAGE	Full	£ 20
	Half	£ 15
	Quarter	£ 10

Seasonal and short term ads are also accepted at these rates

Send copy and cheque payable to

'The Chronicle' to

Phil Corrigan

5, Nash's Farm, Aston Abbots, Bucks

01296 688191

corriganpc@aol.com

Précis of PCC, Treasurer's report, November 2011

Church funds have been considerably 'bolstered' this year by the efforts of PCC. members and the wonderful generosity of villagers. Income has included £1,373.00 from the Fete, £513.00 from the Race Night, and £816.00 from the Harvest Supper and Auction. These funds have contributed directly to our being able to pay outstanding building maintenance bills. The only other major expenditure during the period was £121.00, for organ tuning, which was covered by a single donation. Attempts are being made to recover some of the VAT from the building work but we still have to pay £5,714.00, for the remainder of our share of the 2011 Diocesan costs, and a further £76.85 for our share of the expenses incurred by Stewkley on behalf of the Benefice. When these outstanding bills, totaling £5,790.85, have been paid, we'll have less than £500 in the account, leaving plenty of scope for lots more fund raising during 2012!!!!

HURRAH!!! THE CLOCK'S WORKING!!

There was further set back this month when the clock stopped unexpectedly. Investigation showed that for some reason the chain supporting the 'winding' weight and motor had broken, allowing it all to collapse onto the bell chamber floor. Luckily we found a spare link and repaired the chain and while we were waiting for the clock to 'wind up' we decided to adjust the pendulum (the clock had been running slow) and to tackle the chimes. After considerable investigation, debate and experimentation we discovered how to set the 'hour' chimes and the 'quarter' chimes so that they synchronised with the time shown on the dial. Whew!!! At the time of writing, it's keeping time and (almost) chiming as it should. The plan at present is to let it run as it is for a week or so and then perform further 'tweaking' to make it work as perfectly as any ancient clock can.

What's On In December

Saturday 3rd	Churchyard Clean Up 10-12noon (any help appreciated)	
Sunday 4th	Ramblers 2pm	Wilstone Village Hall
	Evensong 6pm	St James Church
Tuesday 6th	Mobile Library 10.30am	The Green
Wednesday 7th	Parish Council Meeting 7.30pm	Church Room
Thursday 8th	Coffee Shop 10-12noon	Church Room
	Whist Drive 7.30pm	Church Room
Sunday 11th	No Church service - 10am	Wing
Thursday 15th	Coffee Shop 10-12noon	Church Room
	Bingo 7.30pm	Church Room
Friday 16th	Carol Singing - meet 7pm (bring torch/lantern)	The Green
Sunday 18th	Christingle/Carols 5.30pm	Church Room
Tuesday 20th	Mobile Library 10.30am	The Green
Thursday 22nd	Coffee Shop 10-12noon	Church Room
	Whist Drive 7.30pm	Church Room
Sunday 25th	Family Communion 8.30am	St James Church
Monday 26th	Boxing Day holiday	
Tuesday 27th	Village Footpath Walk 2pm	The Green
Saturday 31st	New Years Eve Party	

Address

Please note that all submissions for the Chronicle should be sent to
John Hardcastle
Marloes, Lines Hill
01296 688070

Email submissions to:
editor@aachronicle.co.uk

Please don't forget to tell us of any events that you would like included in the What's On list

Classified

CLASSIFIED ADS ARE FREE in The Chronicle

Phone us on 01296 688191
 or email

editor@aachronicle.co.uk

1. Who was the first British monarch to broadcast a Christmas message to the nation?
2. Child star Jimmy Boyd sang which hugely popular 1950's Christmas song, which was initially banned by the Catholic Church in Boston because it supposedly mixed sex and Christmas?
3. Who banned Christmas in England between 1647 and 1660?
4. On which date is Epiphany celebrated in the traditional Western calendar?
5. Who are the four ghosts in Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol?

answers below

MOBILE LIBRARY 6th & 20th December 10.30am The Green

MOBILE LIBRARY

NEEDS YOU!!!!!!

'USE IT' don't 'LOOSE IT'

1. George the Fifth (in 1932)
2. I saw Mommy kissing Santa Claus
3. Oliver Cromwell
4. 6th January
5. Christmas Past, Christmas Present, Christmas Yet to Come, and Jacob Marley

The Robin Hood Pub Christmas Draw

The Robin Hood Public House, Brook Street, Tring
 Draw will take place at Tuesday 20th December 9pm

Come along and join in the festive fun at The Robin Hood Pub's annual christmas draw in aid of Iain Rennie Hospice at Home. Fabulous prizes to be won with music by Tring Silver Band and Carol singing to put you in the mood for the big day.

JACK & THE BEANSTALK

2.30pm and 7.30pm 17th - 30th December

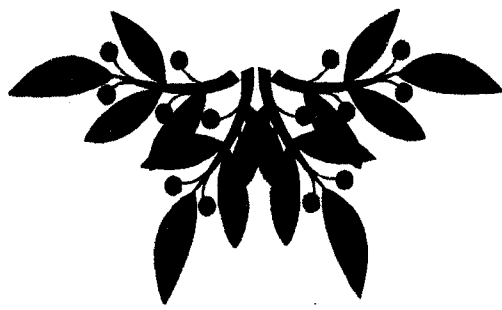
Limelight Theatre, Queens Park Arts Centre,

Aylesbury. A traditional pantomime with guaranteed slapstick!

Tickets from £6. Details www.qpc.org or 01296 424332/431272

630 Club - meets every Saturday in the Royal Oak at 6.30 pm. New members very welcome. Contact Andy Bystra if you need an introduction.

GNOMES (Girls Night Out Men Excluded Sorry) meet, usually in the Royal Oak, every Tuesday 8 pm onwards - all Ladies very welcome - GNOMES specialises in intelligent conversation over a glass of something.



Merry Christmas
and a happy new year
from
Alison & Dave
Flackwell Electronics

