

THE CHRONICLE

Aston Abbots Parish Magazine – March 2014



EDITORIAL

THE CHRONICLE

Issue 340

March 2014

I was looking through the history of the Chronicle on the village website, interestingly the first editorial stated that its aim was to entertain inform and amuse, just looked back and mine in September which had the same aims, just goes to show that things don't change.

To further reinforce this, it seems that back in 1998 Colin Higgs took BCC to task over the state of the village roads, just recently he has done so again, well done Colin. Although some do argue that at least the pot holes slow the traffic down.

I would heartily recommend that anyone new to the village take time to read the history the Chronicle on the Aston Abbots web site, it makes fascinating reading a real potted history of the last 30 years.

It also seems that there were a number of regular, sometimes controversial, contributors to the Chronicle, Ivor Cheek & Nom de Plume, and Bucket of Booze are you still out there? Any other budding but shy potential authors out there, who would like to make their views known feel free to send stuff in. In 1984 the then Editor threatened to bore the village into submission.

I'm happy to report there may be good news about the Fete, I understand that some previous organisers have stepped into the breach. More details next time, so keep the date in your diaries July 26th. Again information gleaned from the Chronicle history it was 22 years since there wasn't a village fete.

The saga of the dung heap seems to be coming to a close, which is a shame as it proved a rich vein of humour and material for several editions, and although near the end I'm pleased to say that another action group has emerged in support of the dung heap STAMP, more details in the Allotment Diary.

Phil Corrigan

March
2014

Snippets & Miscellanea

Royal Oak News

March Guest beers

London Pride

Spitfire

Bass

Future events

15th St Patricks Day Dinner

30th Mother's Day Lunch

St Georges Day Dinner (Apr
26th)

Details from the pub

Cover Star Peter Shorrock has asked me to point out that John Hardcastle is Chairman of the Village Hall Trustees and Not Peter as stated on the cover of the February issue.

I was going to include a new feature "the thoughts of a Parish Councillor" (RGC) but having heard some I don't think you are ready for it. I do understand he has a recent interest in filmmaking.

Cover photo courtesy of John Hardcastle

CHURCH DUTIES

CLEANING

1ST Caroline L & Colin

8th Ann & Gordon

15th Alex & Anita

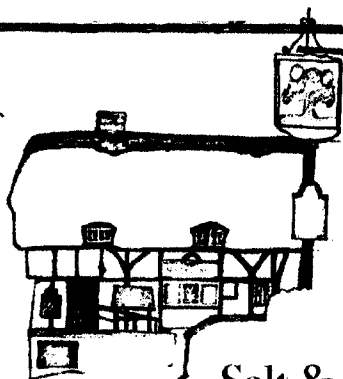
22nd Gay & Colin

29th Colin

No flowers during lent

THE ROYAL OAK ASTON ABBOTTS

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COME AND TRY THE NEW MENU

STARTERS

- Salt & Petter chilli squid & dressed leaves
- Smoked Haddock & spring onion fishcakes & homemade tartare sauce
- Goats cheese & caramelised onion tart
- Feta & Olive salad
- Field mushroom stuffed with goats cheese on garlic toast
- Homemade soup of the day with crusty bread

MAINS

- Ribeye steak garni
- 1kg Moules mariniere on wholegrain mustard mash with pancetta & onion gravy
- Oven roasted lamb rump served with dauphinoise potatoes, mint jus
- Tagliatelle with olives, sun dried tomatoes, pesto & mozzarella served with garlic ciabatta
- Pan roasted Gressingham duck breast, braised red cabbage & apple, garlic saute potatoes & cider jus
- Beer battered cod, hand cut chips & minted mushy peas served with homemade tartare sauce

PHONE : 01296 681 262

What's on in March

Sunday 2 nd	Rambling Club	meet at Rushmere	2pm
	Evensong	St James Church	6pm
Tues 4 th	Pancake Day		
	Aylesbury Vale Transport Meeting	Buckingham	10am
	Bus or Train Queries to Colin.		
Wed 5 th	Ash Wednesday (1st day of Lent)		
Thurs 6 th	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10 – 12
	Whist Drive	Village Hall	7.30pm
Sat 8 th	Litter Blitz	Village Hall	10am
	Sacks & Pickers provided, bring own gloves		
Sunday 9 th	Village Footpath Walk	meet on Green	2pm
Thurs 13 th	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10 – 12
	Bingo	Village Hall	7.30 pm
Tues 18 th	Mobile Library	The Green	10.30am
Thurs 20 th	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10 – 12
	Whist Drive	Village Hall	7.30pm
Thurs 27 th	Coffee Shop	Village Hall	10 – 12
Fri 28 th	Beetle Drive	Village Hall	7pm
	With Sausage & Mash supper		
Sat 29 th	BST clocks go forward 1 hour		
Sunday service	30 th	Mothering Sunday family tea in Village Hall 4pm followed by Church	

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St James's Church events for March and later

BEETLE DRIVE RETURNS

There will be a BEETLE DRIVE on Friday 28 March, 7pm, Village Hall

Beetlemaster Philip Derbyshire returns to preside over another fun evening. Those of you who have been in previous years will know it's a fast-moving and entertaining game for all ages – bring the family and your own drink. Sausage and mash supper included in the price; raffle at half time.

Tickets £7.50 adults, £5 children, £20 family groups of 2 adults and 2 children.
From Colin Higgs, 681343

MOTHERING SUNDAY 30 MARCH

Parents, grandparents, children, in fact everyone welcome to our Mothering Sunday service at 4.30pm in St James's Church. Join us for tea and cake first in the Village Hall at 4pm – just turn up

SAVE THE DATE – Flower festival Saturday 24-Sunday 25 May

- Flower displays in church
- Open gardens
- Teas in village hall

More details to follow nearer the time!

KING ZOG DOES NOT RETURN...

Last year we planned an evening with Neil Rees (a local historian and popular speaker) who was going to tell us all about King Zog of Albania. We had to cancel, but hoped to rearrange this spring. Sadly we haven't been able to find a mutually convenient date – please let any PCC member know if you'd like us to try again later this year!

WEEKLY PRAYER GROUP

We meet every Thursday morning from 9.00 to about 9.30am in St James's Church in summer and at 1 Bricstock in winter. You are most welcome to join us in our prayers. If you would like us to pray for anyone, there is a postbox on the Church porch for you to post a prayer request.

Contact Gay Walker (688632) for more information

Spring is in sight!

With the beginning of March we hope to see the end of the wet and windy weather and the start of Spring and better weather... The bulbs are pushing up, now all we need is some sunshine to boost our spirits.

To help you through we've got some more splendid

events planned for March... including a special fundraising Quiz Night in memory of Sharon, conclusion of the Six Nations, the Unicorn Golf Society first meeting at Buckingham and of course Mothering Sunday! Please note our revised opening hours and extended Sunday lunch hours!

March

- 1st - St David's Day
- 5th - Bridge Club
- 8th - Six Nations 14:30 Ireland vs Italy +17:00 Scotland vs France
- 9th - Six Nations 15:00 England vs Wales
- 11th - Folk music
- 12th - Bridge Club
- 14th - Live Music with Three Bar Fire
- 15th - Six Nations 13:30 Italy vs England + 14.45 Wales vs Scotland, 18:00 France vs Ireland
- 17th Quiz- St Patrick's Day
- 19th - Bridge Club
- Monday 24th 'Mad March Quiz' in aid of the Florence Nightingale Hospice
- 26th - Bridge Club
- 27th TUGS @ Buckingham Golf Club
- 28th - Dinner & Jazz
- 30th - Mothering Sunday - Book now!

PLUS enjoy these Unicorn Regulars:

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Wednesday Night is Bridge Night Beginners welcome.



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This March

- Tuesday 4th Pilgrim Quiz
- Thursday 6th Ladies Night
- Saturday 8th Pilgrim Breakfast
- Saturday 8th - Six Nations 14:30 Ireland vs Italy +17:00 Scotland vs France
- Sunday 9th - Six Nations 15:00 England vs Wales
- Saturday 15th - Six Nations 13:30 Italy vs England 14.45 Wales vs Scotland 18:00 France vs Ireland
- Tuesday 11th Pilgrim Quiz
- Saturday 15th Pilgrim Breakfast
- Tuesday 18th Pilgrim Quiz
- Saturday 22nd Pilgrim Breakfast
- Tuesday 25th Pilgrim Quiz
- Friday 28th Mens Night
- Saturday 29th Pilgrim Breakfast
- Sunday 30th Mothering Sunday - Book now!

All rugby Six Nations matches will be shown in the bar - always a good time to be at the pub. Please note we are also taking bookings for Mother's Day so make sure you've reserved your table. Why not bring a quiz team down every Tuesday?.. Sunday lunch is always popular at The Pilgrim, make sure by booking a table.

The Pilgrim Snug is also available for private dining hire for 12 diners.

Please see website for full menus.



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AT THE ROYAL OAK

In late December, it became evident that several of us hadn't got round to planning anything in the way of a New Year's celebration. None of us were keen on travelling that particular night, and in any event, we wanted to spend it in the village. The obvious thing to do was to 'see it in' at the pub. And so we somewhat cheekily asked Terri if there was any chance of a meal on the night. Unhesitatingly she said there would be, and so it was that we came to thoroughly enjoy a very pleasant 'village' New Year celebration, complete with music, fireworks, and the sound of our own church bells ringing out the old and the New Year in.

Later on in Jan, I was delighted to find that Terri & Garry had arranged a Burn's Night on the 25th. This time we booked early, which proved to be a good move since it turned out to be a 'sell out'. The dining room had been suitably decorated and looked really great. Mike Bush started the proceedings with what we think was the Selkirk Grace. His Scottish accent was so 'authentic' that none of us 'Sassenachs' couldn't actually tell what he was saying and rather assumed it was in a dialect, peculiar to one of the lesser known and more remote clans. Anyway, it sounded pretty convincing and set the tone for the evening!!

Following an appetizing fish pate, the 'not so traditional' haggis was served up in a Yorkshire pudding. Certainly not quite what was expected, but absolutely delicious and evidently very popular with most.

The meal was rounded off with what must have been the most 'sinful', and rich 'Crowdie' I'd ever experienced; absolutely delicious. I did feel obliged however, to take a double dose of statin before going to bed!!!

Very many thanks to all at the Royal Oak for two thoroughly enjoyable evenings.



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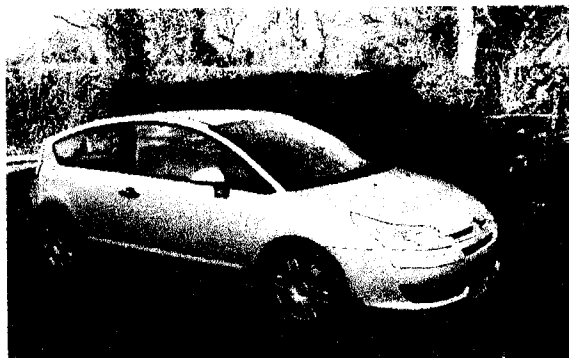
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March
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The Pampero in the Pear Trees

(With more apologies to Kenneth Grahame)

Ratty was feeling good about life. The news from Mole that his cousins in Buckinghamshire weren't going to be evicted from the orchard because of their mole hills was good news.

He was just contemplating a foaming pint of real ale at The Common Beech (apparently they'd made it into CAMRA, or so the rumour had it) when there came a loud knock on the door. Ratty jumped out of his seat, alarmed at what seemed to him to be a very impatient visitor. He opened his door cautiously and was even more surprised to see a weasel about to knock loudly again. The weasel immediately put his paw in the door and thrust a business card into Ratty's face. "Wilbur Weasel – Journalist – The Shire Trumpet".

Ratty's face dropped. Not only was there a journalist at his door but the pint of real ale seemed further away than ever. "I don't talk to journalists" said Ratty determinedly. "You haven't heard what I've got to say yet" retorted the weasel. "It's about Mole's cousin and the scandal of the Muck Heaps in the orchard" Ratty's ears picked up on hearing this and he felt a triumphant smile spread across his face. "Ha Ha" Ratty harrumphed, "that's all done and dusted, there is no story. The Moles in Aston Abbots are safe and sound in their mole heaps". Ratty had hoped this would wipe the smirk off the journalist's face but Wilbur only stuck his paw further into Ratty's parlour and sneeringly said "Ah, but you haven't heard the latest scandal, have you? One of the Muck Heaps in the orchard is missing and the Moles are being blamed – any comment?"

Having extricated the weasel's paw from his front door, Ratty put his coat on and rushed round to Mole's. He found him in his front room pacing up and down with a worried look on his face. "Looks like you've also had a visit from Wilbur" said Ratty. "Yes, what are we to do?" said Mole "we can't leave my cousins to face this alone". "We'll have to get to the orchard in Aston Abbots straight away" said Ratty. "How will we get there?" asked Mole. "I know just the fellow to help us" beamed Ratty.

And so it was that Ratty and Mole found themselves in Toad's new motor car winging their way to Aston Abbots. It was a bright yellow colour and open topped so it was hard to converse during the journey although Ratty could swear he heard Toad singing "Bread of Heaven" at least once during the journey.

They arrived in double quick time and despite Ratty's protest (he'd spotted the village pub replete with Real Ale signs) they made straight for the orchard (although Toad insisted on a jar of the black stuff first, promising to catch up later). They had to pass through an allotment first before getting to the fruit trees. Ratty & Mole both remarked how well the vegetables seemed to be doing. "Must be good quality soil" remarked Mole, who knew about that sort of thing. They also passed a remarkably clean and gleaming Greenhouse. The windows had all been polished and the sunlight bounced off the glass. "Someone's taking extra special pride in that" said Ratty. "I wonder why you'd go to all that trouble to keep your greenhouse that clean?" he mused.

When they passed through to the orchard field there were Mole's cousins waiting to greet him. With all the introductions over Ratty got straight to the point. "What's Occurring" he asked, sounding suspiciously Welsh, must be Toad's influence he thought. "Well" squeaked the moles in unison "As you can see, where there were two muck heaps there is now only one. It disappeared almost overnight and the finger of suspicion is pointing at us"

Mmmm thought Ratty, this is a conundrum. Why would a muck heap suddenly disappear like that? What possible reason could there be for going to all that trouble to have a muck heap only for it to seemingly vanish? Ratty knew that a pint of 6X was required to stimulate his 'little grey cells' so it was off to the local hostelry with Mole in tow. "We'll get to the bottom of this" said Ratty sounding curiously like a small Belgian detective "We'll clear your cousin's name". "Poop, poop" was all Toad could say through his pint of Guinness.

In the next episode "Ratty & Mole go East in search of Enlightenment"

March
2014

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Letters Page

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to you in utter disgust at recent press intrusion and I am considering taking my complaint to the Press Complaints Commission (PCC). I am writing to ask for the support of the residents of Aston Abbotts.

In a recent issue of the Bucks Herald - 22.1.14 - a story featured on page 14 outlining the current 'dispute' relating to the muck heap on our allotment. What I am livid about is the picture that was taken to accompany the story. Did anyone think to ask my Japanese 'Pagoda' Shed – Nathan – if he was happy to be included in the photograph, let alone splashed across the Bucks Herald (paper and online).

As his representative I don't recall any approach and he is quite rightly upset. His new found fame has made him feel uncomfortable and he says he wishes the compost bin would open up and let him sink into. I feel for Nathan, he's a sensitive soul and when these 'media types' happily click away with their Polaroid's they don't think the unhappiness they are causing.

What do you think my chances of a Public enquiry like the recent Leveson enquiry?

Can our media sink any lower?

Yours,

Mr C Phillips

Esteemed representative for Nathan, a Japanese Pagoda shed

I'm available for 'no win-no fee' and for all weddings, parties and door openings.

Sirs

I write in respect of the letter from 'Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells' (The Chronicle, February 2014) in which he/she decried the recent omission of Birthdays from The Chronicle.

I wish to point out that many of us in Aston Abbotts are now so old that we don't actually WANT any more birthdays.

Yours etc,

Name and address forgotten

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More letters (well a letter Ed)

Just to confirm that there are no village moles involved in the “case of the manure heap” other than the brown furry king! Every issue of the Chronicle is sent to the Bucks Herald, this seems to be common practise with village rags. This has always been the case as I understand it and when I took over the postal Chronicles I continued to do so. This is how our saucy ladies Valentines front cover issue became public. So just bear it in mind if you do not want too much publicity for your article or letter, or at least if you don't want to be approached by the local press, as they would seek information and then gain permission to print.

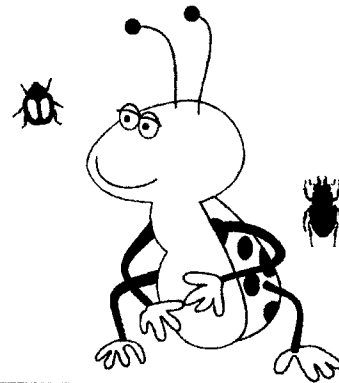
Well I hope it comes as a relief to know there are no moles leaking information to the press after all.

Signed

A Smallgnome

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and hilarious evening
at the Aston Abbots*

Beetle Drive



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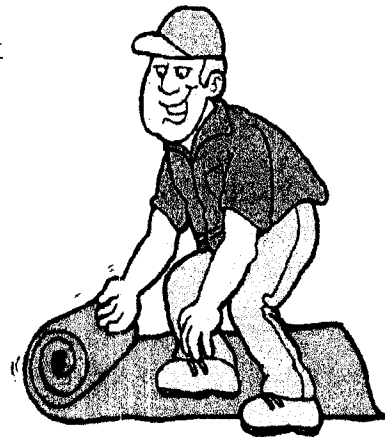
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Countryside Matters

Myxomatosis was released in Australia in 1950 with devastating results, reducing the rabbit populations from 600 million – 100 million in just two years. In France it was introduced in 1952 and by 1954 90% of all wild rabbits were dead. It reached the U.K. in 1953 being illegally imported to West Sussex and by 1955 95% of all wild rabbits in the U.K. were also dead. However, in 2005 a survey, conducted over 16,000 hectares, revealed that the rabbit population had increased three fold every two years, this was most probably a product of rabbits increasing their genetic resistance to the virus.

As I see it now the virus has returned in this area and I am now finding dead rabbits nearly every day on my grass fields. This is a truly shocking disease, most weeks I try to put as many rabbits out of their misery as possible. I even had to kill one on the golf course with a seven iron.

I often stop when I see the poor devils on the side of the road and deal with them there and then. They just sit there and sometimes in the middle of the road, half blind and oblivious to the danger nearby.

The upside is that the local populations of buzzards, red kites and the foxes are feeding particularly well. For the kites I normally lay the bodies of the rabbits on top of hawthorn hedges so the dogs do not roll in the rotting carcasses. Why do they do that? Must be a farm dog bragging rights or a body perfume they adore.

As humans we have manufactured some truly horrific diseases.

James



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ALLOTMENT DIARY

The snowdrops under my apple trees are now all out: the daffodils are shooting, and a lot of other vegetation is threatening to sprout or bloom – much earlier than usual. As has been much publicised, this has been the wettest January in England & Wales for 248 years; but less publicised, this has, in my experience, been the mildest winter I can remember. These two factors present two problems for gardeners: the first is that if we get a cold spell later this month or in March, this will kill off any plants or blossom that have been persuaded by the mild weather into bursting into premature life: the second is that even on the top of a hill, as our village is, the soil is incredibly saturated with water, and it will be some time before digging and rotavating is going to be an easy exercise.

This is of course one of the best times of year for vegetable gardeners: there is little that one can do on ones allotment or garden (apart from spreading muck, which the mild weather has allowed me to do: a large part of one of the two infamous manure heaps in the orchard has now been transferred to my allotment), so that this is the time for poring over seed catalogues, either the paper variety, or on-line; preparing plans of where one is going to plant the different vegetables this year (remembering the three-year crop rotation that is recommended); and dreaming of the crops of vegetables to come. At the moment everything in the garden, as the saying goes, is rosy. It is only later that reality sets in - plants fail to germinate; weeds grow; we have to cope with a drought or a period of perpetual rain; and ones vegetables start to be devoured by pests of one sort or other: slugs and birds, and, later, caterpillars and bugs like carrot fly. As a Times columnist said recently, it's not gardening we like, it's making lists about gardening!

A new form of blight that is affecting gardeners, I understand, is plant theft. There is a lucrative black market in rare and endangered plants, such as orchids and other exotic species; but theft is not confined to plants of this nature: botanic gardeners and local authorities have seen saplings and bulbs skilfully removed. Sometimes whole flower beds have been removed. In East Devon District Council these thefts have become so prevalent that they have taken to putting microchips in plants as a deterrent. I have not heard of vegetable being stolen, but it can only be a question of time.

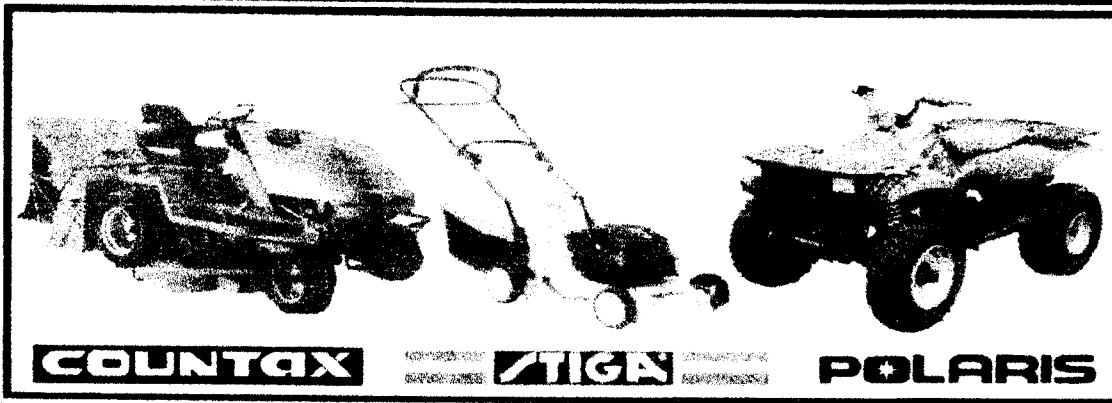
Even more extraordinary, across the Channel, gendarmes in the Calais area, and police in Bavaria, are investigating allegations that hydrangeas have been stolen – not because of their beauty as flowers, but drug traffickers have discovered that a hallucinogenic drug can be extracted from the plant, which can be smoked as a cheap alternative to cannabis!

Next month juice from a genetically modified purple tomato will go on sale in Britain. The plants have been modified to produce fruits containing anthocyanin, a natural pigment found in the skins of blackberries and blueberries. The modification will double their shelf-life, but the tomatoes have been developed for their health benefits. They should help people with cardiovascular disease; and laboratory tests have suggested that anthocyanin could extend the life of cancer patients. The tomatoes will only be sold in juice form initially, because of the possibility of cross-breeding with normal tomato varieties. For me it was irritating to read that the purple tomato was developed by British scientists, but has had to be produced in Canada, because of European opposition to the technology.

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Allotment Diary (cont'd)

Finally, returning to the muck heap, I read David Gray's article last month with interest, and congratulate him on trying to find a compromise solution to the problem. I must declare an interest: I am of course an allotment-holder. However, I have also donated a tree to the orchard, so that I have a foot in both camps. Having said this, my own thoughts are:-

1. I was born, and lived the first 12 years of my life on the outskirts of St. Albans, and my two closest childhood friends lived in a village just outside it, so that I spent much of my early years playing in the fields and woods in the countryside. While my career as a lawyer has meant that I have had to work in towns, I have lived since 1971 in villages. I believe I am qualified therefore to say that I regard muck heaps as a normal adjunct to living in the country, and am surprised by the opposition to the one in the orchard.
2. I am sure that allotment holders would not object to manure from the heap being used to fertilise trees in the orchard.
3. I do not think that any of the allotment-holders whose plots adjoin the main path through it has a plot big enough to allow a manure heap to be placed there, as David has proposed, without prejudicing his own allotment gardening.
4. There are three objections to David's idea of placing the manure heap on the grass verge adjoining the entrance gate: first, this land belongs to Bucks County Council, and I suspect they would object to the land being used in this manner; second, while I rarely do so, a number of allotment-holders use this land for parking their cars when they visit the allotments (as do some people visiting the orchard), and could not do so if there were a manure heap there; and thirdly, if, (which I do not accept), a manure heap is a valid source of discontent, then surely the occupiers of New Zealand Cottages on the opposite side of the road would have more cause to complain than those villagers having trees planted in the orchard?
5. I am not sure exactly what the objection to the muck-heap is, but if some people regard it as unpleasant, it will still be equally unpleasant for them to walk past I were it to be by the entrance gate to the allotments, or on one of the allotments adjoining the main path?

To end on a lighter note, my current diary has a quotation at the foot of every other page, and I enjoyed a recent one from Mark Twain, that a cauliflower was a cabbage with a college education!

Peter Shorrocks (Founder-member of STAMP – Save The Aston Abbotts Muck-heap in Perpetuity)



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The Arty BitsBooks.....Music....Theatre

BOOK CLUB

On February 19th Book Club held their meeting at Anita Parkers house. The choice this month was Black Swan Green by David Mitchell.

The book tells the story of a year in the life of Jason Taylor a 12 year old boy, who is exposed to bullying by his school friends because of his stammer. During the course of the year he furtively writes poetry for the village magazine, befriends an eccentric émigré, qualifies for membership of the village secret society, meets an old crone and encounters a gypsy.

This all takes place with the backdrop of the Falklands War and the slow disintegration of his parents marriage.

Most of the group found the book humorous and at times poignant.

BOOKCLUB – JANUARY 2014

The first meeting of the New Year saw the group discussing “Engleby” by Sebastian Faulks. I had chosen the book having read earlier books by the author, Birdsong and Charlotte Gray, which I had really enjoyed. Engleby also came with a family recommendation, though these often come with a health warning.

The book follows the life of Mike Engleby, written in the first person, a highly intelligent character although rather withdrawn and isolated. He may have suffered a disturbed childhood, including bullying at his public school and the loss of a, possibly, abusive father. Having underachieved at university, he makes a living as a journalist, writing under a female pseudonym, supplemented by illicit drug dealing and petty crime. It is only late in the book that a sub=plot comes to light which completely alters the level of criminality in which he is involved and the state of Engleby’s mind.

The book provoked discussion about the Engleby character; was he mad or bad. Many of us felt the middle part of the book to be rather too slow. However, we were taken by the surprising turn of events, particularly Faulks’ ability to describe Engleby’s experience in a “Special” hospital. This slow burner does end in suspense and raises a further question about the nature of fantasy and reality; perhaps we are left, in the end, unsure of the realm in which Engleby exists.

Date & Start time	Brief description	Start gridref	Miles Grade	Longer description	Contact
Thu 13/03/2014 10:00	Mixture of woods and open farmland near Wendover	SP874073	7 M	Park on the verge Hale Road near junction with Hale Lane Wendover for a walk around Swan Bottom and The Lee.	Stan Goss 01296 613803 07717 444644
Sun 16/03/2014 10:00	A flattish walk from Mentmore on fields, tracks, canal tow path and some road.	SP907197	6.5 M	Meet outside The Stag pub at the end of Mentmore village green. Limited parking on the green, so car sharing recommended. Includes a part of the Outer Aylesbury Ring, and passing site of the Great Train Robbery. Two stiles!	Sarah 07746 056500
Tue 18/03/2014 10:30	Nearly level walk with streams, ponds, moats and Chiltern views from Little Kimble	SP 828062	4 L	Park by Little Kimble War Memorial. We will walk via Apsley Manor Farm and Five Springs Farm and view the Medieval paintings and tiles in Little Kimble Church. Optional lunch at the Swan in Smokey Row after the walk.	Stephen O'Shea 01296 625590 07917 450042
Thu 20/03/2014 10:00	Villages Woods & River near Hurley	SU828841	7.5 M	Meet at car park in Hurley Village, heading south to Ashley Hill Forest, some hills.	John Taylor 07719 936463
Sun 23/03/2014 10:00	A flat walk in North Bucks, east of Winslow	SP 817287	7 M	Park & meet by The Green Man pub in Mursley for a walk touching Winslow before returning via Swanbourne & some trout lakes back to Mursley.	Jerry Davies 01296 481900 07923 536372
Thu 27/03/2014 10:00	Undulating but mostly flat walk from Little Chalfont.	SU981978	7 M	Meet at the Pomeroy Pub Vintage Inn Little Chalfont HP7 9JY Walk to river Chess via Chenies Manor. As its near river may be muddy! Optional lunch at pub after.	Bob & Jane Turner 01296 748695 07941 383869
Sun 30/03/2014 10:00	A varied walk including, hills, woods and canal near Wendover	SP898084	8.5 M	Meet at Wendover Woods exit car park(HP22 5GY), walk down to Halton, along the canal to Drayton Beauchamp, returning via Northhill Wood. Bring snacks for two short stops en-route.	Peter & Lesley Spinks 01296 651653 07432 572534
Thu 03/04/2014 10:00	Four Ways in the Chilterns around Whiteleaf	SP823036	7 M	Walk from Whiteleaf Hill car park to impressive Hampden House and Little Hampden, and return past Chequers and around Pulpit Hill. Great Chiltern springtime views - we hope! A few ascents - none too steep! Nearby pub available for lunch afterwards if you wish.	Alan & Stella Marsh 01844 292466
Sun 06/04/2014 10:00	Ivinghoe, Pitstone and Grand Union Canal	SP945163	8.5 M	Park alongside B488, Station Road [to Leighton Buzzard] in Ivinghoe Village and meet at the junction of Wellcroft Road - which leads to the Golf Course/Vicarage Lane and near the Rose and Crown PH. A varied walk including some hills around the Beacon, fields and canal and two "mills". Dependent on numbers an option at end of walk to visit Ford End Watermill - a small charge will apply. Please car share where possible and bring packed lunch.	Gill 01296 748045 07851 055995
Tue 08/04/2014 10:30	From Bridgewater Arms Little Gaddesden	SP992136	4.5 L	Leave from Bridgewater Arms for woody walk to The Monument (coffee stop?) & return via Ashridge. Lunch at Bridgewater Arms.	Lindsay 01296 613237 07905 484581
Thu 10/04/2014 10:00	Hills and a mill with a view that will thrill. Chearsley area	SP716105	7.5 M	Meet at Chearsley. Circular walk to Nether & Upper Winchendon, returning along the river on the Thame valley walk. Park around the green or the Bell car park for those taking lunch.	Peter & Lesley Spinks 01296 651653 07432 572534
Sun 13/04/2014 11:00	North Bucks Way Part 1. Linear walk using public transport to 11:00am Wolverton start	SP806415	12 S	Catch 9:00am 150 bus from Aylesbury Bus station then train to Wolverton car park at Grid Ref. provided. Linear walk to include Whaddon, Nash and Great Horwood. Mainly open country, bring pack lunch etc. Return journey to include bus from Addington/Winslow. Transport times correct when going to press, check with walk leader nearer time.	Vicki 01296 336890
Thu 17/04/2014 10:00	Walk around the Chalgrove area	SU636967	8 M	Chalgrove Meet in car park behind the Crown Pub interesting walk visting four churches on route.	John Docherty 01844 201336 07531 814198
Sun 20/04/2014 10:00	Undulating walk through pretty countryside around Berkhamsted	TL005093	9 M	Park by War Memorial off New Road north of Berkhamsted. Varied walk to Potten End, near Jockey End, Great Gaddesden, Nettleden and Frihsden. Bring some refreshments.	Marie Jones 01296 630062 07733 412295
Tue 22/04/2014 10:30	A flat and hopefully stile free walk from Haddenham to Dinton and on to Upton returning on Arriva 280 bus	SP742088	4.5 L	Meet at Haddenham Village Hall HP17 8EE A linear walk on the new stile free footpath to Dinton and Upton returning to Haddenham by bus. Optional lunch in Seven Stars at the end of the walk (before returning on the bus).	Jim Robinson 01844 291831 07768 700678

ASTON ABBOTTS BOOK CLUB GOLDEN AWARDS

Our Book Club has been meeting every month since May 2009. We met to discuss our 50th book during January this year. Each member has made a recommendation for the best and runner-up of the books they had read. As you can imagine the selections were very varied and no clear winner emerged.

From the responses we can recommend the following books (in no particular order)

The White Tiger by Avarind Agiga

The House by the Diva by Eugenie Fraser

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

Also we liked 'A Thousand Splendid Suns' by Khaled Hosseini – 'The Alchemist' by Paul Coelho – 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time' by Mark Haddon.

John Hardcastle

Theatre (the good the bad and the ugly)

The good

West Side Story

Judy and I thoroughly enjoyed West Side Story at the Waterside Theatre. In my view this is a 'must see' show – the dancing (choreography), musicianship and staging were superb. The Sharks and the Jets play out this ultimately tragic tale with huge enthusiasm – Leonard Bernstein's music must have been revolutionary in its time – I knew/remembered nearly all the tunes – it was hard not to sing along with some numbers. The programme noted 'that it is a very difficult show to cast; the vocal and dancing challenges are immense because it requires very young performers who can sing and dance and act'. Well they did it all in spades. The sequence when the lady Sharks sing and dance "I wanna be in America" was a show stopper.

John Hardcastle

Looks like the John Hardcastle page (Ed)

Date & Start time	Brief description	Start gridref	Miles Grade	Longer description	Contact
Thu 24/04/2014 10:00	Pleasant walk in the Hertfordshire countryside. Slight undulations.	TL178141	7.5 M	Starting in the Wheathampstead East Lane car park. Walking to the site of the old Wheathampstead Station and on to Lamer Park, playwright George Bernard Shaw's house and back along the Lea Valley way. A pub (Oh Yes !)	Brian Sale 01296 612545 07930 835911
Sun 27/04/2014 10:00	Whiteleaf - part OAR route	SP823036	9 M	Meet at Whiteleaf car park, Peters Lane, for a walk following part of OAR circular route 21. Some steep ups and downs. Bring packed lunch.	Tricia 01296 624967 07762 204292
Thu 01/05/2014 10:00	Walk around Bledlow and Chinnor area	SP776020	7 M	Park at The Lions, Bledlow for a walk taking in Ridgeway around Bledlow and Chinnor area.	Tricia 01296 624967 07762 204292
Sun 04/05/2014 10:00	Farmland and open countryside around Brill	SP654141	7 M	Park and meet at windmill at Brill. Extensive views, some hills and stretches of road. Includes site of notorious interest!	Ros 01296 434714
Tue 06/05/2014 10:30	Hidden bluebell woods near Grim's Ditch	SP868078	5 L	Meet at Wendover library car park for walk via unfrequented paths between Grim's Ditch and Swan Bottom.	Joe Garver 01296 623868
Thu 08/05/2014 10:00	Undulating walk in Chilterns from Cadmore End	SU783927	8 M	Cadmore End. Park opposite school. Circular walk passing through Fingest and Turville.	John Docherty 01844 201336 07531 814198
Sun 11/05/2014 10:00	Outer Aylesbury Ring Walk 10 from Cublington	SP839221	7 M	Park in the village of Cublington, Meet by the Unicorn P/H. Mainly open fields, and good views.	John Taylor 07719 936463
Thu 15/05/2014 10:00	Canals & reservoirs near Bulbourne	SP933136	7.5 M	Meet at The Grand Junction Arms Bulbourne HP23 5QE. A walk based on OAR circular walk 3, along canals and around reservoirs. Admire 18th century engineering feats in this location which has been a site of special scientific interest since 1987. Free car parking at pub if lunching.	Helen & Keith 01296 631069 07759 420206
Sun 18/05/2014 10:00	North Bucks Way Part 2. Setting off from Winslow	SP770277	10 S	Meet at Pay & Display car park located behind shops near Market Square, Winslow. Circular walk through Addington, East Claydon and Granborough. Walking through open country, bring packed lunch etc.	Vicki 01296 336890
Tue 20/05/2014 10:30	Field paths and estate drives in Stowe Park	SP684357	4.5 L	A walk through Stowe's famous landscape garden. Park at Queens Head Pub Chackmore (MK18 5JF)	Adele 01296 748826 07933 752219
Thu 22/05/2014 10:00	Start at Woburn, taking in Aspley Guise and part of Safari Park	SP951333	8 M	We're going to the zoo, zoo, zoo. Meet at car park opposite church in Park Street Woburn. Optional pub at end.	Maurice Crump 01296 392569 07767 787413
Sun 25/05/2014 10:00	Lovely views and gentle hills Aldbury area	SP955149	6.25 M	Meet at the NT car park on brow of hill off Icknield Way on left-hand side of road from Aldbury. Lovely views with gentle hills included.	David Lawrence 01296 482313 07950 088213
Thu 29/05/2014 10:00	Cross river at Mill End, on to Henley and back to start via Greenlands.	SU783865	7 M	Start at Hambleden car park (behind Stag & Huntsman pub). A varied walk incorporating woods, a few hills, a town walk and river path. Optional pub lunch.	Malcolm Paul 01844 290697 07526 222632

Please note, when taking part in any of the walks listed on this programme you do so entirely at your own risk. Details are supplied by leaders long before any walk takes place, making it impossible to accurately predict the weather, conditions underfoot and other factors affecting safety, comfort or the degree of difficulty you may encounter. In really adverse weather, please check that the walk is on with the leader.

Members in group photographs taken on walks need to be aware that any of these photos may be used for publicising and promoting our Group and the Ramblers

Walk Grading Definitions

Leisurely (L) Suitable for reasonably fit people with at least a little country walking experience. Walking boots and warm, waterproof clothing are recommended. Terrain: Includes unsurfaced country paths that may be narrow, muddy or overgrown and obstructions such as stiles and narrow bridges. May be hilly with a few ascents and descents. Pace: Slow or moderate pace.

Moderate (M) Suitable for people with country walking experience and a good level of fitness. Walking boots and warm, waterproof clothing essential. Terrain: As in leisurely walks but with some sustained climbs and perhaps some moderate walking on open hillsides or moorland in the warmer months. Pace: Moderate pace; could include walks taken on leisurely terrain at a brisk pace.

Strenuous (S) Suitable for experienced country walkers with an above-average fitness level. Walking boots and warm waterproof clothing essential. Terrain: Includes rough country and mountains, a few long or lots of short ascents and descents on rough paths and across open country. Pace: Moderate or brisk pace; could include walks taken on moderate terrain at a brisk pace.

WEST SIDE STORY

It was probably 12 minutes into the show before the first song happened.

West Side Story is a very stylised musical based on Romeo and Juliet, but based in Upper West Side in New York.

It is very sharp and punchy with the conflict between rival gangs of the Jets and the Sharks. Inevitably there is a love interest between individuals from the rival gangs.

The songs are all very well known, such as Maria, Tonight, Somewhere, I feel pretty and America.

They were sung by the principals with gusto, tenderness and affection. But the real heart of this musical is the score from Leonard Bernstein. It is discordant, challenging, effective and highly descriptive. It underscores the action but also enhances the movement and dialogue.

Surprisingly one of the stars of the show was off stage. She was the conductor who mastered this elaborate score and controlled all of the on stage action.

Dance routines are a large part of the show. Some of these were really terrific and had the audience cheering. In particular, the sequence of 'Everything's fine in America ' was just wonderful.

The quintet of 'Tonight 'was fabulously done using the sparse scenery and the balconies.

Mentioning the scenery, it had some projected New York scenes with tenement balconies on either side. Simple but dramatic, especially when allied to the skilful use of lights to take the action from one side of the stage to the other.

The young cast were really on form and produced a really wonderful night.

As my companion noted, there were not a load of laughs in the end and large snuffles were heard from section of the audience.

It just shows that a provincial modern theatre such as the Waterside can put on fantastic, entertaining shows

And to think I almost missed it.

Neil Chesher

At the writers request no Ed comments were inserted into this article,prima donna

This page is intentionally blank, seriously every time I put something here it throws out the all the page layouts. Printing deadline is approaching, my patience (for which I am not renowned) is being severely tested, and I dread to think of the effect on my blood pressure! So the easiest solution a blank page.

Well that was the good, now the bad

SOME GIRL I USED TO KNOW

DISSAPPOINTING!

In the show described as “a musical mixtape of my favourite songs from the 80s and 90”, Denise Van Outen plays Stephanie, an Essex girl made good, relaxing in an upmarket hotel suite after the successful launch of her new lingerie line. She goes on to display all the “Essex Girl” traits and tosses in a will she, wont she have a one – night – stand with an old flame for good measure. The trouble is although the acting is good, the script is poor and definitely lacks, particularly in the second half, the humour to get you through!!!

Bob Carvey

And possibly the ugly

Bailey @ NPG

Simon Guy was to submit a critique of the Bailey Exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery, while his overall impression was good I understand that certain aspects of the exhibition left him somewhat traumatised and overwhelmed or as Mike Bush reported inadequate.

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The draw for tickets is made two weeks prior to the date of the show when I will let those who expressed interest know whether they have been successful or not.

John Hardcastle

WATERSIDE THEATRE	Date & Time
THE TWO WORLDS OF CHARLIE F	THU 13 MAR 7.30PM
THE JOHNNY CASH ROADSHOW	FRI 21 MAR 7.30PM
SING-A-LONG-A GREASE	SAT 22 MAR 7.30PM
FAME	MON 24 MAR 7.30PM
NINA KRISTOFFERSON'S BILLIE HOLIDAY STORY	TUE 1 APR 7.30PM
NABUCCO	FRI 4 APR 7.30PM
AN EVENING OF BURLESQUE	SAT 5 APR 8PM
DIAL M FOR MURDER	TUE 8 APR 7.30PM
HEAR THE PEOPLE SING	TUE 22 APR 7.30PM
BUDDY	MON 28 APR 7.30PM



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March 2014

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9th March	10.30am	Communion	Rev. Peter Binns
16th March	10.30am	Communion	Rev. Roger Hale
23rd March	10.30am	Communion	Rev. Gill Rowell
30th March	4pm	Mothering Sunday Tea in Hall 4.00pm Service 4.30pm	Rev. Philip Derbyshire
6th April	6.00pm	Evensong	Rev. Philip Derbyshire

100 Club Draw February 2014

1st Prize, £50: Venita Dixon

2nd prize, £10: Elvina Chu

David Gray – PCC Treasurer

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Parish Council Leader	Peter Shorrock	681260
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Police	Wing Police Station	396163/4
Railways	Chiltern Railways	0870 5165165
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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
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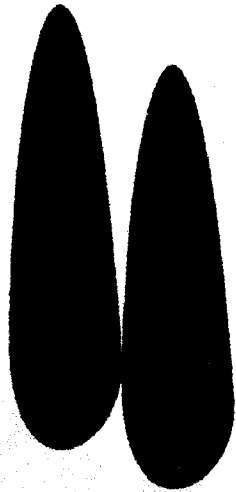
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(Plus metered electricity)

£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 688479 if you wish to book

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April Curnow 707833

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Anita Parker 681325

Gordon Kemp 681763

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David Gray 07935414495

- Treasurer

Gay Walker 688632

Some dates for the diary

Beetle Drive March date to be advised

May 24th/25th Flower Festival St James Church, and hopefully open gardens.

July 26th/27th Village Fete & Festival weekend

Saturday 8th March, Annual Litter Blitz, meet at Village Hall 10am sacks and pickers provided.

If you would like to sponsor an element of the flower festival please contact Colin.

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 specialise in intelligent conversation over a glass of something.

Baby sitters/dog sitters available

Reliable 14 year olds available to look after either children, babies or dogs!

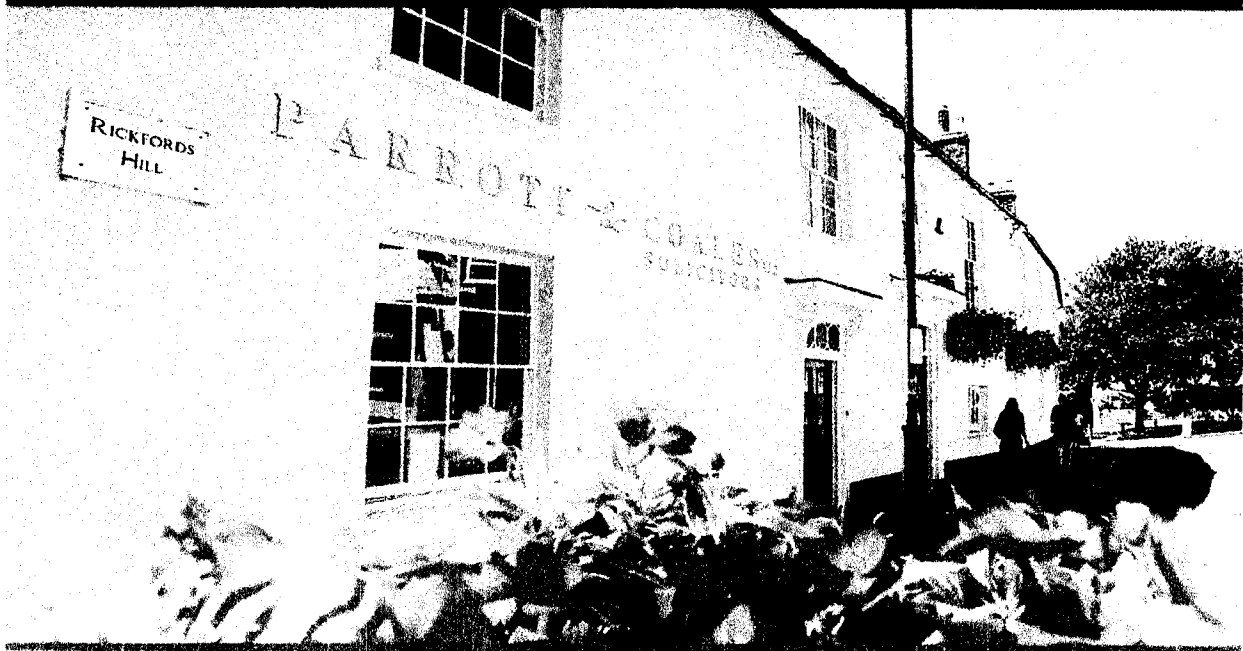
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ASTON ABBOTTS

WATCHOWER

The Obelisk

Villagers may have noticed groups of disappointed looking tourists cruising the village in recent weeks. Bussed out from Aylesbury to view the famous Aston Abbots manure heap, they were bitterly disappointed to find that our Glorious Leader had single-handedly removed most of the heap onto his own allotment.

However, had they cast their gaze down to the far end of The Orchard they would have noticed a new wonder in Aston Abbots: The Obelisk.

This new attraction is apparently the original Trig Point that was located upon Lines Hill. Made redundant by modern mapping techniques, it has long since been abandoned. Now this block of concrete has been rescued and lays resting drunkenly at the far end of The Orchard.

But it is not its sudden appearance that concerns me - it is the fact that it is apparently named "Trevor".

Now, I don't want to point fingers at people who name inanimate objects. Each to his own. After all, I once knew a man who collected pillar boxes and filled his garden with them. But I'm quite confident that never in all of Marcus's wildest and most short-sightedly befuddled deodorant-free days did he ever actually *name* any of his red cast-iron extended family!

But I digress. It is not actually the naming that concerns me. What deeply troubles me is... how did they know that it was male?

All I can say is that if the sexing of that half-ton of whitewashed inanimate concrete is accurate, then I find myself once again in complete and utter awe of Peter Knight's husbandry skills!

Police Seek Miscreant

Police have appealed for information after a desperate chase to catch a man who vaulted over the entrance barrier at the Marylebone station toilets in order to avoid paying the 30p charge.

Police described the man as being middle-aged, with short grey hair, looking like he had recently lost weight, and carrying a television engineer's repair box. They followed the man to Aston Abbots but lost him around the area of The Old Masters.

If anybody has any information about this man, please contact the local constabulary.

Safety Advice

If you must use FaceTime or Skype on your iPad then please make sure you switch on the camera that *faces* you and *not* the rear-facing camera. Otherwise you might just transmit pictures of your wife in 'an unfortunate pose' half way around the world.

An Apology

We wish to apologise for the recent good behaviour of Mr David W Lewis. This is due to circumstances outside of our control.

We understand that he is now being treated with a mixture of champagne and codeine and we remain hopeful that a relapse will occur soon.

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